



Justice

Law Enforcement Review Agency (LERA)
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News Release

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2008 LAW ENFORCEMENT REVIEW AGENCY ANNUAL REPORT RELEASED

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Complaints Down From Previous Year: Commissioner

The number of public complaints about the province's 13 municipal police agencies decreased from the previous year according to the 2008 annual report of the independent Law Enforcement Review Agency, which was released today.

"The public expects police to be held accountable for their conduct and we continue to work with both the public and law enforcement agencies to investigate any concerns or complaints," said George Wright, the commissioner of the Law Enforcement Review Agency (LERA).

In 2008, the total number of complaints decreased with 155 formal complaints requiring investigation, down from 188 in the previous year. A further 97 matters were resolved at intake, down from 120 matters resolved at intake in 2007. When combined with the 153 ongoing files, the agency worked on a total of 367 complaints last year and closed 214 files.

Key points of the report include decreases in a number of complaints including:

- a decrease in the number of complaints alleging the misuse of handcuffs, from 26 in 2007 to 17 in 2008;
- a decrease in the number of complaints alleging the misuse of a taser, from 11 in 2007 to eight in 2008; and
- a decrease in the number of incidents alleging injuries from use of force, from 93 in 2007 to 79 in 2008.

LERA reviews complaints and conducts independent investigations that focus on the way municipal police officers conduct themselves on duty. Allegations the agency may deal with include abuse of authority including arrest without reasonable or probable grounds, use of unnecessary or excessive force, oppressive or abusive conduct or language, and being discourteous or uncivil.

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The agency can not and does not investigate criminal matters and refers any criminal matters to the Crown for investigation by the police.

The complete report and other information about LERA is posted on the agency's website at www.gov.mb.ca/justice/lera.

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