

# Information Policy News: Autumn Events & Lawful Access

Compiled by Devon Greyson, with help from members of the BCLA Information Policy Committee.

Autumn has gotten off to a busy start for the [BCLA Information Policy Committee](#) (IPC)! At the time of publication, we have already held our first Info Policy Salon of the year and participated in the Word on the Street Festival. Several committee members have attended and reported back on community events related to information policy issues.

In addition, our listserv has provided a forum for discussion of current issues ranging from media democracy to lawful access, and from open access to the BCLA's advocacy role in the library community.

This quarter's Info Policy news will highlight some of our September activities, as well as answer key questions about Lawful Access. Enjoy!

## September Salon at SLAIS

By Jeremy Buhler.

On September 16 the Information Policy Committee (IPC) held a Salon at UBC's School of Library, Archival and Information Studies (SLAIS). IPC Chair Caroline Johnson introduced Brian Campbell, founding and long-time member of the committee, who described IPC's principles and activities to members of the SLAIS community.

Campbell discussed IPC's work as an extension of library values in the world, encouraging library workers to move beyond their institutions and engage with larger social issues. He highlighted past IPC achievements including organizing conferences and partnering with like-minded organizations against a tide of reduced public services, privatization, media concentration, and curtailed access to information.

Acknowledging that IPC work is often an uphill battle, Campbell maintained that involvement in the committee is a rewarding way to stay informed about policy issues and give meaning to our work in and outside of the library. A recording of Campbell's presentation and the Q & A that followed will be made available on the IPC's website.

## Word on the Street

Once again this year, the Information Policy Committee and Intellectual Freedom Committee collaboratively staffed a table at the [Word on the Street festival](#) at Library Square in downtown Vancouver on September 27.

Making a break from the roulette wheel of information policy game of recent years, the table featured make-your-own buttons and fridge magnets with freedom to read slogans on them. This activity was a huge hit, particularly among the younger festival attendees.

Table staffers this year noted the large proportion of families in attendance who were not native English speakers. This raises the question of how best to outreach to multilingual communities regarding information policy issues. A first step is to translate our promotional materials. If you are interested in volunteering to help the IPC and IFC translate brochures into another language, please let us know!



Members of the Intellectual Freedom Committee and Information Policy Committee jointly staffed a table at the Word on the Street Festival again this year.  
Photo by Sandra Wong

### 5 Facts About: Lawful Access

1. "Lawful Access" refers to the government's ability to legally intercept, search and seize communications and communications technology.
2. The Canadian government currently needs a warrant or other special authorization to intercept, search and seize most communications (e.g., email). However, both Liberal and Conservative politicians have introduced legislation to make it easier for law enforcement to access communications by minimizing court oversight of such procedures. To date, none of these bills have been successful.
3. Lawful Access has been back in the news this year because in June 2009 two new Lawful Access bills ([C-46](#) & [C-47](#)) were introduced.
4. Many privacy advocacy groups have expressed concern about lawful access legislation, including the BC Freedom of Information and Privacy Association, the BC Civil Liberties Association, and [Canada's Privacy Commissioners and Privacy Enforcement Officials](#).
5. BCLA adopted a [resolution on Lawful Access](#) at the 2005 AGM, and wrote to then Public Safety Minister Stockwell Day opposing the legislation on the table at that time. BCLA also passed a resolution in 2003 when similar reforms were proposed.

You can find more information on Lawful Access and the current bills at the following websites:

- Department of Justice Canada website on the 2002 Lawful Access Consultation:  
<http://canada.justice.gc.ca/eng/cons/la-al/index.html>
- CIPPIC website on Lawful Access:  
<http://www.cippic.ca/lawful-access/#LA01>
- Michael Geist's coverage of Lawful Access events and issues on his blog:  
[http://www.michaelgeist.ca/component/option,com\\_topics/task,view/id,10046/Itemid,84/](http://www.michaelgeist.ca/component/option,com_topics/task,view/id,10046/Itemid,84/)

### About the Information Policy Committee

The BCLA Information Policy Committee (IPC), a standing committee of BCLA, aims to advance and preserve access to information, and to advocate for the public interest in government decisions relating to information policy.

Any BCLA member is welcome to join the IPC. For more information, join our listserv by using the BCLA website listserv management tool here:  
<http://www.bclibraries.ca/listservs/bcla/>

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