



NEWS RELEASE for September 16, 2010

Human Rights Commission recommendations for Police Review

The Yukon Human Rights Commission has made six recommendations with a focus on human rights for the Review of the Yukon's Police Force.

Yukon Human Rights Commission chair Melissa Atkinson says that, "The Commission has an important role to play in the policing review because one of the objectives of the Yukon's human rights law is to promote the principles underlying the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* and the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* and other international and national conventions and agreements that Canada has signed. Some of these have a direct bearing on policing services."

The recommendations call for an immediate and independent review by a human rights expert of the RCMP's policy and procedures in relation to their duty to accommodate the needs of people in custody regarding their disability (including alcohol and drug addiction, mental health disabilities and FASD) or their religion, sex or any other area protected under human rights. In addition this expert should also review these policies and procedures in light of the United Nations *Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners*, other international conventions, the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* and the *Canadian Human Rights Act*.

In addition the Commission recommends there be an independent complaint process, outside of the RCMP, to investigate complaints against the RCMP, including civilian oversight and representatives with human rights expertise.

With regard to orientation and training of RCMP, the Commission recommends there be mandatory orientation about First Nations culture and history, as well as on-going training on issues related to violence against women, sexual harassment, FASD, homophobia, racial profiling and other relevant human rights issues.

The Human Rights Commission also recommends that the Police Review develop a plan of action for all the recommendations, with deadlines and a monitoring process by stakeholders, with a requirement to provide an annual report, tabled in the Legislature, on the actions taken.

The staff of the Commission reviewed inquiries made about RCMP services from their past files and took phone calls and did personal interviews to collect people's stories, responses and opinions over a two week period in early August. Forty-one inquiries related to the RCMP were analyzed and 4 interviews were conducted.

For a copy of the YHRC submission to the Police Review, see www.yhrc.yk.ca under "What's New".

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