

LETTER: Email scandal an affront to democracy

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Dear Editor:

The practice of triple deleting emails by the B.C. government, is not the accidental delete from your inbox.

That happens to the best of us. No, this is deleting an email from the inbox, then from the trash bin, and, now comes the proof this was an intentional and deliberate act, delete it from the mail server too.

Deleting government communication is against the rules, but more importantly it is against the Freedom of Information Act. **All communication within government is part of the public record and must be archived.** Every person entering the government as a staff person are informed about this clearly, including the premier and the ministers.

To suggest that this is matter of interpretation or a technological issue is laughable. The FOI act is very clear on this and there is no room for interpretation. Computer storage is cheap, cheap, cheap and has been for the last 10 years, so that cannot be a factor.

We have heard the responses of Premier Clark and Minister Virk: Both seem totally in denial trying to spin their way out of this. These are serious charges and there should be very serious consequences.

To suggest that from now on, everything will be better is simply ludicrous. Who wants to have people running a government who can't understand the simplest of instructions, especially when only two years ago this matter of (electronic) record-keeping was brought up as well? Or who wants to have people in government who do this intentionally and disrespect the principles of our democracy?

This is not the first time this government has come under fire. Remember the firing of health-care staff and the lies about the case, hard drives with student data gone missing, breaches to patient and medical records, the deaths of teenagers and children in government care.

Premier Clark doesn't seem to understand that it is not up to her to determine what needs to be done, it's up to the people of B.C.

**Anton van Walraven
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