

Appendix D: Email from Jim Sisson: March 19, 2010

Dorothy Sam

From: Jan Reimer [janreimer@acws.ca]
Sent: April-02-10 1:20 PM
To: 'Jim Sisson'
Cc: 'Dorothy Sam'; Carolyn Goard
Subject: RE: Funding for Alberta First Nation Womens' Shelters

Thank you for your follow-up e-mail. It is not clear to me how a new national formula based on a consultation process comes as a surprise to Alberta shelters. In order to gain a better understanding and background on the issue we would appreciate the following information:

1. Details on the new national formula: how is it calculated, what is the breakdown for each province, what are the principles behind the model?
2. What changes were made to the funding methodology for the First Nations Family Violence Prevention Programs. How does this intersect with the new national formula?
3. A rationale on why this new model required a decrease for 4 of the 6 shelters in Alberta.
4. Information provided to participants in the public consultation process in developing the model.
5. A province/territory breakdown across the country of total family violence prevention funding, administrative charges paid to the province/territory and shelter funding (with the number of beds and funding allocated for each shelter).
6. The current status of the Johnson report with respect to the funding model. By our calculations, shelters should have received increases to achieve the recommendations not decreases.
7. The amount claimed by the province of Alberta from the federal government over the last five years (both admin costs and others) for family violence programmes and the amount actually provided to them in each category. Does this amount affect what funding is provided to the On Reserve Shelters? And if so how?
8. Do the dollars identified for the provision of shelter service need to flow to the provincial government under the Administrative Reform Act or can it flow to other agencies in Alberta.

I understand that there is to be a meeting on May 11th and we would appreciate this information prior to the meeting.

Thank you.

-----Original Message-----

From: Jim Sisson [mailto:Jim.Sisson@inac-ainc.gc.ca]
Sent: March-19-10 8:41 AM
To: janreimer@acws.ca
Subject: Funding for Alberta First Nation Womens' Shelters

Jan:

I am writing further to follow-up on our telephone conversation on Thursday evening regarding funding levels for Alberta First Nation Womens' Shelters.

In 2007-2008, the Government of Canada's funding for the national Family Violence Prevention Program increased from \$18.5 million to \$26.8 million, an annual increase of \$8.3 million. In 2009/10, the Government invested an additional \$2.8 million annually bringing total funding for the program to \$29.6 million to support existing and five new shelters, prevention projects and reimbursement of provincial/territorial bills.

Over this same period, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada also amended the funding methodology for the First Nations Family Violence Prevention Program, taking into account the increases in overall program funding, an increase in the number of on reserve shelters and the need to create an equitable, standardized national funding formula. The formula was developed based on a review of research and interviews with shelter experts, National Aboriginal Organizations, departmental regional offices and provincial governments.

The realignment of resources, based on the new national formula, resulted in the majority of shelters across Canada receiving funding increases. The formula has been implemented in all regions, except in Alberta. In the case of Alberta, the overall allocation for 2009-2010 increased from \$7.2 million to \$7.4 million dollars. This funding supports five existing and one new shelter, prevention projects and the reimbursement of provincial bills in Alberta. The formula did, however, also require a decrease in the funding levels of 4 of the 6 Alberta shelters. While this forecast reduction is unfortunate, it is as a result of the relatively high level of historic funding for Family Violence Prevention in the Alberta Region.

As we discussed, a decision was taken to delay the implementation of the new formula in the Alberta Region until after the 2009/10 fiscal year to allow for a more orderly transition of shelter operations.

Regional staff were to consult with the shelters about the transition. Unfortunately, due to other work pressures, this engagement process did not occur. This fact was over looked when the new funding arrangements for the 2010/11 fiscal year were prepared and, as a result, the new arrangements were adjusted to reflect the levels identified in the national funding formula. This change was not communicated to the Alberta First Nation shelters until the last few weeks - leaving them with little time to amend their plans for operations in the new fiscal year - beginning on April 1, 2010.

The new funding formula aims to provide a fair and equitable allocation of the program's resources for existing and new shelters across the country. That said, I understand that the short notice of the planned decrease to the funding of 4 of the 6 Alberta First Nation shelters was not well communicated and does not provide these organizations with adequate time to plan for the new fiscal year. The department values the services that these shelters provide to women and children and wants to ensure that access to these much needed activities are not jeopardized. With this in mind, and given the rapid approach of the new fiscal year, the department has decided to restore the Alberta shelters' funding allocations for 2010/11 to the previous 2009/10 levels.

Having said this, the Alberta Region and Alberta First Nation shelters will also would need to work on a plan to transition the funding allocation for the shelters to the national formula for the start of the 2011/12 fiscal year. The regional office will follow-up with the shelter Directors early in the new fiscal year to initiate discussion on the development of a plan to transition to the new funding model.

Let me know if you have any further questions.

Jim Sisson
Associate Regional Director General
Alberta Region
Indian and Northern Affairs Canada
Internal Virus Database is out of date.
Checked by AVG - www.avg.com
Version: 9.0.791 / Virus Database: 271.1.1/2781 - Release Date: 03/31/10 00:32:00