

The government announces the creation of and appointments to the Military Police Complaints Commission

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The Government of Canada announced today the creation of an independent Military Police Complaints Commission. This follows the adoption of Bill C-25, *An Act to amend the National Defence Act and to make consequential amendments to other Acts*, which received Royal Assent on December 10, 1998. The legislated provisions contained in Bill C-25 to establish a Military Police Complaints Commission will come into force December 1, 1999.

The creation of the Commission will require preparatory work, including finalization of decisions and resolution of issues. Therefore, Louise Cobetto, currently a member of the *Tribunal Administratif du Québec*, has been appointed Chair designate of the Commission, effective September 1, 1999, until the first day of operations.

Paul E. Duffie, Q.C., a lawyer with the firm Duffie, Deschênes & Ouellette, and Thomas G. Flanagan, former Chief of Police, City of Ottawa, will serve as part-time members designate of the Commission, effective September 1, 1999, to assist Ms. Cobetto in the preparatory work prior to the Commission's coming into existence.

Upon establishment of the Commission on December 1, 1999, Ms. Cobetto will become the Commission's first Chair and Messrs. Duffie and Flanagan will become the first members.

The Military Police Complaints Commission, which will be completely independent from both the Canadian Forces and the Department of National Defence, will investigate complaints about the conduct of military police in performing policing duties and investigate allegations of interference with military police investigations. The Commission will ensure that individuals who have such complaints, and individuals against whom allegations are made, are treated in a fair, objective and impartial manner.

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Gérald Simoneau
PCO Communications
(613) 957-5420

Media Relations Office
Department of National Defence
(613) 996-2353

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