

# PRESENTATION SUMMARY

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NORTH VANCOUVER PUBLIC HEARING  
DATED 2 JUNE 2004  
AT THE LONSDALE QUAY HOTEL

THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IS A BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE PRESENTATION TO THE CITIZENS' ASSEMBLY ON ELECTORAL REFORM. IT ATTEMPTS TO CAPTURE THE KEY ISSUES AND ARGUMENTS THAT WERE PRESENTED AND DISCUSSED DURING THE PUBLIC HEARING. IN SOME INSTANCES, THE PRESENTER HAS ALSO MADE A SUBMISSION TO THE ASSEMBLY AND THIS IS ACCESSIBLE VIA THE WEBSITE AT [WWW.CITIZENSASSEMBLY.BC.CA](http://WWW.CITIZENSASSEMBLY.BC.CA) BY CLICKING ON "GET INVOLVED". IF SUCH A SUBMISSION IS AVAILABLE, IT WILL BE NOTED AT THE END OF THIS REPORT.

# Peter Minshull

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## DESCRIPTION OF PRESENTATION

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A presentation in support of proportional representation. Speaking about the perceived weaknesses of coalition and minority governments and supposed strengths of the current system.

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## KEY THEMES

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Mr. Minshull discussed the shortcomings of the current FPTP system. In particular, Mr. Minshull expressed his disappointment with the overly ideological and adversarial style of politics that characterizes BC. According to the presenter, this system fosters yo-yo policy making and a winner take all mentality. Mr. Minshull stated the need for the introduction of an electoral system that encourages compromise, consensus, and pragmatism. The presenter argued that criticisms of minority or coalition governments on the grounds of stability are unfounded as BC has experienced great instability via the violent swings in policy that result from changes in government. Mr. Minshull also challenged the notion that the current system fosters clear lines of accountability and transparency. The presenter argued that local representation is compromised under FPTP as a result of party discipline. Mr. Minshull also discussed the problem of local candidate nominations that are too often captured by late membership drives and the “bussing-in” of supporters. Declining voter turnout was also addressed as a critical problem by Mr. Minshull, however, he argued that this problem should not be solved by the introduction of mandatory voting. According to the presenter, making the electoral results credible would restore peoples confidence in the system and encourage participation.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The presenter recommended the adoption of a system of MMP. According to Mr. Minshull, the introduction of such a system would make people less cynical and more interested in voting as: governments would be more consensual and pragmatic, and less adversarial and ideological; the electoral system would be more transparent and accountable; and everyone would feel that their vote counted and their views were being heard.

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## QUESTIONS, ANSWERS AND COMMENTS FROM THE PANEL

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- Q Do you see that a change to MMP would change the relationship between candidates, and between candidates and parties?
- A I believe that it would change how candidates and parties treat each other. I believe that it would allow minority views to come forward. Coalitions

would form and reform and the need to form coalitions in the future would create a less adversarial atmosphere.