



ROYAL NEWFOUNDLAND CONSTABULARY  
PUBLIC COMPLAINTS COMMISSION

Royal Newfoundland Constabulary  
Public Complaints Commission  
Annual Report  
2024-25

## Message from the Commissioner

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In keeping with the requirements of a Category 3 Entity under the **Transparency and Accountability Act**, I am pleased to present the Annual Activity Report on behalf of the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary Public Complaints Commission for the period April 1, 2024 to March 31, 2025.

This Annual Report was prepared under my direction, and I accept accountability for the actual results reported.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Twila Reid", is displayed on a light gray, textured rectangular background.

**Twila Reid**  
Commissioner

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## Overview

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The Royal Newfoundland Constabulary Public Complaints Commission (the RNCPC or the Commission) operates pursuant to Part III of the **Royal Newfoundland Constabulary Act, 1992**. The sole Commissioner is appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council and serves on a part-time basis, supported by a team consisting of an alternate Commissioner(s) for conflicts, a full-time Manager, a full-time Administrative Assistant/Legal Secretary, two Investigator positions, a Chief Adjudicator and 12 Adjudicators. The Commission functions as an independent, quasi-judicial body. The Commissioner and the adjudicators make considered and reasoned decisions at arms-length from Government, and the Commission is required by section 39 of the **Royal Newfoundland Constabulary Act, 1992** to report at least annually to the House of Assembly.

The Commission is located at 120 Conception Bay Highway Suite 114 Villa Nova Plaza Conception Bay South. The office is open to the public. Where possible, Commission hearings are conducted from this location.

The Commission provides civilian oversight to public complaints made regarding the conduct of members of the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary (RNC) and offers redress by appeal to members of the public or police officers who are dissatisfied with the disciplinary decisions of the Chief of Police.

The process made available by the Commission is designed to be a user-friendly and inclusive avenue for the public to express dissatisfaction with the conduct of RNC police officers employed by the province. The Commission is normally reactive, acting on written and signed complaints from persons claiming to be adversely affected by police actions. Occasionally, the Commission may independently make recommendations to the RNC respecting matters of concern or interest to the public relating to police services. The Commission is committed to providing equitable and gender affirming services in accordance with the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador's commitment to Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+).

### Mandate

The Lieutenant-Governor in Council shall, on the recommendation of the Minister of Justice and Public Safety, appoint a panel of persons to act as adjudicators to conduct hearings into complaints made against police officers. The Act states that hearings are to be conducted without delay giving full opportunity to all parties to present evidence and make representations. It is the responsibility of the Commissioner of the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary Public Complaints Commission to determine which matters are referred to the adjudicators for hearing. The Commission does not present separate Lines of Business as they are reflected in the Mandate.

## Vision

An environment where the public has access to established mechanisms of review of complaints concerning RNC police conduct.

## Primary Clients

The primary clients of the RNCPCCC are those people who are party to a complaint. Section 26(7) of the **Royal Newfoundland Constabulary Act, 1992** identifies those that are party to a public complaint as the Chief, the complainant and the police officer against whom the complaint was made.

## Complaints Process

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### Chief of Police Investigation and Reports:

After a complaint is received by the RNCPCCC, a copy is sent to the Chief of Police of the RNC. The subject of the complaint is then informed of the substance of the complaint. A complaint may also be submitted at any RNC detachment office. The detachment office will forward such complaints to the RNCPCCC.

The Chief of Police then designates a member of the RNC Professional Standards Section to conduct an investigation into the complaint. Or, rarely, the Chief of Police refers the matter back to the RNCPCCC without an investigation by the Professional Standards Section.

Upon completion of the Professional Standards Section investigation, an investigative report will be forwarded to the Chief of Police within three months of the complaint being filed or received, not including the time during which the complaint may have been suspended.

The Chief or Deputy Chief of Police shall consider the complaint, and they may:

- (a) With the agreement of all parties, reach an informal resolution to the complaint
- (b) Dismiss the complaint
- (c) If the complaint concerns the policies or procedures of the Constabulary, the Chief, or Deputy, take whatever action is considered appropriate, if any, or
- (d) Discipline the police officer(s) who is/are the subject of the complaint

The complainant and the police officer(s) who is/are the subject of a complaint shall be informed in writing of the dismissal of the complaint, or of the discipline imposed and the reasons for that dismissal or discipline.

### **Review by the RNCPC:**

A complainant or police officer who is not satisfied with any of the foregoing decisions may contact the RNCPC to request a review of the decision of the Chief of Police. The parties have 15 days from the date of the decision to file an appeal.

The Commissioner will review the matter, and staff has broad powers to investigate. Documents must be made available upon request and individuals can be required to answer questions.

Following an investigation by the RNCPC, the Commissioner may:

- (a) Dismiss the complaint and confirm the decision of the Chief of Police; if the Commissioner does not confirm the decision of the Chief of Police, but is satisfied that the subject matter is frivolous or vexatious, the complaint has been abandoned or withdrawn, or that there is insufficient evidence supporting the complaint to justify a public hearing, the Commissioner shall decline to take further action on the complaint;
- (b) With the consent of the parties, effect an informal resolution/mediation of the complaint; or
- (c) Refer the matter to the Chief Adjudicator for a hearing before an independent Adjudicator.

### **Adjudicator's Hearing:**

When a hearing before an Adjudicator is ordered, the complainant and the officer(s) involved will be notified in writing of the date and place of the hearing. Each party has a right to attend and take part in the hearing and to be represented by counsel. The hearing will be open to the public unless the Adjudicator otherwise determines. All parties will receive a copy of the Adjudicator's decision.

### **A Complaint against the Chief of Police:**

When a complaint has been made against the Chief of Police, the complaint shall be immediately taken up by the Commissioner as if that complaint were an Appeal to the Commissioner as outlined above.

More information on the RNCPC can be found on [www.gov.nl.ca/rncpc](http://www.gov.nl.ca/rncpc).

## Highlights and Partnerships

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### Professional Association:

The RNCPCCC is a proud member of the Canadian Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement (CACOLE). CACOLE is a national non-profit organization of individuals and agencies involved in the oversight of police officers in Canada. CACOLE is dedicated to advancing the concept, principles and application of civilian oversight of law enforcement throughout Canada and abroad. The RNCPCCC has been involved since the establishment of CACOLE in 1997. Being a member of CACOLE keeps the RNCPCCC apprised of the latest trends in civilian oversight, both in Canada and abroad.

CACOLE members represent diverse organizations - municipal and provincial police boards and commissions, First Nations, provincial and federal oversight agencies, ombudsman offices, police associations and professional standard bureaus. Additionally, CACOLE members work with organizations in justice, rights, and advocacy agencies and representatives of community agencies and police services from Canada, the United States, Great Britain, Northern Ireland, Portugal and other European countries.

For more information, please visit CACOLE's website at: [www.cacole.ca](http://www.cacole.ca).

### Activities:

From May 27 to 29, 2024, a representative from the RNCPCCC attended the annual CACOLE conference, which was held in Calgary, Alberta. This year's topics included: body worn cameras, the effects of trauma, restorative complaint resolution, the role of media in police-public interactions, legal developments impacting policing and police oversight, and building trust and respect between provincial police oversight agencies and Indigenous police services.

On June 6, 2024, members of the RNCPCCC presented to the RNC cadet recruits. The presentation was held at the RNC training facility in St. John's and provided the cadets with an overview of the RNCPCCC as well as discussion related to oversight in this province and across Canada.

From October 29 to 30, 2024, representatives from the RNCPCCC met with the national oversight Heads of Agency in Ottawa. Meetings provided a forum for each of the provincial police oversight and review agencies to learn from one another, discuss mutual challenges and share best practices. Topics focused on Indigenous cultural competence in policing oversight, enhancing organization effectiveness, police

accountability and independence, current trends and the future of policing strengthening cooperation and collaboration across agencies, as well as the future of civilian oversight of law enforcement in Canada.

On December 6, 2024, representatives from the RNCPCCC attended Indigenous Cultural Diversity Training through First Light NL. This training opportunity was beneficial to the RNCPCCC as it recognizes the importance of having a more in-depth understanding about the culture of Indigenous groups within Newfoundland and Labrador.

### Complaints and Appeals

During fiscal year 2024-25, the Commission received 1,586 phone and e-mail inquiries from the public regarding the complaints process, as well as requesting information on policing.

The following table provides an overview of operational activities of the Commission during this reporting period.

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Total</b>
Complaints carried forward from previous years	73
Complaints filed during 2024-25	114
Total active public complaints as of March 31, 2025	79
Files concluded	58
Appeals filed to RNCPCCC	3
Appeals concluded	2
Appeals carried forward from previous years	8
Total active appeals as of March 31, 2025	1
Public hearings in progress as of March 31, 2025	0
Referrals to Chief Adjudicator to conduct a public hearing	0
Appeals to the Trial Division of the Supreme Court of NL	5
Complaints transferred from Chief of Police for Investigation	0

## Summary of Complaints by Type of Alleged Misconduct

### Conduct

(Under subsection 3(1) of the **Royal Newfoundland Constabulary Public Complaints Regulations**)

<b>3. (1) Conduct</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>%</b>
3. (1)(a) Improper/Unlawful Arrest	2	2%
3. (1)(b) Unnecessary Force	7	6%
3. (1)(c) Discourtesy	16	14%
3. (1)(d) Lack of Service	23	20%
3. (1)(e) Lack of Investigation	41	36%
3. (1)(g) Contravention of Policy	7	6%
3. (1)(j) Conduct Unbecoming	5	4%
Submitted in Error	13	12%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Report on Performance

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### Issue: Oversight of Complaints as per Part III of the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary Act, 1992

As required by its enabling legislation, the Commission serves as an avenue of redress for members of the public wishing to file a complaint about the conduct of an officer or the operational policies or procedures governing the way a police officer discharges their duties. The objective for the Commission is consistent for the 2023-26 planning period and the associated indicators will be reported for each year of the planning period.

**Objective:** By March 31 each year, the RNC Public Complaints Commission will have responded to complaints from the public as per Part III of the **Royal Newfoundland Constabulary Act, 1992**.

Indicator	Results
Complaints reviewed to ensure compliance with Part III of the <b>Royal Newfoundland Constabulary Act, 1992</b> .	All 114 complaints filed during this period were reviewed to ensure compliance with the Act.
Number of compliant complaints accepted.	All 114 filed complaints were accepted.
Registered complaints investigated or delegated, as required.	None of the registered complaints were deemed to be outside the Commission's jurisdiction. The remaining 114 new complaints were investigated, in addition to 73 files carried over from previous years.
All appeals investigated.	Three appeals were received and were investigated in fiscal year 2024-25.
Decisions on appeals rendered.	Three appeals were received in fiscal year 2024-25. Two Decisions were rendered on these appeals as additional investigative processes that would inform the decisions have not yet concluded.
Complaints dismissed by Commissioner.	38 complaints were dismissed by the Commissioner in fiscal year 2024-25. Eighteen complaints were also withdrawn in fiscal year 2024-25, and one was resolved by informal resolution after an RNCPC investigation.

## Opportunities and Challenges

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Investigations of citizen complaints concerning police conduct present challenges not found in other kinds of regulatory investigations. Police officers exercise exclusive rights to the use of non-negotiable force. However, victims of police misconduct may feel violated because they expect police to behave protectively, professionally, and fairly, and now believe the officer behaved in an unfair or unprofessional way.

The Commission's Investigators are, by definition, impartial, neutral, and fact gatherers. Investigators must balance being empathetic to the complainant with not offering an opinion or judgment on their allegations.

To both parties, the Investigator cannot guarantee anything more than a thorough investigation, by being fair and by focusing on how the Commission's independence counters favoritism or bias and supports impartiality. This professional approach will reassure the public (even if there is no finding of fault) that the public complaints process is fair, independent and thorough and their allegations were investigated.

If the allegations are substantiated, the benefit comes not only to the complainant but also to the police agency which, hopefully, learn from the complaint and make any recommended changes to policies or procedures.

The Commission endeavours to have informal resolution and mediation options available at various stages of the complaint process. However, presently this is only formally available at the appeal stage. The RNCPC has provided informal resolution to complainants, and they have reported positive experiences from the process.

Informal resolution and mediation are beneficial as it could address and resolve certain matters at an earlier stage in the process and provide more satisfaction and confidence in the complaint process. The Commission recognizes this as an important opportunity to further support complainants and provide timely resolutions. The Commission will continue to review opportunities for informal resolutions for the benefit of all stakeholders.

As part of this year's reporting process, we provided the Chief of Police with a summary of RNCPC recommendations from the past four years and formally requested a status update on their implementation.

## Financial Statements

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Expenditure and revenue figures included in this document are based on public information provided in the Report on the Program Expenditures and Revenues of the Consolidated Revenue Fund for Fiscal Year ended 31 March 2025 (unaudited).

### 4.1.03 RNC Public Complaints Commission

	Actual \$	Estimates	
		Amended \$	Original \$
01. Salaries.....	191,264	191,300	122,900
Operating Accounts			
Employee Benefits.....	2,692	2,700	1,300
Transportation and Communications.....	6,707	6,300	4,800
Supplies.....	770	800	800
Professional Services.....	386,097	470,000	205,100
Purchased Services.....	3,646	3,900	1,300
Property, Furnishings and Equipment.....	1,416	1,300	-
02. Operating Accounts.....	401,329	485,000	213,300
<b>Total: RNC Public Complaints Commission</b>	<b>592,593</b>	<b>676,300</b>	<b>336,200</b>

## Contact Us

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