

s.19(1)

Minister  
of National Defence



Ministre  
de la Défense nationale

Ottawa, Canada K1A 0K2

JUL 20 1998

Ms. Wendy Lill, M.P.  
House of Commons  
Ottawa ON K1A 0A6

Dear Ms. Lill:

Thank you for your letter of June 5, 1998, on behalf of your constituent, [REDACTED] concerning his harassment complaint. I apologize for the delay in responding.

The Department of National Defence does not tolerate harassment of any kind, and views all incidents of harassment very seriously. Departmental policy requires every complaint of harassment, sexual harassment or abuse of authority to be appropriately investigated without prejudice or bias. In the case of [REDACTED] the Chief of the Maritime Staff in Ottawa and Maritime Staff in Halifax have spent considerable time and effort attempting to resolve [REDACTED]'s complaint. His allegations have been investigated and recorded formally in a written report. It is felt that no amount of further investigation will shed light on exactly what transpired. [REDACTED]'s complaint focuses on an incident of alleged behaviour by a co-worker [REDACTED] in [REDACTED]. The alleged behaviour was directed not at [REDACTED] but at a third party supervisor who was not present at the time. As described by [REDACTED] the alleged behaviour would certainly be considered highly disrespectful of the supervisor and is certainly not condoned. While disrespectful, the alleged behaviour is not viewed as an incident of sexual harassment as defined by the Treasury Board, but as potential personal harassment given [REDACTED]'s strong reaction to the event. The impact of witnessing this alleged behaviour has apparently caused [REDACTED] considerable stress and anxiety despite efforts by his chain of command to resolve the issue both at the time, and over the two years that have followed.

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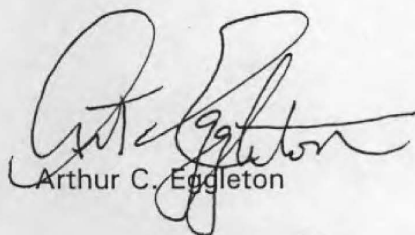
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██████████ first requested an investigation in ██████████ while employed in a shore billet. Although almost a year had passed since the alleged incident occurred, and ██████████ had been posted ashore since ██████████ immediate steps were taken to have the incident investigated. Despite the passage of time and the ship's operational status, the resultant investigation was well documented and able to conclude that the co-worker denied the alleged behaviour, and that there had been no witnesses to the incident. The investigation further revealed that, although ██████████ had spoken to his supervisor shortly after the alleged incident, he repeatedly stated that he did not wish to pursue the matter further. A copy of this investigation was provided to ██████████ who, as you are aware, was not satisfied and requested further inquiries by an external investigator. ██████████ is fully aware of his right to approach the Canadian Human Rights Commission with his complaint.

Subsequent review of this case by maritime staff in Ottawa also concluded that further investigation, and ██████████'s offer to undergo a lie detector test, would not significantly alter the results obtained. It was noted that ██████████'s complaint, and the disrespectful behaviour described, underscores one of the many challenges facing the navy as the Department of National Defence embraces new policies for gender integration, harassment and interpersonal relationships. The Department's Standard Harassment and Racism Prevention training program and the navy's Good Working Relationships program are but two examples of a renewed and sustained emphasis on individual respect for one's peers, subordinates and supervisors. These views, as they related to ██████████'s complaint, were conveyed to Maritime Forces Atlantic in a letter dated April 27, 1998. The Chief of the Maritime Staff will arrange a meeting at the earliest opportunity with Mr. Fudge to review these issues thoroughly.

Once again, thank you for your representation. I hope the foregoing will assist you in responding to your constituent.

Sincerely,



Arthur C. Eggleton

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