



National Defence

Défense nationale

Deputy Minister

Sous-ministre

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Ottawa, Ontario
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Quartier général de la Défense nationale
Ottawa, (Ontario)
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The Honourable Kelly Block
Chair, Standing Committee on Public Accounts
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario
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Dear Ms. Block,

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,


Jody Thomas

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 Force 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. From June 2017, to June 2020, National Defence provided the Public Accounts Committee with five progress updates, noting considerable delays in completing the policy review.

In June 2020, National Defence noted that significant work remained to review and revise the three component parts of its living accommodation policy suite: 1) *Queen's Regulations and Orders* (the policy's overarching regulatory framework); 2) *Defence Administrative Orders and Directives* (the departmental policy); and 3) the *Living Accommodation Instruction* (to guide personnel in implementing the policy). National Defence acknowledged that it had misjudged the time required to complete this review and re-evaluated the process in its entirety to ensure that it would complete all aspects of the policy review by spring 2024, without further delay.

In the interest of transparency and accountability, National Defence provided a timeline illustrating the key steps and milestones required to complete the review, taking into account any possible delays due to COVID-19. 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.

At the time of the last update in December 2020, National Defence reported that it remains on track to have the updated living accommodation policy suite in place by spring 2024, and committed to provide the Committee with an update on the review as part of its update in June 2021. Please find this update below.

Update on the living accommodation policy suite review

Since the update provided to the Committee in December 2020, National Defence has made progress on all three components of the policy suite and is on schedule to meet the overall implementation of the living accommodation policies by spring 2024.

National Defence continues to consult subject matter policy experts (including GBA+), stakeholders, and legal advisors to resolve the various issues and policy gaps as they arise.

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

Since the last update provided to the Committee in December 2020, National Defence has worked with stakeholders to analyze QR&O chapters, articles, and terminology. For example,

National Defence has analyzed QR&O Chapter 28 – *Allotment and Occupation of Quarters* – and has nearly completed the analysis of the *Charges for Family Housing Regulations*.

National Defence remains on schedule in this part of the regulatory policy review and will continue to work with subject matter experts to complete the analysis phase of the required QR&O regulatory amendments by end of 2021. Completion of this phase will enable the preparation of consolidated regulatory drafting instructions during the first half of 2022. This will address legal and policy inconsistencies as well as ensure closer alignment with other related federal housing directives.

Reviewing the Defence Administrative Order and Directive (DAOD)

Concurrently, National Defence continues to analyze, revise, and draft the departmental policy documents for living accommodations – which is the overarching departmental policy. On March 31, 2021, the National Defence Living Accommodation Working Group conducted and endorsed a thorough review of the authorities and responsibilities relating to the DAOD. National Defence also conducted an initial legal review of the departmental policy document.

An in-depth review of a new subordinate departmental policy instruction, which is being developed to provide details regarding the types of living accommodations, is expected to commence over the summer 2021. This subordinate departmental policy document will outline the policy guidance for the requirement, eligibility, allocation, charges/fees, etc. for National Defence living accommodations.

National Defence remains on schedule in its policy review and development of these DAODs.

Reviewing the Living Accommodation Instruction

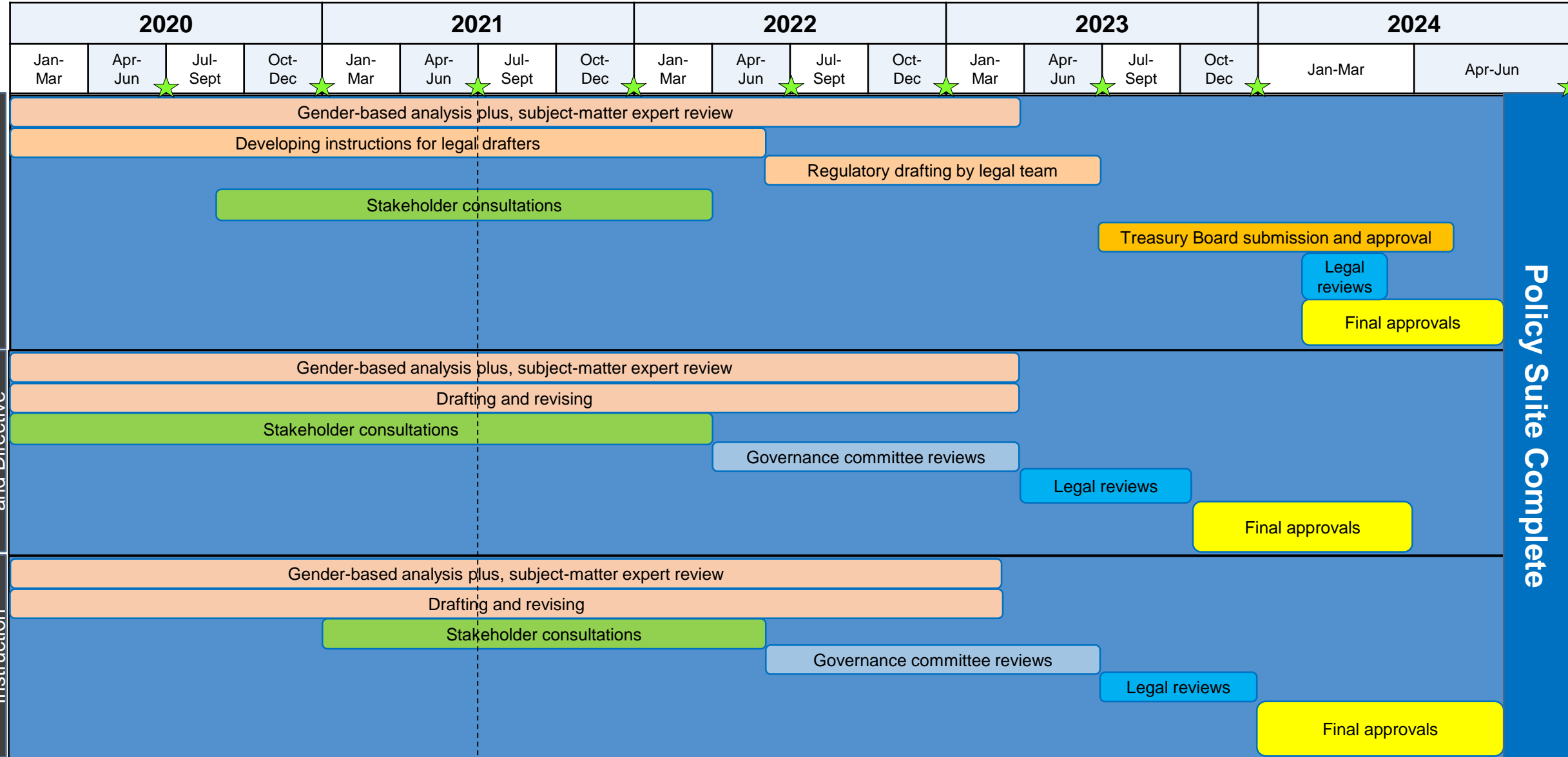
National Defence also continues to modernize the *Living Accommodation Instruction*. In May 2021, National Defence concluded stakeholders' consultations on the *Responsible Pet Ownership* policy. A draft of this policy is expected to be finalized by fall 2021.


The policy and legal reviews of the *Violation Management* annex, which was to be completed by May 2021, remains in progress and is expected to be completed by August 2021. This three month extension will ensure all policy and legal aspects are properly taken into account while ensuring that those living in National Defence residential housing are treated with fairness, respect, and dignity.

Future updates to the Committee

In accordance with the attached timeline, National Defence will once again update the Committee on its progress by December 31, 2021.

Living Accommodation Policy Suite Timeline



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