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The Regina Police Service Response to the Recommendations of the Commission on First Nation and Metis People and Justice Reform

December 16, 2004

Interim Report (January 15, 2003) – A Dialogue in Progress: Focus on Youth

Recommendation 2.1: *That the recommendations contained in the Linn Reports asking for a citizens' complaint review mechanism be implemented.*

Response: The Regina Police Service supports changes to the Police Act and Municipal Police Discipline Regulations that will advance access, transparency and public confidence in the police complaint process. Over the past year, the Service has participated in meetings hosted by Saskatchewan Justice involving the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations, the Metis Nation, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), other municipal police agencies, and the Saskatchewan Federation of Police Officers. The focus and purpose of these meetings has been to discuss revisions to the Police Act and the public complaint process consistent with this recommendation.

Recommendation 2.2: *In the interim, that funding for the Special Investigations Unit (SIU) be provided to ensure it is able to continue its work on behalf of First Nations and Metis people.*

Response: The Regina Police Service has cooperated fully with the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations Special Investigations Unit (SIU) since its inception. Complaints have been received via the SIU and the results of complaint investigations shared with the SIU. The SIU has enabled trust between police and First Nations people in the receipt, review and outcome of complaints.

Recommendation 2.3: *That Saskatchewan Government, First Nations, the Metis Nation and the police work together to create a set of guidelines for the use of police and Crown discretion that ensures that First Nations and Metis youth will be diverted into culturally appropriate programs or services.*

Response: The Regina Police Service supports and participates in restorative justice practices. The Service is willing to be part of discussions leading to province-wide guidelines for the diversion of youth away from the traditional justice system. The Service does not support a policy of diversion in all circumstances but rather believes that working with established guidelines, each case must be assessed on its specific merits.

Recommendation 2.5: *That clear and enforceable standards with regard to safe, fair and humane custody, as well as rehabilitation and reintegration, be adhered to and that an independent body be established to create the standards and monitor compliance. That body must include First Nations and Metis representatives.*

Response: The Regina Police Service supports clear standards for police detention centres. The Service will work as necessary with the Saskatchewan Police Commission to develop and maintain these standards.

Recommendation 2.7: *That the deputy minister's steering committee on YCJA is expanded to include First Nations and Metis representation. This body needs to conduct a detailed analysis of the YCJA to highlight the potential opportunities and the concerns the legislation has for the program and service deliverers, the courts, the communities and the youth. They must continually monitor and evaluate the implementation of the YCJA.*

Response: The Regina Police Service supports the monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the Youth Criminal Justice Act and the involvement of First Nations and Metis people in this work. Outcomes need to be assessed and measured to ensure that the needs of youth and the community are being met. This work should include studies of capacity, recidivism, positive life changes, victim impact and reductions in offending. The Regina Police Service and the RCMP have worked together to develop a Police Caution Program pursuant to the provisions of the Youth Criminal Justice Act for the Province of Saskatchewan.

Interim Report (November 20, 2003) – Working Together

Recommendation 3.2: *It is recommended that Saskatchewan Justice, together with Justice Canada, prioritize the funding of community integrated justice initiatives, such as the proposed models for change.*

Response: The Regina Police Service believes that community justice initiatives need to be properly funded, structured, and evaluated. Without adequate support, these initiatives will fail to meet the needs of both clients and community.

Recommendation 3.5: *It is recommended that integrated case management become an integral part of the service delivery of every human service department or agency of the Government of Saskatchewan.*

Response: The Regina Police Service, through its work, observes gaps, ineffectiveness and inconsistencies in the services provided to individuals and families due to the structural separation of services and division of responsibilities within and between human service providers. Adopting an integrated case management approach as a first principle throughout government and other human service providers would benefit all parties.

Final Report (June 21, 2004) – Legacy of Hope: An Agenda for Change

Recommendation 1.5: *This Commission recommends that post-secondary institutions and professional associations work together to develop plans that will ensure that professionals already in the field have access to programs of continuing professional education that emphasize cultural issues associated with the provision of justice services.*

Response: In 2000, the Regina Police Service, in partnership with the RCMP, hosted a national conference on Aboriginal Policing. In 2003, subsequent to another national conference on Aboriginal Policing held in Winnipeg, the Regina Police Service joined with other Canadian police agencies to create the Law Enforcement Diversity Network (LEAD). Supported by Heritage Canada, the purpose of this group is to establish best practices and training standards for police across Canada on issues of diversity. The Regina Police Service has also been a member of the CACP *ad hoc* committee on Bias Free Policing (a key supporter of the LEAD project) since its inception in March 2003. Throughout 2003 the Service delivered in-service training in diversity issues to a majority of its personnel.

Recommendation 1.6: *This Commission recommends that the governments of Canada and Saskatchewan, justice and health authorities, and traditional practitioners co-operate to protect and extend traditional justice and healing practices, and explore their application to contemporary First Nations and Metis community concerns.*

Response: The Regina Police Service supports this recommendation. Working with the Paul Dojack Youth Centre, the File Hills Qu'Appelle Tribal Council, and the RCMP, the Service has developed and delivered cultural camps for in-custody youth for the past seven years. In 2002 the Service received a federal Justice Minister's Youth Justice Award of Distinction for this work. This initiative, working primarily with in-custody youth, is well beyond the traditional role of police, and the camps are led by a team of elders, First Nation community members, corrections personnel and police. The goal is to help youth learn about and affirm their cultural and personal identity.

Recommendation 2.1.1: *[This Commission recommends] that the Government of Saskatchewan finance a long-term targeted fetal alcohol spectrum disorders (FASD) strategy that includes prevention, intervention and follow up to address the life-long disabilities caused by alcohol use and abuse.*

Response: The Regina Police Service strongly supports the creation of a provincial fetal alcohol spectrum disorder strategy, including the capacity for diagnosis, family support, prevention and criteria for appropriate interventions by educators, police, and corrections personnel among others.

Recommendation 2.1.2: *[This Commission recommends] that the governments of Canada and Saskatchewan, Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations and Metis Nation – Saskatchewan collaborate on a fetal alcohol spectrum disorders awareness-training program that will be delivered to all people who work with children and youth and their families, including the police, to create a level of awareness.*

Response: The Regina Police Service received a similar recommendation as part of the community input to its 2003 strategic plan. In 2003, the Regina Police Service delivered in-service training in fetal alcohol spectrum disorders to a majority of its frontline personnel as well as other members of the Service.

Recommendation 2.1.3: *[This Commission recommends] that the Saskatchewan Police College deliver a fetal alcohol spectrum disorders training module to all new recruits to provide an understanding of fetal alcohol spectrum disorders.*

Response: The Regina Police Service supports this recommendation.

Recommendation 2.2: *This Commission recommends that the governments of Canada and Saskatchewan streamline the funding process for crime prevention interventions in consultation with communities and provide core-funding arrangements to programs that have proven successful.*

Response: The Regina Police Service strongly supports this recommendation. The National Crime Prevention Centre currently provides only start-up or pilot funding for community-based crime prevention initiatives. This policy does not address the fact that meaningful and substantial change in this area requires sustained funding and long-term delivery.

Recommendation 2.3: *This Commission recommends that the Government of Canada, in consultation with the other orders of government, develop Saskatchewan First Nations and Metis Peoples Social and Economic Plans focused on improving quality of life for First Nations and Metis people.*

Further, that the Implementation Office be responsible for monitoring and reporting progress.

The plans must develop policy, through taking into consideration the practices of customs of First Nations and Metis people including, but not limited to, the following goals:

- *Eliminate poverty;*
- *Improve educational attainment;*
- *Increase employment;*
- *Provide appropriate housing;*
- *Promote health especially in the areas of addictions, including fetal alcohol spectrum disorders;*
- *Transfer of resources to the community; and*
- *Respond to the realities of urbanization.*

Response: The Regina Police Service strongly supports this recommendation and made a public statement in 2001 to this effect, regarding the direct linkage between these economic and social issues and the level of criminal offending experienced by our communities. The Service participates with the Regina Inner City Community Partnership in its efforts to address many of these issues locally.

Recommendation 2.4: *This Commission recommends that the Government of Saskatchewan, in partnership with First Nations and Metis*

communities, design a proactive targeted Saskatchewan Crime Prevention Strategy by April 1, 2005.

Response: The Regina Police Service would like more clarity regarding this recommendation. The Service, in partnership with the Department of Justice and Department of Corrections and Public Safety, is delivering a targeted crime reduction strategy for auto theft in Regina. Strategies of this kind are labour intensive, issue specific, and complex to build and deliver. They can be very effective, but the Service does not fully understand how this might be done on a comprehensive, province-wide basis. The Service is willing to work to this end with partners, but anticipates that it would need further resources to do so.

Recommendation 2.5: *This Commission recommends that the Government of Saskatchewan divert funds currently spent on reacting to crime in the criminal justice system, to proactive targeted community based prevention projects.*

Response: The Regina Police Service does not fully agree with this recommendation at this time. The polarization of reactive and proactive policing services does not fully capture the pressures and realities of our situation. The Service believes that we should work toward the goal of less reactive and more proactive policing; however, the shift from one approach to the other should be contingent upon progress and effectiveness and is more complex than exchanging one for the other. Rebalancing the reactive and proactive elements of the criminal justice system must be measured and well-considered.

Recommendation 2.10: *This Commission recommends that the governments of Canada and Saskatchewan, Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations and Metis Nation – Saskatchewan build strategies to respond to gangs that includes: education, prevention and intervention, and that information about gangs be provided to parents, schools and communities.*

Response: The Regina Police Service strongly agrees with this recommendation. The Service has been involved in public education regarding gangs for the past three years. The Service has supported the work of the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations in the “Alter-Natives to

Violence” initiative. The Service has produced a pamphlet for parents and educators on how to recognize the signs of gang involvement, and school resource officers speak with youth about the risks of gang involvement. The Service’s Community Cadet Corps targets youth who are at risk of gang recruitment. More work on this issue is needed. The Service’s Organized Crime Unit is funded by the Department of Justice.

Recommendation 3.2: *This Commission recommends that education systems, Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations and Metis Nation – Saskatchewan, and others, support the introduction in kindergarten and Grade 1 of: non-violence alternatives, information about violence in its many forms, the effects of such violence and solutions thereto, including the responsibility shared by all to eliminate violence, and that it is reinforced in subsequent grades.*

Response: The Regina Police Service supports this recommendation and is willing to assist through the school resource program.

Recommendation 3.5: *This Commission recommends that there be greater consideration given to delivering domestic violence programs that focus on dealing with partners and families.*

Response: The Regina Police Service supports this recommendation.

Recommendation 3.11: *This Commission recommends that agencies providing shelter services to women and police services meet to find a solution to the issue of sharing information with the parameters of the privacy legislation*

Response: The Regina Police Service supports this recommendation and will take steps to ensure that all appropriate and necessary information is shared. The barrier of information sharing is sometimes real due to legislated and/or profession restrictions and at other times the outcome of a lack of understanding and trust.

Recommendation 3.12: *This Commission recommends that the governments of Canada and Saskatchewan expand Victim Services in the province.*

Response: The Regina Police Service supports this recommendation. Currently there are service level restrictions (only certain offences receive personal treatment) in place due to a lack of resources. The volunteer component of this programming, while a good thing in many ways, is limiting in that there is a never-ending cycle of recruitment and training.

Recommendation 3.13: *This Commission recommends that the Government of Saskatchewan provide funding to study the effectiveness of domestic violence programming.*

Response: The Regina Police Service supports this recommendation. It would be helpful to know what is working and what needs to be enhanced or changed.

Recommendation 4.1: *This Commission recommends that every level of government support the education of police, lawyers, and judges to recognize mental disorders and disabilities, in order to divert persons with mental disorders and disabilities to appropriate resources.*

Response: The Regina Police Service supports this recommendation and has delivered limited in-service training in this regard in the past two years. The ability of the police to properly prepare, train and refresh personnel is directly linked to resourcing. It requires not only the capacity to develop or acquire the training but also, and just as essential, the capacity to withdraw police officers from daily demands for service to participate in the learning activity. The capacity to create and sustain a well-trained, well-prepared police contingent is not at the level it should be. Once that capacity is realized, the success of this effort will be directly influenced by the availability of appropriate resources to which individuals may be directed.

Recommendation 4.2.1: *[This Commission recommends the following immediate steps:] Funding be allocated by all levels of governments to therapeutic resources with a First Nations and Metis focus, including: drug addiction, follow up care, and healing initiatives.*

Response: The Regina Police Service strongly supports this recommendation, as it sees on a daily basis the direct and significant connection between addictions and criminal behaviour.

Recommendation 4.2.2: *[This Commission recommends the following immediate steps:] That meaningful sentencing alternatives be developed by Saskatchewan Justice in cooperation with communities and Courts, to allow for intensive therapy involving Elders, healers, and supports for family, and that these sentencing alternatives have a First Nations and Metis focus.*

Response: The Regina Police Service supports this recommendation. The rates of recidivism and cyclic behaviours are too high and current interventions do not seem to be reducing the impact.

Recommendation 4.4.1: *[This Commission recommends that system generated charges be dealt with administratively as follows:] Youth who are subject to system generated charges and lower level offences be referred to Elder led community based teams to discern and consider ways to meet the needs of the youth outside the Courts.*

Response: The Regina Police Service agrees with this recommendation in part. The categorization of certain offences against the justice system as “system offences” needs careful evaluation. Many of the offenders are on some form of release provision or probation. Why they are unable to meet these court imposed stipulations needs to be examined in light of their behaviours and circumstances. Perhaps a more straightforward approach would be to not impose the conditions in the first instance; however, this would not perhaps address concerns regarding public safety and the risk of re-offending. If youth are released with conditions, is it reasonable to expect that they will succeed without adequate support and supervision? Is there adequate support and supervision within the community? The Regina Police Service supports this recommendation in so far as it helps youth make positive choices about behaviour.

Recommendation 4.4.2: *[This Commission recommends that system generated charges be dealt with administratively as follows:] Adults who are subject to system generated charges and lower level offences be referred to community teams to discern and consider ways to meet the needs of the individual restoratively, outside of the Courts.*

Response: The Regina Police Service agrees with this recommendation in part. The categorization of certain offences against the justice system as “system offences” needs careful evaluation. Many of the offenders are on some form of release provision or probation. Why they are unable to meet these court imposed stipulations needs to be examined in light of their behaviours and circumstances. Perhaps a more straightforward approach would be to not impose the conditions in the first instance; however, this would not perhaps address concerns regarding public safety and the risk of re-offending. If adults are released with conditions, is it reasonable to expect that they will succeed without adequate support and supervision? Is there adequate support and supervision within the community? The Regina Police Service supports this recommendation in so far as it helps adults make positive choices about behaviour.

Recommendation 5.1: *This Commission recommends the implementation of a strategy to eliminate racism in policing by the Saskatchewan Police Commission.*

Response: The Regina Police Service strongly supports this recommendation and will work with the Saskatchewan Police Commission to this end.

Recommendation 5.1.1: *[This Commission recommends the implementation of a strategy to eliminate racism in policing by the Saskatchewan Police Commission. This strategy shall contain:] Police recruitment screening strategies specifically to prevent candidates with racist views on ethnic or religious groups from being offered employment.*

Response: The Regina Police Service will work with the Saskatchewan Police Commission to adopt suitable screening instruments and practices to identify potential

police candidates harboring racist or other discriminatory views. The Service currently utilizes structured interview questions within its recruitment process directed specifically at this issue as well as background investigations, home visits and psychological testing which, in part, bear upon this issue. There are undoubtedly best practices documented in this area, and the Service will work with the Saskatchewan Police Commission to enhance our processes.

Recommendation 5.1.2: *[This Commission recommends the implementation of a strategy to eliminate racism in policing by the Saskatchewan Police Commission. This strategy shall contain:] A complaints process that requires allegations of racist language or behaviour against individual officers to be reported to the officers' immediate supervisor and the chief of police.*

Response: The Regina Police Service supports this recommendation unequivocally. Internally, the Service has an established harassment policy; externally, the provisions of the Police Act and the Municipal Police Discipline Regulations make this conduct unacceptable. In both cases, the matters would be reported to the chief of police and the member's supervisor. In a public complaint, the investigation and any disciplinary action taken would be reviewed by the Provincial Complaints Investigator.

Recommendation 5.1.3: *[This Commission recommends the implementation of a strategy to eliminate racism in policing by the Saskatchewan Police Commission. This strategy shall contain:] An intensive remedial training program for police officers who exhibit racist attitudes. This program must be successfully completed to the satisfaction of the officer's supervising officer and the program facilitator.*

Response: The Regina Police Service supports this recommendation. The Service has sent officers to training of this nature for behaviour of this kind. The Service would be willing to assist the Saskatchewan Police Commission with the development of a more police specific and/or intensive training program.

Recommendation 5.1.4: *[This Commission recommends the implementation of a strategy to eliminate racism in policing by the Saskatchewan Police Commission. This strategy shall contain:] The tools which would allow the immediate supervisor or chiefs of police to respond immediately to allegations of racism.*

Response: The Regina Police Service supports this recommendation.

Recommendation 5.1.5: *[This Commission recommends the implementation of a strategy to eliminate racism in policing by the Saskatchewan Police Commission. This strategy shall contain:] A pro-active First Nations and Metis candidate recruitment strategy.*

Response: The Regina Police Service strongly supports this recommendation. The Service staffed and implemented an Aboriginal recruitment initiative during 2001–2003 which produced some benefits and led to the creation of a strategic recruiting plan. The Service is still working at moving beyond the current 8% level of Aboriginal police officers. The Service has had an employment equity plan since 1992 and has shown steady progress with a target of 12% Aboriginal police officers by 2012. In January 2006, the Service plans to fill an equity only recruit class which, if successful, should bring us much closer to our goal.

Recommendation 5.1.6: *[This Commission recommends the implementation of a strategy to eliminate racism in policing by the Saskatchewan Police Commission. This strategy shall contain:] Employment assistance counseling for First Nations and Metis candidates that will assist them with the pressures of working within a police service that has traditionally been dominated by non-Aboriginal people.*

Response: The Regina Police Service supports this recommendation. The Service is fortunate to have a strong and viable contingent of First Nations and Metis officers who offer support to one another. The Service also has several promoted police officers of Aboriginal heritage who provide informal and formal leadership and support to new officers. More could be done in this area, and the Service is willing to work with the Saskatchewan Police Commission in this regard.

Recommendation 5.2: *This Commission recommends that all police services invite members of the First Nations and Metis communities to evaluate the effectiveness of existing cultural awareness programs and implement changes as required.*

Response: The Regina Police Service supports this recommendation. Through its Race Relations Committee (now Community Advisory Committee), the Service had all of its policies reviewed during the mid-1990s for bias and/or discriminatory language or practices. This committee had and has both First Nations and Metis membership. Since 2003, the Service has also had an Elder Advisory Group. The Service currently utilizes the Aboriginal Cultural Awareness Program (ACAP) offered by the First Nations University of Canada (FNUC) as part of its cultural awareness training as well as other training developed by the Cultural Relations Unit in conjunction with the Saskatchewan Police College. Some members of the Service are actively pursuing certification as ACAP instructors in partnership with FNUC. The Service will formally ask the Elder Advisory Group and the Community Advisory Committee to assist with the evaluation of the existing cultural awareness programs and implement changes as recommended.

Recommendation 5.3.1: *This Commission recommends that urban police services have a First Nations and Metis staffing component that is equal in percentage to the respective populations.*

Response: The Regina Police Service strongly supports this recommendation and has been working toward this goal within a twenty year Employment Equity Plan with a completion date of 2012. It is the Service's desire to reach this level prior to the planned date.

Recommendation 5.4: *This Commission recommends that the Government of Saskatchewan, in view of the fact that it invests in community policing initiatives, conduct province-wide surveys every two years to monitor the degree of public satisfaction regarding community policing within all communities.*

Response: The Regina Police Service supports this recommendation. The Service has, in partnership with the City of Regina, contracted professionally conducted city-wide satisfaction surveys since 1999. The Service would welcome a provincial assessment in this regard.

Recommendation 5.5.1: *This Commission recommends that Saskatchewan Justice and the Aboriginal Policing Directorate in the federal Solicitor General's office ensure that Community Police Boards and Police Management Boards receive adequate resourcing and training to ensure that community based policing is supported and successful in all communities.*

Response: The Regina Police Service supports this recommendation. Community based policing is a complex and demanding endeavour that requires learning and understanding to ensure its success. To complement this recommendation, it is important that police officers also receive training in both the theory and practice of community based policing.

Recommendation 5.5.3: *This Commission recommends that police officers working in First Nations and Metis communities, including urban neighbourhoods with high First Nations and Metis populations, be required to meet regularly with Elders and other community leaders in order to learn more about the culture of the people they are working with.*

Response: The Regina Police Service supports this recommendation. The Service has in place an Elder Advisory Group; however more could be done to place frontline officers in contact with Elders and First Nations and Metis community leaders. In 2005, the Regina Police Service will incorporate this recommendation into its operating practices for frontline members working in neighbourhoods with a high percentage of First Nations and Metis residents.

Recommendation 5.6: *This Commission recommends that all police services be required to prepare reports to justify any decisions that do not divert matters extra-judicially.*

Response: The Regina Police Service does not support this recommendation. The Service would prefer the

development of province-wide criteria for diversion. If the goal is more pre-charge diversion, the Service is willing to work with the Crown and First Nations and Metis representatives to establish working criteria for this to happen. The Service does not believe that diversion is appropriate in all circumstances. The Service helped to create a diversion program for auto theft offenders in the face of strong public pressure to do otherwise. This program is working, and the Service received a federal Justice Minister's Youth Justice Award of Distinction for the Help End Auto Theft (HEAT) program in 2003.

Recommendation 5.7:

This Commission recommends that the Government of Saskatchewan establish emergency detoxification facilities in cooperation with municipalities immediately in La Ronge, Prince Albert, Saskatoon and Regina. In remote areas, the Commission recommends that these facilities are incorporated into the local hospital, or in these remote communities, provision be made for sobering up houses as an alternative to drunk tanks.

Response:

The Regina Police Service strongly supports this recommendation. The Service currently takes into custody people who are intoxicated in public places, most of whom are highly addicted to alcohol (approximately 25% of our overall custody numbers). This does nothing to address the problem beyond moving it out of sight. The City of Winnipeg has had this capacity for over thirty years; the City of Calgary has had it for twenty; the time has more than come for this to be done in our communities. To that end, the Regina Police Service has participated with the Regina Area Drug Strategy in developing a proposal for an emergency detoxification centre in the city, which will require sufficient funding to be implemented.

Recommendation 5.8:

This Commission recommends that the Government of Saskatchewan, in cooperation with municipalities, establish detoxification facilities for youth in Saskatchewan.

Response:

The Regina Police Service strongly agrees with this recommendation. In a national study conducted in 2001, the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police (CACCP)

identified that approximately 65% of the persons in custody were under the influence of alcohol or drugs at the time of their arrest and/or the time of the offence for which they were arrested. Substance abuse and addictions are core causal issues in relation to criminal offending. The more done to deal effectively with these issues, the lower the crime rate will become. Saskatchewan currently has the highest crime rate of any of the provinces in Canada. Detoxification facilities offering both immediate and long-term services are an integral component of any comprehensive strategy to reduce youth offending.

Recommendation 5.9.1: *This Commission recommends the increased use of video recording equipment by RCMP and municipal police services.*

Response: The Regina Police Service supports this recommendation. The Service is currently engaged in a major information technology project. The funds necessary for the implementation of this enhanced video capacity will not be available for the next two to three years. It is part of the Service's overall technology plan to have this capability in place in some patrol vehicles within five years. The Service currently has video and audio capabilities within its detention, interview and front counter facilities. The Service will have automated vehicle location (AVL) operational in all patrol vehicles in 2005, and is currently studying in-car video surveillance systems.

Recommendation 5.9.2: *This Commission recommends that an Aboriginal liaison worker or volunteer individual be available for First Nations and Metis people upon their arrival at a police station or detachment office.*

Response: The Regina Police Service supports this recommendation in part. The Service has two Aboriginal Resource Officers funded by the Department of Justice. These personnel work out of the Victim Services Unit. The Service does not have the capacity to provide 24-hour coverage. The Service would be willing to work with First Nations and Metis volunteers to provide enhanced service in this area.

Recommendation 5.10: *This Commission recommends that representatives of the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations, Metis Nation – Saskatchewan, governments of Canada and Saskatchewan work together to develop an independent complaints investigation agency that will meet the needs of First Nations, Metis and non-Aboriginal people with the objective of having such an agency in place by April 1, 2005.*

Response: The Regina Police Service supports changes to the Police Act and the public complaints process that will enhance accessibility, transparency and public confidence.

Recommendation 5.11: *This Commission recommends that the Implementation Commissioner monitor and oversee the establishment of a complaints agency that will reflect and respect the spirit and intent of the existing Special Investigations Unit.*

Response: The Regina Police Service will work with Saskatchewan Justice, the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations, the Metis Nation - Saskatchewan, the RCMP, other municipal police agencies, and the Saskatchewan Federation of Police Officers to increase the accessibility, transparency and public confidence in the police complaints legislation and procedures.

Recommendation 6.8: *This Commission recommends that all levels of court be encouraged to use community based sentences for all offences (unless specifically prohibited by law) and that every level of government redirect resources to fund community based projects and help to facilitate community participation in sentencing.*

Response: The Regina Police Service supports increasing the capacity of community supervision and community participation in achieving positive outcomes through community based sentences. The Regina Police Service sees a gap in the current level of support for effective community based sentencing.

Recommendation 6.9: *This Commission recommends that a Therapeutic Court, preferably mobile, with the capacity to address issues such*

as alcohol and other addictions, fetal alcohol spectrum disorders, families in crisis and family violence, be immediately established and implemented in Saskatchewan and that new funding be provided specifically by all departments and levels of government, including First Nations and Metis governments, to facilitate an integrated response to the root causes of criminal behaviour.

Response: The Regina Police Service strongly supports this recommendation.

Recommendation 6.10: *This Commission recommends that the Government of Saskatchewan continue to work with communities, in collaboration with the Government of Canada and First Nations and Metis Governments, to establish community justice programs which will qualify as Alternative Measures [Extra-judicial Sanctions] programs under S. 717 of the Criminal Code of Canada.*

Response: The Regina Police Service supports this recommendation.

Recommendation 6.11.1: *[This Commission recommends that:] An Aboriginal Liaison person (or other approved community designate) participate in the decision as to whether to refer any alleged criminal behaviour to the community Alternative Measures [Extra-judicial Sanctions] program.*

Response: The Regina Police Service supports this recommendation in part. The Service would like to see the creation of province-wide criteria for diversion through work done jointly with the Crown, police and First Nations and Metis people.

Recommendation 6.11.2: *[This Commission recommends that:] The Aboriginal Liaison person (or community designate) have the ability to apply to the Implementation Commissioner's Office to review a decision whether to refer alleged criminal behaviour to Alternative Measures [Extra-judicial Sanctions]. The Implementation Commissioner's Office must have the authority to access all material relating to this decision, to review it, and to advocate for the reversal of the decision where appropriate.*

Response: The Regina Police Service does not agree with this recommendation.

Recommendation 6.13: *This Commission recommends to the Government of Saskatchewan that all offences, whether Provincial Regulatory offences or Criminal Code of Canada, including spousal assaults and excepting homicide, be eligible for Alternative Measures [Extra-judicial Sanctions].*

Response: The Regina Police Service does not agree with this recommendation.

Recommendation 6.14: *This Commission recommends that all levels of government work towards the closure of incarceration spaces and divert resources thus saved to community-based alternatives.*

Response: The Regina Police Service agrees with this recommendation in part. The Service believes that the balance between incarceration and community-based alternatives has to be based upon effective outcomes which meet the needs of both the offender and the community. There are offenders who cannot be safely released into the community. There is also a current lack of community supervision and support resources. There has been no effective assessment or evaluation of community-based alternatives. Recidivism is a significant issue in our communities. This kind of change needs to be evaluated and introduced in a measured and thoughtful process. It is much more complex than an exchange of one approach for the other.

Recommendation 6.15: *This Commission recommends that adult correctional centers, youth custody facilities, and the Correctional Service of Canada work cooperatively with community justice programs, Probation Services and the offender in the design and implementation of reintegration plans.*

Response: The Regina Police Service supports this recommendation.

Recommendation 6.18: *This Commission recommends that a pre-charge screening process with community involvement be immediately implemented throughout Saskatchewan by the Government of Saskatchewan. As part of pre-charge screening, Crown prosecutors should be instructed specifically to consider whether the matter in question could be referred to a community-based justice initiative as an alternative to Court.*

Response: The Regina Police Service does not support this recommendation. The Crown and the Courts are well-positioned to deal with charges without merit or better addressed through community-based justice initiatives.

Recommendation 6.22: *This Commission recommends that a public education campaign be designed and implemented by all levels of Government directed at providing accurate information on the benefits of non-custodial alternatives to imprisonment and reintegration into the community.*

Response: The Regina Police Service supports evidence-based public communication, based upon evaluation and study. The Regina Police Service supports non-custodial alternatives that deliver positive outcomes for offenders and communities. The Regina Police Service supports reintegration planning and services.

Recommendation 6.24: *This Commission recommends to the governments of Canada and Saskatchewan that more resources be provided to community service providers to develop and operate programs designed that aid offenders with their transition into the community when they are released from prison institutions.*

Response: The Regina Police Service supports this recommendation.

Recommendation 6.28: *This Commission recommends to Corrections and Public Safety that plans for reintegration into the community be created as soon as youth are admitted to youth facilities.*

Response: The Regina Police Service strongly supports this recommendation and has been involved in the planning and

implementation of a pilot project in this regard through the Regina Youth Justice Forum.

Recommendation 6.29: *This Commission recommends that all levels of government immediately design and implement a funding strategy to fully resource the provisions of the Youth Criminal Justice Act, particularly those provisions that address community supervision of youth.*

Response: The Regina Police Service strongly supports this recommendation. In 2004, the Service will perform in excess of 4,000 supervision checks on youth on some form of release within the community. In 2003, the Service performed approximately 3,500 supervisory visits. This work has been demonstrated to reduce significantly offending levels and recidivism within the community; however, it would be better performed by other branches of the justice system, specifically those responsible for probation and corrections. A large gap exists in this area, placing both offending youth and the community at risk.

Recommendation 6.31: *This Commission recommends that an evaluation of probation and community justice services be undertaken to ensure such services are meeting the needs of individuals and communities.*

Response: The Regina Police Service supports this recommendation.

Recommendation 6.32: *This Commission recommends that the options of alternative measures, bail, probation and conditional sentences be employed instead of the use of remand and incarceration wherever possible.*

Response: The Regina Police Service supports this recommendation when the necessary capacity is created to deliver effective community supervision.

Recommendation 6.33: *This Commission recommends that Bail officers, Probation Officers and Conditional Sentence Supervisors be scheduled so that their services are available on a 24-hour basis.*

Response: The Regina Police Service strongly supports this recommendation.

Recommendation 7.2: *This Commission recommends that the governments of Canada and Saskatchewan, specifically Indian and Northern Affairs Canada and Saskatchewan Government Relations and Aboriginal Affairs, in consultation with representatives from the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations and Metis Nation – Saskatchewan:*

a) create a directory for Saskatchewan of First Nations and Metis people who are recognized and respected as trainers/facilitators on cultural awareness and the promotion of healthy relationships between the First Nation and Metis cultures and the non-Aboriginal population;

b) that the directory be made available to organizations, government departments, and members of the justice system wishing to provide cultural awareness training to their employees; and

c) that the list be reviewed and updated on an annual basis.

Response: The Regina Police Service supports this recommendation.

Recommendation 7.4: *The Commission recommends that the Department of Culture, Youth and Recreation take a lead role and work with other relevant government departments, agencies, and non-governmental organizations, along with representation from the First Nations and Metis communities, to coordinate and host an anti-racism conference to coincide with March 21, 2005, the annual day on which Saskatchewan supports the Elimination of Racism and the centenary of Saskatchewan. This conference should be offered by videoconference, wherever possible, to ensure northern communities can participate.*

Response: The Regina Police Service supports this recommendation. The police should lead in upholding and protecting the rights of citizens to be free from racism, discrimination and bias. However, police will inevitably reflect the values of the broader community in which they live and work. There

is a need for broader understanding, acceptance and inclusion in our communities.

Recommendation 7.5: *This Commission recommends that the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities and Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association, along with representatives from the Government of Saskatchewan, Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations, and Metis Nation – Saskatchewan establish a committee to coordinate anti-racism activities in the year 2005.*

Response: The Regina Police Service supports this recommendation and would be willing to participate in this work.

Recommendation 7.6: *This Commission recommends that the Government of Saskatchewan design and implement a media campaign which includes the use of public service announcements, as much as possible, September 2005, with the assistance of First Nations and Metis people, to achieve the objectives below:*

- *Provide all citizens of Saskatchewan an opportunity to reflect on the contribution of First Nations and Metis peoples over the last 100 years of this province's development;*
- *Establish a broad-based understanding of how to build and maintain constructive and positive relationships among First Nations, Metis and non-Aboriginal people; and*
- *Assist individuals and communities to identify and eliminate inequities and barriers based on racial and cultural differences.*

This public education strategy must go beyond 2005 and must include an evaluation component.

Response: The Regina Police Service strongly supports this recommendation. In its submission to the Commission on First Nations and Metis Peoples and Justice Reform on March 14, 2003, the Service offered this conclusion:

As stated at the outset, policing takes place in a context—a community context. It would be of most significance and greatest help to have an inclusive, overarching sense of community identity that provides hope, meaning, purpose and direction for all people, including Aboriginal people, including police. In mixed urban communities, this is critically important, for without an inclusive vision of who we are and what we aspire to become collectively, policing—influenced, informed and guided, to a degree, by its environment—will continue to reflect the limitations of our sense of community. On the other hand, if we can achieve and articulate a vision that, while acknowledging our challenges, speaks to everyone’s dreams, policing will be a tremendous resource and strength to the community. Police have a responsibility for leadership in ensuring fairness and safety for all people. The Regina Police Service has sought to understand the community it serves and assist in the achievement of its goals. A lot of good work has been done, but there are more changes that can and should be made and still more work to be done to engender trust and build respect. The goal has to remain relevant policing and meaningful justice to create a safe and caring community—**people living well together**.

Recommendation 7.7: *This Commission recommends that every person, and especially those in leadership positions, make a commitment to eliminate racism where it is present in day-to-day life.*

Response: The Regina Police Service agrees with this recommendation.

Recommendation 8.1: *This Commission recommends that the Government of Saskatchewan initiate a study to determine the reasons for the high number of First Nations and Metis youth remanded to custody followed by a strategy to reduce these numbers by March 21, 2005.*

Response: The Regina Police Service supports this recommendation in that it seeks to analyze and comprehend the current context.

Recommendation 8.2: *This Commission recommends that the Government of Saskatchewan develop a mental health services plan to prevent and treat mental disorders among children and youth not involved in the youth justice system.*

Response: The Regina Police Service supports efforts to prevent and/or treat mental disorders in children and youths that may increase their vulnerability to victimization and/or offending behaviour.

Recommendation 8.4: *This Commission recommends that the partners in the Policy Framework for Saskatchewan's Education System develop and deliver education outside the traditional school system to those not presently attending school between the ages of 6 and 16. This will require identification of these children and youth and subsequently finding creative means of ensuring their right to an education is respected.*

Response: The Regina Police Service supports this recommendation. There are a large number of young children not regularly attending school in Regina's inner-city neighbourhoods. These children are at-risk of sexual exploitation, gang involvement, substance abuse and addictions, criminal involvement and a life-long disadvantage.

Recommendation 8.5: *This Commission endorses the direction of School Plus but is concerned that without resources and a collaborative approach, School Plus will not succeed. Therefore, it is recommended that the Government of Saskatchewan ensure that School Plus is a priority and fully resourced.*

Response: The Regina Police Service supports the School Plus initiative and will continue to work with local school divisions through the School Resource Officer program.

Recommendation 8.6: *This Commission recommends that all urban municipalities consider the need for transitional or orientation programs for First Nations and Metis youth who move from reserve or rural areas to the urban centers.*

Response: The Regina Police Service supports this recommendation. The Service has been in a multi-year partnership with the

Open Door Society to provide orientation and support services to new immigrants. This proactive work offsets potential future conflicts with the justice system.

Recommendation 8.7: *This Commission recommends that the Government of Canada consult with First Nations and Metis people to establish indicators of quality of life for 2004 for First Nations and Metis children in Saskatchewan's urban environments and that in 2009, these indicators be re-evaluated by investigating actions and initiatives undertaken to improve the quality of life of these children.*

Response: The Regina Police Service supports this recommendation.

Recommendation 8.11: *This Commission recommends that all governments collaborate to sign a Declaration and create long-term Saskatchewan First Nations and Metis Children and Youth Action Plans that transcend all jurisdictions in the best interests of our children and our collective future.*

And that the Declaration be signed addressing the relationships between jurisdictions. The Saskatchewan First Nations and Metis Children and Youth Action Plans must involve First Nations and Metis youth, and all levels of government to create holistic Action Plans that must include social and capital infrastructure projects.

These Action Plans are based on the principles of inclusion of First Nations and Metis children and youth, integrated services, involved communities and future focused.

Response: The Regina Police Service strongly supports this recommendation, as it seeks to set aside jurisdictional issues in support of children, their future, and the future of our communities.