

# Annual Management Report 2008-2009

JUSTICE

FAIRNESS

IMPARTIALITY

RESPECT

## DATA RELIABILITY ASSURANCE

I am responsible for the accuracy, integrity and reliability of the results, information and explanations presented in this Annual Management Report.

Throughout the year, I have used information systems and applied reliable control measures to ensure that the objectives set out in the Strategic Plan and Service Statement were achieved. In addition, management introduced and implemented a number of control measures to manage the risks to which the organization is exposed. These measures include:

- monthly production and rigorous checking of data and statistics on the requests received by the Québec Ombudsman.
- checking of data for the organization as a whole by the external auditor.

The Québec Ombudsman's 2008-2009 Annual Management Report:

- presents objectives, indicators, targets and results;
- contains accurate, reliable data.

The members of the Board of Directors have approved this Annual Report. In addition, the external auditor has examined the plausibility of the results, indicators, explanations and information, and has produced a report.

I hereby certify that the information presented in the 2008-2009 Annual Report reflects the situation as at March 31, 2009, and is reliable.

The Ombudsperson,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "R. Saint-Germain". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Raymonde Saint-Germain

## EXTERNAL AUDITOR'S REPORT

Ms. Raymonde Saint-Germain  
Ombudsperson

We have examined the results, explanations and information presented in the Québec Ombudsman's Annual Management Report for the year ending March 31, 2009. The Québec Ombudsman's management team is responsible for the accuracy, integrity and disclosure of these documents. Our responsibility is to assess their plausibility and consistency, based on our work.

Our examination, which was not an audit, was carried out in compliance with the framework generally used for internal audits. Our task was to obtain information and documentary evidence, carry out analyses, document the operation of compilation mechanisms, review calculations and discuss the information provided.

Based on our examination, we confirm that the results, explanations and information contained in the Québec Ombudsman's Annual Report appear to us to be significant, plausible and consistent in every respect.

External Auditor,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jacques Dumas', with a stylized, cursive script.

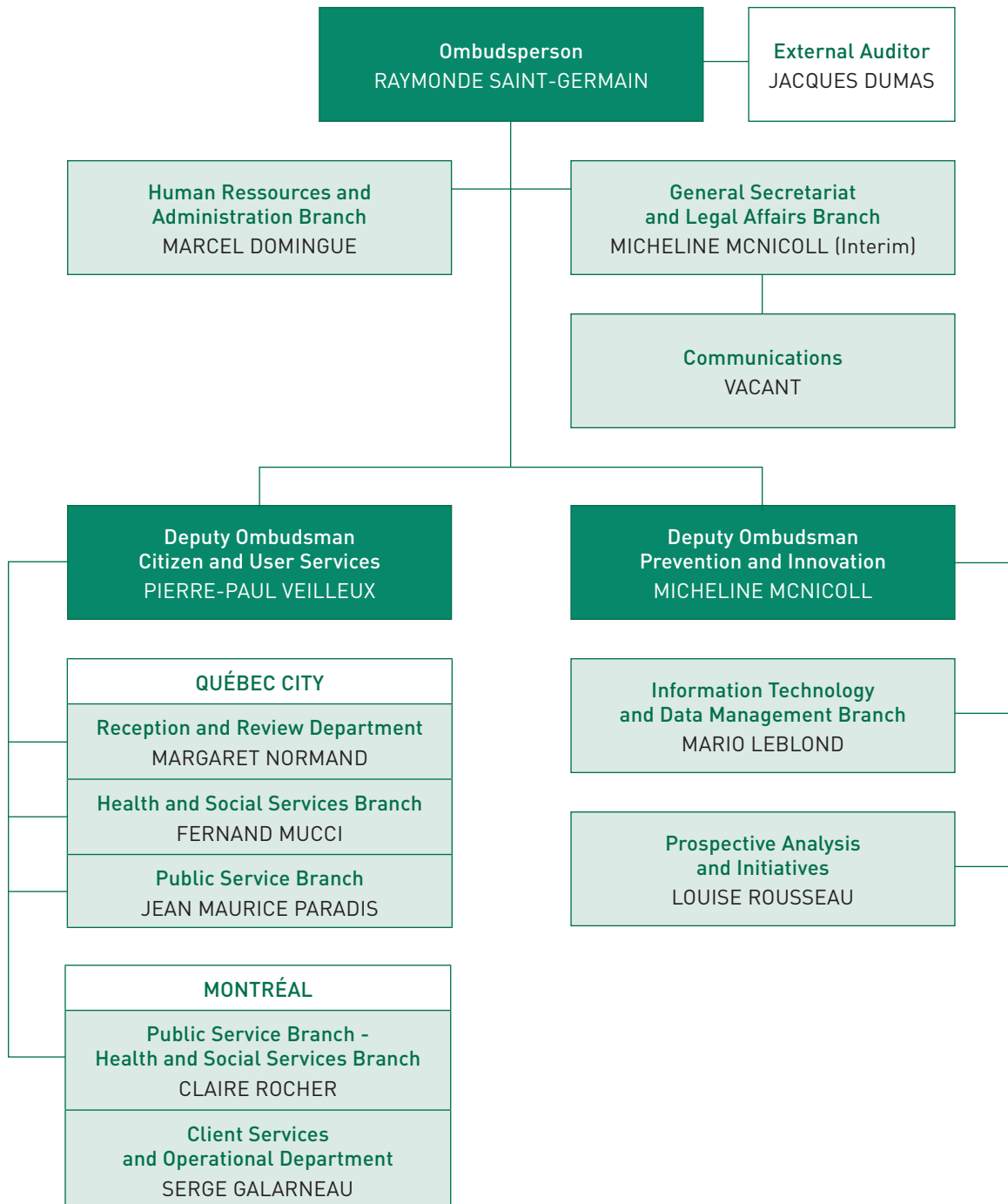
Jacques Dumas

April 27, 2009

## Highlights

- Parliamentary watch activities are one of the methods used by the Québec Ombudsman to fulfill its preventive mission. In 2008-2009, it examined 68 of the 70 bills introduced in the National Assembly, and 102 of the 127 draft regulations published in the *Gazette officielle* – in other words, all the bills and regulations it felt would have significant repercussions for the general public. The Québec Ombudsman made comments in respect of five bills and four draft regulations, and those of its recommendations that were accepted resulted in amendments or other measures.
- 99% of the recommendations made to Québec government departments and agencies or to health and social service network institutions were accepted. In addition, the Québec Ombudsman made 454 general recommendations.
- The Québec Ombudsman undertook some mandates under its own initiative on a number of important social issues, in order to help improve the services available to citizens.
- A more systematic quantitative and qualitative analysis process was introduced for monthly statistics on requests received from the general public (complaints, reports, assistance and information) in order to meet the needs of the population, identify trends, allocate resources and take general preventive steps.
- Efforts to improve working procedures continued during the year, focusing mainly on parliamentary watch, introduction of a structured analysis and investigative method, preparation and use of an assessment grid to determine the priority order of complaints, and systematic reviews of investigation conclusions.
- On April 1, 2008, the Québec Ombudsman centralized its reception and review services, significantly improving the processing of requests from members of the general public and speeding up the disposal of issues not requiring complete investigations.
- The administrative structure was adjusted by transferring information resources from the Human Resources and Administration Branch to the office of the Deputy Ombudsman, Prevention and Innovation.
- The Québec Ombudsman's 2009-2012 Strategic Plan was tabled in the National Assembly.
- The pay equity issue was addressed in accordance with the Pay Equity Act, and financial settlements are expected to be concluded in 2009-2010.
- The Québec Ombudsman reviewed its contractual management by-law and staff training content, reassessed its executive positions using the Hay method, and reviewed several of its administrative policies. It also completed its in-depth examination of complaint and report processing times, announced in 2007-2008.

## Organization Overview



## THE OMBUDSPERSON

The Ombudsperson ensures that Government departments, agencies and health and social service institutions treat citizens with due regard, respect their rights and act in a fair and reasonable manner. She directs and coordinates the institution's activities, determines the orientations and sets priorities. She also ensures that the institution's personnel offers the best possible service and responds adequately to citizens' legitimate needs and expectations concerning the Government departments, agencies and institutions over which she exercises her supervisory authority.

The Ombudsperson reports to the National Assembly. She maintains contacts with the National Assembly standing committees and elected representatives from different political parties, as well as with senior executives in the public service and the health and social service network, while protecting the institution's independence and fields of jurisdiction. In addition, she is responsible for relations with the various public and private organizations working in the field of citizens' rights, and oversees the institution's national and international cooperative activities. She is assisted by two Deputy Ombudsmen.

## DEPUTY OMBUDSMAN, CITIZEN AND USER SERVICES

The Deputy Ombudsman, Citizen and User Services, is responsible for overseeing the consistency of activities in the two fields of intervention stipulated in the Public Protector Act and the Act respecting the Health and Social Services Ombudsman.

He oversees both the health and social services sector and Québec's civil service, and ensures that an integrated approach is taken to user services by supervising the processing of citizens' complaints.

He supports and advises the Ombudsperson on major issues requiring interventions in Government departments and agencies or health and social service institutions.

The Deputy Ombudsman is assisted by the Reception and Review Department and by three investigation branches.

## DEPUTY OMBUDSMAN, PREVENTION AND INNOVATION

The Deputy Ombudsman, Prevention and Innovation, is responsible for the prevention and initiative role stipulated in the Public Protector Act and the Act respecting the Health and Social Services Ombudsman. She reviews situations carefully, produces analyses and carries out studies and consultations before making recommendations to the appropriate authority.

She also oversees the consistency of and adjustments to the Québec Ombudsman's working processes, by suggesting orientations and proposing a general vision and integrated management approach for both the health and social services sector and the Québec public service.

The only significant change made to the administrative structure in the last year was the renaming of the departments under the authority of the Deputy Ombudsman, Prevention and Innovation, in order to reflect the nature of their responsibilities.

## Resource use

### HUMAN RESOURCES

As of March 31, 2009, the Québec Ombudsman's workforce was composed of 132 people. The following tables show the breakdown of personnel categories:

#### DISTRIBUTION OF REGULAR PERSONNEL BY CATEGORY

Category	2008-2009	2007-2008
Senior executive	4	3
Executive	9	7
Professionals	61	65
Technicians	33	31
Office personnel	25	26
<b>Total</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>132</b>

The resource breakdown is virtually unchanged from last year. The apparent increase in the number of executives is due to the fact that someone was hired to replace an executive staff member who had taken pre-retirement and was due to leave his position early in 2009-2010. After this person's departure, the number of executives will be reduced to eight.

#### DISTRIBUTION OF REGULAR PERSONNEL BY ADMINISTRATIVE UNIT

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Ombudsperson's office	3	3	6
Office of the Deputy Ombudsman, Citizen and User Services	90	91	92
Office of the Deputy Ombudsman, Prevention and Innovation	20	12	12
General Secretariat and Legal Affairs	10	10	5
Human Resources and Administration	9	16	17
<b>Total</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>132</b>

There have been no significant changes to the division of resources between the administrative units in the last three years. Those changes that have been made were proportional to the effort required to provide the necessary level of service. In 2008-2009, responsibility for information resources was transferred to the office of the Deputy Ombudsman, Prevention and Innovation. This accounts for the variation in staffing levels both here and in the Human Resources and Administration Branch.

It is important to mention the significant contribution made by employees who are hired on a contractual basis, either to replace regular staff members on leave or to meet additional needs. In 2008-2009, 18 contractual employees joined the team responsible for providing direct services to citizens; 11 worked on public service issues and seven on health and social services issues. A list of everyone who helped the Québec Ombudsman to achieve its mission in 2008-2009 appears in the appendix.

Workforce planning continued to be an issue in 2008-2009, primarily because of the anticipated number of retirements and the shrinking employment market. The Québec Ombudsman has updated its ongoing workforce profile and drawn up a list of vulnerable jobs. Vulnerability levels are currently being examined, and a risk management action plan will be prepared with the goal of ensuring that new employees are hired, maintaining productivity and identifying any training and knowledge transfer needs.

This year, the Québec Ombudsman continued to implement its workforce method optimization plan. The bulk of its effort was concentrated on process improvement, and involved reviewing the parliamentary watch procedure, speeding up mail processing, improving the reception and initial training function and introducing a structured analysis and investigation method to ensure good quality, consistent service. The organization's administrative structure was also examined, and a number of administrative policies were brought up to date.

The Québec Ombudsman is concerned about the health of its personnel, and has introduced some preventive measures in this regard. For example, it has entered into an agreement with the Government departments and agencies housed in the Marie-Guyart building so that its personnel have access to their health and prevention services. All new employees receive documentation on available health services and the Employee Assistance Program. In 2008-2009, the institution's personnel received free flu vaccinations, nursing services, lunchtime conferences and documentation from health-related seminars and other activities.

Employee Assistance Program services are provided by the personnel of the Ministère de la Justice, pursuant to an annual memorandum of understanding. In 2008-2009, 18 people used the Program to obtain support, often in the form of a referral to an outside specialist. In these cases, the Québec Ombudsman paid part of the specialist's fee. In 2007-2008, 2,526 person days were lost through sick leave and salary insurance absences. In 2008-2009, however, this number had been reduced to 2,011 days.

One of the Québec Ombudsman's goals and significant challenges in 2008-2009 was to maintain the leading-edge expertise required to fulfill its mission without increasing the size of its workforce, in a context of increasing demand. Most of its development effort was focused on the health sector, and more particularly on the issues of population ageing, vulnerable populations and mental health, investigation methodologies, support for university training and the development of sector-related expertise.



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## FINANCIAL RESOURCES

The 2008-2009 expense budget was \$12,945,300. As was the case in previous years, this figure includes permanent allocations of \$292,600 for the pension fund of former Ombudsman and Deputy Ombudsman, as stipulated in the Public Protector Act.

### EXPENSE BUDGET

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Expense budget	12,945,300	12,729,800	12,781,800
Salaries	10,059,900	8,773,100	8,606,900
Operations	2,885,400	3,956,700	4,174,900

Virtually all the available allocations were needed to fulfill the institution's mission. Approximately 78% of the allocations went on salaries. In 2008-2009, the Québec Ombudsman focused even more on its workforce optimization strategy by assigning as much of its total allocation as possible to salaries, which enabled it to hire contractual employees and experienced retired consultants. As a result, it was able to deal quickly with a higher number of requests and additional needs without increasing its budget.

At the beginning of the year, the Québec Ombudsman produced its Annual Expense Management Plan, setting out its budget choices and presenting the principal ways in which its allocations would be used.

Given that most of the allocations were used to pay salaries, the best way of monitoring budget use is to look at the distribution of human resources for each of the orientations in the Plan. The cost of each activity is calculated as the sum of direct costs plus general expenses, divided pro-rate to the workforce assigned to each activity.

### BUDGET DISTRIBUTION BY ORIENTATION

	2008-2009		2007-2008	
	Actual estimated <sup>1</sup>	Forecast	Actual	Forecast
Reception and processing of individual complaints	73,1%	71,9%	71,5%	70,0%
Collective actions	7,6%	8,2%	7,9%	8,3%
Institution's reputation	3,9%	4,3%	4,0%	5,4%
Reinforcement of the institution	4,6%	4,6%	4,7%	6,3%
Administration	10,8%	11,0%	11,9%	10,0%

Note: Information systems personnel are included in the "administration" section.

As the above table shows, the Québec Ombudsman allocated its resources in line with its chosen orientations, in compliance with the forecasts set out in the Annual Expense Management Plan.

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<sup>1</sup> Data as at April 15, 2009, i.e. prior to the closing of the financial year.

The expense management plan is one of the tools used to implement the Strategic Plan, and the results of its various actions are therefore presented in the section of this report dealing with the Strategic Plan.

The 2007-2008 Annual Management Report mentioned the possibility of savings when the Montreal team moved into its new premises on December 1, 2007. Now that the actual data are known, the Québec Ombudsman is able to report that rent savings will total \$599,690 during the first five years, and \$1,169,540 by the end of the ten-year lease. After deduction of the fit-up costs, net savings will total \$680,600. In addition, at the time the 2007-2008 Management Report was published, the Québec Ombudsman was engaged in discussions with the Société immobilière du Québec regarding the conditions for termination of its lease at Montreal's Law Court Building. As a result of these discussions, which concluded in October 2008, the Québec Ombudsman was not required to make double rent payments for the period from December 2007 to March 2008.

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## INFORMATION RESOURCES

The File Management system has been improved to reflect users' needs since it was first introduced in April 2007. Between April 1, 2008, and March 31, 2009, more than 294 upgrades and adjustments were made. The personnel of the Information Technology and Data Management Branch provided training and information on the changes. A number of management tools were also produced, allowing resource workloads and file processing times to be monitored more closely.

The information systems team was also involved in consolidating the network, office automation, infrastructure and development services. A technological upgrade was installed to allow the Québec Ombudsman to read documents from all its clients, including those using the latest software suites. In addition, the team worked on the central servers to improve network stability.

The Québec Ombudsman continued the process of documenting its technological procedures. It also updated its policy on the use of information resources, its directive on e-mail and Internet use, and its policy on computer equipment loans.

## National and international activities

Like its fellow Ombudsman and mediators in other provinces and countries, part of the Québec Ombudsman's task is to maintain and improve the constitutional State, thereby contributing to democracy and helping to promote human rights.

The Québec Ombudsman is a member of the Canadian Council of Parliamentary Ombudsman and the Forum of Canadian Ombudsman. The Ombudsperson attended the annual meeting of the Canadian Council of Parliamentary Ombudsman in St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador, on June 11-13, 2008. At the meeting, it was decided that the Council's 2009 meeting would be held in Québec City to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the founding of the Québec Ombudsman.

Our institution also hosted the annual general meeting of the Forum of Canadian Ombudsman on September 9, 2008. On the same day, the Ombudsperson received the *Organisation internationale de la Francophonie* delegate for peace, democracy and human rights, during a mission to Québec.

Most of the Québec Ombudsman's international activities took place through attendance at events held by the professional ombudsman and mediator associations of which it is a member, including the International Ombudsman Institute, the Association des ombudsmans et médiateurs de la Francophonie, and the United States Ombudsman Association. The Québec Ombudsman shares the same goals as these organizations, namely to support existing institutions, provide staff training, encourage research and disseminate research findings. It elects to take part in certain activities organized by these associations if it feels they will enhance its expertise or provide an opportunity to share its experience and expertise with other similar institutions.

On November 17 and 18, 2008, the Ombudsperson attended the meeting of the board of directors of the *Association des ombudsmans et médiateurs de la Francophonie*, held in Rabat, Morocco. She had been elected to the board in December 2007, as the representative for the America-Caribbean zone. The Québec Ombudsman will be hosting the Association's two-yearly conference in September 2009, with support from the National Assembly and the Ministère des Relations internationales.

The Prospective Analysis and Initiatives Manager from the office of the Deputy Ombudsman, Prevention and Innovation, attended the annual meeting of the United States Ombudsman Association, held in Lexington, Kentucky, from September 29 to October 3, 2008. Citizens' rights defence organizations from several countries were present to discuss the topic of excellence. Because of their unique mission, these organizations must adapt their performance assessment frameworks to the context of citizens' services. The conference gave those present an opportunity to share best practices in the field of service assessment and improvement by ombudsman-type institutions.

The 2008 report of the *Organisation internationale de la Francophonie* on the state of democracy, rights and freedoms in the French-speaking world, with the general theme of justice and governance, was presented to the Heads of State and Governments at the Sommet de la Francophonie held in Québec City in October 2008. In 2007-2008, the Québec Ombudsman assisted the *Association des ombudsmans et médiateurs de la Francophonie* with its contribution to the report, among other things by completing a questionnaire on the operations and material means of member institutions and by submitting the Ombudsperson's text on imprisonment sites from the Bamako conference in December 2007.

# Results

## PARLIAMENTARY WATCH

The Québec Ombudsman's parliamentary watch activities are important as a means of prevention, since they allow the institution to intervene upstream of problems by advising Members of the National Assembly, government officers and agency CEOs, thereby helping to improve service to citizens.

An analysis grid and a process coordinated by the General Secretariat are used to identify all the bills introduced the National Assembly and all the draft regulations published in the Gazette officielle. The Québec Ombudsman intervenes when necessary, or when requested to do so. Occasionally, ministers and agency CEOs ask the Ombudsperson for her opinion on proposed amendments, with a view to preventing problems.

She makes her comments directly to the Minister or agency CEO concerned, or submits a brief to the parliamentary standing committee responsible for considering the bill. Sometimes, delegate's<sup>1</sup> requests for information or authorized interventions with Government departments and agencies give rise to amendments or clarifications to bills and draft regulations.

The Québec Ombudsman's actions are governed by section 27.3 of the Public Protector Act, which grants the power to call the Government's attention to the need for such legislative, regulatory or administrative reforms he or she deems necessary, and by section 7 of the Act respecting the Health and Social Services Ombudsman, which entrusts the duty of ensuring that health and social services network users are respected and their rights enforced.

In addition, the institution's parliamentary watch activities are covered by the first orientation of the Québec Ombudsman's 2004-2008 Strategic Plan, "ensure that citizen rights are upheld in this time of change".

## PARLIAMENTARY WATCH FILES

Year	Bills examined/ Bills introduced <sup>1</sup>	Interventions concerning bills	Draft regulations examined/Draft regu- lations published <sup>2</sup>	Interventions concerning draft regulations
2006-2007	62 / 63	5	74 / 129	8
2007-2008	77 / 81	2	152 / 174	0
2008-2009	68 / 70	5	102 / 127	4

<sup>1</sup> The bills that not examined concerned budgets or allocations, and were adopted on the day they were presented.

<sup>2</sup> The draft regulations not submitted related to collective agreement orders or other labour relations issues, professional orders outside the health and social services field, or agencies not falling within the Québec Ombudsman's jurisdiction, and were not concerned with matters of interest to the Québec Ombudsman.

As the above table shows, between April 1, 2008, and March 31, 2009, 68 of the 70 bills introduced in the National Assembly were examined (the 2 remaining bills did not fall within the Québec Ombudsman's jurisdiction). Similarly, 102 of the 127 draft regulations published in the Gazette officielle were also examined.

Following these examinations, the Québec Ombudsman made comments on five<sup>1</sup> bills and four draft regulations, as follows:

- An Act to amend the Police Act (Bill 60, 2007)<sup>2</sup>;
- An Act to amend the Act respecting health services and social services, the Health Insurance Act and the Act respecting the Régie de l'assurance maladie du Québec (Bill 70, 2007)<sup>3</sup>;
- An Act to amend the Supplemental Pension Plans Act, the Act respecting the Québec Pension Plan and other legislative provisions (Bill 68, 2008);
- An Act to amend the Education Act and other legislative provisions (Bill 88, 2007);
- An Act to amend the Courts of Justice Act and the Act respecting municipal courts with regard to court security (Bill 15, 2009).
- Draft regulation: Conditions governing the implementation of the experimental Québec Health Record in the territory of the health and social services agency for the Capitale-Nationale region (2008, Gazette officielle 2, 819)<sup>4</sup>;
- Draft regulation amending the Regulation respecting the reimbursement of certain expenses (2008, Gazette officielle 2, 1735) (comments on SAAQ compensation);
- Draft regulation amending the Regulation respecting the diplomas issued by designated educational institutions which give access to permits or specialist's certificates of professional orders (2008, Gazette officielle 2, 5643) (comments concerning respiratory therapists);
- Draft regulation amending the Regulation respecting the activities engaged in and described in sections 39.7 and 39.8 of the Professional Code (2009, Gazette officielle 2, 24) (comments concerning activities carried out on certain conditions by operators or staff in seniors' residences – e.g. invasive care and administration of medication – normally reserved for professionals).

Several of the Ombudsperson's recommendations were favourably received and led to amendments or other measures. This was the case, for example, with Bill 68 (the Act to amend the Supplemental Pension Plans Act, the Act respecting the Québec Pension Plan and other legislative provisions), where two of her three recommendations were accepted in their entirety, and the third was accepted in part. As far as Bill 88 (the An Act to amend the Education Act and other legislative provisions) is concerned, the Act as adopted addresses the Ombudsperson's recommendation that the roles and obligations of the student protector be clarified, and that the reporting process be made more transparent. The Ombudsperson's comments were also taken into account in the Conditions governing the implementation of the experimental Québec Health Record in the territory of the health and social services agency for the Capitale-Nationale region, in particular regarding documentation on the project's objectives and goals, which must now be given to "interested persons", and not simply on request, as stipulated in the draft regulation. With regard to the other draft regulations and Bill 15, the outcomes of the Ombudsperson's interventions are not yet known, since the final regulations have not yet been enacted and the bill has not been adopted.

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<sup>1</sup> A letter relating to Bill 72 was also sent by a delegate.

<sup>2</sup> The Ombudsperson intervened in respect of this Bill in April 2008 (the bill was introduced in December 2007). Comments were made to support the measures that provide for wildlife conservation officers to be subjected to the police ethics system.

<sup>3</sup> The Québec Ombudsman's intervention mainly concerned the Conditions governing the implementation of the experimental Québec Health Record in the territory of the health and social services agency for the Capitale-Nationale region, but were also related to some aspects of this Bill.

<sup>4</sup> This draft regulation was published in February 2008, and the Québec Ombudsman intervened in April 2008.

The Québec Ombudsman is also invited on a regular basis to make comments during public or special consultations by the Government or the National Assembly. The institution can also present comments on its own initiative, where it feels this is appropriate. This year, for example, during a special consultation by the National Assembly's standing committee on social affairs, concerning homelessness in Québec, the Ombudsperson was invited to present a brief. The Québec Ombudsman pays particular attention to those members of society who are fragile or vulnerable as a result of their physical, mental or psychological health, or as a result of their social condition, which is often the case for the homeless. In its brief, the institution made 20 recommendations, proposing preventive measures designed to ensure continuity of service, immediate protective measures for the most vulnerable individuals, and measures designed to prevent chronic homelessness. The brief also discusses program implementation.

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## THE STRATEGIC PLAN AND ANNUAL EXPENSE MANAGEMENT PLAN

In 2008-2009, the Québec Ombudsman continued to direct its efforts towards achieving the objectives set out in its 2004-2008 Strategic Plan, enriched by the 2006-2011 Intervention Plan to reflect the institution's extended mission in the health and social services sector.

The new 2009-2012 Strategic Plan was tabled in the National Assembly and adopted in March 2009.

The 2004-2008 Strategic Plan centred on the following three objectives:

- Ensure that citizen rights are upheld in this time of change;
- Raise awareness of the Québec Ombudsman and promote the values it advocates;
- Being a model, state-of-the-art organization focused on serving citizens.

The 2008-2009 results, concluding the final year of the Strategic Plan and incorporating the objectives of the Annual Expense Management Plan, are as follows:

## OBJECTIVE 1: ENSURE THAT CITIZEN RIGHTS ARE UPHELD IN THIS TIME OF CHANGE.

AREA OF ACTION 1	GOALS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that the established rules of democracy are followed transparently and that the values of social justice and solidarity are upheld.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop an evaluation grid to help us perform this task more effectively.</li> <li>• Make this task our priority.</li> </ul>

The bills and draft regulations that fell within the jurisdiction of the Québec Ombudsman were all examined by the officers responsible for complaints and reports relating to the government departments, agencies and institutions concerned. Based on the lessons drawn from these complaints and reports, they recommended a certain number of improvements that the Ombudsperson used in her interventions.

AREA OF ACTION 2	GOALS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote the quality of relations between the government and the general public, in whatever form this may take.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide reference tools to help government departments and agencies.</li> <li>• Act in a timely manner to ensure and improve the effectiveness of citizen recourse.</li> <li>• Ensure that no group of citizens is left out by the Online Government project.</li> </ul>

Regular exchanges were maintained in 2008-2009. The Québec Ombudsman also attended a number of meetings with stakeholders and authorities under its jurisdiction, as well as with representatives from complaint assistance and support centres, and with regional and local complaints and service quality commissioners. The purpose of these meetings was to remind the officers of the Québec Ombudsman's mission, to promote service quality and respect for citizens and their rights and, of course, to ensure that the Québec Ombudsman's conclusions and recommendations had been implemented. In 2008-2009, 99% of these recommendations were accepted.

Meetings were also held with citizens' representatives on specific issues including mental health, homelessness, youth in difficulty, housing, and services for seniors, including lodging.

During the same period, the Québec Ombudsman targeted a number of issues, built files and made 454 general recommendations. It also launched several mandates on its own initiative, on topics such as government services for children with invasive development disorders, the investigation procedure used in Québec for incidents involving police officers, and mental health. These mandates were in the process of being completed on March 31, 2009.

The Québec Ombudsman also took the initiative in several other cases, to remedy and avoid repetition of prejudicial situations. For example, it worked with the Sacré-Coeur Hospital in Montreal and the Rockland MD surgery and medical centre on a pilot agreement for professional services, signed on December 13, 2007.

## OBJECTIVE 2: RAISE AWARENESS OF THE QUÉBEC OMBUDSMAN AND PROMOTE THE VALUES IT ADVOCATES.

AREA OF ACTION 1	GOALS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raise awareness of the Québec Ombudsman among the general public and such multiplying agents as community organizations and associations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make ourselves better known among various target groups, including young people, immigrants, and residents of Greater Montreal.</li> <li>• Strengthen our ties with information relayers.</li> </ul>

During the year, the Québec Ombudsman took part in 25 public activities, exhibitions, conferences and congress meetings, in different regions of Québec, including Abitibi-Témiscamingue, the Beauce, the Capitale-Nationale, Chaudière-Appalaches, Est-du-Québec, Lanaudière, Laval, the Eastern Townships, Montérégie and Montreal. Its presence helped raise awareness of its services among the general public and among target groups including students, seniors, the disabled and health and social services network users. The institution also strengthened its ties with multiplying agents including the Montreal Bar Association, the Conseil pour la protection des malades, the Association québécoise de défense des droits des personnes retraitées et préretraitées and the users' committees of various hospitals.

In the fall, the Ombudsperson toured the Eastern Townships region and was guest of honour at the ceremony to launch the 2008-2010 integrated action plan to promote users' rights. She also visited the Sherbrooke detention centre, the Eastern Townships rehabilitation centre, the psychiatric unit of Sherbrooke University Hospital and the Sherbrooke University Institute of Geriatrics, and met with the leaders of a mental health defence organization.

The Québec Ombudsman also received media coverage during the year, in particular when it tabled its Annual Report in the National Assembly on May 29, 2008.

AREA OF ACTION 2	GOALS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote the values of justice, fairness, transparency, respect and integrity in government/citizen relations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote the organization with government departments and agencies.</li> <li>• Use various forums to promote our values.</li> <li>• Contribute to national and international activities that foster respect for citizen rights.</li> </ul>

The Québec Ombudsman promoted its values, role and services on several occasions during the year. Among other things, it gave speeches to the staff of the Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse du Québec, the members of the Fédération des centres d'assistance et d'accompagnement aux plaintes, regional complaints and service quality commissioners, the members of the Syndicat des agents de la paix en service correctionnel du Québec in Montreal and students at the École nationale d'administration publique and the Université du Québec à Montréal, during a course on administrative law. In addition, the Québec Ombudsman helped ensure that citizens' rights were upheld both nationally and internationally, as mentioned earlier.



### OBJECTIVE 3: BE A MODEL, STATE-OF-THE-ART ORGANIZATION FOCUSED ON SERVING CITIZENS.

AREA OF ACTION 1	GOALS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop expertise to face new challenges and bolster staff dedication.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review skills profiles to improve staff recruitment and training.</li> <li>• Make full use of employee skills and promote skills development.</li> <li>• Offer a stimulating work environment.</li> </ul>

The goal of improving the organization's performance and focusing on customer service continued to be a priority in 2008-2009. As in previous years, the Québec Ombudsman worked to maintain and develop its employees' skills by implementing a leading-edge, targeted training program. This year, training was concentrated in a number of specialized sectors, and more generally on the implementation of a systematic analysis and investigation methodology suited to the institution's mission, so as to ensure quality and consistency in its actions.

The institution also worked to maintain the motivation of its expert staff by developing excellence recognition measures. Premiums were paid to some employees in recognition of the complexity of their task, and exceptional performance bonuses were also paid in accordance with current directives. A work structure committee chaired by the Ombudsperson was set up to ensure that staff members are involved in improving the quality of their work. At the same time, the management team worked to develop a culture of recognition within the institution.

Steps were taken to ensure pay equity, in compliance with the Pay Equity Act, and two prescribed postings were made. Following a series of consultations with the Conseil du trésor Secrétariat, the main lines of a settlement were established, with the result that this major question should be resolved in early 2009-2010.

AREA OF ACTION 2	GOALS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve work methods for studies, analyses and surveys.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote greater care in our work processes.</li> <li>• Improve the consistency of institutional activities.</li> <li>• Adopt a structured, ethical approach.</li> <li>• Equip ourselves with modern tools to ensure the quality of our activities and increased accountability.</li> </ul>

The Québec Ombudsman has been working hard to improve its methods since September 2006, among other things by strengthening its investigation process. An investigation specialist was hired to study the organization's current processes and develop tools to facilitate the work of its staff, a task that was completed in January 2009. All staff received training in February 2009, and the Québec Ombudsman's Complaint Processing Handbook is currently being updated. The new, improved investigation process was approved by the Ombudsperson, and is better suited to the more complex investigations that the institution is required increasingly to perform. In addition, the Québec Ombudsman has adopted a priority assessment grid for complaint processing (risk management grid), which is now used to establish the priority order for files and covers aspects such as substantiation, allocation of files to staff members, and processing by all the institution's sectors.

AREA OF ACTION 3	GOALS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be an organization focused on meeting the needs of all citizens.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop strategies adapted to the specific needs of certain vulnerable or needy clients.</li> <li>• Pay close attention to response time and the way cases are wound up with citizens.</li> <li>• Offer sufficient support to personnel in stressful situations with clients.</li> </ul>

A memorandum was prepared every month, presenting monthly complaint and report statistics. These statistics were also presented regularly to the management board, and were discussed with managers.

An in-depth analysis of complaint processing times was carried out for every step in the process, and a number of improvements were introduced.

Qualitative statistical analysis has become a regular activity for staff in the Office of the Deputy Ombudsman, Citizen and User Services. An analysis service has also been implemented in the Prospective Analysis and Initiatives Branch of the Office of the Deputy Ombudsman, Prevention and Innovation.

## DECLARATION OF SERVICES TO THE PUBLIC

The institution's new Declaration of Services to the Public and 2009-2012 Strategic Plan were completed in 2008-2009, and came into force on April 1, 2009.

The 2008-2009 results for the various commitments are presented on the basis of the Declaration of Services to the Public in force on March 31, 2009.

For the Québec Ombudsman, it is a point of honour to respond to citizens courteously and quickly, providing accessible, relevant and accurate information.

In its Declaration of Services to the Public, the Québec Ombudsman makes commitments regarding the accessibility and quality of its services and communications, and reasserts the need for citizens to be a core concern for every staff member, based on the values of justice, equity, respect and transparency.

During office hours, every citizen receives a personalized verbal response to their initial contact, and is referred to the resources best equipped to deal with their situation.

On April 1, 2008, the Québec Ombudsman merged two of its units (reception and review) as a means of responding more effectively to citizens' requests.

The new process has made it easier for the institution to achieve the objectives set out in the Declaration of Services to the Public, and has also improved the strategic watch function, in particular with regard to major issues such as the shortage of physicians or emergency room and surgery wait times. In addition, the institution is now able to obtain more information on service quality and the problems associated with gaining access to complaints commissioners. It also simplifies the processing of multi-sector complaints involving both the health and social services networks and government departments or agencies.

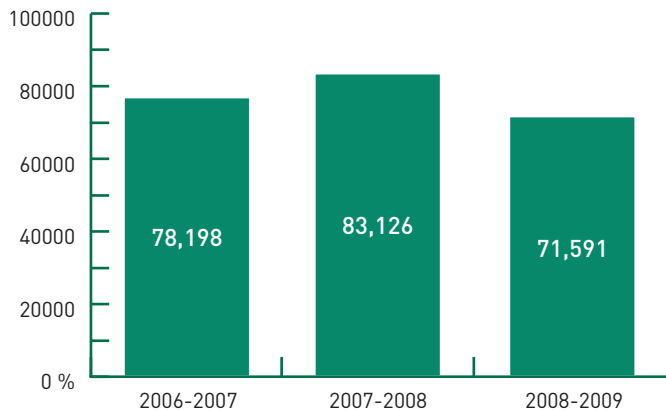
The Reception and Review Department has adopted a more personalized approach to its written responses, and now provides simpler, clearer information.

In addition, the Québec Ombudsman is now able to respond much more quickly and effectively to problems submitted by health and social services network users.

Thanks to the vigilance of the Reception and Review Department, the Québec Ombudsman is now able to act quickly in serious situations brought to its attention by individual citizens or commissioners.

## TELEPHONE ACCESS

### Number of calls received



### Commitment

A telephone receptionist will answer your call within three minutes.

### Results

In 2008-2009, 79% of calls from citizens resulted in contact with a telephone receptionist within 18 seconds.

After the reception and referral step, the citizen's complaint is forwarded to the staff members responsible for administrative verification and preliminary analysis. Complaints that are deemed to be admissible at this point are transferred to an agent for a preliminary investigation.

## PROCESSING OF THE REQUEST

### Commitment

We will acknowledge receipt of a citizen's request for service within two working days, either verbally or in writing.

### Results

Percentage of processing within two working days		
Year	2 days or less	More than 2 days
2006-2007	98%	2%
2007-2008	95%	5%
2008-2009	99%	1%

## DILIGENT PROCESSING OF REQUESTS FOR ASSISTANCE

### Commitment

We will direct citizens to appropriate resources within two working days.

### Results

Percentage of citizens' requests directed to an appropriate resource within two working days		
Year	2 days or less	More than 2 days
2006-2007	97%	2%
2007-2008	90%	10%
2008-2009	95%	5%

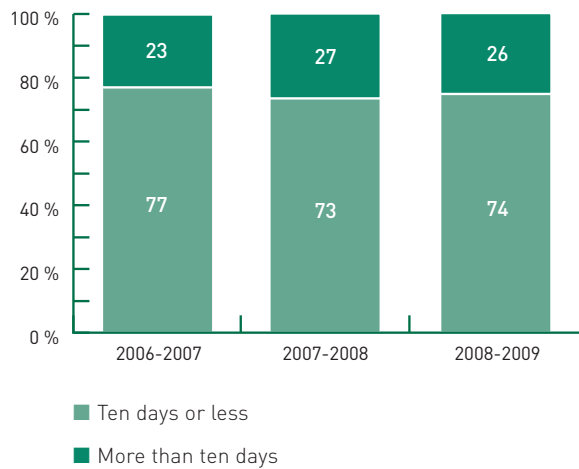
## DILIGENT PROCESSING OF COMPLAINTS

### Commitment

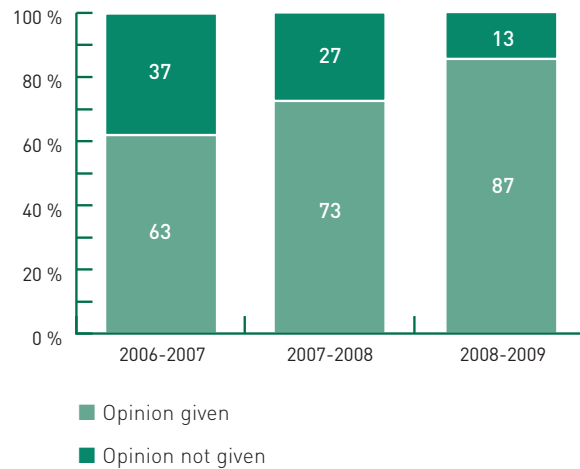
We will do everything we can to process a citizen's complaint within ten working days, and we will inform the citizen if additional time is required.

### Results

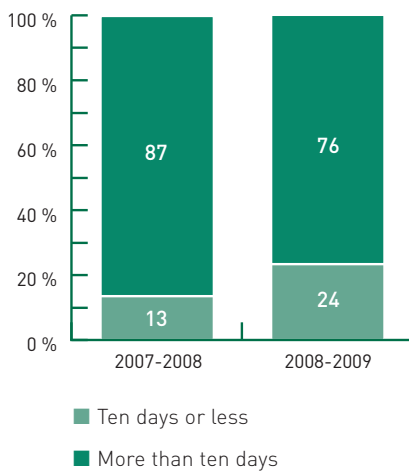
**Public service complaints processed in less than 10 days**



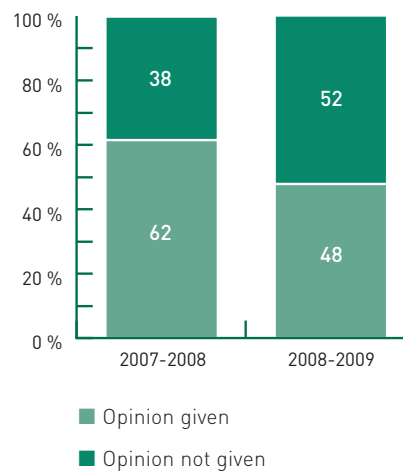
**Percentage of public service opinions**



**Health and social service complaints processed in less than 10 days**



**Percentage of health and social service opinions**



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## SERVICE QUALITY

A citizen who is dissatisfied with the service received from the Québec Ombudsman can contact the Service Quality Manager.

The Québec Ombudsman's complaint processing mechanism helps ensure good quality service by assigning responsibility to the managers concerned. For example, a complaint relating to an active file is processed by the manager responsible for the sector in question, who must also provide follow-up. A complaint concerning a file that has been closed is first examined by the service quality committee, chaired by the Ombudsperson and composed of the Deputy Ombudsman concerned, along with the Secretary General. The committee is responsible for ruling on the validity of the complaint, and where applicable it also stipulates the steps required to improve service quality, remedy any mistakes and prevent them from recurring.

In 2008-2009, 69 people submitted complaints about service quality while their files were still active, 40 did so after their files had been closed, and a handful complained at both stages. In all, 109 people submitted a total of 147 complaints<sup>5</sup> relating to service quality in 2008-2009; this number is higher than the previous year, when 99 people submitted a total of 107 complaints.

In 2008-2009, the committee and managers processed 158 complaints<sup>6</sup>, 21 of which resulted in remedial action or additional measures such as apologies or the provision of extra information.

As was the case last year, the grounds for complaint most often mentioned by complainants were conclusions, refusal to process complaints because they were inadmissible or outside the organization's jurisdiction, the review process and processing times.

Most of the grounds that were deemed to be valid, or that led to improvements, were related to conduct or communication problems.

## PROCESSING TIMES FOR COMPLAINTS RELATING TO SERVICE QUALITY

The Service Statement in force in 2008-2009 provided for a period of 10 working days to process complaints. However, this goal was set before the new complaint processing mechanism was introduced in 2007-2008. Experience has shown that the 10-day goal is difficult to achieve with the new mechanism. For example, the fact that complaints relating to closed files must be submitted to a committee – which was not the case before the current procedure was introduced – can have the effect of lengthening processing times. In all cases, too, the allegations supporting complaints must be checked and counter-checked. In addition, for the sake of fairness, everyone concerned must be given an opportunity to express their views. Also, the committee often needs additional information in order to make a well-informed decision. The 2009 Service Statement provides for a longer processing time that allows all these aspects to be taken into account.

Citizens are told about the complaint process and given an estimated processing time when they first make contact with the institution. If the issue is a complex one that is likely to take longer to process, the person is notified promptly.

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<sup>5</sup> In 2008-2009, two individuals each submitted eight complaints.

<sup>6</sup> The figure includes complaints created in last year's files.

### *Average processing times for complaints received in 2008-2009*

Complaint Processing	Average Time (Working Days)
Complaints processed by managers (during file processing)	
Reception and Review	2.5
Public Service	3.9
Health and Social Services	27.6
Complaints processed by the committee (file processing completed)	44.3

## Legislative and government requirements

Because of the Québec Ombudsman's special status in the Québec State, as an institution reporting directly to the National Assembly and therefore independent of the Government, it is not subject to requirements concerning the reduction of regulatory and administrative requirements for enterprises, sustainable development and climate change, use and quality of the French language in the public service, or the adoption of a code of ethics and good conduct for public administrators. Despite its special status, however, the Québec Ombudsman voluntarily adheres to some of these requirements, which it considers relevant to its mission and functions.

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## ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND THE PROTECTION OF PERSONAL INFORMATION

The Québec Ombudsman is governed by the Act respecting access to documents held by public bodies and the protection of personal information (Act respecting access), pursuant to section 3 of the Act.

The Québec Ombudsman complies with the requirements of both its constituting act and the Act respecting access. To comply with the Act respecting the Health and Social Services Ombudsman and the Act respecting health services and social services, it also considers certain special rules governing access to information and the protection of personal information applicable to users' complaint files.

Every year, in line with the Government Plan of Action for the Protection of Personal Information and the Regulation respecting the distribution of information and the protection of personal information, the Québec Ombudsman examines the issue of access to information and the protection of personal information in its Annual Report.

In 2008-2009, as planned, the Québec Ombudsman updated its training program on access to information and the protection of personal information, which is given to new employees when they first join the institution. All new employees are met individually, and the general principles of access to information and the protection of personal information are explained in a format adjusted to their specific needs.

The following priorities have been selected for the coming year:

- Adoption of an administrative policy based on the Regulation respecting the distribution of information and the protection of personal information;
- Updating of the internal handbook on access to information and the protection of personal information, which is used on an everyday basis by the Québec Ombudsman's personnel.

## ACCESS TO INFORMATION

In 2008-2009, the Québec Ombudsman received 38 requests for access to information pursuant to the Act respecting access to documents held by public bodies and the protection of personal information. The requests related to both the public service and the health and social services network.

Of these requests, 26 related to personal information and 11 to administrative documents. One was a request for correction of personal information.

As far as processing times are concerned, 95% of the requests for access were processed within the stipulated 20-day period. The other 5% required a 10-day extension.

In the same period, only one decision made by the officer in charge of access to information generated a request for review by the Commission d'accès à l'information in accordance with sections 135 and 137 of the Act respecting access. The Commission made two decisions involving the Québec Ombudsman, and in both these cases it upheld the decisions made by the officers concerned and rejected the requests for review. In all, seven requests for review are currently awaiting a hearing before the Commission.

### *Statistics for the last five years*

Fiscal year	Number of requests
2008-2009	38
2007-2008	43
2006-2007	60
2005-2006	45
2004-2005	38



## INFORMATION SECURITY

Information security is a constant concern for the Québec Ombudsman. The Directive on the Use of E-mail and the Internet and the Policy on the Use of Information Resources have both been updated to ensure that the institution's personnel comply with the rules currently in force. A chronicle is also posted on the Québec Ombudsman's website, as a means of raising staff awareness of the need to ensure that passwords remain secret.

The Québec Ombudsman has introduced an information security management framework and has taken certain other related steps, including a survey of existing security measures for physical assets (premises) and information assets (information technologies).

The Information Security Committee, which is composed of the Ombudsperson, the Secretary General and Legal Affairs Manager, the Information Technology and Data Management Branch Manager, and the officers responsible for the protection of personal information and information security, is in charge of implementing both the policy and the management framework. It met four times in 2008-2009.

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## USE AND QUALITY OF THE FRENCH LANGUAGE

The Québec Ombudsman has adopted a language of communication policy in line with the Charter of the French Language. It applies the provisions of the Charter relating to the language of administration, in particular with citizens who have requested action in respect of a public agency under its jurisdiction. The policy is also based on the Charter provisions relating to health services and social services, and on section 15 of the Act respecting health services and social services, which states that "English-speaking persons are entitled to receive health services and social services in the English language".

The Québec Ombudsman's policy concerning the language of communication is consistent with its mission and characteristics, as set out in the legislation it is responsible for applying, the Public Protector Act and the Act respecting the Health and Social Services Ombudsman. The Policy reflects the fact that the Québec Ombudsman receives written and verbal complaints, reports and intervention requests from citizens throughout Québec, including health and social services network users, and must help them to formulate their requests or complaints, and provide assistance with the related procedures.

The purpose of the policy is to ensure that all the institution's personnel are aware of how the Charter of the French Language and section 15 of the Act respecting health services and social services apply to the institution's activities. It provides guidelines for the choice and use of the language of communication for individual citizens, health and social services network users and government departments and agencies.

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## CONDUCT AND ETHICS

The Ombudsperson and all the institution's personnel have undertaken, under oath or in a solemn declaration, to perform their duties honestly, impartially and fairly, and not to accept any sum of money or benefit other than that granted to them in accordance with law.

The entire personnel is regularly reminded of the need for confidentiality and discretion. This is not only a legal obligation, but also an institutional value.

## Follow-up to the Auditor General's recommendations concerning resource optimization

In 2008, the Auditor General performed a resource optimization audit for the Québec Ombudsman, and the Ombudsperson accepted his five recommendations. Below is a brief review of the current status of these recommendations as of March 31, 2009.

### CONTRACTUAL MANAGEMENT

When the new Government regulations on contractual management came into force on October 8, 2008, the Québec Ombudsman decided to review its own by-laws, first to bring them into line with Government requirements, and second to ensure fairness in its handling of competitors. The new by-laws will come into force as soon as it is approved by the National Assembly Bureau.

The Québec Ombudsman also groups its calls for bids and makes use of multi-year contracts and time banks to meet occasional or recurrent needs.

These improvements are part of the institution's focus on sound management practices. Seven internal resources have been trained to ensure that the new contractual management regulation is applied properly within the institution.

## STAFFING

In 2008-2009, the Québec Ombudsman had all its managerial positions assessed by an independent specialist using the Hay method, to ensure that the level of responsibility was consistent in each case with the classification of the manager holding the position. The last such managerial job assessment took place in March 2001.

The institution also improved its administrative staffing policy, reasserting the values of transparency and fairness in the recruitment process and stipulating that positions must be filled using a merit-based approach, i.e. with at least two selection methods to assess candidates' aptitudes and skills, and then selection of the best person for the job.

## COMPLAINTS PROCESSING

The Québec Ombudsman has been working hard to improve its methods since September 2006, among other things by strengthening its investigation process. An investigation specialist was hired to study the organization's current processes and develop tools to facilitate the work of its staff, a task that was completed in January 2009. The investigation workforce received training in February 2009.

The institution's Complaint Processing Handbook is currently being updated to reflect the new investigation process, which includes a method for more complex investigations. In addition, the Québec Ombudsman has adopted a priority assessment grid for complaint processing (risk management grid), which is now used to establish the priority order for files and covers aspects such as substantiation, allocation of files to staff members, and processing by all the institution's sectors.

The Department has also set up a reference bank containing all the institution's positions and legal opinions, to ensure that anonymous conclusions are available to all investigation staff.

Lastly, the Québec Ombudsman has reinforced its directive on the approval of written and verbal conclusions, with the result that all files will in future contain evidence to the effect that the conclusions were verified by the appropriate person. Approval is also entered in the institution's file management system.

## COMPLAINT PROCESSING TIMES

The Québec Ombudsman sets great store in the quality of its services, and seeks the best ways of dispensing them as quickly as possible without sacrificing rigour and ensuring that all aspects are covered by its conclusions concerning complaints and reports.

This year, the institution continued its in-depth analysis of complaint processing times, begun in 2007-2008.

The goal of the analysis is to identify the factors that cause delays, where they originate, and how far the institution can control them. For example, when requesting essential documents from Government departments and agencies or health and social services institutions, the Québec Ombudsman has less control than for its own internal work organization. Reminders are important tools in fulfilling its external role. As for its internal work processes, they have been carefully examined to identify ways of improving processing times.

Existing optimization measures have helped to reduce delays in some cases. For example, since April 1, 2008, complaints and reports relating to health and social services issues and appeals from decisions by local and regional commissioners are examined by a team that reviews their admissibility and settles some of the less complex cases. During the year, 327 complaints, reports and requests for help were settled within an average period of 20 days, whereas previously the process would have taken several months. Efforts are continuing to reduce processing times even further. The priority grid and new investigation methods introduced in late February 2009 will help the Québec Ombudsman to manage urgent and complex issues and still leave it the flexibility to deal with longer-term matters.

A productivity analysis is currently underway, and performance indicators are being identified. Both these activities will be completed in the coming year, and are expected to be implemented by 2010-2011.

## REPORTING

The Québec Ombudsman considers the reporting process to be extremely important, and uses both the Government guide and the Auditor General's recommendations as its basis. In particular, it ensures that reports, wherever possible, allow for comparisons over several fiscal years, and all financial data is subjected to special checks. In addition, its new telephone system and the monitoring process for complaints about its own service now allow it to report accurately on its activities in these areas.

# Appendices

## COLLABORATORS

The Québec Ombudsman would like to thank its collaborators, whether permanent, temporary or contractual. Their professionalism and commitment have helped the institution to achieve its mission. They are:

### **Ombudsperson's Office**

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### **Office of the Deputy Ombudsman, Prevention and Innovation**

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## COMPARATIVE TABLE – JURISDICTIONS OF CANADIAN PARLIAMENTARY OMBUDSMAN AND REQUESTS PROCESSED

This table presents the fields of jurisdiction of the Parliamentary Ombudsman in Canada's provinces and territories, along with the number of requests received and processed in fiscal year 2007-2008 or calendar year 2007<sup>7</sup>.

Province, territory and population <sup>8</sup>	Government departments and agencies <sup>9</sup>	State corporations <sup>9</sup>	Educational network	Youth	Correctional services	Municipal network	Health	Total number of complaints and requests for information received			Requests for services closed
								J	NJ	Total	
Alberta 3,290,000 inhab.	J	J	NJ	NJ	J	NJ	J	413	4,690	5,103	683
British Columbia 4,113,000 inhab.	J	J	J	NJ	J	J	J	6,896	1,757	8,653	5,950
Manitoba 1,148,000 inhab.	J	J	NJ	NJ	J	J	J	174	1	175	203
New Brunswick 730,000 inhab.	J	J	J	J	J	J	J	1,964 (complaints only)	777 (complaints only)	2,741 complaints + 666 requests for information	1,757
Nova Scotia 913,000 inhab. <sup>10</sup>	J	J	J	J	J	J	J	1,623	628	2,251	1,559
Ontario 12,160,000 inhab.	J	J	NJ	NJ	J	NJ	NJ	11,117	5,637	16,754	16,213
Québec 7,546,000 inhab.	J	NJ	NJ	NJ <sup>11</sup>	J	NJ	J	9,800	10,381	20,181	21,259
Saskatchewan 968,000 inhab.	J	J	NJ	NJ	J	NJ	J	2,119	1,009	3,128	2,316
Newfoundland and Labrador 505,000 inhab.	J	J	J	NJ	J	NJ	J	248	n.d.	248	n.d.
Yukon 30,000 inhab.	J	J	J	NJ	J	J	J	35 (complaints only)	16 (complaints only)	51 complaints + 122 requests for information	32

J: Jurisdiction NJ: No jurisdiction n.a.: information not available

<sup>7</sup> Prince Edward Island, Nunavut and the Northwest Territories do not appear in the table because they do not have a Parliamentary Ombudsman.

<sup>8</sup> Source: STATISTICS CANADA. *Population and Dwelling Counts, for Canada, Provinces and Territories, 2006 and 2001 Censuses – 100% Data* (Table), Population and Dwelling Count Highlight Tables, 2006 Census, [online], 2007.

<sup>9</sup> In Québec, these corporations include Hydro-Québec and Loto-Québec among others.

<sup>10</sup> These statistics were published in *Annual accountability report for the fiscal year 2007-2008*.

<sup>11</sup> Although the Québec Ombudsman processes complaints concerning youth centres, it has no jurisdiction over the decisions of Youth Protection Directors.



We would like to thank everyone, in all departments of the Québec Ombudsman, who contributed to this publication.

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