



Assemblée des Premières Nations Québec-Labrador

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PRESS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE DISTRIBUTION

Special Unit within the *Bureau des enquêtes indépendantes (BEI)* to deal with complaints made by First Nations: the AFNQL remains vigilant

Wendake, August 10, 2018 – The Assembly of First Nations of Quebec-Labrador (AFNQL) welcomes yesterday's announcement from the Quebec Ministry of Public Security confirming the establishment of a special unit, including certain additional measures, within the *Bureau des enquêtes indépendantes (BEI)*, which function will be to investigate any complaint alleging criminal acts towards a First Nation member committed by a police officer in Quebec. These new measures will come into force on September 17, 2018.

After almost three years and as a result of the repeated representations and requests of First Nations, the Government of Quebec finally accepts to fulfill its responsibilities and to set up this new unit within the BEI. This new model was developed through close collaboration with the Working Group comprised of First Nations representatives, including the AFNQL. It is expected that this new process to address complaints will be monitored in collaboration with the Working Group.

"We must remain vigilant, because this new structure alone will not solve the injustices of the past, but it should allow anyone to benefit from a culturally adapted approach as part of the complaint process" said Ghislain Picard, Chief of the AFNQL.

The *Service de police de la Ville de Montréal (SPVM)* is currently responsible for investigating allegations of abuse allegedly committed by police officers towards First Nations members, except for allegations of a sexual nature which are processed directly by the BEI. The mandate of the Independent Civil Observer appointed by Quebec, Me Fannie Lafontaine, will end when the final report is filed, when the SPVM investigations are completed and have been the subject of a decision of the *Directeur des poursuites criminelles et pénales (DPCP)*.

About the AFNQL

The Assembly of First Nations of Quebec and Labrador is the political organization regrouping 43 Chiefs of the First Nations in Quebec and Labrador. Follow us on Twitter @APNQL

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Source:

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