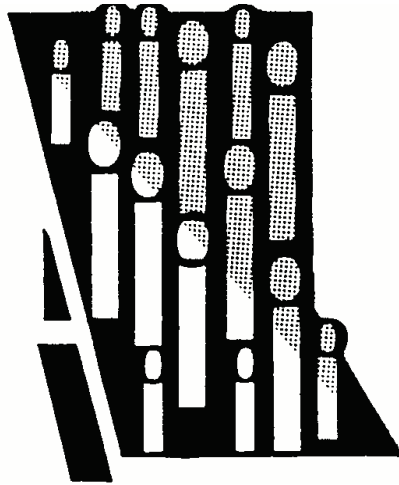


B.C. Human Rights Coalition



Annual Report 2006- 2007

**Produced for the Annual General Meeting
Held at SFU Harbour Centre
September 19, 2007**

Board of Directors 2006-2007

Table Officers:

President:	Pat Pitsula / Margherita Zorzetto
Vice-President:	Margherita Zorzetto / Alistair Smith
Secretary:	Matthew Yun / Sarah Chandler
Treasurer:	Tim Agg

Directors at Large:

Sarah Chandler
Jasvinder Gill
Leila Harding
Ashleigh Keall
Alicia Mercurio
Alistair Smith

Staff 2006-2007:

Dulce Cuenca	Advocate
Joyce Chung	Information Coordinator
Robyn Durling	Advocate
Judi Grimsrud	Information Coordinator / substitute Legal Admin Assistant
Terre Flower	Project Coordinator – Towards Bias Free Security
Terri Kennedy	Communications Coordinator
Svetlana Khakhleva	Office Coordinator / Communications Assistant
Anita Lee	Legal Administrative Assistant on leave of absence
Wendy Liew	Advocate on leave of absence
Marilyn Minkler	Manager, Finance and Administration
Susan O'Donnell	Executive Director
Romy Ritter	Office Coordinator/ Communications Assistant
Vicki Shillington	Substitute Advocate
Neeti Tewari	Administrative Assistant
Ronda Urquhart	Legal Administrative Assistant
George Valinho	Advocate on leave of absence

Auditor: Turco Ross Chartered Accountants, Vancouver, BC.

Legal Supervision: Barb Cornish, of Singleton Urquhart.

The B.C. Human Rights Coalition gratefully acknowledges the Ministry of the Attorney General for funding of the Human Rights Clinic Program. In addition, we thank the Law Foundation of B.C. for providing special project funding this year and the City of Vancouver and the B.C. Gaming Commission for their continued support.

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Message from the Board of Directors

Our last Annual General Meeting was held on September 27, 2006, where we reviewed our work and elected a new Board of Directors. This year, two Board-staff strategy and evaluation meetings were held to determine priority areas and committee structures. Board priority areas emerged as follows:

- To continue to develop and implement a strong infrastructure for the Coalition. This includes defining the roles and responsibilities of the Chair, Executive Director and the Board; reviewing existing Coalition policies, and identifying other policies that need to be developed; and revenue development to aid in expansion and capacity development;
- To broaden our community outreach, networking and partnerships to include more community stakeholders in the work and education that we do; and
- To continue to attempt to affect legislative change in the area of human rights.

Through the year, our Board and staff have worked within the following committee structures to accomplish these goals. A brief discussion of these committee structures and their work follows:

Clinic Committee

This committee was formed to help design and direct the formation of our Human Rights Clinic Program and to ensure that the program maintains an appropriate place within the Coalition structure. Over the past year, committee members were instrumental in negotiating a new three year funding contract for the Program which will take effect April 1, 2007 through March 31, 2010. In conjunction with a similar Board committee formed by our Clinic partner, the Community Legal Assistance Society, committee members worked to ensure that both organizations supported each others funding requests for new three year contracts.

Finance Committee

The finance committee continues to provide the Coalition with overall direction on financial matters and makes financial recommendations to the full Board. Members routinely met throughout the past year to review monthly financial statements of the Coalition.

Staff Liaison Committee

The staff liaison committee is a long standing committee of the Board which plays a vital role in administering the collective agreement and directing policy around human resource issues. This committee was very active in successfully bargaining a collective agreement with B.C.G.E.U. and members also contributed by drafting governance policies for the Board and new job descriptions for non-unionized staff.

Law Reform Committee

Once again this year, the law reform committee was very active in advocating for strengthened rights. A formal submission was prepared and presented to the Premier's Council on Aging and Seniors' Issues where we recommended our human rights legislation ought to be strengthened in a number of areas in order to adequately reflect the needs of older British Columbians. We also supported a Provincial Member of Parliament in a private member's bill to include family status protection in the purchase of property section in the *Code* and we continued to work with student researchers on

specific areas of interest. Near the end of this reporting period, our provincial human rights legislation was amended to prohibit mandatory retirement and extend age protections into the area that covers facilities, accommodations and services generally available to the public.

Recognizing Excellence in Human Rights

In addition to committee work, the full Board plays an active role in our annual celebration of International Human Rights Day, which was held on December 6, 2006.

This past year, the United Nations Association of Vancouver nominated the *Creative Peace Network Society* as the Renate Shearer Award recipient. The *Network* promotes peace and understanding between Palestinian, Arab, Muslim and Jewish communities both in Canada and in the Middle East. The *Network* is comprised of a diverse group of individuals committed to fostering a culture of collaboration and justice through creativity and dialogue. In 2004, they began a program called *Peace it Together* that brings Canadian, Palestinian and Israeli youth together for two weeks in the summer. Using the arts as a focal point, the youth learn to hear others' stories, gain new communication and conflict resolution skills, and use dialogue and creativity to break down barriers and transform lives. Twenty-nine youth participated in the 2006 summer program. Their efforts cumulated in the production and public screening of eight short films dealing with the crisis in the Middle East.

The Board also helped to mark the third anniversary of the Rosemary Brown Award for Women held in Victoria on April 4, 2007. Six organizations - the United Nations Association, the B.C. Association of Social Workers, the B.C. Federation of Labour, the B.C. Human Rights Coalition, the National Congress of Black Women Foundation, and the Society for Children and Youth of B.C. – work together on this event as a way to honor and commemorate the life and work of Rosemary Brown. Each year the Award is presented to a woman, or a women's group, who has made an outstanding contribution in one of the areas championed by Rosemary Brown. This year's theme focused on Women in Labour.

Angela Schira, Secretary-treasurer of the B.C. Federation of Labour since 1989, was chosen as the Award recipient. Ms. Schira was the first woman elected to a full-time position at the Federation of Labour and she stands as a long-time labour and women's rights activist who has been a champion and mentor for women in the labour movement. The Honourable Iona Campagnolo, Lieutenant Governor of B.C., presented the Award at the ceremony.

In summary, the past year has been one of consolidation, of strengthening our core, re-examining our processes, and clarifying our role as a Board of Directors, and how we would like to interface with the community and our staff in the future. As always, we extend our gratitude to our major funders, the Ministry of Attorney General, the City of Vancouver and the Law Foundation of B.C., as well as individual donors. We also wish to acknowledge and thank the hard-working and dedicated staff at the Coalition who efficiently handle the day-to-day administration of the work and carry out the mandate of the organization.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS, B.C. Human Rights Coalition

Staff Report

Our first contract with the Ministry of the Attorney General (MAG) came to end March 31, 2007, marking the third year of the Human Rights Clinic. As the time of reporting, a new contract is being worked out, which will give us certainty until March, 2010. Although there is never enough resources

to allow for the services we would like to provide, our partnership with MAG has developed into a positive and rewarding relationship.

One thing that has been noticeable in the past, and that we hope will now settle down is the constant turnover in staff. But as each year goes by we have been able to increasingly develop a team approach to the work we do.

Once again, we have modified the work we do, in order to build a stronger infrastructure and a more efficient organization. Thanks to Debbie Breidt, from CLAS, we have a new data base which allows us to collect the data we need and to review our statistics from many different perspectives. We have re-designed the way that we perform legal administrative assistance, moving from one staff in this role to two, and building a case management role into the job descriptions. As our Information Coordinator moved into one of these positions, we have also hired a new Information Coordinator. In addition we have a new Communications Assistant this year, and one new Advocate. Lots of changes!

Our project *Towards Bias Free Security: Balancing Public Safety with Equal Access and Respectful Treatment*, with an educational component in the Justice Institute Training Program, a stand alone training manual, a rights card and brochure for the public, and a website containing in depth information, is now near completion. We were also able to influence new legislation in the private security industry. Thanks to the Law Foundation of B.C. for the funds to complete this project.

Once again, the staff extends its gratitude to our Board of Directors, who is consistently there for us, and without whom our Coalition simply could not function.

About the B.C. Human Rights Coalition

The Coalition is a charitable non-profit community organization governed by a volunteer Board of Directors that is elected annually. Our mission works to promote and strengthen domestic human rights in B.C. through advocacy, education and law reform. As a Coalition we are a membership organization, and accept both group and individual members. Any member in good standing is entitled to seek election to our Board of Directors at our Annual General Meeting.

The Coalition's program areas provide for a full range of service delivery in the area of human rights law and policy. Our services are offered province wide and are regularly accessed by those from outside the Lower Mainland region. Our programs include and integrate the following: information, education, training, consultation, investigation, mediation, research and advocacy (client representation). Our advocacy programs protect existing rights, our education, training and consultation programs help to prevent discrimination, and our law reform program seeks to expand human rights protections. Together this integrated approach works to promote and strengthen human rights in this province.

Education

The range of educational services we provide extends from general information programs to extensive, and often tailored, training programs. Our efforts include:

- General public inquiries. Coalition staff responded to 11,454 general public inquiries and calls related to client services this year.
- Publications. *Your Rights to Know*, a lay person's guide to B.C.'s human rights legislation and complaints process; *Responding to Incidents of Racism*

and Hate: A Handbook for Service Providers; News from the Coalition, a newsletter produced on a regular basis with a separate Q&A section.

- Website. Our website provides extensive information and resource material on human rights law and policy, as well as information about our structure and our work.
- Consultations. We provide confidential consultations that assist a variety of stakeholders in understanding and designing guidelines and best practice

approaches around specific issues related to human rights law and policy.

- Media Work. The Coalition is increasingly being sought out to comment on, and provide perspective on issues related to human rights.
- Presentations: We offer a range of innovative and effective workshops and presentations that have a preventative effect on human rights complaints. Sessions are offered province wide and are available through a variety of fee structures.

For more information on our educational services, see page 8 of this Annual Report.

Advocacy and Client Representation

Advocacy and client representation have been core functions of the Coalition since 1985. Representing people with human rights complaints over this period has meant that the degree and scope of our client work has had to adapt to changing enforcement structures. One element of our client work that remains unchanged is the fact that our expertise lies in the early stages of complaint resolution. This means that we provide client representation up to and including all stages through mediation, leaving the art of litigation to others.

Today, 99 % of our client work occurs in the provincial jurisdiction where we run a publicly funded Human Rights Clinic. Client representation is available through the Clinic on a province wide basis to those who lodge formal complaints of discrimination under provincial human rights legislation. We have an intake process for clients and after a successful assessment, Coalition advocates represent clients through the early stages of the Tribunal's complaint process which often involves assisting in framing complaints, making and responding to submissions and applications, complying with disclosure rules, and representing clients through early settlement processes. Where necessary, clients are transferred to our Clinic partner, the Community Legal Assistance Society (CLAS), to prepare for and conduct litigation. This free Clinic Program ensures access to publicly funded representation for provincial complainants.

In the federal jurisdiction, client representation is not publicly funded at any stage during complaint resolution. This continues to restrict our ability to formally represent clients, but we do provide information and advice to anyone who requires it. For more information about our client work, see page 12 of this Annual Report.

Law Reform

Striving for better human rights protections remains as much a priority to us today, as it has since our inception in the early 80's. Over the years, we have utilized a variety of strategies to conduct this work including executing litigation strategies, writing briefs and submissions on government led legislative reviews and by lobbying government officials whenever the opportunity exists. To leverage our own limited resources, we often support the efforts of others by partnering, endorsing campaigns, writing letters of support, or by joining forces in some other way. For more information about our law reform work, see page 14 of this Annual Report.

Educational Services

Providing education and training, as well as promoting awareness and understanding of human rights issues, have been core functions of the Coalition for many years. Information provided through general public inquiries, online and print resources and through consultations and educational programs, helps to build awareness and understanding about human rights protections. Much of our educational work also helps to build capacity by providing the tools and resources required to implement positive change at both an individual, and an institutional level.

Information and Referrals:

In the period ending March 31, 2007, the Coalition compiled statistical information on 11,454 incoming phone calls. These calls represent client related communications and general public inquiries only. We do not compile phone statistics for general administration or operations, nor do we compile statistics on email or fax inquiries.

Of the 11,454 recorded calls, sixty-one percent (6,972) were client and case related. The remaining thirty-nine percent (4,482) reflect inquiries from the public. In relation to general inquiries, many callers seek basic information about human rights law and want to know what their options are. Callers often seek an assessment as to whether their situation may fit within human rights protections, or they may have questions in relation to filing complaints. We provide callers with information and practical advice - as opposed to legal advice - about what legal protections exist, what their options are, and what factors are required to make out a formal complaint.

Twelve percent (1,392) of general inquiries identified a specific group characteristic or ground when seeking information. The chart to the side categorizes these calls.

Twenty-three percent (2,601) of general inquiries identified specific issues or concerns that they sought more information or advice on. These calls are grouped into five categories as discussed below and presented in table format on the next page.

Complainant Process and Expectations:

We provide detailed information in regards to the formal complaints process as well as inform people about Clinic services. We guide callers through specific questions on filling out forms and other related requirements. In all cases we ensure callers know the appropriate statutory agency for filing complaints and how to access more information from those agencies.

Total Recorded Incoming Phone Calls

Protected Grounds	1392	12%
General Human Rights	2601	23%
Out of Jurisdiction	489	4%
Total General Calls	4482	39%

Case Related	6005	52%
Intake	967	8%
Total Client Related	6972	61%

Total Reported Calls	11454	100%
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Calls by Protected Ground (12% of Total Calls)

Sex	156	11%
Sexual Harassment	180	13%
Race	102	8%
Religious Belief	36	3%
Place of Origin	46	3%
Ancestry	54	4%
Physical Disability	423	30%
Mental Disability	168	12%
Marital Status	21	2%
Family Status	74	5%
Age	69	5%
Sexual Orientation	23	2%
Political Belief	3	1%
Criminal Record	15	1%
Source of Income	4	-
Retaliation	6	-
Hate Propaganda	2	-
Pay Equity	10	-

Total Reported Calls	1392	100%
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Respondent Process and Expectations:

Our education staff is able to provide respondents with process assistance and information. We also assist in explaining defenses that exist under the *Code* and explain factors that the Tribunal is likely to consider. In all cases we ensure respondents are aware that publicly funded representation is available through the University of Victoria's Law Centre.

Federal Jurisdiction Inquires:

These calls have been identified as falling under the federal jurisdiction. We provide information and advice specific to the *Canadian Human Rights Act* and its related enforcement process and structure.

Consultations and Educational Development:

Our consultation program assists employers, institutions, community organizations, unions and others in understanding and designing guidelines around specific issues such as drug and alcohol policies, pregnancy leave, harassment policies, duty to accommodate issues, mandatory retirement and advice on specific day-to-day situations. Consultations are provided on a confidential basis and are a natural extension of our education work. This period, we responded to 338 such inquiries. An additional 125 calls pertained to the development and planning of educational sessions.

When inquiries fall outside the human rights arena, a referral to a more appropriate agency is made. Four percent of our total calls (489) required such a referral with the four most common areas referred to as: employment (15%); social assistance (12%); housing (10%); family matters (3%); and a miscellaneous category that accounts for the remainder (60%).

Media Work:

Human rights decisions, their implications, and dialogue on related issues continue to be expressed in various forms of B.C. media. The Coalition strives to maintain a collaborative relationship with media and we continue to provide comment, perspective and background or referrals to media sources.

This interest by the press serves as an important educational function as it highlights many of the general principles associated with human rights legislation and it helps to inform employers and service providers on many of the complexities around issues such as duty to accommodate, harassment, gender disparities in the workplace and the scope of liability.

Online and Print Resources:

The Coalition continues to produce and distribute *Your Rights to Know* a lay person's guide to human rights in B.C. This publication provides a plain language approach to understanding the law and contains up-to-date information on filing a complaint. The booklet is widely distributed through our educational channels, through numerous non-profit and community groups, and is available on our website.

Calls of General Human Rights Nature (23% of Total Calls)

Complainant Process and Expectations	2110	81%
Respondent Process and Expectations	11	-
Federal Jurisdiction	17	1%
Consultations	338	13%
Educational Development	125	5%
Total	2601	100%

Calls Out of Jurisdiction - Referrals (4% of Total Calls)

Employment	73	15%
Housing	49	10%
Family Matters	15	3%
Social Assistance	59	12%
Miscellaneous	293	60%
Total	489	100%

We continue to service requests for *Responding to Incidents of Racism and Hate: A Handbook for Service Providers*. The manual was developed as a resource for professional service providers and incorporates concepts and principles of equality, outlines the scope of human rights law, and provides guidelines for advocates when assisting clientele with discriminatory incidents. It is available on our own, and the Ministry of Community, Aboriginal and Women's Services website.

The Coalition publishes and distributes a free newsletter. *News from the Coalition* allows us to raise awareness and understanding of equality concepts and principles by providing summaries on human and equality rights decisions and by engaging readers in dialogue on reform issues. Separate Q & A sheets are produced and added when contentious or problematic areas are brought to our attention through public inquiries and case law. This year a Q & A sheet was developed on sexual harassment.

We assisted the Ministry of the Attorney General in revising and updating their series of seven information pamphlets on human rights protections this year and we continue to act as a clearing-house for bulk orders of these materials which are all available in English, Chinese, and Punjabi.

We also continue to maintain an extensive listing of fact sheets, guides and policies on various human rights issues. This listing is available online and is distributed through educational channels.

This year, the Coalition has been very active in developing public legal information materials and extensive training tools and curriculum for the private security industry in B.C. to ensure discriminatory free and respectful interactions between guards and the public. At year end, the materials for the public were still in development, but once complete, will include a wallet sized rights card, a brochure and a comprehensive website (www.securityandyou.ca).

Our website, www.bchrcoalition.org, is a key communications tool for the organization. We received 1,090,425 hits in the past year, representing a 9% increase over the last 12 month period. The site provides extensive information on B.C.'s human rights system as well as general information, links and online educational materials on human rights law and procedures.

Workshop Delivery:

Workshop and training sessions this past year focused on three primary areas: the delivery of sessions to employers and employer groups, the delivery of sessions to union and community advocates, and the delivery of sessions to broader public audiences.

In total, we delivered the equivalent of 33 days or 199 classroom hours of education and training this fiscal period, which is slightly less than the 37 days delivered last year. Forty-seven separate sessions comprise this 33 day total and 20 of these sessions were conducted outside the Lower Mainland region. Nine sessions were targeted specifically to Professional Service Providers, 17 sessions were targeted specifically to Employers and 12 sessions were targeted specifically to Union and Community Advocates. The remaining nine sessions were open to a broader range of participants.

Beyond classroom hours, much time and effort goes into developing collaborative relationships and creating programs that meet the needs of those seeking our services.

Building Capacity Through Partnerships:

The value of our preventative educational work is greatly enhanced by establishing collaborative relationships with others who share equality and its underlying principles as a common vision. Working with others to build capacity for equality allows us to leverage our own resources and extend the reach of our preventative work. A few highlights of this work include:

Towards Bias Free Security: Balancing Public Safety with Equal Access and Respectful Treatment. This project is led by the Coalition and has three broad objectives: to build human right standards into the training programs of private security personal, to ensure adequate accountability mechanisms in the regulation of the industry, and to educate the public on their rights when interacting with security. The project is guided by an advisory team and includes members from the Solicitor General's office, the Justice Institute of B.C., private industry, the B.C. Civil liberties Association, PIVOT Legal Society, the B.C. Coalition of People with Disabilities, Affiliation of Multicultural Societies and Services Agencies of B.C., the United Native Nations Society, and the Community Legal Assistance Society. At completion the project will contribute to and have a preventative impact on the private security industry in B.C.

Staff also acts in an advisory capacity on various other capacity building initiatives such as:

Participation in a group committed to assessing and exploring various initiatives in relation to hate crime stakeholder needs. The group includes representation from the Solicitor General's Office, the Canadian Jewish Congress, the Centre and the Coalition. A stakeholder roundtable was held in December as a way to organize stakeholders and develop a strategic plan for moving issues forward. Strategic planning continued into 2007.

Participation in an initiative headed by the Institute for Safe Schools and Communities of B.C. (ISSC). Issues that ISSC is responding to and resonate with our own mandate include dealing with issues of marginalization, exclusion, bullying, harassment and discrimination in the school system. We shared information and continue to monitor and participate in this work.

Participation in the *Safe Harbours Project* headed by AMSSA. This project aims to build safe, discriminatory-free communities by collaborating with business, community and other stakeholders in providing a safe haven for those affected by acts of violence and discrimination.

We also continue to build capacity within the labour movement by instructing two extensive sessions on the Duty to Accommodate at the Canadian Labour Congress's Winter School Program. This provides stewards and union members with knowledge, skills and practical know how to resolve and prevent workplace discrimination from occurring.

Our work with professional service providers and their associations also continued. We delivered core human rights modules under specific Victims Services programs and we partnered with the B.C. Human Resource Management Association in delivering human rights training to their membership. We also continue to work with the College of Registered Nurses Association of B.C. as they build human rights standards into the development of their profession.

Staff participated in various speaking engagements and conferences this year. We presented on cultural and religious accommodation at the annual conference of the B.C. Association of Specialized Victim Assistance and Counseling Programs. We presented on human rights and racism at the annual advocates training conference sponsored by the Legal Services Society and the Law Foundation of B.C. We were part of a panel at a Lancaster's Human Rights and Accommodation Conference and at a Seminar sponsored by the B.C. Epilepsy Association. Staff also presented on two topics at the annual Canadian Association for the Prevention of Discrimination and Harassment in Higher Education Conference.

Advocacy and Client Representation

Today, 99% of our client work occurs in the provincial jurisdiction where we jointly run a publicly funded Human Rights Clinic with the Community Legal Assistance Society (CLAS). This Clinic provides representation to complainants through all stages of the Tribunal's complaint process. The Coalition performs client intake functions at which point, our advocates then have a window of opportunity to resolve complaints through alternative dispute resolution before the legal team at CLAS undertakes hearing preparation and litigation. In the federal jurisdiction, we provide information, advice and assistance to complainants, but we are unable to provide full representation as we are limited by both human and financial resources.

Clinic Program – Onsite Short Service Clinic:

We conduct an onsite Clinic service every Monday between 10:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. at the Tribunal's offices in Vancouver. An advocate and an information officer assist complainants during the initial or entry stage of complaints by explaining Tribunal process and procedures and assisting those who have difficulty framing complaints or replying to applications. This service is provided on a first come first serve basis. 378 people were assisted through the 35 sessions held this year.

Clinic Program – Client Intake:

For those not aware of Clinic services prior to filing a complaint, the Tribunal formally advises all complainants in writing of the service very early in the process. While most individuals contact us immediately, we do struggle when faced with requests from those who may not fully understand the time sensitive nature of the Tribunal's process. Our ability to provide quality representation is restricted in these situations.

When the Tribunal has accepted a human rights complaint for filing, a complainant may apply for Clinic representation. At that time, we assess the complaint to determine whether a prima facie case of discrimination has been made out. We do not judge the merits of the complaint. If the assessment results in a negative intake decision, written reasons are provided and notice of an appeals process and its procedures are provided.

Our intake system also provides for flexible or partial representation agreements to assist in framing complaints, or to assist in a time-limit argument. Partial retainers are also sometimes used where an impending deadline is evident and we don't have time to properly review the file.

We continue to strive for an intake turnaround time of ten working days and, for the most part,

we've managed to achieve this goal. In some cases however, our intake process may take more than three weeks.

In the fourth year of operation, 388 requests for representation were processed. This represents a 15% decrease from the 445 requests processed last year. Two-hundred and seventy (70%) new client files were approved for opening this year compared to 292 last year. One hundred and sixteen requests (30%) were declined service due to negative assessment decisions or no client follow up compared to 111 that were declined for the same reasons last year. Two clients withdrew their requests for service this year.

Of the 116 requests that were declined service, 1 was assessed to be outside the scope of the *Code*; 40 had no link between the allegation made and a protected ground; in 8 instances, we saw no contravention of the *Code*; we were unable to accommodate the scheduled hearing dates in 43 instances this year and 24 prospective clients did not follow up with their representation request.

Our assessment decisions were appealed by 33 people this fiscal. Twelve appeals were overturned and twenty-one appeals were upheld. No appeals were pending at yearend.

Clinic Program - Client Work:

We worked on 389 client files this fiscal period compared to 451 last year. One hundred and forty-four files were carried over from our previous year, and 245 new files were opened. A total of 276 client files were closed throughout the same period; one hundred and nineteen (43%) were settled by Coalition advocates, sixty-six (24%) were otherwise closed, and ninety-one (33%) were transferred to CLAS. Our settlement rate last year was 37%. Of the 389 files worked on this period, 113 (29%) remain open at yearend.

All but 3 of the 144 files carried over from last year are now closed; 63 were settled, 54 were transferred to CLAS to prepare for litigation, and 24 were otherwise closed.

Settlements

Coalition advocates successfully settled 119 files this fiscal period compared against 115 settled last fiscal. Settlement is often achieved through direct negotiations, through Tribunal assisted mediation, or through a combination of these two options. Of the complaints settled, 105 were in the area of Employment (Section 13), nine were in the area of accommodations, services and facilities (Section 8), three were in the area of tenancy premises (Section 10), one was in the area of discriminatory publications (Section 7) and one was in the area of union membership (Section 14). In three instances, retaliation (Section 43) was added to complaints and in one instance discrimination on the basis of wages (Section 12) was added. Physical disability was the most often cited ground of discrimination, listed 39 times, with mental disability listed 14 times. Sex was cited 16 times, sexual harassment 21 times, pregnancy 10 times, and sexual orientation was cited 7 times. Place of origin and colour were each cited twice, race was cited six times; and religion and ancestry were each cited once. Family status was cited thirteen times, marital status three times and age was cited four times.

Terms of settlement are based on confidentiality agreements, so we are unable to disclose specific terms. However, we consistently aim to achieve the best terms, whether monetary or not, for our clientele and we continually strive to negotiate and build broader systemic remedies into settlement terms. As the Coalition has a respected and experienced education department, terms of settlement often integrate education, training and policy consultation along with monetary remedies.

Files Worked on by Region (address of client)

Central Interior	30
Fraser Valley	17
Greater Vancouver	220
Kootenay / SE Interior	10
North East	24
North West	11
Okanagan	35
Out of Province	1
Sunshine Coast	3
Vancouver Island	38
Total	389

Complaints Settled by Region (address of client)

Central Interior	7
Fraser Valley	9
Greater Vancouver	65
Kootenay / SE Interior	2
North East	9
North West	4
Okanagan	13
Out of Province	0
Sunshine Coast	1
Vancouver Island	9
Total	119

Files transferred to CLAS

All new client files originate at the Coalition where preliminary work is conducted, except in the case where the Tribunal has streamed complaints into a 'case managed' stream. In those instances, files are transferred directly to CLAS. For standard stream complaints, much value is added to a client's file prior to transferring to CLAS. Our advocates often assist in re-framing complaints, adding respondents, making and responding to submissions and applications, complying with disclosure rules - including devising statements of remedy - and attending and attempting early resolution. It is only when it becomes evident that settlement is unlikely to be achieved, or for other reasons outlined above, that client files are transferred to CLAS in order to prepare for and conduct litigation. Ninety-one files were transferred to CLAS this year compared to 119 last year.

Reasons for Transfer	#'s
Case Managed Files	0
Within 120 days of hearing	34
Settlement attempts unsuccessful	20
Respondent not interested in settling	17
Client instruction	0
Legal complexities on file	9
Other	11
Total files transferred	91

Files Otherwise Closed

In some cases, files are closed for other reasons. The chart below details those situations.

Reasons file closed	
Complaint abandoned by client	8
Partial retainer, services rendered	1
Settlement achieved outside of clinic	7
Client withdrew complaint from Tribunal	5
Representation withdrawn from client	20
Client withdrew request for services	2
Complaint dismissed by Tribunal	20
Other	3
Total Otherwise Closed	66

At yearend, March 31, 2007, 113 client files remain open. Three files remain open from previous fiscal periods; 1 was concluding settlement and 2 were active at yearend. Of the remaining 110 open files, nine were opened in the first quarter of this year, 20 in the second quarter, 32 in the third quarter, and 49 in the fourth quarter of this year.

Law Reform Work

For the past few years, much of the work of our law reform committee has focused on the under-inclusive nature of B.C.'s human rights legislation, particularly in relation to age discrimination, ageism and the issue of mandatory retirement. We've worked with academics and interest groups, conducted various research projects, issued position statements and disseminated our views through a variety of channels in order to increase awareness and push for strengthened human rights protections.

This past year, the debate on the practice of mandatory retirement gained momentum in B.C., and the Coalition continued to work on the issue. The law reform committee made a formal submission to the Premier's Council on Aging and Senior's Issues in the summer of 2006 where we argued that our provincial human rights legislation required extensive revisions in order to adequately reflect and protect the rights of older British Columbians.

In 2006, B.C. was one of only three Canadian jurisdictions to not protect against any form of age discrimination in the area of our human rights legislation that covers accommodations, facilities and services available to the public. Without adequate age protections discrimination for older British Columbians could manifest in what is offered to seniors, how it is offered and what is not offered. Our submission urged Council to address this gap by recommending an open-ended definition of age and adding age as a protected ground in all areas under the *Code's* jurisdiction. We also supported eliminating mandatory retirement in the same submission, but urged that Council recommend a comprehensive consultation on the issue because of its far reaching implications.

In late 2006 the Premiers Council put forth their recommendations to government, which included eliminating the practice of mandatory retirement and extending age protection into accommodations, facilities and services generally available to the public. In April of 2007 the government responded by proposing amendments to the *Code*. The law reform committee urged government for broader consultations to ensure the best legislation possible, but the amendments passed without further considerations. While the Coalition welcomes these strengthened age protections, we were disappointed in the lack of a public process before amending the *Code* and we remain concerned that government did not assess the implications of the amendments on other legislation.

Earlier in the year, the law reform committee also supported a Provincial Member of Parliament in a member's *Bill* to include family status protection in the purchase of property section of our human rights legislation. Lack of family status protection typically manifests as discrimination when a woman who owns property has a child in an adults-only building. If the strata moves to enforce the adults-only bylaw, the woman may be forced to sell her unit. More problems arise for condo owners who rent their suites. Currently, owners can't refuse to rent based on someone's family status or their age. If they rent to a woman who later has children, the strata may try to enforce their 'adult-only' designation. The owner, while accountable to the strata, is prohibited from evicting a renter based on family status. These situations cause distress, anger and loss of opportunity for those involved. The inconsistency of grounds protected in tenancy versus the grounds protected in ownership also causes confusion and resistance in embracing equality concepts. The inconsistency is unjustified and should be amended. Unfortunately this proposed *Bill* did not make it through final reading and the governments own amendments did not contemplate such a revision.

This committee also continued to work with the U.B.C. ProBono Law Student's Program this past year. A research paper was completed on the continued efficacy of a blanket exemption in our provincial human rights legislation that allows group and employee insurance plans to make distinctions based on physical and mental disabilities. The paper sets out a best practice approach in legislative provisions on this issue and will assist the law reform committee in formulating future lobbying initiatives.

For many years the Coalition has argued that B.C.'s human rights legislation is under-inclusive. While we've made great strides this past year, we still have much work to do. Once again, we had a very dedicated group of volunteers who all helped to move issues forward this year. To all committee members, volunteer researchers and program coordinators, we are grateful for your contribution and we look forward to continued success in the future.

**THE VANCOUVER AREA
HUMAN RIGHTS COALITION SOCIETY**

GLOBAL

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

MARCH 31, 2007

Auditor's Report

Statement of Financial Position

Statement of Changes in Net Assets

Statement of Operations

Statement of Cash Flows

Notes to Financial Statements

Expenditures
- Schedule

AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the directors,
The Vancouver Area Human Rights Coalition Society,
Global,
Vancouver, BC

We have audited the statement of financial position of The Vancouver Area Human Rights Coalition Society, Global as at March 31, 2007 and the statements of changes in net assets, operations and cash flows for the year then ended. These financial statements are the responsibility of the society's management. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit.

We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Those standards required that we plan and perform an audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation.

In common with many non-profit organizations, the society derives revenue from donations, the completeness of which is not susceptible to satisfactory audit verification. Accordingly, our verifications of these donations was limited to the amounts recorded in the records of the Society and we were not able to determine whether any adjustments might be necessary to donation revenue, excess of revenue over expenditures and net assets.

During the year, the society purchased equipment totalling \$ 3,414 (2006 - \$ 2,310). This equipment was expensed during the year, as explained in Note 1 iii. Canadian generally accepted accounting principles require that equipment be recorded at cost and amortization be taken over the estimated life of the equipment.

In our opinion, except for the effects of adjustments, if any, which we might have determined to be necessary had we been able to satisfy ourselves concerning the completeness of donations and the failure to properly record the purchase of equipment, as described in the preceding paragraphs, these financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of The Vancouver Area Human Rights Coalition Society, Global, as at March 31, 2007 and the results of its operations, changes in net assets and cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles. As required by the Society Act of British Columbia, we report that, in our opinion, these principles have been applied on a basis consistent with that of the preceding year.

Vancouver, BC
July 26, 2007





Chartered Accountants

THE VANCOUVER AREA HUMAN RIGHTS COALITION SOCIETY
GLOBAL
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
MARCH 31, 2007

\$

			<u>2007</u>	<u>2006</u>
ASSETS				
	<u>OPERATING FUND</u>	<u>RESERVE FUND</u>		
CURRENT ASSETS				
Cash and term deposits	184,342	13,331	197,673	205,217
Accounts and grants receivable	33,798	-	33,798	10,748
Prepaid expenses	<u>13,023</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>13,023</u>	<u>9,056</u>
	<u>231,163</u>	<u>13,331</u>	<u>244,494</u>	<u>225,021</u>
LIABILITIES				
CURRENT LIABILITIES				
Accounts, payable and accrued	27,181	-	27,181	36,934
Unearned revenue (Note 3)	<u>130,091</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>130,091</u>	<u>104,271</u>
	157,272	-	157,272	141,205
NET ASSETS				
UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS	<u>73,891</u>	<u>13,331</u>	<u>87,222</u>	<u>83,816</u>
	<u>231,163</u>	<u>13,331</u>	<u>244,494</u>	<u>225,021</u>

APPROVED BY THE DIRECTORS


 _____ Director

 _____ Director


**THE VANCOUVER AREA HUMAN RIGHTS COALITION SOCIETY
GLOBAL
STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN NET ASSETS
YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2007**

\$

			<u>2007</u>	<u>2006</u>
	<u>OPERATING FUND</u>	<u>RESERVE FUND (Note 4)</u>		
BALANCE, BEGINNING	70,862	12,954	83,816	158,975
Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenditures	3,029	377	3,406	(2,350)
Write-off of equipment and leaseholds	-	-	-	(41,967)
Funds set aside for reserve - salary	-	-	-	(30,842)
BALANCE, ENDING	<u>73,891</u>	<u>13,331</u>	<u>87,222</u>	<u>83,816</u>

THE VANCOUVER AREA HUMAN RIGHTS COALITION SOCIETY
GLOBAL
STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS
YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2007

	\$		<u>2007</u>	<u>2006</u>
	<u>OPERATING FUND</u>	<u>RESERVE FUND</u>		
REVENUE				
Grants				
- City of Vancouver	20,000	-	20,000	19,054
- Law Foundation project	28,907	-	28,907	-
- Ministry of Attorney General of BC				
- Human Rights Clinic	<u>949,788</u>	-	<u>949,788</u>	<u>882,110</u>
	998,695	-	998,695	901,164
Donations	1,070	-	1,070	695
Fees for services/publications	4,730	-	4,730	6,309
Gaming	60,067	-	60,067	49,395
Memberships	982	-	982	1,152
Miscellaneous and interest	12,841	377	13,218	9,020
Rosemary Brown award	<u>641</u>	-	<u>641</u>	-
	<u>1,079,026</u>	<u>377</u>	<u>1,079,403</u>	<u>967,735</u>
EXPENDITURES (SCHEDULE)	<u>1,075,997</u>	-	<u>1,075,997</u>	<u>970,085</u>
EXCESS (DEFICIENCY) OF REVENUE OVER EXPENDITURES	<u>3,029</u>	<u>377</u>	<u>3,406</u>	<u>(2,350)</u>

**THE VANCOUVER AREA HUMAN RIGHTS COALITION SOCIETY
GLOBAL
STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2007**

\$

	<u>2007</u>	<u>2006</u>
OPERATING ACTIVITIES		
Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenditures for the year	3,406	(2,350)
CHANGES IN NON-CASH WORKING CAPITAL		
Accounts and grants receivable	(23,050)	(2,260)
Prepaid expenses	(3,967)	(344)
Accounts, payable and accrued	(9,753)	(9,549)
Unearned revenue	<u>25,820</u>	<u>11,752</u>
Cash (used for) operating activities	<u>(7,544)</u>	<u>(2,751)</u>
INVESTING ACTIVITIES		
Write-off of equipment and leaseholds	-	41,967
Net assets invested in equipment	-	(41,967)
Restricted net assets – salary	<u>-</u>	<u>(30,842)</u>
Cash provided by (used for) investing activities	<u>-</u>	<u>(30,842)</u>
(DECREASE) IN CASH AND TERM DEPOSITS	(7,544)	(33,593)
Cash and term deposits, beginning	<u>205,217</u>	<u>238,810</u>
CASH AND TERM DEPOSITS, ENDING	<u>197,673</u>	<u>205,217</u>

THE VANCOUVER AREA HUMAN RIGHTS COALITION SOCIETY
GLOBAL
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
MARCH 31, 2007

\$

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The financial statements of the society have been prepared in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles, except as described in Note 1 iii. Because a precise determination of many assets and liabilities is dependent upon future events, the preparation of financial statements for a year necessarily involves the use of estimates, which have been made using careful judgment.

The financial statements have, in management's opinion, been properly prepared within reasonable limits of materiality and within the framework of the significant accounting policies summarized below:

i. Combination

The financial statements reflect the year end accounts of the following programs:

- a) Human Rights Clinic Program
- b) B.C. Human Rights Coalition

All the programs have March 31, 2007 year ends.

ii. Financial statement presentation

In order to more clearly reflect the various divisions of the society's activities, the society has adopted a fund accounting basis of presentation as follows:

- The operating fund reflects assets, liabilities, revenues and expenditures relating to the general operations of the society.
- The reserve fund reflects interest earned on its term deposit and amounts returned to or reserved from the operating fund in the year.

iii. Equipment and leaseholds, and amortization

Equipment and leaseholds were written-off in the year to conform with the society's policy of expensing capital asset purchases.

Commencing December 1, 2002, the society has agreed to expense equipment in the year of purchase. During the year, the society expensed equipment totalling \$ 3,414 (2006 - \$ 2,310).

THE VANCOUVER AREA HUMAN RIGHTS COALITION SOCIETY
GLOBAL
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
MARCH 31, 2007

\$

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES (cont'd)

iii. Equipment and leaseholds, and amortization (cont'd)

In this respect, the financial statements are not in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles. If the society had capitalized the equipment, amortization for the current year would have been increased by \$ 1,717 (2006 - \$ 1,332), accumulated amortization would have been increased by \$ 1,717 (2006 - \$ 1,332), other expenditures would have been reduced by \$ 2,310 (2006 - \$ 2,310), excess of revenue over expenditures would have been increased by \$ 1,697 (2006 - \$ 978) and ending net assets would have been increased by \$ 1,697 (2006 - \$ 978) respectively.

iv. Revenue recognition

The Society follows the deferral method of accounting for contributions. The contributions are recognized as revenue when received or receivable if the amount to be received can be reasonably estimated and collection is reasonable assured.

Donations, memberships and fees for services and publications are recognized as revenue in the year in which they are earned. Grants received for specific projects are recorded as revenue at the time the related expenditure is made.

v. Non-cash donations

Non-cash donations of services are not reflected in these financial statements.

vi. Use of estimates

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of revenues and expenditures during the reporting period. Actual results could differ from those estimates.

vii. Financial instruments

The fair value of all items that meet the definition of a financial instrument approximate their carrying values. These items include cash, receivables, payables, and accruals, and bank loans. Unless otherwise stated, it is management's opinion that the society is not exposed to significant credit, currency or interest rate risk arising from these financial statements.

**THE VANCOUVER AREA HUMAN RIGHTS COALITION SOCIETY
GLOBAL
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
MARCH 31, 2007**

\$

2. PURPOSE OF THE SOCIETY

On April 4, 1984, the Society was incorporated pursuant to the Society Act of British Columbia as a non-profit society and is a registered charity under the Income Tax Act.

The Vancouver Area Human Rights Coalition Society, Global is a non-profit society, providing education, consultation and advocacy in Human Rights throughout British Columbia.

3. UNEARNED REVENUE

	<u>2007</u>	<u>2006</u>
Law Foundation project	21,093	-
Gaming direct access	40,966	51,033
Rosemary Brown award	217	858
Ministry of Attorney General of BC Human Rights Clinic program	<u>67,815</u>	<u>52,380</u>
	<u>130,091</u>	<u>104,271</u>

4. RESERVE FUND

	<u>2007</u>	<u>2006</u>
Reserve fund – beginning	12,954	12,752
Interest earned on term deposit	<u>377</u>	<u>202</u>
Reserve fund – ending	<u>13,331</u>	<u>12,954</u>

5. COMMITMENTS

The society leases its premises pursuant to an operating lease, which expires September 30, 2007. The following is a schedule of future minimum lease payments for the next year:

2008	<u>30,849</u>
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THE VANCOUVER AREA HUMAN RIGHTS COALITION SOCIETY
GLOBAL
EXPENDITURES SCHEDULE
YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2007

\$

	<u>OPERATING FUND</u>	<u>RESERVE FUND</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2006</u>
EXPENDITURES				
Audit and accounting	9,071	-	9,071	8,671
Bank and service charges	1,949	-	1,949	1,515
Client disbursements	25,246	-	25,246	25,443
Equipment purchases	3,414	-	3,414	2,310
Equipment rentals and service	9,440	-	9,440	10,797
Facility rentals	1,004	-	1,004	-
Legal consultation and advice	32,127	-	32,127	42,189
Legal representation	22,764	-	22,764	-
Office	24,310	-	24,310	27,252
Postage and courier	2,285	-	2,285	3,057
Printing and production of materials	4,140	-	4,140	7,202
Publications and subscriptions	10,872	-	10,872	9,634
Rent	65,998	-	65,998	66,238
Special events	2,487	-	2,487	1,731
Staff training	8,474	-	8,474	6,316
Telephone	6,389	-	6,389	6,244
Travel	26,372	-	26,372	19,712
Wages and benefits	818,855	-	818,855	731,130
Website and database	800	-	800	644
	<u>1,075,997</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,075,997</u>	<u>970,085</u>

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