



INFO-COM



President's Message

Once again, I am pleased to present to you the new inFo-COM issue. With ongoing training and planning for our upcoming Conference, lots has been going on as we strive to keep you informed and connected. So many things have occurred since the second issue. And this third issue will allow you to learn more about what is going on within the Forum of Canadian Ombudsman (FCO).

The Board of Directors has been meeting more often recently and so have the various committees in

order to keep up the momentum. For instance, as you may be aware, the Conference Committee, chaired by Ian Darling, is working hard in order to put everything in place to organize the 2005 FCO Conference, which will be held in Toronto in May. In addition, the Training and Education Committee has also been very successful in organizing training sessions: the FCO Ombudsman Investigation Course held in Toronto September 29-October 1, 2004 and *Enquêtes Ombudsman* held in Montreal on November 17 to 19, 2004 were hailed as a real successes. Everyone is doing a great job and we can be proud of what we are accomplishing as an Ombudsman organization.

I would like to take the opportunity to congratulate Clare Lewis who has been involved in the Ombudsman field for close to 20

years and in the FCO since its conception. He played an important role in the FCO as a member of the Board of Directors and the Chairperson of the Code of Ethics Committee. In addition, he served two terms as the President of the International Ombudsman Institute. Clare Lewis' term as Ombudsman of Ontario will be ending in January 2005. I invite you to learn more about Mr. Lewis' achievements by reading an article on page 5.

This third issue covers a vast array of topics which you, as members, have indicated to be areas of interest. Please continue submitting ideas – we are here to bring together our community.

Enjoy your reading!

Dyane Adam, President of the FCO

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2005 Forum of Canadian Ombudsman (FCO) Conference

Planning is underway for the second FCO Conference. Hosted by the University of Toronto, the conference will take place May 15-18, 2005 in downtown Toronto, Ontario. Our conference will build on the success of the inaugural FCO conference in 2003. The goal of the FCO is to act as an umbrella organization for Canadian Ombudsman across different sectors.

The conference committee is putting the final touches to the program and is looking for input before the program is finalized. Please let us know what you would like to see at the conference.

- Is there some training you would like to receive?
- Is there a topic or issue you would like to discuss?
- Is there a speaker you would like to hear?
- Is there a session or topic from the last conference that you would like to see repeated, or expanded-upon in 2005?

United States Ombudsman Association Conference

Submitted by Mr. Michel Tremblay, FCO Secretary

The United States Ombudsman Association (USOA) held their 25th annual conference in Portland, Oregon on October 19-22, 2004.

The USOA is the national organization for public sector ombudsman professionals and currently has 140 members. Founded in 1977, USOA is North America's oldest national ombudsman association with members from ombudsman offices in local, state, and federal governments, and affiliated ombudsman offices. Under its bylaws, USOA was organized to operate exclusively for educational, scientific and charitable purposes.

Its purpose is to assist existing ombudsman and ombudsman organizations in improving the operation of the ombudsman offices throughout the United States. Additionally, the USOA dedicates itself by social and educational means to promote and encourage the establishment of ombudsman offices at the international, national, state and local levels.

94 ombudsman or delegates attended this year's conference, mostly from the United States, but there was also a good representation from Canada (eight) and a few from other parts of the world.

The theme of the conference: *"Building Bridges to meet Tomorrow's Challenges"* was articulated by a program designed to address issues central to ombudsman's specific challenges. Workshops on investigation and communications skills and techniques, as well as conflict resolution, mediation, confidentiality, ethics and case management helped the participants to improve their effectiveness.

Mr. André Marin, Ms. Mary McFadyen and Mr. Gareth Jones from the Office of the Ombudsman DND/CF were the presenters of a daylong session on investigation and reporting. Mr. Howard Kushner, Ombudsman, British Columbia and Mr. Michel Tremblay, Ombudsman at Canada Post were also presenters and panellists in other sessions.

Next year's conference will be held in Nashville, Tennessee.

The planning committee would also like to invite you to become involved. We are looking for:

- facilitators for group discussions;
- volunteers to join the planning committee;
- volunteers to assist with logistics during the conference.

The chairperson of this year's planning committee is Mr. Ian Darling. Please contact Ian at idarling@fanshawec.ca with your ideas and/or to indicate your ability to join this year's planning committee. Please do not hesitate to add this event in your agenda. We cannot wait to see you in Toronto!



Doing Our Jobs Better (And Having A Good Time Too!)

Submitted by Ms. Liz Hoffman, Education & Training Committee Chairperson

Members were pretty clear about what they were hoping to receive from FCO when we began the organization just three years ago. Opportunities to network and to receive training specific to the ombudsman environment were at the top of the list. The FCO Education and Training Committee has been working hard to live up to members' expectations. In March 2004, we hosted our first course – **Ombudsman Basics: What, Why and How To**. This fully subscribed course was very well received and will be offered again.

To facilitate the request from members for training focused on investigations, the FCO received permission from the International Ombudsman Institute (I.O.I.) to deliver an investigators training course developed by the I.O.I. for one year. In September 2004, we hosted the first course based on this training material – a two and half day **Ombudsman Investigations Workshop**. The fully subscribed course included assessing the role of the investigator and then studying investigative planning, the gathering and analyzing of evidence and report writing in the Ombudsman environment – all key to investigators being good at their jobs. This course was taught in Toronto in English and will be offered in November 2004 in Montreal in French. The FCO Education and Training Committee also has plans to provide some specialized programs. The first will be offered in the Spring of 2005 to ombudsman and staff working in the Corrections area.

Using FCO members' feedback, the Education and Training Committee is at work preparing the 2005 FCO Education and Training schedule. Please send us your ideas!

Conference of the International Ombudsman Institute

The Quebec Ombudsman's office played host for the very successful VIII International Conference of the International Ombudsman Institute (I.O.I.) held in Quebec City this past September. Madame Pauline Champoux-Lesage, Ombudsman of Quebec, was the gracious host for 340 representatives from 77 countries, as well as several Canadian ombudsman offices.

Governor General Adrienne Clarkson was the Keynote Speaker at the opening ceremony. She welcomed the delegates to the conference, praised Quebec for hosting such an important event, gave an historic overview of Canada and reviewed the role and contribution of the Ombudsman, nationally and internationally.

The conference's theme of "*Balancing the Obligations of Citizenship with the Recognition of Individual Rights and Responsibilities – The Role of the Ombudsman,*" provided plenaries and workshops led by panelists and presenters including I.O.I. President Clare Lewis Q.C., the Ombudsman of Ontario; European Ombudsman Nikiforos Diamandouros; and the Ombudsman of Botswana, Lethebe Amos Maine. Topics for discussion included: "Respecting Human Diversity and Generally Understood Democratic Values"; "The Responsibility of the Ombudsman in Developing a Public Service Ethic in the Face of Socio-political and Economic Change"; and "Can the Recognition of Individual Rights and Freedoms Survive the Pressure to Enhance Security?"

The I.O.I. was established in 1978 as a worldwide organization of ombudsman offices. It currently has over 175 members from 83 countries and the head office is located at the Faculty of Law, University of Alberta, in Edmonton. The International Conference is held every four years in different locations worldwide.



Independence and Accountability

Submitted by Ms. Frances Bauer

Organizations use their hierarchical structure as one way to demonstrate accountability. We all know we can "go up the line" if not satisfied with how we are treated. But ombudsman work independently – so where is "up the line" for us?

At the University of Western Ontario (UWO) Ombuds Office, we try to make it easy for people to provide feedback about our service. An Advisory Committee, with members representing different university constituencies, is a key to this

process. As a group, it recommends our budget to our funding partners, reviews my performance, and advises me about promoting the office and other non-case related initiatives, and assists with the service reviews of the Office we undertake every four or five years. It also receives comments about the Office from the community. Last year a particular complaint made us realize we needed a clearer process. The individual member who received that complaint felt bullied and harassed. Now a member in receipt of a complaint about the Ombudsperson must raise the issue with the Committee. Only

the Committee can decide the appropriate action to take.

Ombudsperson independence at UWO is set out in our Memorandum of Agreement. Our impartiality is symbolized by the fact that the office is funded jointly and equally by the University and the University Students' Council. We explain our independence to each new user of our service in our first contact with him or her. Now our accountability is highlighted, too, as our complaint procedure is posted prominently on our Website. Please visit us at <http://www.uwo.ca/ombuds/>; and feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Message from the Secretariat

We hope you will find this info-COM issue useful and informative.

In order to ensure that this newsletter is relevant to your needs, we ask for your opinion and input. 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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Don't forget to visit the FCO Website
on a regular basis...

<http://www.ombudsmanforum.ca>

Expand your horizons...

The Ombudsman of British Columbia recently issued their Special Report No. 25 entitled: Broken Glass, Broken Trust. To view the report, visit <http://www.ombudsman.bc.ca>.





Happy Retirement, Mr. Lewis!

The Forum of Canadian Ombudsman (FCO) would like to recognize Clare Lewis, Q.C., Ombudsman of Ontario for his outstanding contributions to the FCO and to the promotion of ombudsmanship nationally and abroad. Clare has served as Ombudsman of Ontario since January 2000 and will be completing his term in January 2005.

Clare has an extensive legal background having practiced as a defence counsel, prosecutor and Provincial Court (Criminal Division) Judge. Clare left the Bench in 1985 to assume the position of Public Complaints Commissioner, responsible for the resolution of public complaints against the members of the Toronto Police Force and in 1990 was appointed the Police Complaints Commissioner of Ontario. Prior to being appointed Ombudsman he served as the Chair of the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario. Clare has received several awards recognizing his public service; in 1991 he received the Canadian Bar

Association – Ontario Award for Distinguished Service in making exceptional contributions to the development of law in Ontario for his work as Police Complaints Commissioner and as Chair of the 1988 Task Force on Race Relations and Policing. In November 2000, he was awarded the Society of Ontario Adjudicators and Regulators (SOAR) Medal for his contribution to the administrative justice system in Ontario.

Consistent with the energy Clare has demonstrated in his previous “careers”, he has been an active member of a number of Ombudsman organizations. He was instrumental in supporting the creation of the FCO and has served on its Board of Directors since 2001. In his role as the Chair of the FCO’s Code of Ethics Committee, Clare was involved in the creation of a Model Code of Ethics for FCO. He has encouraged the involvement of his staff in a number of FCO training initiatives. Clare also served as a Director and Secretary to the Canadian Ombudsman

Association. In addition, he served two terms as the President of the International Ombudsman Institute (I.O.I.) after having served as a Director and Secretary since 2001. Under Clare’s direction, Ombudsman Ontario created an Investigative Training Manual for the I.O.I., which was recently used as the basis for the FCO’s inaugural investigative training course. He has written a number of papers for the I.O.I. and is known for his work internationally assisting in promoting the concept of the Ombudsman. At the invitation and expense of a number of countries and organizations, Clare has attended at international meetings and conferences sharing his considerable knowledge and expertise.

Clare’s support, experience and forthright delivery will be missed in the Ombudsman community. We congratulate him on his successes in the Ombudsman field, thank him for his support and assistance over the last five years, and wish him all the best in his future endeavours.