



# INFO-COM

## Message from the President

I would like to take this opportunity to tell you how pleased I am to present to you the first issue of *inFo-COM*.

The Forum of Canadian Ombudsman (FCO) is an umbrella association for the Canadian ombudsman community, which has been continually growing since its creation in 2001. It has been clear for the past few years that a broad based association was required to bring together the expanding ombudsman community in Canada. The idea of fostering a better understanding of the ombudsman's role has contributed to the creation and growth of the FCO.

As you may be aware, the FCO Board of Directors meets on a regular basis. Our last meeting was held on January 23, 2004 and we agreed that developing a Newsletter would be an exciting way to get our members involved. After all, this organization was created to benefit you, so please feel free to send us your ideas for articles or let us know about interesting ombudsman developments that would help your fellow-ombudsman. Your comments and suggestions will help us to better meet your needs.

We believe this Newsletter and our organization will help promote the growing ombudsman community in Canada and across the globe.

Dyane Adam, President of the FCO



## FCO Training Programs

FCO will offer its first training course entitled, *Ombudsman Basics: What, Why and How To* from March 28 to March 30 in Toronto. The curriculum has been developed by members of the Education and Training Committee. Members of the Committee will also be the instructors for this first course. Topics to be covered include key functions of the ombudsman role, basic complaint handling steps from intake to resolution, and approaches to record keeping, reporting and office management for both large and small offices. In addition, Mr. André Marin has agreed to speak about demonstrating the value of ombudsman work, the theme of a recent publication of his office.

The course should be useful both for those from large offices who want a big picture of ombudsman practice to better appreciate where their own role fits in, and for those from small offices who manage all the functions alone or with one or two others. Registration is limited, and participation is limited to practicing ombudsman or their staff.

This course is being offered in English, but the intention is to offer the same course in French at a later date, probably in Montréal. Other offerings are planned, too: the FCO has been granted permission to use the IOI Investigations Training Manual once in English and once in French, on a trial basis. Dates and locations for the Investigations courses have not yet been set. In addition, a specialized course for those working in the corrections field is planned for October.

If you have questions about any of the training programs, please contact Frances Bauer: [fbauer@uwo.ca](mailto:fbauer@uwo.ca).

Don't forget to visit the FCO website on a regular basis at [www.ombudsmanforum.ca](http://www.ombudsmanforum.ca).



## Who's who in the Ombudsman community?

### Departures and Retirements

Ms. Carol Cumming Speirs  
Ombudsman for Students, McGill University  
Ms. Ellen King  
Ombudsman for the Province of New Brunswick  
Mr. Scott Sutton  
Ombudsman for the Province of Alberta  
Ms. Mayann Francis  
Ombudsman for the Province of Nova Scotia

### Arrivals and Appointments

Mr. Bernard Richard  
Ombudsman for the Province of New Brunswick  
Mr. Dwight Bishop  
Ombudsman for the Province of Nova Scotia  
Ms. Johanne Savard  
Ombudsman for the City of Montreal  
Dr. Norman Miller  
Ombudsman for Students, McGill University  
Ms. Chantal Belanger  
Ombudsman, Laurentian Bank  
Mr. Robert Bisailon  
Ombudsman, HEC Montréal  
Mr. Gord Button  
Ombudsman for the Province of Alberta  
Mr. Pierre Niedlispacher  
Ombudsman, Coca-Cola Enterprises, Inc

## Message from the Secretariat

The Secretariat is thrilled to participate in the realization of our first *inFo-COM* issue. We hope you will find it useful and informative.

It is our goal to provide you with an edition of InFo-COM each quarter. In order to ensure that this newsletter is relevant to your needs, we ask for your opinion and input. Speak up and let us know about all your suggestions regarding formats and topics you would find interesting.

We look forward to hearing from you.

*FCO Secretariat*

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## To be noted in your calendar...



### March:

FCO membership renewal  
First issue of inFo-COM  
*Ombudsman Basics: What, Why and How To* held March 28 to 30, 2004, in Toronto

### May

Annual General Meeting - May 19, 2004 at 125 Queen's Park, Toronto, Ontario

### September

International Ombudsman Institute (I.O.I.) Conference in Quebec City – September 7-10, 2004

## FCO Membership Committee

FCO membership renewal notices and reminders were sent at the end of December 2003. If you did not receive your renewal notice, please contact the FCO Secretariat for information on membership renewal. FCO memberships are for the calendar year -membership fees for applications received after Oct.1 of each year are reduced by 50%.

The FCO approved a Guideline on Institutional memberships at their January 23, 2004, Board of Directors meeting. The guideline explains that all organizations, in particular all Ombudsman Offices, are expected to join the FCO as institutional members in the name of the organization. An organization shall be defined as a group of individuals who have an affinity and have formed an administrative and functional structure to achieve a common purpose. An organization generally has a "head", named members or staff, holds meetings, and has articulated its objects. The head of an organization is not required to have an individual membership. The cost of an institutional membership is \$200 for organizations of 6 or more persons and \$100 for 5 or fewer persons. The individual membership fee is \$75. Access to the members' section of the FCO website is provided to individual members and the head of an institutional member.

Membership applications can be found on our website, along with instructions on "how to become a member".

For more information, please contact the FCO Secretariat at [allison.mccomas@ocol-clo.gc.ca](mailto:allison.mccomas@ocol-clo.gc.ca).

## FCO Education and Training Committee

The Education and Training Committee has been meeting regularly via teleconference and working hard in order to develop and offer the first FCO training, *Ombudsman Basics: What, Why and How To*. The course will be offered on March 28 to March 30, 2004 in Toronto (we invite you to consult page 1 to learn more about it).

Congratulations to all the organization committee members and best success!

Stay tuned for the upcoming training:

*La fonction d'ombudsman : Quoi, pourquoi et comment*  
(French version of *Ombudsman Basics: What, Why and How*)

Investigation Training

Correctional Ombudsman Training

For more information, please contact Frances Bauer at [fbauer@uwo.ca](mailto:fbauer@uwo.ca), Chair of the Education and Training Committee or visit the FCO Website at [www.ombudsmanforum.ca](http://www.ombudsmanforum.ca).

### Expanding your horizons

“The primary objective of the Campus Conflict Resolution Resources project (Campus-adr.org) is to significantly increase administrator, faculty, staff and student awareness of, access to, and use of conflict resolution information specifically tailored to the higher education context.”

The quoted text is from the website itself. Visit the Site at <http://www.campus-adr.org/>.



## FCO Code of Ethics Committee

The FCO has recently created a new committee, the FCO Code of Ethics Committee. The mandate of this committee was to develop a Model Code of Ethics that could be adapted by our various members for their personal use.

In a very short period of time the committee has succeeded in drafting a Model Code of Ethics.

The principles outlined in this code are clear and well defined. The Model Code of Ethics can be used by a variety of Ombudsman offices wishing to adopt and modify it to fit their needs.

We invite you to consult the Model Code of Ethics which will be made available on the FCO website. Check it out!

For more information, please contact the FCO Secretariat.

## FCO Website Committee

In 2003, the committee members accomplished the following:

- increased committee membership from one to three!
- achieved approval for their operating budget
- achieved approval and funding for a list serve to permit members to exchange views
- achieved approval of an editorial process for inclusions on the site

For more information, please contact the FCO Secretariat.