



For Release Following the Tabling of the
Ombudsman Saskatchewan 2005 Annual Report
April 28, 2005

OMBUDSMAN RAISES THE BAR FOR SASKATCHEWAN GOVERNMENT

Ombudsman Kevin Fenwick tabled his annual report in the Saskatchewan Legislative Assembly today. The report notes that complaints are down slightly from 2004 and encourages government organizations to enhance fair practices.

“Sometimes we determine that government needs to treat people more fairly and we address those substantive issues,” Fenwick said. “Other times, we may determine that the results were fair, but people still feel the results were unfair. Why is that? Maybe they weren’t given all the information they needed, maybe they fell through the cracks of a government process, or maybe they were not treated with respect. The process and the relationship can be as important as the result. We believe our office can help government prevent complaints and, ultimately, do a better job of serving the people of Saskatchewan.”

Ombudsman Saskatchewan’s priorities for 2006 are:

- **Fair Practices Training** – In 2005, Ombudsman Saskatchewan developed and piloted a Fair Practices training program for government employees. That training program will become widely available to government in 2006.
- **More Fairness Recommendations** – In addition to checking for fairness, Ombudsman Saskatchewan has, in an informal way, also looked at process: “How was the complainant treated? If better explanations were provided, could an amicable solution or understanding have been reached sooner?” In the past, these kinds of considerations have not always made it into our recommendation process. Now, they will.
- **Watching for a balance between fiscal accountability and service delivery** – 2005 was a year when several fiscal irregularities surfaced for government. With a renewed accountability comes the danger that necessary fiscal controls – if practiced over-zealously – may stifle fair service delivery to citizens. Ombudsman Saskatchewan will watch for this in 2006 and encourage government to strike an appropriate balance.
- **Increasing Systemic Investigations** – Over 90% of Ombudsman Saskatchewan’s work has been on individual complaints. Sometimes it makes sense to look at widespread issues and make recommendations that will improve fairness for many people. The office plans to do more of this in 2006.

Copies of the Ombudsman Saskatchewan 2005 Annual Report are available on the Ombudsman website at www.legassembly.sk.ca/officers/ombuds.htm, in Regina at the Ombudsman Office, Suite 150 – 2401 Saskatchewan Drive or in Saskatoon at the Ombudsman Office, 315 – 25th Street East.

The Ombudsman is an Officer of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan with the authority to investigate complaints received from members of the public who believe the government administration has dealt with them unfairly. Government administration includes any department, branch, board, agency or commission, responsible to the Crown, and any public servant in Saskatchewan. The Ombudsman was established by the *Ombudsman and Children's Advocate Act*.

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