



Office of the President

1050 YORK RESEARCH TOWER
4700 KEELE ST
TORONTO ON
CANADA M3J 1P3
T 416 736-5200
F 416 736-5641
www.yorku.ca/president

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York University Receives the Safety Audit Report June 25, 2010

York University is committed to creating a space where people feel valued and safe. We recognize that it is only when these conditions are satisfied that each individual can perform at his or her optimal level and make a full contribution as a York community member.

In response to events in the Fall of 2007, I struck the University Safety Audit Committee (USAC) comprised of faculty, staff, alumni and representatives from both the York Federation of Students and the Graduate Students Association, and chaired by Professor Livy Visano. USAC's role was to oversee a safety audit process that would be led by an external organization. After conducting an open public bidding process, USAC selected the Metropolitan Action Committee on Violence Against Women and Children (METRAC) to perform the audit with a mandate to identify ways to improve York's environment, both physical and cultural.

USAC and METRAC have now concluded their work and we have received **METRAC's report**. I want to take this opportunity to thank the committee members for their service and dedication to the process, including an acknowledgement to Livy Visano for his leadership in this important exercise.

Although this audit process ended up taking longer to achieve a final document than anyone had anticipated, we have not waited for this report to take action.

Over the two year period, we have worked hard to enhance our security measures and initiatives. Recent changes and upgrades have included investments in people. Our residences are now better served through the establishment of the residence watch officer program; we have more staff devoted to our campus escort programs for any community member to use between campus locations; and we continue to bolster our surveillance abilities across campus.

The audit process provided opportunities for engagement and participation of the York community. The findings demonstrate an interest from our faculty, students and staff to participate in a process to enhance our university. I believe that a strong community is based upon a shared commitment by all its members to exhibit a desire to look out for one another.



The report captured many of the strengths related to safety programs on campus, as well as the approach and rationale for their existence. However, one of the most prominent themes from the METRAC safety audit is the need to develop a more pronounced culture of safety and security for all community members. We all need to strengthen our connection and outreach to our community, through improved communication and education. This process has played a role in advancing us further along that path. The report also highlights opportunities for the enhancement to our services, programs, policies, and infrastructure.

For those reasons, I have appointed Gary Brewer, Vice-President Finance and Administration, to lead a pan-University committee to review the report and develop a comprehensive action plan which will be developed over the summer. In early September, I will provide an update to the York Community on the progress of our work, with a goal to advancing a culture of safety and respect.

Mamdouh Shoukri
President and Vice-Chancellor