

**Premier Gordon Campbell**  
**Open Cabinet Meeting Introduction**  
**June 27, 2001**

This is the first of our regular monthly open Cabinet Meetings. This was a commitment that we made during the election, and it's one that we intend to keep. It's important that we open up government and this is one of the steps we intend to take to do that.

We're breaking new ground – for our staff, for the public and for Cabinet itself. So let me briefly outline what I hope we'll be able to do.

This is going to be a true Cabinet meeting. It is a Cabinet meeting that will have specific items on the agenda. It may not be something that people want to watch. It may not be something that they will watch. The important thing for us is that it is something people *can* watch if they decide they would like to. It is important that we open up decision-making and we intend to do that.

In a regular Cabinet meeting, Ministers call one another by their first names. I expect to have Ministers call one another by their first names in this meeting. In a regular Cabinet meeting Ministers act as strong advocates for their Ministries. I expect that to take place here. Ministers ask what I think are important questions to those making presentations. I want that to take place here. I want us to have full, open and honest debate.

At the end of a discussion around the Cabinet table we come to a decision. When that decision is made it is a decision of the Cabinet. There are no winners and losers. It may be positioned like that outside of the Cabinet room or outside of this meeting but as far as the Cabinet is concerned we are doing the best we can to come up with judgements that will work for the people of British Columbia.

There are specific areas that we will not be dealing with in an open Cabinet session. We do not intend to deal with labour negotiations in open Cabinet. We won't be dealing with acquisitions or sales. Personnel matters will not be dealt with in open Cabinet.

We have said that there are specific items that will be dealt with in open Cabinet. I want to outline some of those for you today. First, all major Capital projects and approvals and decisions will be made here in open Cabinet. That would include projects like the Vancouver Trade and Convention Centre proposal. It would include things like the SkyTrain expansion project. There's no reason why those decisions can't be made in public and they will be.

Land use decisions including the dedication of parks will be made in open Cabinet meetings. All public policy decisions on gaming will be made in open Cabinet. I can't think of how much further ahead British Columbia would be if that had been the case in the past.

Any decisions with regard to the Agricultural Land Reserve that require Cabinet decision-making will be made in open Cabinet. Changes in policy with regard to forest tenures will be made in open Cabinet. Those are commitments that we have made as a government to the people of BC and we intend to honour those commitments.

Presentation materials and briefing notes that are used at these meetings will be made available after the meeting is adjourned for those who would like them.

It is important for me to reiterate that we have other obligations in government. We are governed by the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. We will adhere to that act. The protection of privacy is a very important issue that we intend to make sure is maintained as we make decisions about what can be discussed and what can't. There are also legal requirements for us to ensure that third party interests are protected as these discussions take place. We intend to meet those obligations as well.

Today our agenda will include an introduction of Ministries; a briefing on the annual cycle that we go through in the Legislature; and a fiscal overview from the Minister of Finance. There will be a report for decision on the Gulf Islands National Park process from the Minister of Water, Lands and Air Protection. There will be a discussion on photo radar.

I would like to say thank you for those who have decided to come and participate in this day. In the future, the agendas will be made available to the public on the day that the Cabinet meeting is taking place. I hope this will be a way that we can open up and demystify some of the processes of government – and invite people to watch as decisions are made that we expect to be held to account for.