



CHAIR'S MESSAGE

It is my honour to have been asked to step into the position of Chair of the Yukon Advisory Council on Women's Issues mid-way through the year. I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the tremendous leadership of the former chair, Betty Irwin. Betty has worked tirelessly for Yukon women and girls for many years and she will be missed by all members of the Council.

The first item on the calendar was to host the Coalition of Provincial & Territorial Advisory Councils on the Status of Women. Representatives from across Canada met in Whitehorse in late September. This also tied into the fall meeting of the YACWI council the same weekend. It was an excellent opportunity for our members to meet their peers from all across Canada.

The agenda included presentations from various provinces and territories about initiatives in their regions including a presentation from Yukon Women's organizations such as the Women's Coalition. Yukon was well represented and the presentation was one of the highlights of the meeting.

The bulk of this year has focused on the review and subsequent recommendations coming out of the draft report *Gaps, Needs and Options: Legal Advocacy for Yukon Women*. This report was commissioned by YACWI to inform discussion regarding Recommendation 4.1 of the *Sharing Common Ground* report to consider the establishment of a legal advocate position to support women. YACWI's review of the report is complete and final recommendations are being compiled and forwarded to the Minister for her consideration.

The Yukon Advisory Council is comprised of a very knowledgeable and diverse group of women who bring their individual perspectives to the discussion but also that of their communities. We appreciate the many opportunities to engage with Yukon women and women's organizations about their concerns and ideas on how to best support and empower women.

KIM SOLONICK
CHAIR, YUKON ADVISORY COUNCIL ON WOMEN'S ISSUES

ABOUT THE COUNCIL

The Yukon Advisory Council on Women's Issues was established by the Yukon Advisory Council on Women's Issues Act in May 1992. The Act mandates Council to:

- » Develop public awareness of the issues affecting the status of women;
- » Promote a change of attitudes within the Yukon so that the women may enjoy equality of opportunity;
- » Encourage discussions and expressions of opinion by Yukon residents on issues affecting the status of women;
- » Review policies, programs, and legislation affecting women, as directed by the Minister;
- » Advise the Minister with respect to such issues as the Minister may refer to the Council for its consideration;
- » Advise the Minister with respect to such issues as the Council considers advisable; and
- » Encourage organizations and groups that promote the equality of women.

Council business is directed and determined mainly at Council meetings.

The Council is comprised of eight members appointed by the Commissioner. At least 50 per cent of the members are from rural areas and at least 25 per cent are members of Yukon First Nations.

Enhance your opportunity for high-level decision and leadership participation! Opportunities to sit on the Council arise throughout the year. Please contact the Women's Directorate, if you're interested.

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YUKON ADVISORY COUNCIL ON WOMEN'S ISSUES

YAWCI ANNUAL REPORT
2013/14

The Yukon Advisory Council on Women's Issues (YACWI) held four meetings during the 2013-14 fiscal year. At each meeting, information items were brought to the Council's attention and the Director of the Women's Directorate provided updates on Directorate activities. In addition, a standing agenda item encouraged round table discussions about the most recent activities and/or concerns of Yukon women and women's groups. The Minister responsible for the Women's Directorate, the Hon. Elaine Taylor, was invited to each meeting.



JUNE 14 & 15, 2013 DAWSON CITY, YUKON

A number of issues were raised by Dawson City women at a well-attended public meeting, including access to mental health services, housing, lateral violence, the prevalence and use of street drugs and concerns about dual charging in domestic violence situations. Kelly Manweiller and Mike Simpson made a presentation about the new Specialized Response Unit (SRU) with the RCMP M Division. The SRU responds to cases of domestic violence, sexual assault, elder abuse and child abuse. The goal of the SRU is to improve investigations and the RCMP response. Also discussed was the draft *Legal Advocacy Report*. Agreements were made that YACWI would request feedback from stakeholders before finalizing the report.

SEPTEMBER 28, 2013 WHITEHORSE, YUKON

At our second meeting there was extensive discussion of the draft *Legal Advocacy Report* involving both Jennie Cunningham, Lawyer and author of the report and Leslie McCullough, Assistant Deputy Minister with Court & Regulatory Services, Department of Justice.

Ms. McCullough reported that Justice had reviewed the document and identified ways to address concerns including the expansion of referral services and increased training opportunities that focus on trauma and First Nation history. Ms. McCullough emphasized the complexity of legal aid issues and challenges and praised YACWI for undertaking research in this area.

Ms. Cunningham noted that legal aid lawyers are in high demand and there are capacity challenges for having time to support vulnerable clients who may not understand the legal system and their rights. YACWI members appreciated the expertise and perspective of the two guests and deliberated on recommendations for the remainder of the afternoon.

JANUARY 17 & 18, 2014 WHITEHORSE, YUKON

At YACWI's third annual meeting, members welcomed Whitehorse resident Sophie Elasoff to the council. Charlotte Hrenchuk, Project Coordinator with the Yukon Status of women Council gave a presentation on the draft report *Repairing the Holes in the Net: Responding to the Mental Health Needs of Northern Homeless*. Ketsia Houde, Women's Coalition Coordinator, gave presentation on the current activities of the Yukon Women's Coalition. Ms. Houde discussed areas of priority for the Coalition which included continuation of collaborative partnerships, a protocol with the Whitehorse detachment of the RCMP, and discussions with judges to discuss women's treatment in court, and increased coordination of public education campaigns. Jennifer England, Director of the Women's Directorate, highlighted the directorate's Federal/Provincial/Territorial work on increasing women on boards and the upcoming five-year Retrospective Evaluation on Gender Inclusive and Diversity Analysis. Ms. England also noted the Gender Equality Indicator's project which will provide up-to-date statistics on women's equality in Yukon.

MARCH 1, 2014 TELECONFERENCE

The fourth meeting of the year was a teleconference to finalize recommendations from the *Legal Advocacy Report* and to begin planning for the 2014 Women's Forum. Members discussed forum ideas that would significantly address emerging women's issues.

Lateral violence was quickly selected as the primary area of focus, because it is a current issue, and can address other relevant sub-themes such as women in politics, equality and multiculturalism, mental health, and women in the legal system. Members discussed possible speakers and highlighted the relevance of Dr. Allan Wade and Catherine Richardson's work on Response-Based Approaches. The site that defines lateral violence is: <http://bit.ly/1iVseSb>

A detailed expression of interest will be advertised for Women's Forum coordinators in May 2014.

MEMBERS AS OF MARCH 2014

- KIM SOLONICK Whitehorse (Chair)
- KAREN KEENAN Teslin (Vice-chair)
- IRENE BREKKE Whitehorse
- ANN MAJE RAIDER Watson Lake
- BARBARA BARCHEN Mayo
- DIANE SCHROEDER Dawson City
- SOPHIE ELASOFF Whitehorse

FINANCIAL STATEMENT 2013-14

DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT
Travel - in territory	12,674
Honoraria	6,531
Contracts	1,665
Room rental/food	1,219
Advertising	248
Program Materials	1,649
Printing	243
TOTAL	\$24,229