



THE WATCHDOG

Newsletter

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Oversight in sight

MUS-READ FAQs ABOUT BILL 8



For the first time, the public will be able to complain to the Ontario Ombudsman about school boards (as of September 1, 2015), and about municipalities and universities (as of January 1, 2016), now that the dates have been proclaimed for the relevant sections of the *Ombudsman Act, 1990*, the *Public Sector and MPP Accountability and Transparency Act*. The Act extends Ombudsman scrutiny to the so-called "MUSH sector" for the first time in the office's 40-year history.

In [an op-ed](#) published by the Toronto Sun, the Ombudsman describes how complaints about school boards have doubled since 2010, and how

our office plans to spend the summer letting everyone in the school sector know how to complain, how we work, and what to expect in preparation for this increased jurisdiction.

Our office is already getting lots of questions about this new 'MUS' jurisdiction. How will oversight work? Does the Ombudsman replace local accountability officers? What kind of 'MUS' issues will the Ombudsman be able to investigate? What does a person need to do, if anything, before complaining to our Office? These questions, along with many others, are answered on our [MUS frequently asked questions](#) page. [Check it out](#) to learn more!

POLICING THE POLICE

Ontario Ombudsman André Marin spoke at the annual general meeting and spring

JUNE 2015

The Ombudsman investigates public complaints about Ontario government agencies. His office oversees more than 500 provincial ministries, agencies, tribunals, boards, commissions and Crown corporations.

[FILE A COMPLAINT ONLINE](#)

Ombudsman Ontario

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**OMBUDSMAN'S ANNUAL
REPORT TO BE
RELEASED JULY 28**

Stay tuned for the Ombudsman's 2014-2015 Annual Report, which will be released on July 28, and will recap an historic year in the Ontario Ombudsman's office.

conference for the Ontario Association of Police Services Boards in Toronto on May 29. He highlighted some of his office's work on police-related investigations, and emphasized the importance of robust police services boards. [Watch his speech](#)



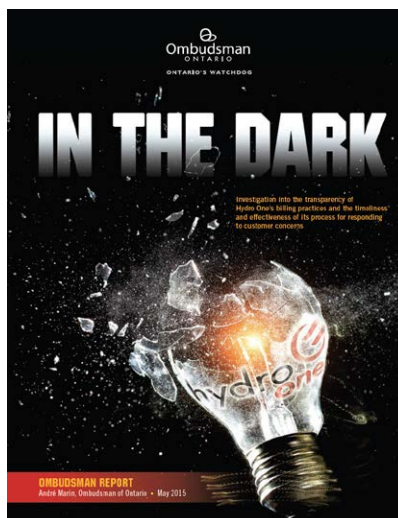
Oversight of police services boards, and their exclusion from Bill 8, has been in the news recently. Read the Toronto Star's editorial: [Police boards must be held accountable by ombudsman](#).

HYDRO ONE - OUTSIDE OMBUDSMAN OVERSIGHT

As of June 4, 2015, and the passing of the Ontario budget bill, the Ombudsman no longer has oversight of Hydro One. The Ombudsman's Office notified Hydro One that it will continue to investigate more than 578 outstanding complaints it received prior to the passing of the bill.

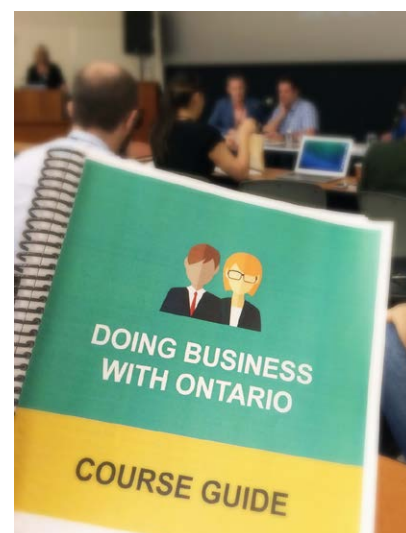
If you have a complaint about Hydro One, please refer to [this information](#) on our website about next steps to take to resolve your issue.

On May 25, the Ombudsman revealed a litany of egregious problems with billing and customer service arising from Hydro One's disastrous installation of a new customer information system in May 2013, which he estimates affected well over 100,000 customers. [Read the report](#)



TAKING CARE OF ONTARIO BUSINESS

Senior Counsel Wendy Ray discussed the Ombudsman's mandate, powers, and how the Office triages 25,000 complaints a year as part of Crown Summer School, an annual educational conference for Crown counsel organized by the Ministry of the Attorney General on June 17. She was part of a panel discussion alongside Auditor General Bonnie Lysyk at McMaster University.



IN THE CLEAR

The Ombudsman found that London City Council did not violate the open meeting requirements of the Municipal Act, when they held an in camera meeting to discuss proposals from developers hoping to purchase and redevelop land owned by the City. [Read the full report](#).

In the Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands, the Ombudsman found that discussions held in person and over email by council did not constitute illegal meetings under the Act, but he did recommend that members of council should avoid laying the groundwork necessary to exercise the power or authority of

IN THE NEWS

Distracted driving - Ontario has passed new distracted driving legislation that will allow more medical professionals to report medically unfit drivers, the [Toronto Star recently reported](#). In his 2014 report, [Better Safe Than Sorry](#), the Ombudsman recommended measures to ensure the medical community understands its responsibility to report drivers whose medical conditions pose safety risks.

Privatization of public services - Privatization of public services - resulting in the loss of ombudsman oversight - is a growing concern for ombudsmen around the world, writes International Ombudsman Institute Vice President Peter Tyndall, the Ombudsman of Ireland. He notes that ombudsmen in some countries do have oversight of utilities and things like customer service - and he explains why an in-house corporate complaints office should not be called an "ombudsman." [Read the full interview](#).

INVESTIGATIONS UPDATE

[Ontario direction to police on de-escalation:](#)

The Ombudsman is in the process of finalizing his report and is expected to release it later this year.

[Adults with developmental disabilities in crisis:](#)

Staff continue to resolve individual cases and take complaints - more than 1,300 to date. The large-scale systemic investigation continues, and the Ombudsman expects to release a report later in 2015.

Anyone who has information relevant to our ongoing investigations can contact our office at 1-800-263-1830, [file an online complaint](#) or email: info@ombudsman.on.ca.

council over email or through informal discussions. [Read the full report](#)

WE'RE HIRING!

Take a look at some of our [open positions](#), including an Articling Student and a Human Resources Officer, and follow us on [LinkedIn](#) for job postings, investigation updates, report releases, and more.



STAY CONNECTED

The Ombudsman has **3,744** [Facebook fans](#) and **32,301** [Twitter followers](#)! Please continue to reach out to us on social media, or drop us a line at thewatchdog@ombudsman.on.ca.

And stay connected with our office in both official languages! Follow our French Twitter account: [@Ont_OmbudsmanFR](https://twitter.com/Ont_OmbudsmanFR).

Office of the Ombudsman of Ontario | Bureau de l'Ombudsman de l'Ontario
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