



Solicitor General  
of Canada

Solliciteur général  
du Canada

The Honourable  
Elmer MacKay

L'honorable  
Elmer MacKay

CONFIDENTIAL

Commissioner R.H. Simmonds  
Royal Canadian Mounted Police  
1200 Alta Vista Drive  
Ottawa, Ontario  
K1A 0R2

Dear Commissioner Simmonds:

This is in reply to your letter of August 7, 1984 to my predecessor concerning your proposal for a Force policy to govern the recruitment and retention of homosexuals.

I have reviewed the Aide-Mémoire outlining the rationale for the Force's position on homosexuality, the draft Commissioner's Standing Order that you have had prepared, and your public statements on this issue before the House of Commons Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs. I understand your position that public expectations of the RCMP and the sensitivities of Force members about working with homosexuals are factors to be taken into account in considering their employment in the Force. The recruitment of homosexuals raises a range of difficulties for the Force, not unlike those experienced by other Government and private sector institutions. I have some concerns about whether the employment considerations relating to Force recruitment practices will sustain a prohibition from hiring as a bona fide condition of employment. This of course leads to the more fundamental question of whether such a policy position should be adopted at all.

I am particularly concerned that a serving member who, in all other respects may be performing satisfactorily or better, could under the proposed Standing Order be summarily dismissed from the Force as a consequence of the chance discovery of his or her homosexuality. I believe that all serving members should enjoy the same rights and privileges of job security and due process and that discharge from the Force should be based only on objective public behaviour such as poor performance or unbecoming conduct.

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Ottawa, Canada  
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I would, therefore, ask that the proposed Commissioner's Standing Order not be issued until we have had an opportunity to discuss fully your concerns over homosexuality for the RCMP and ensure that any course of action considered is politically, legally, and administratively appropriate.

Yours sincerely,

Elmer MacKay, P.C., Q.C., M.P.