

## Civil Resolution Tribunal – Building An Online Platform

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The CRT is an administrative tribunal that forms part of the British Columbia justice system. It started to resolve strata property disputes of any amount under the *Strata Property Act* in July of 2016. In June of 2017, the CRT began resolving small claims disputes under the *Small Claims Act* valued at \$5,000 and under. Recently, the Provincial Government announced the CRT, in early 2019, would begin resolving minor accident claims under the *Insurance (Vehicles) Act*, and claims involving cooperatives under the *Cooperative Association Act* and societies under the *Societies Act*.

When the CRT opened its doors for strata property claims in July 2016, the extent of its online platform was the strata property Solution Explorer and application process. Soon after, respondents were able to file their response to a dispute notice online.

Prior to June 2017, the Solution Explorer was expanded to include the CRT's small claims jurisdiction along with an additional online application tailored for small claims disputes.

To use the online platform, parties are given access codes with each dispute notice that are particular to that dispute. In recent months, the filed responses are now set out next to each claim on the platform so that parties can easily see and review the individual claims and responses. Also, parties are automatically notified of each stage of the process.

The CRT has also moved some of its facilitation processes to the online platform allowing facilitators to better manage claims by:

- Updating and narrowing claims and responses as agreed by an applicant,
- Splitting claims, if required, for more complex claims involving multiple parties and counterclaims, and
- Permitting parties to resolve their disputes (or claims within their disputes).

While facilitation may still involve telephone conference calls and email exchanges, communication between the parties and facilitator is also on the CRT's online platform.

In the coming weeks, parties will have the ability to upload evidence files directly to the platform and link supporting evidence to individual claims. The platform will support various types of electronic files including, text, pdf and jpeg formats. This will eliminate the need to provide evidence files by email, except in rare cases where physical evidence is provided.

In the coming months, the tribunal decision plan process, where parties provide their written submissions and agreed statements of facts, will also move to the online platform, thereby eliminating the need to exchange electronic files for this process.

As with all aspects of the CRT online processes, the platform will be subject to continuous improvement based on party feedback.

The online platform allows the CRT to store all dispute data in a central Canadian location. Once the platform is in full operation, it is expected to assist in reducing timelines for both facilitation and adjudication processes.

*Current Statistics*

As at April 30, 2018, the CRT has accepted 1,084 applications for strata property dispute resolution. This has resulted in 314 resolutions by agreement or withdrawals and 266 binding decisions, including 88 by default or for non-compliance. The CRT has refused to resolve 1 dispute and refused to accept 32 applications. There are currently 136 dispute notices issued that are awaiting responses by parties and 311 disputes in facilitation.

Please contact us at [info@crtbc.ca](mailto:info@crtbc.ca) if you have any questions or comments.