



**February 22, 2010**

## **INFORMATION AND PRIVACY COMMISSIONER ANNOUNCES CUTBACKS IN SERVICE DUE TO LACK OF RESOURCES**

The Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner (OIPC) has been denied an additional Investigator position for the third year in a row.

Dickson stated that *"I cannot fulfill my statutory mandate, ensuring that citizens of this province are afforded their information and privacy rights, without adequate resources."*

In the last six years that this office has been operating on a full-time basis, there has been a substantial increase in public demand for assistance. The number of reviews and complaints is up by 113% over last year, advice to public bodies and health trustees is up 26% over last year, inquiries from individuals, public bodies and trustees is up by 14% over last year. Some citizens have been waiting for more than three years for a resolution to their case file.

Dickson stated that *"surging demand for service has overwhelmed the OIPC and it simply cannot be sustained by one of the smallest offices of its kind in Canada (three investigators and a caseload of 376 reviews and investigations)."*

*"The decision of the Board of Internal Economy will diminish accountability of public bodies to the people of Saskatchewan."*

Effective immediately the OIPC will send a letter to all citizens who request an investigation or review alerting them that they should not expect any action on their file for approximately 12 to 18 months.

Dickson also stated that his office will be advising all public bodies to expect significant cutbacks and delays in areas including consultation projects undertaken at the request of the approximately 3,000 bodies that the OIPC oversees including Ministries, Crown corporations, boards, commissions, agencies, schools, regional health authorities, municipalities, universities, colleges and health trustees.

The public can also expect to see an increase in the amount of time it will take for an investigator to respond to them regarding their concerns.

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For more information contact:

Office of the Saskatchewan Information and Privacy  
Commissioner  
503 – 1801 Hamilton Street  
Regina, Saskatchewan S4P 4B4

Telephone: (306) 787-8350  
Toll Free: (Saskatchewan only) 1-877-748-2298  
Fax: (306) 798-1603  
e-mail: [webmaster@oipc.sk.ca](mailto:webmaster@oipc.sk.ca)  
website: [www.oipc.sk.ca](http://www.oipc.sk.ca)