

Human Rights



Ontario
Human Rights Commission
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Project Charter

A CELEBRATION OF PROGRESS

Objectives

Concentrating on anti-racism and human rights in employment practices for public service, the Human Rights Project Charter gave the Toronto Police Service (TPS) the chance to step back and look at itself through a human rights lens. The Charter focused on two main objectives:

1. Finding and eliminating 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. Finding and eliminating 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*

An agreement for this landmark project was signed in May 2007.



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The Ontario Human Rights Commission, the Toronto

Police Services Board and the Toronto Police Service have worked in partnership to eliminate discrimination in the internal and external practices of the Service.

There is still work to do but this project is an example of how the power of partnership can help any public or private organization to change its culture and meet its human rights goals.

- Barbara Hall,
Chief Commissioner,
Ontario Human Rights
Commission

Why did we create the Charter and undertake this partnership?

- ❖ The way the police “do business” must meet the standards set by the Ontario Human Rights Code. The Charter was a way to help make that happen.
- ❖ The Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC), the Toronto Police Services Board (TPSB) and the Toronto Police Service (TPS) agreed it was crucial to build meaningful, lasting solutions to concerns being brought before the Human Rights Tribunal.
- ❖ The Project Charter drew on the expertise of the OHRC to support change programs already underway at the TPS.

What did Project Charter involve?

- ❖ Over the past three years, this ambitious project has focused on four main areas:
 - Recruitment, selection, promotion and retention
 - Police learning
 - Accountability
 - Public education.
- ❖ Through research, analysis, dialogue and consensus, new ideas and relationships emerged among the project partners that have led to real progress in the project’s four key areas.

Who is involved?

- ❖ The Sponsor Group is made up of the Chief Commissioner of the OHRC, the Chair of the Toronto Police Services Board and the Chief of the Toronto Police Service.
- ❖ Participants included over 80 staff members from all ranks and levels of the three agencies.

What has the project achieved so far?

- ❖ *Recruitment, Selection, Promotion and Retention:* It’s important that all TPS human resource systems be barrier-free for current and future TPS members. Progress so far:
 - Recruitment focused on under-represented groups such as women from diverse communities
 - An “Inclusive Design Review” incorporated three employment systems reviews, a new Diversity Management Unit, the creation of Internal Support Networks and an equity-based review of the promotion processes. This review will continue
 - A review of workplace accommodation is underway
 - A Confidential Employee Database (CED) will better track and analyze demographic data on members
 - Exit surveys are being expanded to improve information about human rights issues.



The Police Services Board is proud of Project

Charter and our cooperative relationship with the OHRC. Through dialogue and consensus, the three partners have helped to ensure that the Service will continue to be a world leader not only in effective policing, but also in accountability and sensitivity to the community. The benefits of this project will continue to be felt as we move ahead in the coming years.

- Dr. Alok Mukherjee,
Chair, Toronto Police
Services Board

- ❖ Learning: Human rights training for all members is being developed and improved. Progress so far:
 - Specific training has been developed on “Human Rights 101” and “Racially Biased Policing & Racial Profiling”
 - Training will include a combination of on-line and classroom methods. This will ensure that the complex messages are clear to all members, and that there is enough time to deliver human-rights material effectively.
- ❖ Accountability: TPS governance was reviewed to ensure compliance with the *Human Rights Code*, to increase awareness and compliance within the Police Service, and to capture information from human rights complaints for analysis and reporting. Progress so far:
 - We have completely revamped the way we analyze and investigate human rights complaints
 - Forms and processes for complaints have been updated
 - Amendments to Board policies with human rights components are ready for review
 - Information and marketing strategies are underway and more are being developed
 - Forms and processes used to evaluate members, including senior members, have been updated and improved and are ready for implementation.
- ❖ Public Education: A comprehensive communication strategy is needed that highlights TPS human rights and anti-racism initiatives. Progress so far:
 - New guidelines and training ensure appropriate human rights-themed language is used in all internal and external communication
 - A feature “pull-out” was placed in community newspapers, entitled “Fair & Equitable Policing” (more than 450,000 copies were distributed)
 - Wider communication is in place for TPS human rights-related events
 - Outreach to individuals and communities without access to conventional communication tools is under development.



The Toronto Police Service has gained a great deal by this project. With our partners, we have made progress as we strive to reflect the community, contribute to a socially just society, and provide excellent, professional and accountable service to the public. I am confident that this relationship will outlast the project, and that we will continue to move closer to the community with which we work every day to reduce crime and disorder and to improve quality of life in Toronto.

– William Blair,
Chief of Police,
Toronto Police Service



In a city made up of people from all over the globe, it is vital that the police service have the tools it needs to work with people of all races, languages, cultures and backgrounds. Toronto's motto is “Diversity Our Strength,” and the Human Rights Project Charter has helped our police service to move even closer to the people who live, work and play in Toronto, as well as those who visit here.

– David Miller,
Mayor, City of Toronto

How will this benefit the Police Service and the community in Toronto?

- ❖ The TPS has shown Toronto that it is committed to being an organization free of discrimination and bias. It strives to reflect the racial, cultural, ethnic and linguistic character of the city, and to continue to deliver the whole range of policing services in an effective and insightful way that is consistent with the principles of community engagement.
- ❖ The community will have more confidence as the TPS deals with a number of controversial issues, including racially biased policing. This will lead to an improved relationship between the Police Service and Torontonians of all backgrounds.
- ❖ As other organizations undertake partnerships like the Human Rights Project Charter, they will be more aware of the importance of anti-racism and human rights, and the benefits of ensuring that their policies and services reflect best practices. These values will be visible to the community, which will enhance public support and improve relationships.

For more information

This process can benefit other organizations. If you would like to discuss the process or for more information, please contact:

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What remains to be done?

- ❖ Project Charter has achieved many goals, but the improvement must be continuous. All of the partners are very confident that progress will continue in coming years
 - An example of a next step is an “inclusive design review.” The review, which focuses on religion, will look at the Police Service’s culture, policies and practices, to ensure they are welcoming to all members of the organization.
- ❖ A Human Rights Advisory Committee will continue the spirit, momentum and legacy of Project Charter. Reporting regularly to the Sponsor Group, it will:
 - Be made up of two representatives from each of the involved agencies
 - Make sure good work is not undone over time
 - Maintain and monitor all Project Charter strategies, ensuring that they stay “on track”
 - Provide information, advice and support to other organizations involved in similar projects
 - Ryerson University will assess Project Charter to answer the question, “*Did we do what we set out to do?*” The Advisory Committee will work with the Ryerson team, making sure it has all the information and access it needs
 - The first report in 2010 will provide preliminary results. The second will be completed before 2014 to gauge longer-term results and sustainability.
 - The university will also help with a long-term, comprehensive assessment of the elements of Project Charter, including:
 - The project itself
 - Organizational change within the TPS (to ensure that we are, in fact, making things better)
 - Whether the change was due to Project Charter.

Why should my organization go through this process?

Project Charter is moving the police in Toronto closer to the community it serves. It will ensure that anti-racism and human rights remain built into our processes and ingrained in our culture. Improved procedures and processes are only the beginning; shared information, training and mutual understanding are key to creating an organization that is culturally competent, sensitive to the needs of the community, and willingly accountable for its actions and priorities. This can only improve the relationship between *your* organization and *your* community. Take our word for it: it’s worth the time and effort.

The Project Team...

