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# EVALUATION OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS PROJECT CHARTER

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



**Ontario  
Human Rights Commission**  
Commission ontarienne des  
droits de la personne



## THE PROJECT

In 2007, following several race-based human rights complaints, the Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC or "the Commission") required many public interest remedies as part of a proposed settlement with the Toronto Police Services Board (the Board) and the Toronto Police Service (the Service). In order to address the increasing number of public interest remedies, and to capitalize on ongoing efforts addressing human rights concerns, the Board and the Service, in partnership with the Commission, launched the Human Rights Project Charter (Project Charter) in May 2007. The Project Charter continued for three years and aimed to apply a human rights lens to all aspects of policing.

In December 2010, Ted Rogers School of Management's Diversity Institute at Ryerson University was contracted to evaluate the Project Charter. The evaluation was suspended in April 2011 due to financial constraints, and it resumed in March 2012.

This report provides an assessment of the Project Charter's implementation. Specifically, it outlines the purpose and context of the Project Charter and its evaluation, provides a description of the methodologies used to assess its impact, outlines the findings from the review of the Project Charter's four main sections, and offers overall conclusions and recommendations moving forward.

## THE PROJECT'S OBJECTIVES AND PURPOSE

The Project Charter, a unique three-year project, was collaboratively designed and drafted by the three partners. It aimed at ensuring that the principles of the Ontario *Human Rights Code* were interwoven in Service Governance, procedures, and services, while also developing a new collaborative approach between the Board (which oversees the Service), the Service, and the Commission. The Project Charter identified two specific goals:

1. The identification and elimination of any discrimination that may exist in the employment policies of the Toronto Police Services Board and the practices of the Toronto Police Service that may be contrary to the Ontario *Human Rights Code*.
2. The identification and elimination of any discrimination that may exist in the provision of policing services by the Toronto Police Service to the residents of the City of Toronto that may be contrary to the Ontario *Human Rights Code*.

The Project Charter outlined a series of human rights issues and corresponding initiatives in four general areas: Public Education; Recruitment, Selection, Promotion, and Retention; Accountability; and Learning. The Project Charter's unique collaborative approach aimed at creating sustainable, lasting change. Although this major initiative ran from May 2007 to 2010, many of its implementation efforts are ongoing.

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## METHODOLOGY OF THE EVALUATION

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The Diversity Institute's evaluation aimed to assess:

1. Was the Project Charter a success?
2. Did the Project Charter really do what it set out to do?
3. Did it make a difference? Why or why not?
4. Lessons learned and suggestions for improvement.

The scope of the evaluation was limited to a review of existing data, processes, interviews with Project Charter stakeholders,

and a media analysis. Evaluation and measurement were not built into the design of the program or collected for many elements, making the assessment of the Project Charter and its impacts difficult. Some elements of the program are still in the process of implementation or have not been implemented. Moreover, apart from the interviews with Project Charter stakeholders and media analysis, no additional empirical data were collected as this was not within the scope of the Project Charter.

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## CONCLUSIONS

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Based on rigorous analysis of available data and processes, interviews with Project Charter stakeholders, as well as media analysis, we have drawn the following conclusions.

### WAS THE PROJECT CHARTER A SUCCESS?

The Project Charter was successful in spearheading a unique collaborative approach to addressing human rights issues in policing. The Project Charter acted as a catalyst to the Service's ongoing efforts to combat discrimination. The Project Charter has helped influence discussions and efforts of human rights and policing in Canada and has created a new, integrated approach to organizational change. In the wording of one interview respondent:

*Overall, my opinion with respect to the Project [Charter] is that this was an essential first project to open the door that was never opened before.*

### DID THE PROJECT CHARTER REALLY DO WHAT IT SET OUT TO DO?

There was evidence that many of the components of the Project Charter were implemented as planned and met their targets. Some elements are still being implemented, while others were deferred due to financial constraints. In some cases, Project Charter components may have been implemented, yet there was insufficient information to allow for evaluation. In other instances, we had no evidence of whether or not they were undertaken.

### DID IT MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

During the period of the Project Charter, there was evidence of continued progress towards the two overarching goals of reducing discrimination within the Service and in its interactions with the community. For example, there was evidence of positive changes in workplace culture and

environment, and significant progress in the area of human resources (e.g., increased attraction of diverse groups to civilian positions; increased proportion of female applicants achieving senior level uniform positions). Community surveys also indicated improvements in the perception of the Service in relation to human rights and its sensitivity to different cultures, although these surveys did not allow for analysis of perceptions among specific groups. While it is reasonable to assume that some elements of the Project Charter contributed to the progress towards overall goals, in many cases there is no evidence that provides a direct link between specific initiatives/strategies and overall outcomes. At the same time, a number of other ongoing initiatives that were not part of the Project Charter may also have contributed to progress. Critical elements known to be influential in creating inclusive environments and service delivery may have been assumed in the Project Charter without necessarily being defined in its objectives, such as governance and leadership. For example, there is evidence to suggest that the leadership of the three partner organizations helped drive the formation of the Project Charter's progress in certain areas.

### LESSONS LEARNED

- The Project Charter broke new ground in addressing issues of discrimination within policing.
- Many elements of the Project Charter were unique and may be considered leading practices.
- Contextual factors, such as strategic commitment and the leadership of all three partners were critical in driving the Project Charter and cultural change, but these factors were not explicitly addressed, nor can they be easily measured.
- Built-in evaluation mechanisms are needed for all future projects and initiatives.

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## RECOMMENDATIONS

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- Improve diversity- and human rights-related internal and external data collection and analysis.
- Continue to strengthen human resources processes.
- Focus on behavioural change in training and on specific issues such as racial profiling.
- Focus additional attention on strategy and organizational sustainability.
- Ensure that future change projects build in evaluation and a strong logic model in the plan.