



Day three

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By Jamie Smith, tbnewswatch.com



Jamie Smith

Julian Falconer speaks Thursday afternoon after closing arguments

With closing arguments wrapped up, it could take weeks before recommendations are made following a pre-inquest hearing into the death of Reggie Bushie.

Nishnawbe Aski Nation lawyer Julian Falconer said the evidence is clear that the Thunder Bay District's 2011 jury-roll is ineligible because of the lack of First Nations representation.

NAN, and Attorney General's office needs to figure out a way to compile information for First Nations people living on reserves because the current system clearly isn't working.

"What this really brings out is that there is a deep seeded problem that needs the various governments involved to sit down at a table and work as partners to solve this," Falconer said after the third day of hearings Thursday afternoon.

While the courtroom can highlight deficiencies in the system, Falconer said cooperation will ultimately fix a list that saw only 17 First Nations members this year. The Ontario justice system can charge and imprison First Nations so why can't it figure out how to represent them on jury-rolls he added.

"The truth has to be told about the problem and certainly that's been the struggle so far but

we look forward to things improving every step of the way," Falconer said. ""We've figured out how to involve First Nations in our prison system at disturbing numbers surely it behooves us to involve them at the adjudicative phase like other citizens."

Counsel for Ontario's Court Services declined comment until coroner Dr. David Eden reaches his decision in the coming weeks. Once that has been made, a date for the inquest into Reggie Bushie's death will be set.