



Office of the Integrity Commissioner -
Ontario Public Service

Bureau du commissaire à l'intégrité -
Fonction publique de l'Ontario

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Integrity Commissioner Releases Statement Regarding Disclosure of Potential Wrongdoing filed in relation to the Niagara Parks Commission

Toronto – The Integrity Commissioner of Ontario today has released a statement regarding the disclosure of potential wrongdoing filed in July 2008 with the Office of the Integrity Commissioner.

The disclosure related to certain conduct on the part of the Chair of the Niagara Parks Commission. As the Commissioner is required to do under the *Public Service of Ontario Act, 2006*, the matter was referred to the Secretary of Cabinet for investigation.

The Government Investigation concluded that there was no wrongdoing committed by the Chair but that there were other issues that required action on the part of the Government. The Integrity Commissioner has determined that she is satisfied with the Government's response and will not be commencing an investigation of her own.

The Integrity Commissioner has made the following recommendations:

Recommendation 1

To instill public confidence in the ability of the Board of the NPC to provide robust transparent oversight in accordance with its mandate, it is recommended that the Government commence – on a priority basis – the following reviews, support and training to which it has committed, establishing clear timelines for completion and appropriate public reporting of the timelines, status and outcomes of its work:

- 1. The Ontario Internal Audit Division will conduct a thorough review of the procurement and lease processes to determine whether NPC's policies and controls are appropriate and consistent with best practices.*
- 2. The Ontario Internal Audit Division will lead an audit of recent procurement practices and prepare a report for the Ministry of Tourism to articulate if there are instances where procurement was not consistent with policy and best practice.*
- 3. The Ministry of Tourism will provide guidance to the NPC to facilitate more open and accountable behaviours with respect to their business decisions.*

4. *The Ministry of Tourism will ensure that additional Board governance training is delivered to the NPC, which will include detailed information on informed decision-making and conflicts of interest.*
5. *The Niagara Parks Commission will be the first agency reviewed in the context of the Ministry of Tourism's separate governance review of all of its agencies.*

Recommendation 2

To instill public confidence in the Board and to dispel any notion that the decision to renew the Maid of the Mist lease was one made without full information or due process, it is recommended that in the course of the Ministry review of the lease renewal, the Ministry provide the Board the opportunity to review its decision with the benefit of knowing the Government's expectations regarding Revenue Generating Opportunities and sound agency governance and with full knowledge of all the expressions of interest received in relation to the boat-related tourist attraction in Niagara Falls.

The Integrity Commissioner's statement is available online at <http://www.oico.on.ca/dow/DOWweb.nsf/htmlDocs/home?openDocument>.

The Integrity Commissioner of Ontario, an Officer of the Legislative Assembly and independent from government, is responsible for five key areas – members' integrity, lobbyist registration, the review of Ministers and opposition leaders' expenses, ministers' staff ethical conduct and the public service disclosure of wrongdoing (whistleblowing). These responsibilities are outlined in the *Members' Integrity Act, 1994*, the *Lobbyist Registration Act, 1998*, *Cabinet Ministers' and Opposition Leaders' Expenses Review and Accountability Act, 2002* and the *Public Service of Ontario Act, 2006*.

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