



National Defence

Défense nationale

Deputy Minister

Sous-ministre

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Ottawa, Ontario
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Ottawa, (Ontario)
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The Honourable John Williamson
Chair, Standing Committee on Public Accounts
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario
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Dear Mr. Williamson,

As agreed upon in the Government Response to the 10th Report of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts entitled *Report 5, Canadian Armed Forces Housing, of the Fall 2015 Reports of the Auditor General of Canada*, National Defence submits its update on Recommendation 1.

Sincerely,

Bill Matthews

Enclosures: 2

**Response to the Standing Committee on Public Accounts
Report 5, Canadian Armed Forces Housing, of the Fall 2015 Reports of the Auditor
General of Canada**

Recommendation 1

That the Department of National Defence provide the House of Commons Standing Committee on Public Accounts with its new operational requirements for military housing by 30 June 2017, and its revised accommodation policy by 31 December 2018.

Background

In its 2015 audit of Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) housing, the Auditor General recommended that National Defence complete a review of its military housing policy. National Defence agreed and committed to producing a revised accommodation policy by fall 2017. As reported previously to the Committee, National Defence acknowledged challenges in completing the policy review. It developed a new work plan to complete a review of the living accommodations policy suite by spring 2024.

CAF housing policy is guided by the following:

- An overarching regulatory framework (Queen's Regulations and Orders);
- Corresponding departmental policy communicated through orders and directives (Defence Administrative Orders and Directives); as well as
- The Living Accommodation Instruction to guide personnel in implementing the policy.

The living accommodations regulatory and policy suite is intended to align these three component parts.

In the interest of transparency and accountability, in June 2020, National Defence provided the Committee with a timeline illustrating the key steps and milestones required to complete the review. National Defence also committed to updating the Committee every six months – by 31 December and 30 June of each year – until the review is complete and the new policy suite is in place.

Since June 2020, National Defence has provided six updates to the Committee. In its June 2023 update, National Defence reported that it remained on schedule to meet the overall completion of the living accommodations policies by spring 2024. National Defence also reported that in relation to relevant QR&Os, it had finalized the regulatory drafting instructions and these instructions were submitted to the Department of Justice on time to complete the regulatory amendment package.

Please find the December 2023 update below regarding progress on the QR&Os, orders and directives, and the Living Accommodations Instruction, as well as next steps regarding implementation.

Reviewing the Queen's Regulations and Orders (QR&Os)

As per the attached timeline, the legal review and associated regulatory amendment package is near completion, which is being developed in concert with the Department of Justice. This

process will serve to ensure harmonization between the regulations and policies, as well as closer alignment with the National Joint Council, *Isolated Post and Federal Housing Directive*. It is expected to be complete by spring 2024.

Reviewing the Defence Administrative Orders and Directives

Since June 2023, National Defence has continued with the development of a new departmental policy. Once completed in spring 2024, it will provide departmental guidance regarding the types of living accommodations available, and outline the policy guidance for the requirements, eligibility, allocation, and charges/fees for National Defence residential housing.

A last set of updates are currently being incorporated by the policy drafters. National Defence is moving forward with the review and development of these living accommodations orders and directives, to ensure the review is completed on time by spring 2024.

Reviewing the Living Accommodations Instruction

Since the June 2023 update, National Defence has continued its review of the Living Accommodations Instruction concurrently with the orders and directives review. This process will ensure the harmonization of the three component parts of the living accommodations regulatory and policy suite to ensure there are no legal or policy conflicts. This work is expected to be completed on time.

As per the policy suite timeline, stakeholder consultations continue concurrently to the drafting and revising of the Instruction, as well as Gender-Based Analysis Plus and internal governance committee reviews. This will ensure that feedback from relevant stakeholders and subject matter experts is included in the update.

Approval and Implementation Phase

In order to execute these regulatory and policy changes effectively and coherently throughout the organization, an implementation phase has been added, and is outlined in the attached updated timeline.

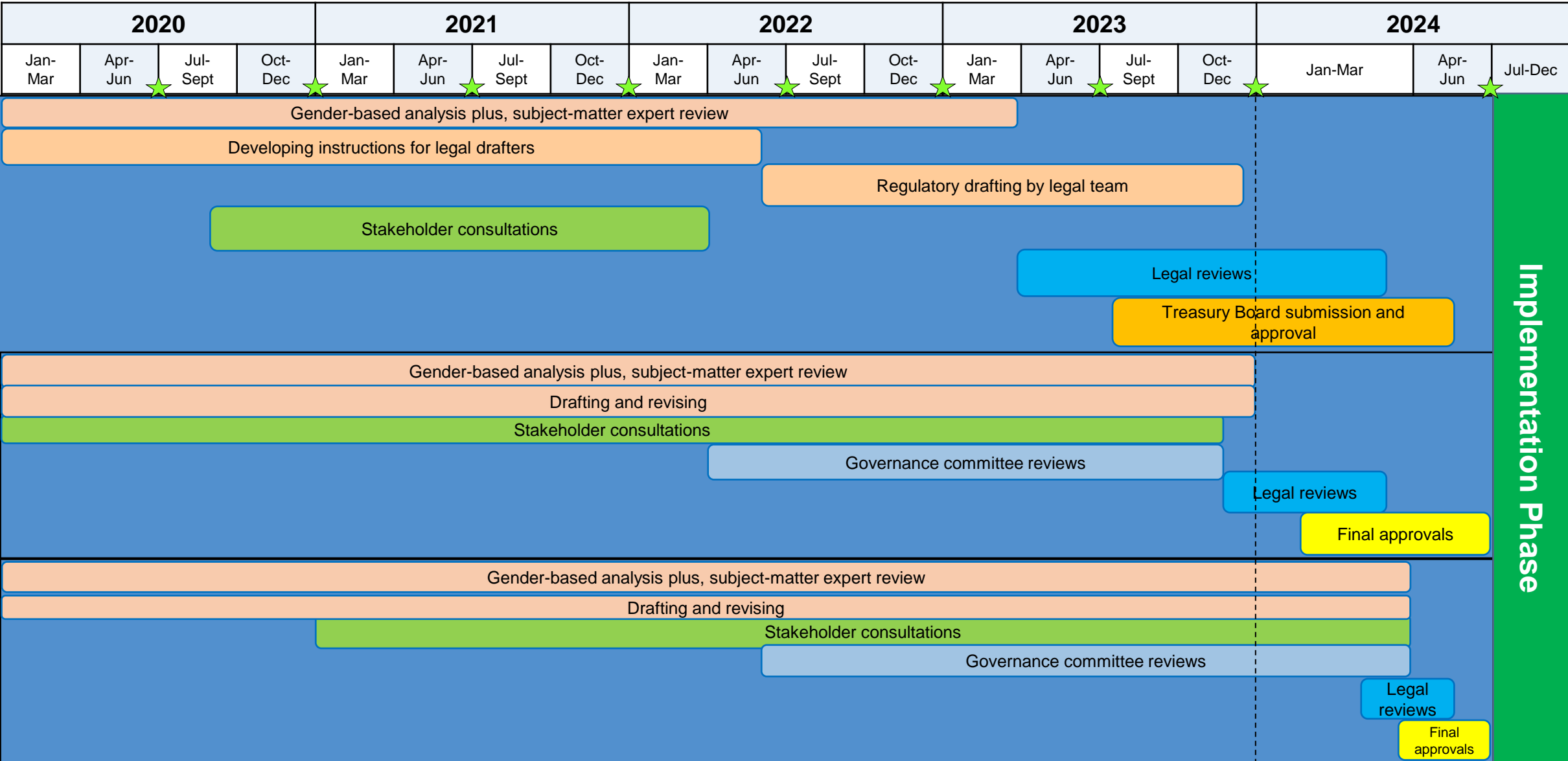
It is expected that the regulatory and policy updates as described under the OAG's audit will be approved on time or slightly ahead of schedule. Then, an implementation phase will commence to allow for the proper training of staff, to update local process tools, and to implement a comprehensive communication plan aimed at advising all applicable stakeholders, administrators and CAF members of the updates. While the approval of the regulatory and policy suite will be on time (spring 2024), it will come into force on 1 December 2024, to ensure a smooth transition.

Future updates to the Committee

National Defence will provide the Committee with a progress update on the living accommodations policy suite review by 30 June 2024.

*Updated *Living Accommodations Policy Suite Timeline* is included as Appendix A.

Living Accommodation Policy Suite Timeline



★ = semi-annual PACP update due June 30 and December 31