



THE WATCHDOG

Newsletter

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Ombudsman to release 2015-2016 annual report: Nov. 2

Ombudsman Paul Dubé will release his 2015-2016 Annual Report next Wednesday, November 2. It is the Ombudsman's first annual report since his office's mandate was expanded to include municipalities, universities and school boards, in addition to provincial government organizations.

You can catch the live webcast on the main page of our [website](#) at 2 p.m. on Nov. 2 – mark your calendar!

► [Watch the video about the upcoming report](#)



Ontario Ombudsman makes submission to police oversight review

On October 27, Ombudsman Paul Dubé released his submission to the



OCTOBER 2016

The Ombudsman is an independent officer of the Ontario legislature who conducts oversight of provincial government agencies and municipalities, universities and school boards. Ombudsman Paul Dubé began his five-year term on April 1.

[FILE A COMPLAINT ONLINE](#)

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**CLOSED MUNICIPAL
MEETINGS**

[Municipality of West Nipissing](#)

province's [Independent Police Oversight Review](#), calling for new legislation to make police oversight bodies more effective, accountable and transparent.

In the submission, entitled [Oversight Unchanged](#), Mr. Dubé argues that all three of Ontario's police oversight bodies – the [Special Investigations Unit](#) (SIU), the [Office of the Independent Police Review Director](#) (OIPRD) and the [Ontario Civilian Police Commission](#) (OCPC) – should be within the Ombudsman's mandate, as should municipal police services boards. At present, the only one of these bodies within the Ombudsman's jurisdiction is the SIU, which investigates cases where police are involved in incidents of serious injury or death.

- › [Read the Ombudsman's submission](#)
- › [Read the full press release](#)

In the news

- › [Ombudsman wants the power to look into police oversight bodies](#) (CTV News)
- › [Ontario Ombudsman wants power to investigate all police oversight bodies](#) (CBC News)

"The more we learn by being open and working together, the more we're able to build fair and better ways of governing": Premier Wynne speaks to watchdogs

Premier Kathleen Wynne spoke about the importance of building good working relationships between government organizations and oversight offices, as the keynote speaker at our office's annual training course for administrative watchdogs, "Sharpening Your Teeth," on October 25.

Since 2007, we have offered the course for ombudsmen and professional investigators across Canada and around the world, always on a full cost-recovery basis. This year we welcomed more than 70 participants, from as far as Tonga, Ukraine, Antigua and Barbuda, and Nebraska; from ombudsman offices in Nova Scotia, Manitoba and Yukon; and from other ombudsman and legislative offices in Ontario. Sessions included training in conducting systemic investigations, interviewing and report writing, as well as a presentation by New Brunswick Ombudsman Charles Murray.

In her speech, the Premier noted, "By emphasizing procedural fairness, resolving complaints as quickly as possible and having a level of personal contact with the people who seek out the help of the Ombudsman, you help people to see the government itself in more human terms."

- › [Watch the video](#)

The Ombudsman found that the Municipality of West Nipissing did not violate the open meeting requirements in the *Municipal Act* or its procedure by-law at the special meeting on July 21, 2016. The municipality has since amended its procedure by-law to provide for public notice of all meetings.

[Read the letter](#)

OUTREACH

October was another busy month, including travel to Albuquerque, New Mexico, where Ombudsman Paul Dubé made a presentation to police oversight officials from across North America at the [National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement's Annual Conference](#).

The Ombudsman presented to attendees about his report on police de-escalation techniques, which was very well received. He also discussed de-escalation with civilian heads of oversight of law enforcement in Ottawa during a meeting organized by the [Civilian Review and Complaints Commission for the RCMP](#).

The Ombudsman also attended the [United States Ombudsman Association annual conference](#) in Arlington, Virginia, in mid-October - a valuable opportunity to share knowledge and expertise with ombudsmen from across North America.

Ombudsman staff continue to meet with stakeholders around the province. In October, they met with groups in the developmental services sector and from municipal associations, including in McNab, Horton, Toronto, and Guelph.

WHAT'S NEW?



Premier Kathleen Wynne delivers her speech during the Ontario Ombudsman's Sharpening Your Teeth training on October 25, 2016.

Broader public sector: Recent cases

We've received more than **3,900** complaints about municipalities, universities, and school boards since our jurisdiction over those sectors came into effect. We've had **974** school board complaints since September 1, 2015 and since January 1, 2016 we've received **2,736** complaints about municipalities and **205** about universities. Most of these cases have been resolved informally, usually through referral to local officials.

Recent cases

Municipalities

A man contacted our office about a burned-out streetlight in his neighbourhood. He had brought the matter to his municipality but months had gone by without a response. Our Office intervened and discovered there had been a miscommunication with city staff, as well as a temporary hiatus in replacing bulbs, since the municipality was planning to switch to LED bulbs on October 17. The municipality assured us the contractor will replace burned-out bulbs first, including the one the man had flagged to the municipality.

A mayor called our Office wondering if the Ombudsman could fill the role of municipal integrity commissioner. Ombudsman staff explained our role as an office of last resort and clarified that we don't replace local accountability mechanisms, including the integrity commissioner. We sent the mayor an email with this information and included references to relevant sections of our website and speeches by the Ombudsman.

[Check out our brochures](#) to learn more about municipal, university and school board complaints, or [fill out a complaint form here](#).



What's new at our office? Check out the [Ombudsman's latest post](#) about his most recent speeches and reports, and other activities by our team.

WANT TO WORK WITH US?

We're looking for talented people to join our **administrative, investigations and early resolutions** teams.

Learn more about early resolutions [here](#). Learn about investigations [here](#). Learn about the administrative assistant positions [here](#).



STAY CONNECTED

Ombudsman Ontario has **4,474** [Facebook](#) fans and **37,349** [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:

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

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