



Ombudsman



# Annual Report 2019–2020

National Capital Commission Ombudsman



# Mandate of the NCC Ombudsman

The mandate of the NCC ombudsman was established by the NCC Board of Directors in 2009. The ombudsman's mandate is to provide members of the public with an independent, neutral, fair and confidential process to resolve complaints concerning the activities of the NCC. The ombudsman is required to keep the NCC board of directors and senior management informed about complaints, on a need-to-know basis.

The ombudsman's aim is to reach the best possible understanding of a situation giving rise to a complaint, and to determine a fair way to resolve it. The ombudsman routinely attempts to resolve complaints informally by reaching an agreement between the complainant and the NCC. If this is not feasible, the ombudsman will conduct a formal investigation and submit a recommendation to the complainant and the NCC.

A person with a complaint must attempt to resolve their complaint directly with the NCC. If this is not successful, the ombudsman can address the complaint.

The ombudsman is not able to address complaints that fall outside of the ombudsman's terms of reference.

**The ombudsman is not an advocate for the complainant or for the NCC.**

## What is an ombudsman?

The word *ombudsman* is of Swedish origin. The role was established in Sweden to create a process to address complaints made by individuals against public agencies.

An ombudsman is an independent, neutral official who investigates complaints about an organization in the public or private sector. The ombudsman's mandate and processes are established administratively by the senior management of the organization or by law.

The ombudsman must assess whether or not a complaint falls within the ombudsman's mandate and, if so, whether or not the complaint has merit. The ombudsman works independently and impartially. The ombudsman seeks to achieve a fair resolution of the complaint.

June 25, 2020

*National Capital Commission Board of Directors*

Dear Members of the Board,

I am pleased to submit the Annual Report of the NCC Ombudsman for 2019–2020. It provides an overview of the major activities of the Office over the past 12 months.

I have appreciated the opportunity to serve the Board over the past year. Thank you for your ongoing confidence and support.



Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. Saville', written over a light blue horizontal line.

Kevin Saville  
NCC Ombudsman

How to contact  
the NCC Ombudsman  
confidentially

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# The Year in Review

From April 1, 2019, to March 31, 2020, the public communicated with the Ombudsman about a wide range of issues. The Ombudsman referred members of the public to the appropriate NCC service when internal administrative procedures had not been exhausted. As required, the Ombudsman addressed complaints and sought to resolve them as fairly and efficiently as possible, employing informal resolution approaches if appropriate. In more urgent situations, the Ombudsman took steps to ensure prompt action on the part of the NCC.

## Types of Complaints

The Ombudsman can investigate complaints concerning a range of NCC activities, including the following:

- Service issues
- NCC property maintenance
- Compliance with NCC and government policies and procedures
- Communications issues.

The following are examples of complaints addressed to the Ombudsman in 2019–2020:

- NCC decision to pilot a pop-up bistro at Patterson Creek Park in Ottawa
- Safety in Gatineau Park related to speeding automobiles, group cycling, excessive consumption of alcohol at Champlain Lookout, and lack of respect for wildlife and the environment
- Groundwater pollution from Moss Mine in Gatineau Park causing harm to a neighbouring farm
- Delay in receiving a ski pass.





## Numbers at a Glance

TYPE OF ISSUE/INQUIRY	NUMBER OF ISSUES/INQUIRIES Jan. 2019 to Dec. 2019
Outside the NCC mandate	14
Standard referral to the NCC	27
Informal dispute resolution	6
Complaint investigated	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>49</b>



## Complaint Resolution Process

The complaint resolution process requires complainants to try to resolve their complaints directly with the NCC before filing them with the ombudsman. The ombudsman is required to keep the NCC board of directors and NCC senior management informed about complaints, on a need-to-know basis.

