



# SIU SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS UNIT

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# UES UNITÉ DES ENQUÊTES SPÉCIALES

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## **For Immediate Release**

### **SIU Director Responds to Ombudsman's Report**

*Recommendations will help SIU improve processes, maintain public confidence and trust*

TORONTO (September 30, 2008) -- The Special Investigations Unit (SIU) welcomed today's Ombudsman's report for its contribution to strengthening Ontario's system of civilian oversight.

"I wish to thank Ontario's Ombudsman and his staff for the important public service they have undertaken on behalf of the people of Ontario," SIU Director James Cornish said in a statement released today. "The Ombudsman's recommendations will help make the SIU an even more vital public institution, one working to maintain the public's confidence in civilian oversight and the public's trust that there is one law for everyone in Ontario."

The Ombudsman's report contains a total of 46 recommendations, of which 25 are directed at the SIU. Cornish said he has committed the SIU to a full and careful consideration of the report and to taking the necessary steps to act on the Ombudsman's recommendations where feasible.

Cornish noted in his statement that before the Ombudsman announced his investigation in June 2007, the SIU had already sought to address caseload pressures by requesting funding from the Ministry of the Attorney General for additional resources. Earlier this year the ministry approved new funding of about \$700,000, which the SIU will use to fill two new investigative positions, add two entry-level investigator positions, hire additional administrative staff and fund an outreach coordinator position. The SIU also received one-time funding to acquire a mobile investigative centre.

Cornish noted that the Ombudsman made several positive findings about the SIU in his report:

- *The Ombudsman found no evidence of any cases having been tainted by improper motives or bias*
- *Although at the outset of his review the Ombudsman suggested he might recommend that the SIU re-open cases, there was no such recommendation*
- *The Ombudsman recognized that the SIU's consultative approach often results in the policing community taking corrective action.*

“The Ombudsman noted that there have been some investigative flaws in isolated cases. This of course reminds us that we must always strive to do better,” Cornish said. “As the Ombudsman pointed out, when the SIU discovers a flaw in the thoroughness of an investigation or in the adequacy of its investigative practices, we take steps to redress the issues.”

Cornish also noted that the Ombudsman acknowledged the strong commitment of SIU staff to their work. “The men and women of the SIU are skilled professionals dedicated to public service,” he said. “I stand firmly behind their abilities and their dedication to doing the best job they can on behalf of the people of Ontario.”

The SIU is an independent civilian law enforcement agency that investigates circumstances involving police and civilians which have resulted in serious injury (including all allegations of sexual assault) or death. Its mandate is to maintain confidence in Ontario's police services by assuring the public that police actions resulting in serious injury or death are subjected to rigorous, independent investigations.

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**Director Cornish's statement is available on Canada NewsWire**

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**Statement by James Cornish  
Director, Special Investigations Unit (SIU)  
Response to the Ombudsman's Report  
September 2008**

On behalf of the women and men of the Special Investigations Unit, the SIU, I would like to thank Ontario's Ombudsman for his systemic review of the SIU's processes. The Ombudsman has provided 25 recommendations on how we can improve our work. Already I have committed the SIU to a full and careful consideration of the Ombudsman's report and to taking the necessary steps to act on the Ombudsman's recommendations where feasible.

Even before June 2007, when the Ombudsman launched his investigation, the SIU had already begun to address many issues noted by the Ombudsman.

In response to increasing caseload pressures, the SIU sought funding from the Ministry of the Attorney General for additional resources. The Attorney General was responsive to the SIU's requests and, in August 2008, approved new funding totalling approximately \$700,000. These new funds will enable us to hire and train four more full-time investigators, including two entry-level investigators. We will also hire additional administrative staff and fund an outreach coordinator position. The Attorney General also approved one-time funding to enable the SIU to acquire a mobile investigative centre.

Outreach has long been a priority at the SIU. During my tenure, the SIU:

- *Established an Affected Persons Coordinator position in 2006*
- *Launched the First Nations Liaison program in 2005*
- *Continued the work of the Director's Resource Committee*
- *Invited civilians to speak about their experiences with the SIU at internal training sessions.*

The Ombudsman made positive findings about the SIU in his report. The Ombudsman found no evidence of any cases having been tainted by improper motives or bias. This reflects the SIU's commitment to providing an impartial public service to the people of Ontario.

The Ombudsman acknowledged the strong commitment of SIU staff to their work. The men and women of the SIU are skilled professionals dedicated to public service. I stand

firmly behind their abilities and their dedication to doing the best job they can on behalf of the people of Ontario.

The Ombudsman recognized that the SIU's consultative approach often results in the policing community taking corrective action. One example of the success of this approach is that the SIU is now routinely told in advance of major policing operations that have the potential for violence so that the Unit can plan for a swift response if called.

The Ombudsman noted that there have been some investigative flaws in isolated cases. This of course reminds us that we must always strive to do better. As the Ombudsman pointed out, when the SIU discovers a flaw in the thoroughness of an investigation or in the adequacy of its investigative practices, we take steps to redress the issues. It should be noted that the Ombudsman, at the outset of his review, suggested he might recommend that the SIU re-open cases. There was no such recommendation.

In closing, I wish to thank Ontario's Ombudsman and his staff for the important public service they have undertaken on behalf of the people of Ontario. I am confident the Ombudsman's recommendations will help make the SIU an even more vital public institution, one working to maintain the public's confidence in civilian oversight and the public's trust that there is one law for everyone in Ontario.



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**Excerpts from the Ombudsman's Report on the SIU**

- "In most cases, we found the SIU's investigative coverage to be adequate once staff were deployed." (Para. 161)
- "Notwithstanding some isolated cases, we did not find evidence of widespread problems with security of SIU scenes." (Para. 170)
- "The SIU's informal efforts often result in police committing to take corrective action..." (Para. 227)
- "The SIU's mantra of consensus, co-operation and conciliation is firmly instilled in its management culture. Sometimes this approach is successful in situations of conflict with police." (Para. 237)
- "Within the Unit, Director Cornish has a reputation for ensuring the adequacy of investigative files." (Para. 271)
- "While we have found some SIU investigations that were flawed from an evidentiary or procedural perspective, the SIU should not be held up to a standard of perfection in every case." (Para. 282)
- "Based on the materials that we reviewed, it appears that in general, when the SIU has uncovered problems with the thoroughness of an investigation or the adequacy of its investigative practices, it has taken corrective action." (Para. 282)
- "The SIU's operations orders provide for contact with affected individuals during its investigations, and for telephone or in-person briefings at their conclusion. Director Cornish has personally attended such briefings in a number of instances to explain his decision in cases where he has decided not to lay charges. In some cases we reviewed, SIU investigators appeared to have maintained regular communication with the civilians involved in their investigations." (Para. 306)
- "In fact, during our investigation, we were unable to find any objective evidence that any individual case had been tainted by improper motives." (Para. 323)
- "...without exception the SIU investigative staff professed a strong commitment to their work, and I do not doubt their sincerity..." (Para. 348)

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## **For Immediate Release**

### **BACKGROUNDER**

#### **History of Civilian Oversight in Ontario and Reviews of the Special Investigations Unit**

The Special Investigations Unit (SIU) is a single but integral component of Ontario's system of civilian oversight of police. The Ontario Ombudsman's report of 2007-2008 on the SIU represents the latest step in the long and continuing evolution of ideas on the structure of an accountable, independent and responsive system of police oversight in Ontario.

The SIU was initially established in 1990 in response to a series of reviews and reports on police accountability in Ontario. In 1981, as a result of concerns over police policing themselves, the Office of the Public Complaints Commissioner was created with jurisdiction only over the Metropolitan Toronto Police Service. While the Commissioner monitored the process, the police retained responsibility for the investigation of public complaints.

In 1988, the Ontario Government created the Task Force On Race Relations and Policing, chaired by Clare Lewis. In 1989, the Task Force reported that visible minorities did not believe they were policed fairly and recommended, among other things, that Ontario create an independent agency to investigate police shootings and to determine whether charges should be laid. In response, the SIU was created in 1990 under a new *Police Services Act* for the investigation of deaths and serious injury arising in the course of policing.

In May of 1992, immediately after a riot on Yonge Street in Toronto, the Government appointed Stephen Lewis as its advisor on race relations. On June 9, 1992, Mr. Lewis made recommendations on policing, including some specifically dealing with the SIU. The report recommended increased funding for the SIU, and that the SIU should report to the Attorney General instead of the Solicitor General. In response, on September 29, 1992, the Attorney General announced the transfer of the SIU from the Ministry of the Solicitor General to the Ministry of the Attorney General and confirmed its arms-length agency status.

In July of 1992, the reconstituted Task Force on Race Relations and Policing commented on the problem of SIU resources in light of its broad mandate, which had been extended beyond police shootings to any serious injury or death resulting from police conduct.

On December 19, 1995, the Commission on Systemic Racism in the Ontario Criminal Justice System reported that the establishment of the SIU had not improved police accountability in the use of force. The Commission highlighted three basic problems the SIU was encountering: (i) inadequate funding, (ii) a lack of cooperation from police services, and (iii) the refusal of individual officers to be interviewed. The Commission made several recommendations aimed at remedying these problems.

In October of 1996, the Government asked Roderick McLeod, Q.C. to advise on how Ontario's system of civilian oversight could be improved. With respect to the SIU, Mr. McLeod proposed a consultation process with affected parties regarding the duty to cooperate, and made recommendations with respect to the control of SIU incident scenes.

In September 1997, the Honourable George Adams, Q.C. was appointed by the Attorney General and the Solicitor General to consult with community and police organizations on ways to improve the relationship between the SIU and the police. Mr. Adams focused his consultation in the areas of: (i) timely notification of incidents to the SIU by the police; (ii) control of the incident scene pending arrival and investigation by the SIU; and (iii) timely cooperation of police officers involved in the incidents being investigated.

Mr. Adams delivered his report in May 1998 in which he made 25 recommendations. In February of 2003, Mr. Adams delivered a review report of the reforms implemented as a result of the 1998 recommendations. Mr. Adams reported that there was a vast improvement in the SIU's performance and in the relationships between the SIU, police and community groups.

The Ontario Ombudsman announced an investigation of the SIU in June 2007.

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## **BACKGROUNDER**

### **Mandate of the Special Investigations Unit**

The Special Investigations Unit (SIU) is a civilian law enforcement agency with a “consequence-based” jurisdiction to conduct criminal investigations of incidents involving the police and civilians that have resulted in a serious injury (including all allegations of sexual assault) or death.

Complaints about police conduct that do not involve a serious injury or death must be referred to the appropriate police service or other agencies such as the Ontario Civilian Commission on Police Services (OCCOPS). The Independent Police Review Office, once it is operational, will also provide a forum for complaints against the police.

The definition of “serious injury” with respect to the SIU’s mandate has been the subject of vigorous debate. The SIU’s first Director, the Honourable John Osler, consulted with representatives from the Ministry of the Solicitor General and the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police to develop the following definition, based on the definition of “assault causing bodily harm” in the Criminal Code of Canada.

*“Serious injuries” shall include those that are likely to interfere with the health or comfort of the victim and are more than merely transient or trifling in nature and will include serious injury resulting from sexual assault. “Serious Injury” shall initially be presumed when the victim is admitted to hospital, suffers a fracture to a limb, rib or vertebrae or to the skull, suffers burns to a major portion of the body or loses any portion of the body or suffers loss of vision or hearing, or alleges sexual assault. Where a prolonged delay is likely before the seriousness of the injury can be assessed, the Unit should be notified so that it can monitor the situation and decide on the extent of its involvement.*

In his 1998 report, the Honourable George Adams, Q.C. recognized that where there is uncertainty over the nature of an injury, the police should nevertheless notify the SIU of the incident. Mr. Adams wrote: “It is not practical for a police service to attempt to determine the SIU’s jurisdiction in a strict legal sense before notification is effected



because of the inherent uncertainty of many incidents. The issue of notification must be treated more like that of calling an ambulance - when in doubt call.”

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### **BACKGROUNDER**

#### **The Special Investigations Unit's Affected Persons Services**

Creating the Affected Persons Coordinator (APC) position has helped the Special Investigations Unit (SIU) to improve its ability to respond to the needs of those persons impacted by the incidents the SIU investigates.

The SIU established the position in 2006. The APC liaises with SIU investigators to offer assistance to complainants or families and to support them through the investigative process and thereafter. The coordinator assesses the needs of affected persons and, should the individuals wish, refers them to a range of services such as short-term crisis and grief counselling. The coordinator also relays questions and answers to and from the investigators that are not case related.

The SIU seeks to foster appropriate, consultative and supportive relationships with complainants and the families of those whose deaths are the subject of an SIU investigation. In death cases, this usually begins at the front door of soon to be grieving families, where investigators must break the news of the death of a loved one.

Typically, in an effort to promote continuity and consistency in the relationship, a single member of the investigation team, assisted by the APC where possible, will take the lead in communicating with complainants and families. At the end of an investigation, SIU investigators convey the investigative findings and the rationale behind the Director's decision. The current Director has also made it his practice in certain cases and upon request, to meet personally with the families of deceased persons and/or their representatives to discuss the results of cases.

The services of the APC are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Since 2006, the SIU's Affected Persons Coordinator has assisted in 91 cases, providing support to a total of 161 people.

In some cases, the APC may go beyond assisting the affected persons in dealing with the immediate after-effects of the incident in which the SIU was involved. The coordinator may refer individuals to longer-term resources such as counselling, support groups, and drug and alcohol rehabilitation programs.

The Affected Persons Coordinator participates in public education and outreach activities to community groups, including mental health organizations and Victim's Services Units.

This enables the SIU to connect with intake workers to provide information on the role and mandate of its Affected Persons service.

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## **BACKGROUNDER**

### **The Special Investigations Unit's Balanced Scorecard Process**

The Balanced Scorecard process at the Special Investigations Unit (SIU) reflects the efforts of the SIU over the past 18 months to create a workplace office culture marked by open communication, mutual trust and respect.

The Balanced Scorecard is a tried and tested corporate change framework used successfully by leading public and private sector institutions. The system aims to harness the power of an organization's people, recognize their value and allow for consultation. The Balanced Scorecard process starts with a re-statement of the organization's mission, vision and values.

The Balanced Scorecard is well underway to becoming the vehicle for coordinated change and growth at the SIU for many years to come. It is essential to the Unit's commitment to investigative excellence.

An important component of the Balanced Scorecard is the development of a comprehensive set of performance measures that will help the SIU to assess and make improvements to its operations. Another is the development of policies that are in line with the shared mission, vision and values of the organization.

Through the Balanced Scorecard, the SIU is developing a new records management system that, when fully implemented, will for the first time in its history enable the Unit to monitor its performance and police compliance with legislative and regulatory requirements.

Other current projects being developed through the Balanced Scorecard include overhauling the case review process by police and civilian parties; revisiting how investigators are assigned to cases through discussions on "one investigative team"; undertaking outreach initiatives; implementing new training positions and instituting a new mentorship program for training purposes; and taking steps to change management culture and practices.

Recently, about 90 per cent of the SIU's employees indicated they were in favour of continuing the Balanced Scorecard process. The same percentage recognized its constructive effect in creating positive change within the organization.

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## **BACKGROUNDER**

### **Confidentiality and Openness at the Special Investigations Unit**

There are several reasons why the Special Investigations Unit (SIU) limits the type and amount of information it will release to the public.

- The public interest in protecting the integrity of ongoing investigations will often require maintaining confidentiality. Disclosure of information may adversely affect other processes in the justice system such as parallel administrative investigations conducted by police and resulting disciplinary proceedings, or private Informations sworn by complainants.
- Also of concern is the chilling effect disclosure may have on potential witnesses. It has been the SIU's experience that witnesses are sometimes reluctant to cooperate with the SIU given that the SIU is investigating possible criminal conduct by police. Thus the SIU assures potential witnesses that their statements will only be used in the furtherance of SIU investigations and will not be disclosed without consent. This assurance is often successful in convincing witnesses to talk to the SIU.
- The SIU must adhere to legal requirements regarding the release of information. *The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* generally prohibits the disclosure of personal information collected in the course of a law enforcement investigation. The *Personal Health Information Protection Act* prohibits the release of medical information of the type found in SIU Director's Reports. The *Youth Criminal Justice Act* contains strict privacy rules limiting the release of various categories of information.

Within this framework, the SIU's practice has been to disclose as much information as possible while adhering to confidentiality and legislative requirements.

- For example, the SIU has begun to issue more numerous and more detailed news releases than ever before. In 1997, the SIU issued a news release in slightly more

than 20 per cent of its cases; in 2006, it issued news releases in more than 36 per cent of cases.

- In cases where a news release is not issued, the SIU has begun the practice of posting an abbreviated form of news release, called a Report on Case, on the SIU website.

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## **BACKGROUNDER**

### **The Special Investigations Unit's Consultative Approach**

The cooperative and consultative approach used by the Special Investigations Unit in dealing with police and communities, both on a case-by-case basis and with respect to systemic issues, has been the policy of the Unit since the current SIU Director, James Cornish, assumed office in 2004.

Mr. Cornish's decision to adopt a cooperative and consultative approach with the police and with communities was based on observations and recommendations made by the Honourable George Adams, Q.C. in his 1998 and 2003 reports on the Special Investigations Unit.

As a result of Mr. Adams' recommendations in his 1998 report, sections 12 and 13 of O. Reg. 673/98 under the *Police Services Act* (dealing with police and SIU relations with the media) came into force.

In his 2003 report, Mr. Adams commended the consultative approach adopted by the SIU since his 1998 recommendations. Mr. Adams found that dialogue produced better results than public confrontation and commented on the benefits of communication and cooperation.

An example of the success of this approach in recent years is that the SIU and the Coroner's Office have worked together to reduce conflicts surrounding police attendance at autopsies. Another is that for the first time in its history, the SIU is now routinely informed in advance by the police of major operations that have the potential for violence, so that the SIU can plan for a swift response if called.

The consultative approach has not precluded the Director from raising issues of cooperation or other systemic issues with those who are responsible to ensure compliance with the statutory and regulatory requirements related to the SIU, namely the chiefs of police and the Commissioner of the OPP. On many occasions, the Director has put his concerns in writing to chiefs of police and the OPP Commissioner. He has often done so in the context of the reporting letters to the chiefs of police or OPP Commissioner which are issued at the close of every non-charge case.



At other times, the Director has expressed his concerns in separate correspondence. It is also the current Director's practice to report on issues related to the duty to cooperate and other matters within the body of the Director's Report filed with the Attorney General at the end of every non-charge case.

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### **BACKGROUNDER**

#### **The Special Investigations Unit's Director's Resource Committee**

Former Special Investigations Unit (SIU) Director Peter Tinsley established the Director's Resource Committee (DRC) in 2002, in response to recommendations made by the Honourable George Adams, Q.C. in his 1998 review of the SIU. In that report, Mr. Adams drew attention to dissatisfaction on the part of various communities with the historical lack of SIU outreach to non-police groups and the absence of formal avenues for dialogue with the SIU.

The DRC is part of the SIU's outreach efforts. Its purpose is to provide non-police communities with a forum for communicating with the SIU. DRC meetings typically occur twice a year and are chaired by the SIU Director. At these meetings, DRC members can raise issues identified by their communities regarding the work of the SIU or the police, and they provide the Director with input on various topics. DRC members have also assisted with SIU recruitment efforts among the communities they represent.

Perhaps the most substantive work tackled by the DRC is its recent contribution to the debate surrounding the restructuring of the police complaints system in Ontario as the result of Bill 103. This Bill has since been enacted into law and established the office of the Independent Police Review Director. The DRC's work culminated in a formal submission to the Standing Committee on Justice Policy of the Legislative Assembly in November, 2006.

The SIU is currently working on establishing formal terms of reference for the DRC. This will help to facilitate a common understanding among committee members of the work of the DRC, while promoting a degree of continuity in the DRC's mission across changes in leadership. The SIU is also engaged in efforts to create an additional DRC to serve northern Ontario communities.

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### **The Special Investigations Unit's First Nations Liaison Program**

In recent years, the Special Investigations Unit (SIU) has focused on building and maintaining a constructive relationship with First Nations communities. In 2005, the SIU launched its First Nations Liaison (FNL) program, developed in response to the Honourable George Adams' review reports as a mechanism for improving the delivery of SIU services in cases involving First Nations persons. There are three essential components to the FNL initiative: investigations, outreach and training.

#### **Investigations**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Cases Involving First Nations People</b>	<b>Cases Where FNL Was Engaged</b>	<b>Cases Where FNL Was Lead investigator</b>	<b>Cases Where FNL Assisted</b>
2006	13	12	6	6
2007	13	10	7	3
2008 (to June 30)	11	9	6	3

#### **Outreach**

Outreach is an essential part of the First Nations Liaison program. The SIU has met with many First Nations leaders since 2005 including meetings of the Director with three Grand Chiefs. The SIU has met with representatives of the First Nations Chiefs of Police Association on several occasions to discuss questions regarding SIU jurisdiction in relation to First Nations Constables. In February and April 2006, at the invitation of the Manitoba Métis Federation, SIU staff traveled to Winnipeg to attend a roundtable conference on potential changes to the system of police oversight in Manitoba. At the conference, the SIU gave a presentation on its model of oversight, and spoke at some length about the work of its First Nations Liaison program.

The SIU also has a working relationship with The Aboriginal Legal Services of Toronto, which includes a protocol whereby the SIU notifies the legal clinic of incidents involving First Nations persons so that the clinic can offer its services to complainants and affected families.

## **Training**

First Nations-centred cross-cultural training has featured prominently at in-house SIU training programs over the last few years. The Nishnawbe Aski Nation has been particularly interested in assisting the SIU in developing a training regime that provides SIU staff with cultural competence in dealing with members of this province's diverse First Nations communities. The SIU has traveled outside its offices to attend First Nations cultural sensitivity programs. For example, a contingent of SIU staff, including investigators and management staff, attended the *First Nations Forum* in Forest, Ontario in March 2006 as part of the proceedings of the Ipperwash Commission of Inquiry.

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#### **The Special Investigations Unit's New Funding**

In the last several years, the number of incidents reported to the Special Investigations Unit (SIU) has increased significantly. In 2004, the SIU investigated 136 incidents. In 2005, the SIU investigated 195 incidents. In 2006 and 2007, the SIU investigated 226 and 257 incidents respectively. The SIU expects reported incidents to exceed 257 in 2008, and for cases to continue being reported to the SIU in these high numbers in the years to come.

Given these increasing caseload pressures, the SIU sought funding from the Ministry of the Attorney General for additional resources.

The Attorney General was responsive to the SIU's requests and in August 2008 approved new funding totalling approximately \$700,000. These new funds will enable the SIU to hire and train four more full-time investigators, including two entry-level investigators. The entry-level positions are targeted towards attracting investigators from non-police backgrounds and will give the SIU, for the first time in its history, the opportunity to train internally men and women who may not have a wealth of investigative experience but who exhibit the promise, drive and ability to become good investigators.

The SIU's new funds will also be used to hire additional administrative personnel. One of these positions will be dedicated to helping to free up supervisors' time, allowing supervisors to devote more time to advising, mentoring and guiding investigators.

The SIU will also establish a position for an outreach coordinator. The coordinator will enhance the Unit's efforts to spread the word about its mandate to persons and communities who might be affected by SIU investigations.

The Attorney General also approved one-time funding to enable the SIU to acquire a Mobile Investigative Centre (MIC). Having a MIC will better enable the SIU to carry out its investigations at incident scenes.

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**Current as of September 30, 2008**



# SIU SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS UNIT

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# UES UNITÉ DES ENQUÊTES SPÉCIALES

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## **For Immediate Release**

### **BACKGROUNDER**

#### **The Special Investigations Unit's Outreach Initiatives**

The Special Investigations Unit (SIU) defines "outreach" as those efforts aimed principally at spreading word about the Unit and its particular statutory mandate to persons and communities that could be impacted by its work.

Given the public interest of its mandate, the SIU's outreach is at times as broad as Ontario's general population of more than 12 million people. But the SIU has also shared information and insights with other jurisdictions that are seeking to learn more about the SIU's role in Ontario's system of civilian oversight, which is a model for the rest of Canada and the world.

Since February 2003, the SIU has hosted delegations from England and Wales, China, Mexico and Boise (Idaho), all concerned with the reform of police accountability mechanisms in their homelands. The SIU has also liaised over the last several years with officials from a number of Canadian provinces looking to adapt their own systems.

The SIU Communications Manager is currently responsible for the administration of the Unit's overall outreach program. The manager designs and implements outreach strategies and personally participates in outreach events. Given the increased emphasis that the SIU has recently placed on outreach activities, the SIU will soon begin the process of hiring a full-time outreach coordinator, who will take the lead for the SIU's outreach program across the province.

All SIU staff share responsibility for outreach. Through the Balanced Scorecard<sup>1</sup> process, employees are involved in designing and delivering a broad range of outreach activities, and in the delivery of outreach at various venues such as:

- Lecturing at academic institutions
- Presenting at information sessions to various targeted organizations (e.g. high schools or EMS providers)
- Educating police recruits at the Ontario Police College
- Participating in joint presentations with senior rank police officers
- Speaking at police association meetings or local gatherings of police officers
- Talking to members of the public at community centres

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<sup>1</sup> See separate Backgrounder on the Balanced Scorecard for more information on that process.



- Participating at trade shows or job fairs, and
- Liaising with individuals and organizations engaged in the work of civilian oversight.

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## **For Immediate Release**

### **BACKGROUNDER**

#### **The Special Investigations Unit's Staff Composition and Recruitment Practices**

Ensuring that Special Investigations Unit (SIU) investigations remain as effective as possible begins with the hiring of qualified, professional investigators. The SIU's current roster of investigators comes to the Unit with solid credentials.

Throughout the Unit's history, SIU Directors have recognized the issue of an overrepresentation of former police officers in the SIU's investigative ranks. In response, successive Directors have tried to achieve a greater balance between former police officers and individuals with no police background. At present, under the leadership of the current Director and for the first time in the Unit's history, the majority of the SIU's classified investigative staff are from non-policing backgrounds. In addition, the current Director has succeeded in obtaining approval for a new classification of investigator at the SIU, targeted toward attracting more investigators without police backgrounds.<sup>1</sup>

The SIU also recognizes that its investigative staff should reflect Ontario's cultural diversity. The SIU has made progress in recruiting from within Ontario's culturally diverse communities, in the belief that when communities see themselves reflected in their institutions, they are more likely to have confidence in and cooperate with those institutions. This has been accomplished while still hiring the best candidates for the job and in accordance with Ontario Public Service hiring practices.

The SIU is committed to ensuring that openings for staff are filled by way of open competitions, and that job opportunities are advertised as broadly as possible to ensure that the pool of candidates is not inadvertently limited. To attract a more diverse candidate pool, the SIU has been active in attending job fairs across Ontario, publishing job ads in community newspapers and enlisting community leaders in recruitment efforts.

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<sup>1</sup> See separate Backgrounder on New Funding for more information on those positions and other developments.

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**For Immediate Release**

**BACKGROUNDER**

**The Special Investigations Unit's Staff Training Program**

Employee training, with a strong focus on fostering excellence in investigations, is a top priority at the Special Investigations Unit (SIU).

To foster excellence in staff training, the SIU has established a Training Coordinator position as well as an internal Educational Advisory Committee. The committee meets on a regular basis to discuss training requirements at the Unit. Many of the committee's suggestions have shaped the agendas of internal training sessions, which are multi-day events that take place four times a year.

The SIU's training program focuses on developing well-rounded, engaged and interested employees equipped with the necessary tools and expertise to fulfill their roles. Selected employees who have particular expertise, as well as subject-matter experts from outside the SIU, conduct training sessions to ensure that SIU staff are up to date on best practices in investigations. Topics examined in recent SIU training sessions have included sexual assault investigations, shooting investigations, interviewing techniques, ballistics, issues related to child witnesses, case briefings and DNA testing, among others.

Another important focus of the SIU's training program is ensuring that investigations are free from bias. To this end, every SIU internal training session includes a cultural competency component, with a recurring emphasis on First Nations cultures. Furthermore there have been presentations and workshops on ethics, the use of value-laden language and the phenomenon of "tunnel vision." Specific topics have included a presentation by a former street worker dealing with life on the streets; a look into the culture and practices of the Jewish community in Toronto; a talk regarding the Chinese-Canadian community's collective experience with the police and the SIU; and a half-day presentation dealing with issues related to the Jamaican and African Canadian communities in Ontario.

As part of the SIU's commitment to the health and wellness of all employees, each internal training session also includes a standing item geared at assisting employees with

the stresses of their work lives. The SIU also holds standalone-training sessions aimed at refining the skill sets of SIU staff in their professional and personal dealings with others.

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