

THE MANITOBA
HUMAN RIGHTS
COMMISSION



LA COMMISSION DES
DROITS DE LA PERSONNE
DU MANITOBA

NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

Round table discussion takes place on bias-free policing

Thirty representatives from nearly 20 community groups, neighbourhood associations, the University of Winnipeg and the Winnipeg Police Service met recently at the Manitoba Human Rights Commission for a round table discussion on bias-free policing.

The Commission announced the establishment of the Racialized Communities and Police Services Project (the “RCAPS Project”), a partnership with researchers from the University of Winnipeg to examine concerns brought to the Commission about police services to Aboriginal residents of a Winnipeg neighbourhood.

The RCAPS Project Committee has developed a number of project proposals to help identify any problems in the provision of policing services to Aboriginal and visible minority communities, and to assist in developing strategies that support bias-free policing services.

In open discussion at the round table meeting, various community groups stressed the importance of anti-racism education, and the need for more Police Service resources for cross-cultural training and community outreach. They shared stories from their communities about experiences with the police. Winnipeg Chief of Police Jack Ewatski said, “I do not need to be convinced that mistrust exists between some community members and some members of the Winnipeg Police Service. I see this round table as an opportunity to obtain advice and guidance from the community to help find ways to alleviate that mistrust.”

It was also agreed that it would be valuable for all the groups represented to meet periodically and share information, focusing on strategies to address reports or perceptions of bias in police services to racialized communities.

Grant applications to various funding bodies have been made for the RCAPS project. One grant already received will enable the committee to hold neighbourhood consultations to gather information from individuals about police services to members of racialized communities.

The roundtable discussion was the third in a series of public consultations held by the Manitoba Human Rights Commission. The mandate of the Commission is to achieve equality of opportunity and freedom from discrimination through the protection and promotion of human rights.

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The following groups, organizations and associations attending the Round Table Discussion on Bias Free Policing, agreed to send out this joint news release,

1. Social Planning Council
2. Needs Centre for War Affected Children
3. Manitoba Association for Rights and Liberties (MARL)
4. City of Winnipeg Police Service
4. ACOMI (African Community Organizations of Manitoba Inc.)
7. ACOMI (African Community Organizations of Manitoba Inc.) Secretariat
8. Centennial Neighbourhood Group
9. United Against Racism – Aboriginal Youth Circle
10. Ka Ni Kanichichk
11. Dufferin School
12. Helping Hands Resource Centre for Immigrants Inc.
13. Ifelodin Training and Developing Inc,
14. University of Winnipeg RCAPS Research Group
15. Amicale (The Congo Cultural Organization)
16. Welcome Place
17. Winnipeg Foundation Centennial Neighbourhood Project
18. Spence Neighbourhood Association