



Ombudsman



Canada

Annual Report 2015



National Capital Commission Ombudsman

Mandate of the NCC Ombudsman

The mandate of the NCC Ombudsman was established by the NCC Board of Directors in 2009. The Ombudsman's mandate is to provide members of the public with an independent, neutral, fair and confidential process to resolve complaints concerning the activities of the NCC. The Ombudsman is required to keep the NCC Board of Directors and NCC senior management informed about complaints, on a need-to-know basis.

The Ombudsman's aim in investigating a complaint is to reach the best possible understanding of the situation that gave rise to the complaint and to form a view of a fair way to resolve it. After completing the investigation, the Ombudsman explores the possibility of resolving the complaint informally, by agreement between the complainant and the NCC. If this is not feasible, the Ombudsman will submit a recommendation to the complainant and the NCC.

A person with a complaint against the NCC must start by trying to resolve it directly with the NCC. If this approach is unsuccessful, the Ombudsman can investigate the complaint.

The Ombudsman is not able to investigate complaints concerning the appropriateness of NCC policies, compliance with contracts or legislation or issues before the courts.

The Ombudsman is not an advocate for the complainant or for the NCC.

What is an Ombudsman?

The word *ombudsman* is of Swedish origin. The role was established in Sweden to create a process to address complaints made by individuals against public agencies.

An ombudsman is an independent, neutral official who investigates complaints against an organization in the public or private sector. The ombudsman's mandate and processes are established either administratively by the senior management of the organization or by law.

The ombudsman must assess whether or not a complaint falls within the ombudsman's mandate, and if so, whether it has merit. The ombudsman must work independently and impartially, meaning that the ombudsman's only interest in the outcome of the complaint is to reach a fair resolution.

December 31, 2015

National Capital Commission Board of Directors

Dear Members of the Board,

I am pleased to submit the Annual Report of the NCC Ombudsman for 2015. This annual report summarizes the activities of the NCC Ombudsman during its seventh year of operation.



Yours truly,

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ellen Fry'.

Ellen Fry
NCC Ombudsman

“Thank you for having the NCC look into this matter. Thank you again and I am so grateful that you are helping us with this matter.”

“Once again, many thanks for your intervention.”

(translation)

**How to contact
the NCC Ombudsman
confidentially**

EMAIL

info@ombudsman.ncc-ccn.ca

WEBSITE

www.ombudsman.ncc-ccn.ca

MAIL

NCC Ombudsman
311-40 Elgin Street
Ottawa ON K1P 1C7

TELEPHONE

Direct Line: 613-947-4330

Toll Free: 1-877-947-4330

TTY: 613-947-4339

Toll Free TTY: 1-877-947-4339

FAX

613-947-4311

The Year in Review

In 2015, as in previous years, the Ombudsman received communications from the public about a wide range of issues concerning the NCC. The Ombudsman investigated and resolved complaints filed with the Ombudsman, using approaches to seek informal resolution where feasible. The Ombudsman also ensured that members of the public who had not yet tried to resolve their issues through NCC internal processes were put in touch with the NCC. In instances where the issues were urgent, the Ombudsman assisted in ensuring that they were addressed promptly.

The following are complaints by members of the public to the Ombudsman in 2015:

- Several individuals complained about tree and grass maintenance done by the NCC in specific locations. The NCC addressed the issues that were raised and clarified the maintenance processes that would occur in the future.
- An individual was injured on NCC property. The Ombudsman assisted the individual and the NCC to resolve the situation.
- An individual complained about arrangements that were made whereby cricket is played on the grounds of Rideau Hall. The Ombudsman did not identify any basis to recommend a change to these arrangements.

“Thank you again. I do appreciate your help and understanding.”

“First, I want to thank you warmly for remembering me last Friday. Also, my sincere thanks for your compassion, your desire to help us, and for your sense of responsibility and professionalism.”

(translation)

Types of Complaints

The Ombudsman can investigate complaints concerning the full range of NCC activities. Complaints can involve

- NCC property maintenance
- Compliance with NCC and government policies and procedures
- Communications issues
- Service issues
- Tenant issues
- Contractor issues

“I appreciate your reassurances and fairness.”

Numbers at a Glance

In 2015, there were 108 inquiries from the public, involving 123 issues.

TYPE OF ISSUE/INQUIRY	NO. OF ISSUES/INQUIRIES	ACTION
Complaint Investigation and informal dispute resolution	6 investigations, including 14 issues	Investigated the complaint and recommended resolution
Inquiry about the Ombudsman's role	4	Explained the Ombudsman's role
Issue within the NCC mandate, but NCC internal resolution has not yet been tried.	89 inquiries, including 96 issues	Referred to the NCC
Issue outside the NCC mandate	9	Suggested a more appropriate organization to contact

Complaint Resolution Process

The complaint resolution process requires complainants to try to resolve their complaints directly with the NCC before filing them with the Ombudsman. The Ombudsman is required to keep the NCC Board of Directors and NCC senior management informed about complaints, on a need-to-know basis.

