



16th Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

Standing Committee on Government Operations

Report on the Review of the
Human Rights Commission
2006-2007 Report

Chair: Mr. Kevin Menicoche

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October 23, 2008

SPEAKER OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Mr. Speaker:

Your Standing Committee on Government Operations is pleased to provide its Report on the Review of the Human Rights Commission 2006-2007 Report and commends it to the House.

Kevin Menicoche, MLA
Chairperson

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON
GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS**

**REPORT ON THE REVIEW OF THE
HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION 2006-2007 REPORT**

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**STANDING COMMITTEE ON
GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS**

**REPORT ON THE REVIEW OF THE
HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
2006-2007 REPORT**

INTRODUCTION

The Standing Committee on Government Operations met on October 9, 2008 to review the 2006-2007 Report of the Human Rights Commission. The Committee would like to thank Ms. Mary Pat Short, Chair of the Human Rights Commission, and Ms. Thérèse Boullard, Director of Human Rights, for appearing before us.

2006-2007 ANNUAL REPORT

The 2006-2007 report does not include any recommendations; however, the Committee would like to take the opportunity to comment on other issues that were discussed during our public meeting.

The 2006–2007 Annual Report was the third report of the Human Rights Commission since its establishment on July 1, 2004. The Committee welcomed the concise and visually informative new reporting format and is pleased with the Commission’s offer to include a community breakdown for the origin of inquiries and complaints in future reports.

The Committee was pleased to hear of the progress the Commission has made in raising awareness about human rights through its education and outreach activities including community visits, public presentations, information sessions, educational audio conferences and several publications. The success of the Human Rights Commission’s awareness activities appears to be clearly demonstrated by the steep increase of inquiries from 253 in the previous year to 427 in 2006-2007.

The Committee welcomes the Commission’s approach to addressing issues of discrimination in the workplace through the publication of three Employers’ Guides on *Human Rights*, the *Duty to Accommodate* and *Alcohol and Drug Testing*, combined with information sessions that were conducted for employers.

The Committee appreciates the work of the Human Rights Commission with youth and schools; in particular, the development of resources addressing bullying among students.

We acknowledge the Commission's efforts to bring education and awareness workshops on Human Rights and the *NWT Human Rights Act* to all regions of the Northwest Territories. The Committee highlights the importance of visits to smaller communities, as they will provide residents with a better understanding of their rights under the *Act*.

The Committee understands the Commission's need for funding increases due to the growth of inquiries and hearings before the Human Rights Adjudication Panel. However, the Committee is concerned about the ability to fund continued budget increases without compromising service and outreach activities in future years.

CONCLUSION

The Committee commends the Commission's work and achievements to date and looks forward to monitoring the continued evolution of human rights in the Northwest Territories.