

**A message from the  
Arbitrators Association of British Columbia**

The AABC is comprised of qualified individuals who are able to resolve complaints, grievances and other differences using a wide variety of alternative dispute resolution processes.

The most common and well-established alternative dispute resolution processes are arbitration and mediation, and they are often used together. Other processes have gained popularity in recent years in order to address concerns such as cost, efficiency and proportionality. These alternative processes are often designed with the assistance of AABC members to meet the specific circumstances and objectives of the parties, and may include limitations as to both content and conduct. Examples include third party/neutral evaluations, investigations with or without binding recommendations, and respectful workplace mediations.

**Arbitration**

Arbitration is a process where parties who are unable to achieve their own resolution to a dispute agree on an independent neutral to hear the case and make a legally binding determination on the outcome. The arbitration process may to some extent mirror a court proceeding, as spokespersons make opening statements, adduce evidence through witnesses, and make closing arguments which usually include some reference to previously decided cases. The arbitrator considers the evidence and submissions, and issues an award.

Generally, the arbitration process is less formal, more cost-efficient, and more expeditious in comparison to a court proceeding. Formal pleadings are not required, and additional “motions” with consequential delays are greatly minimized, if not eliminated entirely in the vast majority of cases. Arbitrators often use telephone conference calls and written submissions to resolve pre-hearing and other preliminary matters. Some parties have developed “expedited arbitration” procedures which allow for an even more informal and efficient dispute resolution mechanism.

Boards of arbitration generally consist of a sole arbitrator. Sometimes, the parties to a dispute prefer a three-person panel comprised of a nominee for each side and an agreed on neutral chairperson.

**Mediation**

Mediation differs from arbitration in that the result is agreed on, not awarded. A mediator serves as an intermediary between the parties, who might not even be together in the same room, in assisting them to reach consensus.

The mediation process is grounded in negotiation, and it invariably involves an exploration of interests, and the translation and assessment of competing positions. The mediator acts as facilitator or “go between” in assisting the parties to reach a resolution. The process itself is flexible and it allows for the parties themselves to craft creative outcomes to satisfy their respective interests.

**Med-Arb**

Med-Arb is a process where a neutral third party is appointed to mediate an outcome but, if a mutually agreeable resolution is not reached, the neutral is empowered to decide the matter.

**HONORARY MEMBERS**

**RICHARD B. BIRD Q.C.,  
TONY HICKLING, JAMES MACINTYRE Q.C.  
DONALD R. MUNROE Q.C.**  
*(contact information available on website)*

This brochure was designed and produced internally by members of the Association.

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**ARBITRATORS  
ASSOCIATION OF  
BRITISH COLUMBIA**

The Arbitrators Association of British Columbia was established in 1980, and remains an independent association of arbitrators and mediators who have demonstrated competence and acceptance in the community and have met the Association’s experience requirements.

AABC members have a broad range of backgrounds and experience as consensual third party neutrals in the resolution of disputes, particularly in the field of labour relations. Members have varying experience in other areas as well, including human rights, employment, commercial and property matters.

As an organization, the AABC facilitates the professional services of its members, and is dedicated to promoting the advancement of arbitration and mediation in British Columbia.

To learn more about the AABC, or to find out when members are available, please check our website:

[www.labour-arbitrators.bc.ca](http://www.labour-arbitrators.bc.ca)

**Arbitrators Association of British Columbia**  
**300 - 1275 West 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Vancouver, BC V6H 1A6**  
**Tel: 604 331 4454 Fax: 604 685 0571**

**Executive Committee**

<b>Stan Lanyon</b>	PRESIDENT	<b>Irene Holden</b>	VICE-PRESIDENT
<b>John Hall</b>	SECRETARY	<b>Chris Sullivan</b>	TREASURER
<b>Kate Young</b>	DIRECTOR	<b>Robert Pেকেles</b>	DIRECTOR

**ARBITRATORS ASSOCIATION OF BC MEMBER LIST**

**Beaulieu, Guy**  
 150 - 11331 Coppersmith Way  
 Richmond, BC V7A 5J9  
 T: 604 320 0556  
 F: None  
 E: guy@guybeaulieu.ca

**Black, Q.C., Allan E.**  
 1640 - 401 West Georgia Street  
 Vancouver, BC V6B 5A1  
 T: 604 632 3380  
 F: 604 632 9950  
 E: ablack@blackgropper.com

**Borowicz, Q.C., Frank S.**  
 404 World Trade Center  
 999 Canada Place  
 Vancouver, BC V6C 3E2  
 T: 604 351 7755  
 T US: +1 727 612 5057  
 E: fsb@juxta.com

**Brown, Mark**  
 1004 - 3050 Hillcrest Drive  
 Whistler, BC V0N 1B3  
 T: 604 561 8707  
 F: None  
 E: markjbrown@shaw.ca

**Burke, Emily M.**  
 400 - 601 West Broadway  
 Vancouver, BC V5Z 4C2  
 T: 604 708 6102  
 F: 604 708 6105  
 E: emburke@telus.net

**Coleman, Rick**  
 220 - 1118 Homer Street  
 Vancouver, BC V6B 6L5  
 T: 604 682 6770  
 F: 604 685 6773  
 E: rscoleman@telus.net

**Devine, A. Paul**  
 300 - 1275 West 6th Avenue  
 Vancouver, BC V6H 1A6  
 T: 604 331 4454  
 F: 604 685 0571  
 E: pauldevine@adrservices.ca

**Diebolt, Q.C., Robert**  
 2343 Belleview Avenue  
 West Vancouver, BC V7V 1C9  
 T: 604 925 3161  
 F: None  
 E: rddiebolt@shaw.ca

**Dorsey, Q.C., James E.**  
 3380 Redfern Place  
 North Vancouver, BC V7N 3W1  
 T: 604 980 7225  
 F: 604 909 2755  
 E: dorseyj@shaw.ca

**Doyle, Elaine**  
 203 - 1275 West 6th Avenue  
 Vancouver, BC V6H 1A6  
 T: 604 691 2555  
 F: 604 691 2557  
 E: elainedoyle@telus.net

**Fleming, Michael**  
 4052 Trinity Street  
 Burnaby, BC V5C 1N8  
 T: 604 868 5459  
 F: 604 325 1274  
 E: mike.fleming.arb@gmail.com

**Fraser, Q.C., Paul D.K.**  
 1910 Watson Street  
 Victoria, BC V8R 3H8  
 T: 250 595 5330  
 F: 250 595 5331  
 E: paul.fraser@coibc.ca

**Fuller, George C.E.**  
 200 - 852 Fort Street  
 Victoria, BC V8W 1H8  
 T: 250 388 4550  
 F: 250 383 7973  
 E: george.fuller@gflc.ca

**Glass, Nicholas**  
 404 - 815 Hornby Street  
 Vancouver, BC V6Z 2E6  
 T: 604 684 6718  
 F: 604 684 2501  
 E: glassnicholas@hotmail.com

**Gordon, Joan**  
 300 - 1275 West 6th Avenue  
 Vancouver, BC V6H 1A6  
 T: 604 676 1576  
 F: 604 676 1575  
 E: joangordonadr@shaw.ca

**Greatbatch, Jean**  
 300 - 1275 West 6th Avenue  
 Vancouver, BC V6H 1A6  
 T: 604 551 6775  
 F: 604 879 6608  
 E: jean\_greatbatch@telus.net

**ARBITRATORS ASSOCIATION OF BC MEMBER LIST**

**Hall, John B.**  
 300 - 1275 West 6th Avenue  
 Vancouver, BC V6H 1A6  
 T: 778 554 6677  
 F: None  
 E: JohnHallADR@telus.net

**Holden, Irene**  
 203 - 1275 West 6th Avenue  
 Vancouver, BC V6H 1A6  
 T: 604 691 2555  
 F: 604 691 2557  
 E: iholden@telus.net

**Johnston, Daniel B.**  
 1918 Bostrom Road  
 Nanaimo, BC V9X 1N8  
 T: 250 722 2855  
 F: 250 722 2892  
 E: danieljohnston@telus.net

**Keras, Ron**  
 5693 - 9A Avenue  
 Delta, BC V4L 1B8  
 T: 604 948 0956  
 F: 604 948 9554  
 E: ronkeras@telus.net

**Kinzie, John D.**  
 5291 Woodpecker Drive  
 Richmond, BC V7E 5P4  
 T: 604 274 1692  
 F: 604 277 1148  
 E: john\_kinzie@telus.net

**Korbin, Judi**  
 203 - 1275 West 6th Avenue  
 Vancouver, BC V6H 1A6  
 T: 604 691 2555  
 F: 604 691 2557  
 E: korbin@telus.net

**Laing, Heather J.**  
 510 - 700 West Pender Street  
 Vancouver, BC V6C 1G8  
 T: 604 685 8329  
 F: 604 685 9254  
 E: hlaing@sanlaing.ca

**Lanyon, Q.C., Stanley**  
 217 - 713 Columbia Street  
 New Westminster, BC V3M 1B2  
 T: 604 522 5002  
 F: 604 522 5055  
 E: stan.lanyon@arboffices.com

**Larson, Dalton L.**  
 510 - 700 West Pender Street  
 Vancouver, BC V6C 1G8  
 T: 604 943 6191  
 F: 604 943 6194  
 E: daltonlarson@dccnet.com

**Love, Paul**  
 B - 506 Thulin Street  
 Campbell River, BC V9W 2L1  
 T: 250 287 4500  
 F: 604 677 5740  
 E: paullove@telus.net

**McConchie, John L.**  
 4691 Marineview Crescent  
 North Vancouver, BC V7R 3P4  
 T: 604 980 2860  
 F: 604 980 3552  
 E: jmconchie@mcconchies.com

**McDonald, Rory**  
 1248 Fulton Avenue  
 West Vancouver, BC V7T 1N6  
 T: 604 921 1988  
 F: 604 921 1995  
 E: rkm@telus.net

**McEwen, Joan**  
 4632 NW Marine Drive  
 Vancouver, BC V6R 1B9  
 P: 604 868 0297  
 F: None  
 E: joaniemcewen@gmail.com

**McPhillips, David C.**  
 199, 800 - 15355 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
 Surrey, BC V4A 2H9  
 T: 604 535 7266  
 F: 604 535 6658  
 E: dmcpPhillips@shaw.ca

**Moore, Wayne**  
 410 - 2525 Quebec Street  
 Vancouver, BC V5T 4R5  
 T: 604 875 8592  
 F: 604 875 8594  
 E: wmoore@telus.net

**Nichols, Julie**  
 210 - 1401 West 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
 Vancouver, BC V6H 1C9  
 T: 604 551 4001  
 F: 604 608 9100  
 E: julienichols@shaw.ca

**ARBITRATORS ASSOCIATION OF BC MEMBER LIST**

**Nordlinger, Q.C., Karen F.**  
 1100 - 777 Hornby Street  
 Vancouver, BC V6Z 4S1  
 T: 604 689 7571  
 F: 604 685 8563  
 E: knordlinger@agdnlaw.ca

**Orr, Q.C., John M.**  
 2368 The Esplanade  
 Victoria, BC V8R 2W2  
 T: 250 595 8675  
 F: 250 595 7421  
 E: orrlaw@shaw.ca

**Pekeles, Robert**  
 PO Box 46871  
 Vancouver, BC V6J 3E0  
 Tel: 604 230 4209  
 Fax: 604 736 6470  
 Email: pekeles@shaw.ca

**Peltz, Arne**  
 220 - 19 Dallas Road  
 Victoria, BC V8V 5A6  
 T: 250 388 5070 Ext 246  
 F: 250 388 5096  
 E: ap@peltz.ca

**Ready, Vincent L.**  
 203 - 1275 West 6th Avenue  
 Vancouver, BC V6H 1A6  
 T: 604 691 2554  
 F: 604 691 2556  
 E: vready@telus.net

**Sanderson, Q.C., John P.**  
 510 - 700 West Pender Street  
 Vancouver, BC V6C 1G8  
 T: 604 685 8329  
 F: 604 685 9254  
 E: jsanderson@sanlaing.ca

**Sigurdson, Q.C., Glenn**  
 308 Moyne Drive  
 West Vancouver, BC V7S 1J5  
 T: 604 688-4678  
 F: None  
 E: cse@direct.ca

**Sims, Q.C., Andrew**  
 149 - 10403 - 122 Street  
 Edmonton, AB T5N 4C1  
 T: 780 423 6807  
 F: 780 423 6813  
 E: andysims@simsgroup.com

**Skratek, Sylvia**  
 17 - 1835 56th Street  
 Delta, BC V4L 2L8  
 T: 604 943 3828  
 F: 604 357 1134  
 E: skratek@naarb.org

**Somjen, Gabriel M.**  
 1200 - 200 Burrard Street  
 Vancouver, BC V7X 1T2  
 T: 604 640 4013  
 F: 604 622 5930  
 E: gsomjen@blg.com

**Sullivan, Christopher**  
 203 - 1275 West 6th Avenue  
 Vancouver, BC V6H 1A6  
 T: 604 691 2554  
 F: 604 691 2556  
 E: celsullivan@telus.net

**Taylor, Q.C., Colin**  
 607- 499 Broughton Street  
 Vancouver, BC V6G 3K1  
 T: 604 789 8775  
 F: 250 764 7518  
 E: colintaylor@telus.net

**Thompson, Mark**  
 4792 Elm Street  
 Vancouver, BC V6L 2L3  
 T: 604 822-8375  
 F: 604 263-0830  
 E: mrkthompson39@gmail.com

**Thorne, John**  
 20 - 15288 36<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
 Surrey, BC V3S 0S6  
 T: 604 536 0281  
 F: 604 536 0263  
 E: t.i.r@mac.com

**Young, Kate**  
 300 - 1275 West 6th Avenue  
 Vancouver, BC V6H 1A6  
 T: 604 331 4454  
 F: 604 685 0571  
 E: kateyoung@adrservices.ca