



# MEMORANDUM

**To:** All Sworn Police Personnel  
**From:** David Ebinger, Chief of Police  
**Date:** January 11, 2008  
**Subject:** Handling of Complaint of Racial Profiling

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Recently I responded to inquiries from the City's Human Rights Commission regarding tracking of our traffic stops in order to pursue the possibility of racial profiling by officers of the Moorhead Police Department. My response to the Commission was that traffic stop data, such as that compiled by the Department in 2003 and 2004, may lead to lively academic discussions but rarely yields conclusive evidence one way or another regarding the presence of racial profiling. Following a number of inconclusive surveys law enforcement administrations across the country chose to take a proactive approach and to document the actions of their officers, investigate all allegations of profiling, and to train their personnel in techniques to allay a citizens' concern over racial profiling.

The Moorhead Police Department was one of the departments that chose this response, and as a result I am able to assure our citizens that racial profiling does not occur on our department. That being said, I request that all officers and supervisors be reminded of the basic procedures we have employed which allow us to maintain our credibility as professionals and retain the trust of our citizens. Please be sure to follow the below listed practices when dealing with situations where racial profiling may become an issue:

1. Whenever possible document all contacts with Vision Hawk, recorded interviews, and other recording devices. The courtesy and professionalism that our officers extend to the citizens they encounter have been reflected in these tapes when past allegations of misconduct have been investigated. On more than one occasion this evidence has conclusively exonerated officers who were falsely accused.
2. All allegations of racial profiling, even those that appear unfounded, should be immediately reported to a supervisor. Supervisors will immediately initiate an investigation by completing a complaint form and obtaining a statement from the complainant. Efforts should also be made to interview any potential witnesses. Reluctance or refusal by a complainant to make a complaint or sign

a complaint form does not relieve the supervisor from completing the complaint form and forwarding the form and other evidence to the Deputy Chief of Operations for assignment.

3. Officers should be willing to disclose the reason for traffic stops or other forms of detention to a citizen as soon as practical. Efforts should be made to give citizens their response in as non-confrontational a manner as circumstances allow and officers should be willing to answer any reasonable questions directed to them regarding the stop.

I appreciate the professionalism and the hard work of our officers. The widespread respect that our citizens have for the members of the Moorhead Police Department is something that is expressed to me on an almost daily basis. The continued adherence to the above listed practices will assist me in addressing the occasional citizen who has concerns regarding the activities of our officers.