

NOTICE TO THE PROFESSION RE: CHANGES TO COURTROOM 502 AT THE LAW COURTS

Tuesday, September 10, 2019

For members of the Bar with matters before the Nova Scotia Court of Appeal, there have been a number of recent changes to the courtroom at the Law Courts in Halifax that you should be aware of prior to your matter appearing in court.

Over the summer, Courtroom 502 was upgraded to prepare for a lengthy appeal hearing that starts this week. Crews replaced the carpets and installed monitors and speakers throughout the courtroom, part of a new system that allows evidence and exhibits to be viewed electronically.

VoiceLift Technology

The new system includes VoiceLift technology, which amplifies people's voices and enables a better hearing experience for everyone in the courtroom. As before, any side conversations at counsel tables may be captured on the court record, however, counsel should be aware that this new technology also amplifies those discussions throughout the courtroom.

Video and Telephone Conferencing

The new system fully integrates the courtroom's video and telephone conferencing capabilities, connecting all microphones in the courtroom and the V/C and T/C units through one speaker system. This will greatly improve the audio experience for counsel and others participating remotely in proceedings.

When participating in a telephone conference into Courtroom 502, the connection may be poor if counsel uses a hands-free mobile device. For optimal results, counsel is encouraged to connect using a mobile device directly or a landline.

Media Box

Courtroom 502 now includes a media box on the wall in the public gallery of the courtroom. The box allows journalists to plug directly into the court audio to supplement their note-taking. The same guidelines are in place for the use of electronic devices in courtrooms — members of the media are not permitted to transmit or broadcast the audio in their news coverage, without written permission from the Court.

With these changes, Courtroom 502 is now considered to be the most technologically advanced courtroom in Nova Scotia. Any inquiries stemming from these changes can be directed to the Prothonotary for the Court of Appeal, Caroline McInnes, at 902-424-8962 or by email at Caroline.McInnes@courts.ns.ca.