
Opening Statements from the Commission Team

Public Meeting, Thursday, May 26, 2022
from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. at the Shaw Center, Ottawa.

Christine Mainville, Co-Lead Counsel Remarks (Delivered in French)

Good evening,

Thank you for taking the time to be here with us this evening, whether you are in person, joining us online or watching us on television. My name is Christine Mainville, and I am one of the three Co-lead Counsel for the Commission.

We want to start these important public meetings by acknowledging that we are in Ottawa tonight on lands traditionally occupied by the peoples of the Algonquin Anishinaabe Nation. Their culture and presence have nurtured and continue to nurture this land. We want to show our respect and honour all First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples and their valuable past and present contributions to this land.

These meetings are an opportunity to hear from those in the community directly affected by the issues impacting the Ottawa Light Rail Transit System. It is important that you have the opportunity to be heard.

Allow me to begin by introducing my colleague as Co-Lead Counsel to the Commission, Kate McGrann. You will also hear from the Commissioner of the Inquiry, The Honourable Justice William Hourigan.

We all appreciate your engagement with the Inquiry process and look forward to hearing your thoughts, comments and suggestions.

I will now turn it over to Kate to introduce the subject matter for these meetings and the Commissioner who will make a few remarks. Then it will be your turn to talk.

Kate McGrann, Co-lead Counsel Remarks

Thank you, Christine and good evening, everyone,

The Commission's mandate is to investigate the commercial and technical circumstances that led to the breakdowns and derailments of the Ottawa Light Rail Transit system during Stage 1 of the project.

The issues with the Light Rail Transit system have impacted so many of you in the City of Ottawa. The Commission values your input and wants to hear from you. That is why we are holding these public meetings.

We look forward to hearing your experiences and views, as we head into our Commission hearings in the coming weeks.

I am pleased to be here tonight to participate in this important meeting and to introduce you to the Honourable Justice William Hourigan.

Justice Hourigan was appointed Commissioner to lead this independent public inquiry on December 17, 2021.

Justice Hourigan has a distinguished 30-year career in the law:

- In private practice, Justice Hourigan specialized in complex commercial litigation;
- He was appointed to the Ontario Superior Court in 2009, where he served on the Board of Directors of the Ontario Superior Court Judges' Association; and
- In October of 2013, he was elevated to the Court of Appeal for Ontario.

The Commissioner will make recommendations in a final report that is expected to be delivered at the end of the Summer or in the Fall, to Ontario's Minister of Transportation, to help prevent these issues from happening again in future stages of this project and in other infrastructure projects in Ontario.

Christine and I are very proud to work with him and to support this important public inquiry.

I would now like to turn it over to Commissioner Hourigan.

Thank you.

Commissioner, the Honorable Justice William Hourigan Remarks

Thank you, Christine and Kate.

Good evening, my name is William Hourigan.

I am the Commissioner leading the public inquiry into the Ottawa Light Rail Transit system.

I want to begin by first welcoming everyone present here tonight, as well as the many others attending virtually by watching on our webcast or on television.

I also want to acknowledge and send out our support and best wishes to all those impacted by the recent storms, especially those who lost loved ones or friends. You are in our thoughts tonight.

The purpose of our meetings yesterday and tonight are to provide you with an opportunity to share your views and your thoughts with us directly on what has transpired with the Ottawa Light Rail Transit System.

My colleagues and I want to hear from you.

My final report will contain the recommendations as well as the findings of our investigation.

These meetings are critical in gathering feedback to inform our work.

We invite all those who have registered to deliver a statement to share with us tonight any considerations you feel will help me and the Commission team better understand how Stage 1 of the transit project has affected you and your communities.

If you wish to make a statement but have not registered, let Estelle or Brad know at the back of the room and we will try to find time for you to speak. If you are not speaking tonight, you can always send information relevant to the Commission's mandate or your ideas in writing by email or by calling our general enquiry line that is available on the Commission's website.

The Commission team has been working full speed since January to prepare for these meetings and the hearings to come. We will continue to update our website regularly to ensure you have the latest developments on the inquiry, including next steps in the process.

I will now turn it back over to Kate and Christine to proceed.