



# Constitutional Reform Commission

## Frequently Asked Questions

### What is the mandate of the Constitutional Reform Commission (CRC)?

The CRC was established to advise the Dene National Chief and Leadership on options for updating the Dene Nation Corporate Constitution and By-laws, to bring them into compliance with decades of Assembly and Leadership resolutions and to reflect the current reality of the Dene Nation.

### Who are the members of the CRC?

**Chair:** Georges Erasmus

**Co-Chair:** Herb Norwegian

**Support:** Lila Fraser Erasmus – Project Coordinator

Chris Reid, Senior Political Advisor – Dene Nation

**CRC Members:** Danny Gaudet – Sahtú  
Bertha Rabesca Zoe – Tłı̄cho  
Sam Gargon – Dehcho  
Florence Catholique – Akaitcho  
Neil Pascal – Gwich'in

### How were the members of the CRC chosen?

The commissioners and advisors were appointed by the National Chief.

### Is there any oversight by Chiefs?

Yes, there is a Chiefs Working Group which the CRC reports to regularly and seeks direction from. The members of the Chiefs Working Group are:

## **Chiefs Working Group Members:**

Dene National Chief – Norman Yakeleya  
Grand Chief Ken Smith – Gwich'in  
Grand Chief Wilbert Kochon – Sahtú  
Grand Chief George Mackenzie – Tłı̨chó  
Chief Robert Charlie – Gwich'in  
Chief Gerald Antoine – Dehcho  
Chief Edward Sangris, Akaitcho

## **How often does the CRC meet?**

The CRC met as often as funding would allow, on average 1-2 days per month.

## **Do the members of the CRC travel?**

Prior to the pandemic the CRC held face-to-face meetings as often as funding allowed, as well as meetings by teleconference. Since the pandemic, the CRC now holds video teleconferences.

So far, the CRC has met with all of the Dene regions, and briefed leadership on progress to date.

## **How is the CRC funded?**

The activities of the CRC are funded by Canada's Nation Rebuilding Program.

## **What has the CRC accomplished to date?**

The commissioners have spent much time discussing the fundamental nature of the Dene Nation and the basic principles which should be incorporated into an updated Dene Nation Corporate Constitution.

### **So far the CRC has:**

- put together a chronological record of all past motions and changes made to the Dene Nations Constitution and By-laws document from 1972 – 2016.
- developed a unifying document; Declaration of the United Dene, which is a statement of the common characteristics that unify us as Dene.

- extensively reviewed the existing Dene Nation Constitution and By-laws for gaps, contradictions and duplication and to ensure that it accurately reflects the nature, values and objectives of the Dene Nation.
- divided the Constitution and By-laws into two separate documents, with major constitutional principles in the Constitution and corporate organizational details set out in a draft Organizational By-law.
- drafted revisions to the Constitution and By-laws which address redundancies, gaps and contradictions and bring these documents in line with direction found in Dene Nation Assembly resolutions.

## What are the next steps?

The CRC has made recommendations to the Dene Nation leadership regarding proposed changes to the Constitution and By-laws. These documents will be discussed in detail at a special assembly, August 4 - 6, 2021, in Somba Ké (Yellowknife), Denendeh.

