

**THE NOVA SCOTIA FREEDOM OF INFORMATION  
AND PROTECTION OF PRIVACY ACT**

A **REQUEST FOR REVIEW** of a decision of **DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE** to disclose information respecting severances for terminated senior government officials.

**REVIEW OFFICER:** Darce Fardy

**REPORT DATE:** April 3, 2002

**ISSUE:** Whether disclosing information about the severance packages and compensation of terminated senior government officials was an unreasonable invasion of privacy.

In a Request for Review, under the **Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act**, dated February 19, 2002, a third party asked that I review the decision of the Department of Finance (the department), in response to an application for access, to provide information on severance packages and other compensation provided to senior government officials whose jobs were terminated in 1993.

Third parties were notified of the Application in accordance with s.22 of the **Act** to offer them an opportunity to consent to the disclosure or to raise objections. Several objected but only one filed a Request for Review after the Department made its decision to disclose the information. The third party said disclosure would constitute an unreasonable invasion of privacy because it could have an adverse affect on current employment. In the meantime the Department disclosed the information of the third parties who did not ask for a Review.

To support its decision to disclose, the Department relied on s.20(4) which lists the kinds of information which, if disclosed, would not constitute an unreasonable invasion of privacy.

In particular it cited subsections (e) and (i):

(e) A third party's remuneration as an officer, employee or member of a public body; or

(i) Details of a discretionary benefit of a financial nature granted to a third party by a public body.

**Conclusion:**

I agree that disclosing the information on severance packages and compensation of the third parties is not an unreasonable invasion of their privacy even if they are no longer with government. The packages and compensation were provided when they were.

**Recommendation:**

That the Department, in accordance with its decision, disclose to the applicant the same information on the objecting third party as it did the other third parties.

**Dated** at Halifax, Nova Scotia, April 3, 2002.

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Darce Fardy, Review Officer