



News Release

For Immediate Release

The Government of Canada and the Federation of Newfoundland Indians Announce Appointment of Geoffrey Brown as Chief Appeal Master to the Qalipu Enrolment Process

July 31, 2015

Ottawa, ON

Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development
Canada

The Honourable Bernard Valcourt, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, and Brendan Sheppard, President of the Federation of Newfoundland Indians (FNI), today welcomed the joint appointment of Mr. Geoffrey Brown as Chief Appeal Master to the Qalipu Mi'kmaq First Nation Enrolment process.

Mr. Brown was admitted to the Newfoundland and Labrador Bar in 1979. His extensive legal experience, including his appointment as Queen's Counsel, in 2006, and appearances before both Federal and Supreme Courts of Canada, make him extremely well suited for the position of Chief Appeal Master.

The Qalipu Enrolment Committee, comprised of members from Canada and the FNI, is in the process of completing its review of the 94,000 applications for membership in the First Nation by June 30, 2016. Applicants will be notified by mail with regard to their eligibility once this review is complete.

Applicants will then have 30 days to appeal the decision of the Enrolment Committee by sending an Appeal Notice to the Chief Appeal Master. The Chief Appeal Master will render decisions on appeals by January 30, 2017.

Canada and the Federation of Newfoundland Indians are committed to ensuring that all applicants for membership in the Qalipu Mi'kmaq First Nation are treated fairly and equitably.

Quick Facts

- When Newfoundland joined Confederation in 1949, Mi'kmaq communities were not recognized as First Nations under the *Indian Act* and their legal status, as well as the status of their members, was uncertain.
- Discussions between the Government of Canada and the Federation of Newfoundland Indians led, in 2008, to the Agreement for the Recognition of the Qalipu Mi'kmaq Band and, in September 2011, an Order in Council established the Qalipu Mi'kmaq First Nation as a "band" under the *Indian Act*.

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- A review of applications for founding membership in the First Nation, except those previously rejected, is underway to ensure that applicants meet the criteria for eligibility set out in the 2008 Agreement. This includes the applications of all those who have gained Indian status as members of the Qalipu Mi'kmaq First Nation.

Quotes

“Adding someone like Mr. Brown, with his extensive experience and expertise in Newfoundland law, as the Chief Appeal Master to the Qalipu Mi'kmaq First Nation Enrolment process demonstrates our joint commitment to ensuring the process is conducted in a fair and equitable fashion.”

Bernard Valcourt
Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development

“Mr. Brown’s reputation for rigour, professionalism and fairness made him the right candidate for this position. Canada and the FNI are pleased he has accepted the position and we look forward to working with him.”

Brendan Sheppard
Chief of the Qalipu Mi'kmaq First Nation

“I am honoured by this appointment as Chief Appeal Master to the Qalipu Enrolment Process and to be given the opportunity to contribute to such an important development for First Nations in Newfoundland and Labrador.”

Geoffrey Brown
Chief Appeal Master

Associated Links

[Qalipu Mi'kmaq First Nation Enrolment Process](#)
[Qalipu Mi'kmaq First Nation Band](#)
[2008 Agreement](#)
[June 2013 Supplemental Agreement](#)

Contacts

Emily Hillstrom
Press Secretary
Office of the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development
819-997-0002

Media Relations
Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada
819-953-1160

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