



Nfld. & Labrador

## Ex-cadet sues over alleged sexual abuse in N.S. in 1970s



N.L. man says he was 14 when alleged assaults began at CFB Greenwood

Carolyn Stokes and Rob Antle · CBC News · Posted: Jan 07, 2016 7:00 AM NT | Last Updated: January 7, 2016

Ex-cadet from N.L. sues Ottawa over claims he was sexually abused at camp in N.S. in the 1970s 5:04

A former air cadet from Newfoundland and Labrador says it's taken him 40 years to muster the courage to talk about the sexual abuse he claims to have suffered at the hands of an officer at a camp in Nova Scotia.

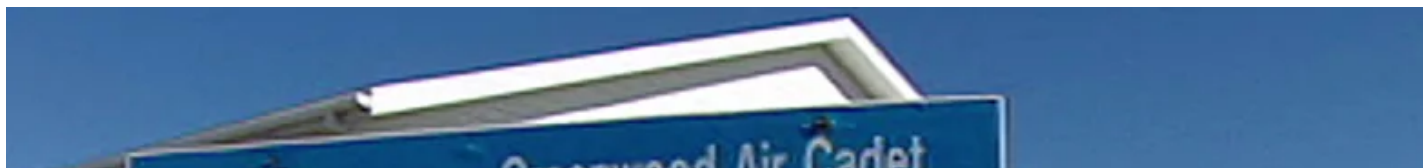
John Doe — whose identity is protected by a court-ordered publication ban — has sued the federal government.

Proceedings at Newfoundland and Labrador Supreme Court have dragged on for nearly five years without resolution, even though his alleged abuser doesn't deny some of the allegations against him.

"He says it was consensual," John Doe said in an interview with CBC News.

"I'm a minor, he's an adult, he's roughly seven years older than I was. I don't know, I never ever gave permission."

Court filings indicate that John Doe was 14 when the alleged sexual assaults began. His alleged abuser was 21 at the time.





John Doe says the alleged abuse happened at CFB Greenwood, in Nova Scotia's Annapolis Valley. (CBC)

The lawsuit was filed in 2011, and has yet to make it to trial.

John Doe's lawyer, Will Hiscock, said the case has had a big impact on his client.

"These cases are very emotionally draining," Hiscock said.

"It dredges up a lot of the past that people spend a lot of time trying to put behind them, trying to move on with their lives."

## Attended camp at CFB Greenwood

John Doe's story begins at CFB Greenwood in Nova Scotia in the early 1970s, when he left home at the age of 14 for cadet camp.

It was a different time, he said. Children were taught to always respect their superiors — something that was the prime lesson in the military world John Doe entered. It's a lesson he said changed his life forever.





The lawsuit was filed at Newfoundland and Labrador Supreme Court in 2011 but has yet to go to trial. (CBC)

"The rank is the rank, you've got to be obedient, you've got to listen to your superiors," he recalled.

As a teenaged cadet, he thought he was on his way to a dream career.

"I just thought that as you progressed in cadets, you became more of a man, you're heading toward Armed Forces, your prospect and that, and become a pilot."

But he said everything changed after his first camp at CFB Greenwood.

"That's when I was sexually abused and it all went downhill from there," he said.

## Many encounters, ex-cadet claims

Hundreds of cadets were at Greenwood and they all slept together in a massive hangar, but John Doe said he was separated from the group when he was assigned to a new course.

He said his 21-year-old superior officer, the teacher of the course, came into the room and got under the covers with him, the first of many encounters.

In court documents, John Doe alleged that he was forced to masturbate and perform oral sex on an older male. He said those sex acts were also performed on him.



The other man admitted in his own court filings to "engaging in acts of a sexual nature" with John Doe, but said "the same were consensual."

He admitted to acts of masturbation, but denied the allegations concerning oral sex.

## Suing federal government

According to a statement of claim filed at Supreme Court, John Doe is making a number of allegations against the federal government.

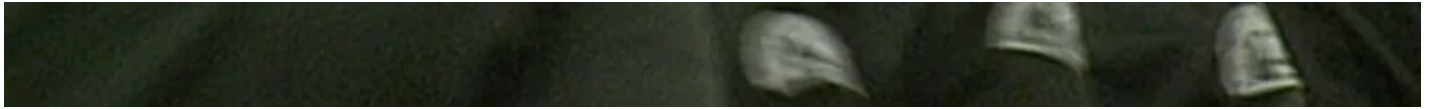
He says they:

- failed to take reasonable measures to protect him from being abused;
- failed to adequately, properly and effectively supervise the Royal Canadian Air Cadet program;
- and failed to use reasonable care in assuring the safety, well-being and protection of minors enrolled in the program.

In its statement of defence, Ottawa denied any negligence, and said if any representative or employee assaulted John Doe, he was not acting in the course of his duties.

The federal government insists that the supervision and level of protection provided to John Doe were "in all material respects, reasonable and proper in the circumstances."





According to court documents, Ottawa is denying any negligence in relation to an ongoing lawsuit over allegations of sexual abuse of a cadet at CFB Greenwood more than four decades ago. (CBC)

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## DND says allegations taken seriously

The Department of National Defence told CBC News it can't comment on any civil suit that is currently before the courts.

But in general terms, DND said allegations of inappropriate sexual behaviour involving cadets are taken very seriously.

"When allegations are reported, they are investigated and followed up with appropriate action," spokeswoman Maj. Holly-Anne Brown said in a statement emailed to CBC News.

"If there is any possibility that a criminal act has been committed, the matter is immediately referred to the police agency of jurisdiction. The protection, safety and welfare of cadets are always our first priority."

John Doe's civil action is not the only one alleging sexual abuse involving cadets in the region.

According to Brown, as of last fall, four such cases were underway in Atlantic Canada. Since 1999, another seven civil actions alleging sexual abuse have been resolved in the region. Between three and five of those cases involved cadets.

In 2014, a former Saint John, N.B., air cadet's lawsuit against the federal government over sexual abuse he suffered in the 1980s was settled out of court.

- [Ex-cadet's lawsuit against federal attorney general settled](#)

Brown said that DND cannot provide any details regarding settlement of a particular matter, citing confidentiality.

## Working to get 'back on track'

For his part, John Doe said it took many years to reveal his story to his family, and he now wants to close the door on what happened as soon as he can.

"I'm working to get my life back on track, and it's been 40 years," he said.



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