

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 29, 2013



BC ID Card can't get names right

Limit of 25 characters means many people will have incorrect name on their licence

VANCOUVER—There is a big problem with the new card the BC government is promoting as the foundation of its ID management system – it can't carry some full names if they are longer than 25 total characters.

The BC Services Card is a key part of the BC government's broader "e-government" strategy – a comprehensive identity management system meant to facilitate online access to government services and the integration of databases that contain citizens' personal information.

This problem has become a big issue for franco-Columbians, who discovered that the names they normally go by were not showing up on their new drivers licences.

<http://www.radio-canada.ca/regions/colombie-britannique/2013/08/22/006-permis-conduire-prenoms-problemes-identification.shtml>

It's becoming clear that many more will encounter difficulties under this new system. For example the newly arrived Prince George (George Alexander Louis Windsor) would not be able to get his full name on a BC ID Card if he were to move to, say, Prince George. (see attached list for more forbidden names)

But it's not just the Royal Family who should be concerned. The traditional inheritance of a series of family names is an important part of many cultures, but would pose problem under this new system. Other ID management systems such as passports and birth certificates account for this by allowing a high upper-limit on the number of characters permitted, so why doesn't the BC ID Card? This would seem to be yet another in a long line of oversights.

"This is a serious problem for a document that is supposed to be the basis of gaining access to all kinds of government services," said FIPA Executive Director Vincent Gogolek. "It will become an even bigger problem if this ID document doesn't match other ID documents for the same individual, especially in situations like crossing an international border."

The BC government has promised to conduct a 'consultation' on the card this fall, but will not allow the consultation to recommend that the card program be halted.

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Some names that won't fit on the BC drivers licence/ID Card

The Royals:

Prince Charles Philip Arthur George Windsor
Prince William Arthur Philip Louis Windsor
Prince George Alexander Louis Windsor

Canadian-born actor Kiefer Sutherland:

Kiefer William Frederick Dempsey George Rufus Sutherland

Pablo Picasso:

Pablo Diego José Francisco de Paula Juan Nepomuceno María de los Remedios Cipriano de la Santísima Trinidad Ruiz y Picasso

Congolese American basketball player Dikembe Mutombo:

Dikembe Mutombo Mpolondo Mukamba Jean-Jacques Wamutombo

Senegalese American musician Akon:

Aliaune Damala Bouga Time Puru Nacka Lu Lu Lu Badara Akon Thiam

Sri Lankan cricketer Chaminda Vaas:

Warnakulasuriya Patabendige Ushantha Joseph Chaminda Vaas

Older Hawaiian names tend to be long, with many syllables and vowels, eg:

Antonio Kamakanaalohamaikalani Harvey Sabato III