



# **16<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories**

## **Standing Committee on Government Operations**

Report on the Review of the  
2008-2009 Human Rights  
Commission Annual Report

Chair: Mr. Kevin Menicoche

## **MEMBERS OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS**

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Northwest  
Territories

Legislative Assembly

Standing Committee on Government Operations

February 11, 2010

SPEAKER OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Mr. Speaker:

Your Standing Committee on Government Operations is pleased to provide its Report on the Review of the 2008-2009 Human Rights Commission Annual Report and commends it to the House.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kevin Menicoche".

Kevin Menicoche, MLA  
Chairperson

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON  
GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS**

**REPORT ON THE REVIEW OF THE  
2008-2009 HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION  
ANNUAL REPORT**

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

Introduction .....	1
2008-2009 Annual Report.....	1
Recommendation 1 .....	2
Conclusion .....	2
Recommendation 2 .....	2

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON  
GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS**

**REPORT ON THE REVIEW OF THE  
2008-2009 HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION  
ANNUAL REPORT**

**INTRODUCTION**

The Standing Committee on Government Operations reviewed the 2008-2009 Annual 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 their appearance before the Committee.

**2008-2009 ANNUAL REPORT**

The 2008-2009 Annual Report was the fifth report of the Human Rights Commission. The Committee recognizes the effort and accomplishments of the Commission.

The Commission used a variety of methods to provide information on Human Rights to communities. An essay contest was held for students in grades seven to twelve. Students were asked to describe a role model who exemplifies the human rights principles of inclusivity, diversity, peace and respect. Awards were given to both essay winners and role models. As well, ten presentations and workshops were held in five communities. Two were offered at the NWT Teachers' Association / Education, Culture and Employment Conference. The Conference had 925 educators in attendance.

The Committee is pleased with the Commission's plans for next year that include offering workshops on workplace human rights issues, and continuing outreach to schools. However, there appears to be very limited contact with residents who live in remote communities. The Committee encourages the Commission to use its excess revenue from 2008-2009 to send Commission and / or staff members to more regional events and to more communities.

The Commission staff responded to 259 inquiries, of which 33 were considered complaints. After review and investigation, four complaints were referred to hearing by the Adjudication Panel. In the future, the Committee requests the Commission provide detail on the region of origin of inquiries and the location of hearings.

The rate for honoraria for Commission members was reduced as of April 1, 2009. The Board of Management adjusted the honorarium rates to bring them in line with Government policy. The Human Rights Commission Chairperson noted that the reduction has led to less willingness on the part of some members to attend meetings. In some cases, if members must take time off work, they lose money as the honorarium does not cover their salary. The Standing Committee on Government Operations recognizes the need for participation of Commission members for on-going leadership within the Commission's activities.

#### **Recommendation 1**

**The Standing Committee on Government Operations recommends that the Government of the Northwest Territories include the Human Rights Commission in its Human Resources Manual, Section 810 - Civic Leave, thus making Board members who are GNWT employees eligible for civic leave with pay to attend meetings.**

#### **CONCLUSION**

The Committee commends the Commission's work and achievements to date. We look forward to seeing more outreach to communities and look forward to monitoring the continued advancement of human rights in the Northwest Territories.

#### **Recommendation 2**

**The Standing Committee on Government Operations recommends the Government of the Northwest Territories provide a comprehensive response to this report within 120 days.**