



## FACT SHEET

ETHI COMMITTEE APPEARANCE 2023-10-16

# Communications and Engagement

## KEY MESSAGES

### Looking back at 2022-23

- In 2022-23, the Office met with over **700** stakeholders through **78** presentations to lobbyists, public office holders, and other interested parties, such as universities and international organizations.
    - So far in this fiscal year, we have met with **4 195** stakeholders through **61** presentations or meetings in Canada and internationally.
  - The Office received **68** media inquiries in 2022-23, nearly double the number received in the previous year. The vast majority of these were related to the renewal of the Lobbyists' Code of Conduct.
    - So far in this fiscal year, we have received 33 media inquiries, on par with the number during the same period last year.
  - In December 2022, the Council on Governmental Ethics Laws Conference met in Montréal for their annual conference. The Office presented in two sessions:
    - Commissioner Bélanger provided an update on developments in the Canadian lobbying landscape at the Council on Governmental Ethics Laws Conference.
    - Commissioner Bélanger and senior policy analyst Scott Whamond were panelists in a session on finding a balance between being clear versus overly precise in rules and standards to promote greater compliance. Legal literacy experts gave high marks to the OCL's efforts in using plain language in updating the Lobbyists' Code of Conduct.
    - The 2023 conference will continue to see participation from the Office. Commissioner Bélanger has once again been invited to provide an update on developments in the Canadian lobbying landscape and will also be a panelist on a session about legislative changes. The Office's communications manager will be included on a panel on leveraging data.
  - Each year, we participate in two meetings with the Lobbyists Registrars and Commissioners Network (LRCN) to share best practices and provide updates related to our respective regimes. Meetings take place once virtually and once in person.
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## STATISTICS

	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24*
<b>Number people who learned about lobbying (attended meetings)</b>	<b>1,327</b>	<b>709</b>	<b>4,195</b>
Number of meetings with stakeholders	98	78	61
Meetings with lobbyists	63	55	47
Meetings with POHs and DPOHs	15	13	4
Meetings with other stakeholders	18	9	8
Meetings with lobbyists associations	2	1	2
Number of media requests	35	68	33

\*As of 2023-10-12

### Looking at 2023-24, the current fiscal

- During the first half of 2023-24, our efforts have primarily focused on ensuring that lobbyists understand and comply with the updated *Lobbyists' Code of Conduct*, which came into force this summer.
  - We have prioritized communications with those who are currently listed in the Registry of Lobbyists to support their understanding and compliance with the updated standards of ethical behavior.
  - We have seen an increase in questions received, with a large increase in questions related to gifts and hospitality.
  - So far in this fiscal year, we have conducted 20 outreach sessions that were specifically about the Lobbyists' Code of Conduct.
- More broadly, we are developing ways to expand awareness and understanding of the lobbying regime. We will increase our products and tools, while also improving our use of plain language, so that we can further promote compliance. This includes updating our Interpretation bulletins and developing explainers for some of our most asked about topics.
- Education and engagement activities are not only be aimed at lobbyists but also at other stakeholders, including media, public office holders and designated public office holders. Each stakeholder group has its own information needs and each plays a role in supporting ethical behaviour and transparency for a healthy democracy.
- Also, we are exploring collaboration opportunities to leverage new and well-established networks, including other federal organizations to reach a greater number of individuals.
- As the Registry of Lobbyists is the primary tool for transparency in the lobbying of federal officials, there is tremendous value in promoting and encouraging its use.
- In addition to new features, we will offer tutorials to media and government officials to help them easily find information that can be useful to them. A vast amount of information and data is available in the registry, and we recognize that it can be overwhelming.

- Earlier this year, we launched search alerts for the Registry, a feature that allows users to easily create alerts based on keywords such as names, subject matter, institutions, and other criteria. Whenever information matching the selected criteria is added to the registry, an email notification is sent.
  - Since its launch at the end of March 2023, **260** search alerts have been created by **159** people. The search results were also shared **413** times.
- As Canada's lobbying regime is often cited as a model on the international stage, we continue to engage with international bodies such as the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). In line with this approach, Commissioner Bélanger was a panelist at an OECD plenary session titled Reinforcing democracy: The role of integrity amongst elected and appointed officials which drew **over 3 600** attendees in May 2023. The Office also continues to engage with the OECD on its public integrity indicators project and participated in a virtual panel in Oct. 2023.
  - Addressing international audiences about Canada's experience in regulating lobbying activities provides opportunities to share our expertise with international counterparts and helps to foster transparency and the ethical lobbying of decision makers at all levels.