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THE Watchdog

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New investigation: Safety on our roads



Ontario Ombudsman André Marin launched a new systemic investigation on March 20 – into how the province monitors drivers with uncontrolled hypoglycemia.

The case of Allan Maki, who was in diabetic shock when he caused a crash that killed three people in Hamilton in 2009, raises serious questions about the Ministry of Transportation's process of obtaining information about drivers with uncontrolled hypoglycemia and taking action when warranted, Mr. Marin said. Family members of the accident victims brought the case forward to the Ombudsman.

There are approximately 1 million people with diabetes in Ontario. According to some studies, up to 25% of those being treated with insulin could potentially experience hypoglycemic unawareness – the inability to recognize the warning signs of low blood sugar and potential impairment.

"Although most drivers who have diabetes are perfectly safe, the condition of uncontrolled hypoglycemia was deemed serious enough that Ontario and other provinces made it a reportable condition," Mr. Marin said. "But if that requirement doesn't result in appropriate action by the Ministry, it is meaningless. Our investigation will determine whether processes in place are adequate to protect public safety."

Read the full press release [here](#).

The Ombudsman asks anyone who has had experience with the issue contact his office at 1-800-263-1830 or via www.ombudsman.on.ca. The investigation is being conducted by the Special Ombudsman Response Team and is expected to take about six months.

Ombudsman honoured with Bar Association award

On April 26, at a gala dinner, the Ombudsman was honoured with the Ontario Bar Association's Distinguished Service Award.

The award represents recognition of Mr. Marin by his peers in the legal community for exceptional career contributions to the legal profession and the development of Ontario law, as well as the achievement of significant law-related benefits for Ontarians.

"We're honoring the Ombudsman's commitment to justice issues, to

The Ombudsman's Office oversees and investigates about 500 provincial ministries, agencies, tribunals, and Crown corporations.

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INVESTIGATION UPDATES

CLOSED MUNICIPAL MEETING INVESTIGATIONS

London

The Ombudsman's latest Open Meeting Law Enforcement Team (OMLET) investigation found that councillors in London, Ont., did not violate the Municipal Act when they met in camera to discuss the "Occupy London" protest last November. Read the full report [here](#).

The Ombudsman will also make a personal appearance at a meeting of London council on June 25, where he will discuss his office's role and procedures in investigating closed municipal meetings.

Education sessions

Ombudsman staff delivered training sessions to the Town of Amherstburg, the Town of South Bruce Peninsula, and the County of Essex. The training summarized the Municipal Act (which



the strength of his commitment and advocacy for those that don't have the strength and the voice to speak for themselves," said OBA vice-president Morris Chochla, who presented Mr. Marin with the award.

In accepting the award, Mr. Marin dedicated it to his staff at the Office of the Ombudsman of Ontario. "From the moment government maladministration is brought to our attention, our approach to issues needs to be unfailingly professional," he said. "From the triage, to the analysis, to the investigation, to our findings, to our recommendations and to the outreach and communications stages, our work must, at all times, meet exacting standards. Our people have truly risen to the occasion. I am indebted to the staff of the Ombudsman's Office for the sheer dedication and motivation to help the 'little guy' access the corridors of power, humanize government and find solutions to big and small problems."

Mr. Marin also received the 2009 OBA Tom Marshall Award of Excellence for his outstanding contribution to the practice of public sector law in Ontario.

The event was live-tweeted on the Ombudsman's Twitter account ([@Ont_Ombudsman](#)) with the hashtag #OOLive, and a Storify story of all the tweets can be found [here](#).

You can also see [photos](#) and [video](#) from the event.

Pictured at right: Ombudsman André Marin with Ontario Bar Association Vice President, Morris Chochla.

Special Investigations Unit under scrutiny

The Ombudsman's investigation of the province's Special Investigations Unit - and his two reports, [Oversight Unseen](#) and [Oversight Undermined](#) - were back in the news after two speeches in Ottawa in which he discussed new concerns about possible pro-police bias in the SIU, as well as a lack of police co-operation with the SIU.

On April 21, Mr. Marin addressed the annual conference of the Association of Ontario Police Services Boards. His presentation was live-tweeted on his Twitter account ([@Ont_Ombudsman](#)) with the hashtag #OOLive. The tweets were compiled into a Storify story that can be found [here](#).

On April 22, the Ombudsman made a similar presentation to the Civil Liberties Association - National Capital Region. A précis of his remarks is posted [here](#).

At both events, the Ombudsman revealed concerns about a recent TV documentary that showed SIU staff exhibiting possible pro-police bias. One SIU member is seen wearing a ring that is blurred in the video, but which further investigation proved to be a police ring - something the SIU prohibited after the Ombudsman's 2008 investigation. The SIU is looking into the incidents. The Ombudsman also commented about how the SIU Director had sent more than 200 letters to local police chiefs about lack of co-operation with the SIU, but received only about 20 responses.

Several media stories arose from this, including:

[Police ignore letters of concern from watchdog](#) (Ottawa Citizen)

[Chief promises to 'acknowledge' letters from SIU](#) (Ottawa Citizen)

[Ombudsman Andre Marin slams SIU over pro-police bias in Michael Eligon case](#) (Toronto Star)

[Three SIU investigators disciplined in case of Toronto man shot by police](#) (Global Toronto)

Ombudsman outreach and #OOLive

governs closed meetings) and the role of the Ombudsman Open Meeting Law Enforcement Team (OMLET) in investigating contraventions of that Act.

The Ombudsman is also now conducting investigations into closed meetings in Amherstburg, London, Midland, and Head, Clara and Maria.

SORT INVESTIGATIONS

OPP handling of stress-related injuries

The Special Ombudsman Response Team (SORT) investigation into how the Ontario Provincial Police deals with operational stress injuries (including post-traumatic stress disorder) is complete and the Ombudsman is now drafting his report and recommendations. The Ombudsman expects to release his report by late summer.

CONNECTING ONLINE

The Ombudsman now has more than **7,100** Twitter followers and more than **1,700** Facebook fans.

Thanks to our Twitter followers for suggesting the hashtag #OOLive! All the Ombudsman's live-tweeted events will use this hashtag, which allows anyone to follow tweets about a particular event, or to revisit older ones. You can also subscribe to our [Storify account](#) (where we aggregate tweets into stories).

Please continue to reach out to us on social media, or drop us a line at thewatchdog@ombudsman.on.ca.

SELECTED CASE

Losing laundry
Selected case from the 2010-2011 Annual Report



House guests

On March 5, the Ombudsman met with a group of interns from the Saskatchewan Legislature, who were in Toronto on a visit hosted by their counterparts in the Ontario Legislature.



Down under, over the Internet

Thanks to the technology of Skype, Ombudsman Marin was a featured speaker at the Public Sector Legal Officers' Forum in Canberra, Australia on March 6. He discussed his report on the expansion of police powers for the 2010 Toronto G20 summit ([Caught in the Act](#)) and how investigators used social media to gather evidence.



A group of inmates complained to the Ombudsman that they had not received clean clothes for some time – in some cases over a month. The inmates were upset and some expressed concern that fights might break out over the issue. When Ombudsman staff contacted senior staff at the jail, they acknowledged that there were problems with the clothing supply, including that items sometimes went missing when they were sent to be laundered at another correctional facility.

In response to the Ombudsman's inquiries, the jail addressed the clothing shortages by ordering extra clothing stock, increasing the number of clean laundry deliveries per week and getting regular reports from the laundry officer so that shortages can be identified and dealt with quickly.

You can read this, and other cases, in last year's [Annual Report](#).

COMING SOON

The Ombudsman is now compiling his 2011-2012 Annual Report – expected to be released in June. The next edition of our newsletter will also be out that month.

Later this summer, the Ombudsman will release his first Annual Report devoted solely to Open Meeting Law Enforcement Team (OMLET) investigations of closed municipal meetings. Watch for more details in our June newsletter.

Transparency International

On April 19, Ombudsman Marin was invited to speak at Transparency International Canada Inc.'s Day of Dialogue on anti-corruption. The Ombudsman joined a panel of speakers to discuss the effectiveness of municipal anti-corruption institutions. The event was live-tweeted on the Ombudsman's [Twitter](#) account with the hashtag #OOLive.



Ontario Ombudsman @Ont_Ombudsman 19 Apr
Education - of public & officials - is a big part of a municipal anti-corruption official's work. #OOLive

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