

NEWS RELEASE

An all-party subcommittee created by the Members' Services Board of the Yukon Legislative Assembly announced on March 23, 2012 that it would be recommending the appointment of Tim Koepke as the Ombudsman/Information and Privacy Commissioner for Yukon.

Tim Koepke is a professional engineer and Canada and British Columbia land surveyor who became a consultant to the federal government Yukon land claim negotiating team in 1987 after 24 years' association with the Underhill Group of companies, the last 18 of which were spent as a senior partner. His consulting activities included land and resource development projects in British Columbia, Yukon and the Northwest Territories. He has lived in Whitehorse for 42 years, during which time he has served on the boards of Yukon corporations, numerous professional associations and service organizations. He has been elected a Life Member of the Association of Professional Engineers of Yukon and the Association of BC Land Surveyors and as an Honorary Life Member of the Association of Canada Lands Surveyors for which he also serves as a Special Examiner.

Mr. Koepke has worked with Government of Canada as a Chief Federal Negotiator. Since his appointment in 1987, Mr. Koepke has been involved with negotiations for the 11 completed Yukon Land Claim settlements as well as transboundary files in northern BC for the Federal Treaty Negotiation Office in Vancouver. He has also represented Canada in negotiations between governments, First Nations and Athabasca oil sands producers in an attempt to reach agreement on long-term benefits. Mr. Koepke was the Chief Federal Negotiator for the Tsawwassen First Nation treaty settlement in the Vancouver area that came into effect in April 2009. Following the completion of the Tsawwassen treaty Mr. Koepke was assigned the 'Namgis First Nation file in the Alert Bay area of northern Vancouver Island.

Tracy-Anne McPhee's term as Ombudsman/Information & Privacy Commissioner ends on April 7, 2012.

The Ombudsman Act requires that the Ombudsman be appointed by the Commissioner in Executive Council on receipt of the recommendation of the Legislative Assembly made by at least two-thirds of the members of the Legislative Assembly. It is expected that the required motion will be debated during the 2012 Spring Sitting. The Ombudsman is appointed to a five-year term and may be reappointed.

The all-party subcommittee created by the Members' Services Board consists of Hon. Doug Graham, Jan Stick and Sandy Silver. This subcommittee was given responsibility for recruiting a nominee to be placed before the Assembly for its consideration. It placed advertisements inviting applications in local newspapers on February 1 and 3. A total of 16 applications were received. Following short listing, the subcommittee conducted interviews on March 14, 2012.

The Ombudsman is an independent officer of the Legislative Assembly who, in accordance with the provisions of the Ombudsman Act, reviews administrative directions of the Government of Yukon by investigating complaints against departments, agencies, boards and commissions and submitting reports or taking other appropriate action in response to those complaints. The Ombudsman also serves as the Yukon's Information and Privacy Commissioner and, as such, is charged with fulfilling the duties of that position in accordance with the provisions of the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act. These duties include conducting reviews into decisions respecting access to records of departments and agencies of the Government of Yukon.

Contact: Helen Fitzsimmons
Legislative Assembly Office 667-5618