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**MESSAGE FROM THE NEW CORRECTIONAL INVESTIGATOR**





It is my privilege to present my first report as Correctional Investigator. My core value in approaching my new functions is that the Office should address offender problems from the perspective of informed objectivity. This reflects the time-honoured tradition of being an ombudsman, serving citizens by listening, learning, analyzing and influencing in order to resolve conflict and ensure fairness.

An ombudsman is neither an advocate nor an adversary, neither a judge nor a jury. S/he is an independent, impartial investigator who proceeds in a direct, timely fashion using significant powers of inquiry to assess the facts and come to common sense conclusions. Not by any power to impose outcomes but rather by the power of thorough, persuasive analysis and articulation does the ombudsman achieve resolution of citizens' problems. Only once the investigation is complete does the ombudsman take a position—not for the client group but for fairness.

I believe that the immediacy and flexibility of this approach lends itself very well to the prison environment, where integrity, independence and responsiveness can often have an impact on vital liberty and

personal security rights. I believe that it will be fundamental that I implement the ombuds approach in a way that encourages candour and trust with offenders and staff alike. I believe that my Office can continue to make a difference for all concerned.

With specific regard to this year's Report we have decided to change our format for reporting ongoing issues of concern. Each page contains a concise description of the concerns and issues that have arisen in the past. A more complete review is available from the series of Annual Reports that have already contained findings and recommendations on these topics. We have emphasized the progress that has been made in collaboration with CSC, offenders and other stakeholders and briefly underlined the issues that remain to be addressed. Finally my specific recommendations are set out.

I hope that this format will provide the reader with a balanced and concise review that will be useful in understanding our perspective on the matters. Reader comments on any of the topics are welcome. Please send me your comments by email at [sapershi@oci-bec.gc.ca](mailto:sapershi@oci-bec.gc.ca) or by surface mail at Box 3421, Station "D", Ottawa, Ontario K1P 6L4.

