

# New chair tipped to lead BlackBerry maker: report

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An official of Research in Motion (RIM) displays a newly launched BlackBerry bold 9900 at a function in New Delhi in August. A former banker and stock exchange head, Barbara Stymiest, could become the first-ever independent chair of RIM in a shakeup of the beleaguered BlackBerry maker.

A former banker and stock exchange head could become the first-ever independent chair of Research in Motion in a shakeup of the beleaguered BlackBerry maker, a report said Tuesday.

The National Post, citing sources familiar with a review of RIM's governance structure, said Barbara Stymiest, 55, an independent director who joined RIM's board in 2007, has been tipped for the post.

RIM would only say that a committee of independent directors were "on track" to study the company's governance structure and report their

findings by the end of January.

The board will then respond within 30 days to the committee's recommendations, a RIM spokesman said.

The review was demanded by a group of shareholders unhappy with the direction set by co-founders Mike Lazaridis and Jim Balsillie that led to RIM's stock price sinking under the weight of gloomy earnings figures.

The Waterloo, Ontario-based RIM saw its share of smartphone subscribers fall to 16.6 percent from 19.7 percent in the key US market after a major outage in October, while RIM shares lost 80 percent of their value in the past year.

The board committee was asked to assess the merits of having an independent chair and of reducing the board roles of Lazaridis and Balsillie, who are also RIM's co-chief executives.

RIM agreed to the governance review last July to avoid a public confrontation with shareholders at its annual meeting. A group of shareholders proposed splitting the chair and chief executive roles to boost accountability.

Stymiest, 55, is the former head of the TSX Group, which operates the [Toronto Stock Exchange](https://www.torontostockexchange.com/), and the Royal Bank of Canada's former chief operating officer.

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