

September 24, 2018

The Honourable Mike Farnworth
Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General
Parliament Buildings
Victoria, BC V8V 2C2

Re: Provincial Policing Resources

Dear Minister Farnworth,

On behalf of the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM, I write to you to request additional policing resources to increase the authorized strength of RCMP provincial detachments to a sufficient level. This need for adequate resourcing has emerged as an important issue among our membership, and is reflective of feedback received during the 2018 UBCM Convention.

According to provincial data, in 2016, the provincial government funded 774 RCMP officers to conduct general duty and investigations within its policing jurisdiction (1.18 officers per 1,000 persons). In comparison, the Province funded 796 general duty and investigations officers in 2008.

I am aware that during the 2018 UBCM Convention, a number of local governments met with provincial representatives to express concerns related to a lack of provincial policing resources. While this is not a new issue, there is growing concern with the Province's reluctance to increase its resource commitment. In areas with combined post detachments, this has oftentimes left local governments to fully absorb any increased demands for policing.

Since the most recent RCMP contract was signed, UBCM's members have endorsed numerous resolutions (see attachment) requesting the Province analyze and review its resource commitment to provincial policing. These resolutions are all consistent in citing a lack of provincially funded officers and resources.

In many small and rural communities, representatives are concerned with a less visible police presence, slower response rates, and instances where police simply do not respond to calls for service. UBCM believes the Province must consider increasing its budget allocation towards provincial policing, especially as

it relates to providing a greater police presence in small, rural and growing communities with provincial detachments.

I thank you in advance for your consideration, and look forward to your response.

Very Best,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Arjun Singh', with a stylized, cursive script.

Arjun Singh
President, UBCM

cc: *The Honourable Selina Robinson, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing*

*Clayton J.D. Pecknold, Assistant Deputy Minister and Director of Police Services,
Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General*

WHEREAS it is generally recognized that police work in BC is heavily urban focused; however increasing the number of general duty municipal officers should not come at the expense of a reasonable level of police service in rural communities;

AND WHEREAS there has been little or no increase in the number of provincially funded general duty officers over the past several years, compromising police service levels in many rural communities throughout BC:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Government of BC review its rural police resourcing models to ensure that adequate resources are available to properly police rural communities.

Convention Decision: Endorsed

Provincial Response

Ministry of Justice

The RCMP has been conducting a Rural Policing Study looking at police service delivery models to ensure compliance with the Canada Labour Code.

As resource demands vary between jurisdictions from year to year, the RCMP is constantly monitoring resources to ensure adequate and effective policing across the Province. Decisions about provincial resource allocation are based on a number of factors, such as crime rates and patterns, population size, geography and economic circumstances. Given the fluid nature of policing, the RCMP, in conjunction with the Provincial Government, consistently monitors and reviews existing resources and redeploys accordingly in order to prevent and reduce crime in BC communities.

WHEREAS it is generally recognized that police work in BC is heavily urban focused; however increasing the number of general duty municipal officers should not come at the expense of a reasonable level of police service in rural communities;

AND WHEREAS there has been little or no increase in the number of provincially funded general duty officers over the past several years, compromising police service levels in many rural communities throughout BC:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Government of BC review its rural police resourcing models to ensure that adequate resources are available to properly police rural communities.

Convention Decision: **Endorsed**

Provincial Response

Ministry of Justice

Under the Police Act, the Minister of Justice is responsible for overseeing policing and ensuring that an adequate and effective level of policing and law enforcement is maintained throughout the Province, both in municipalities and provincial areas.

The RCMP is reviewing existing service delivery to implement new policing models, where appropriate, that will improve policing in remote and rural areas while ensuring member and public safety.

The Ministry will also review the structure of Policing in the Province and consider models of service delivery as one of the action items identified as part of the BC Policing and Community Safety Plan.

Other Response

RCMP

The BC RCMP provides provincial policing services to British Columbia under contract between Public Safety Canada and the Province of BC. We are committed to working closely with the Police Services Division to ensure an appropriate and effective policing level throughout the province. These resolutions will be a very important component of the information we will use in our discussions with Police Services Division.

WHEREAS the RCMP provides policing in rural communities;

AND WHEREAS RCMP staff shortages produce a grave threat to the public;

AND WHEREAS staff shortages can be identified by RCMP audit:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the provincial government increase the number of RCMP members at detachments that have identified staff shortages through RCMP audit.

Convention Decision: **Endorsed**

Provincial Response

Ministry of Justice

Under the Police Act, the Minister of Justice is responsible for overseeing policing and ensuring an adequate and effective level of policing and law enforcement is maintained throughout the province.

In these fiscally challenging times, it is increasingly imperative to find innovative solutions to meet public expectations for the delivery of police services and address increasing costs. Government has set this as a priority for the RCMP.

The RCMP reviewed existing rural services to implement new policing models, where appropriate, that will improve policing in remote and rural areas while ensuring member and public safety. With government approval, some of the restructured service delivery models have already been implemented in high priority detachments, including the addition of member(s) to those detachments.

Whereas municipalities and rural areas in Northern BC continue to experience intense growth due to the expansion of resource development;

And whereas there has been little to no increase for decades in Provincial policing resources to support to growing rural areas serviced out of combined post detachments located within municipalities:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM call on the provincial government to mandate the RCMP to conduct an analysis of all combined post detachments in the province to ensure that there is adequate resourcing for provincially funding RCMP members and administrative support staff.

Convention Decision: Endorsed

Provincial Response

Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

Government is aware of the potential impacts that resource development can have on local services. Ministry staff have looked at various models across government and continue to assess potential impacts in order to be ready to address them as needed. The Ministry will be looking at the outcomes of the Province's Community Readiness Project as a source of best practices that can be used to mitigate the impacts that major industrial developments have on public safety. In addition to this cross-government work being undertaken, Ministry staff and the RCMP continue to work to identify and adequately plan for potential impacts of major development projects on policing and police resources.

Ministry staff continue to liaise with the RCMP to ensure adequate and effective services are delivered as per the Police Act and the Provincial Police Service Agreement. This includes ensuring that resource levels for each portion of an integrated provincial/municipal detachment are commensurate to workload demands and accountable to the jurisdiction they are assigned to.

Other Response

Assistant Commissioner, Criminal Operations Officer, "E" Division – Core Policing, RCMP

Although the funding of such positions is the responsibility of the Province, I can speak to the processes involved in making resourcing determinations and requests for personnel.

Over the last two years, the RCMP has transitioned to the General Duty Staffing Analysis (GDSA) methodology as one tool used to assess resourcing needs. The methodology is now in place and data is currently being compiled in several communities. Along with environmental assessments of specific detachment areas, it is felt that our approach can provide an accurate assessment of resourcing requirements.

In addition, each year the RCMP prepares a Multi-Year Plan (MYP), pursuant to the terms of the Provincial Police Service Agreement. The Plan prioritizes requests for new positions and involves a rigorous internal process which includes submissions by local and district commanders, including GDSA recommendations (if available). Areas in need of support are then included within the MYP and presented to the Province. Any new funding is distributed according to the prioritized areas of need.

I would encourage all municipal and area representatives to continue to work with their detachment commanders in identifying priorities and providing feedback to assist the above processes in accurately reflecting local policing requirements.

Whereas RCMP 'E' Division uses, in some areas, an integrated detachment model (two or more municipal or provincial RCMP units housed in one building) to provide policing to combined municipal and provincial areas;

And whereas municipalities authorize and fund increases to the number of municipal officers at the integrated detachments, but the number of provincially funded officers does not automatically change, possibly resulting in a potential imbalance and financial subsidy to provincial or rural areas by the municipalities:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM call on the Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General to initiate a review of the number of provincial officers serving at an integrated detachment when the municipal component of the detachment is increased to ensure that the municipal and provincial areas are being funded fairly.

Convention Decision: Endorsed

Provincial Response

Ministry of Public Safety & Solicitor General

Integration of police services across and within regions is a cornerstone of the vision of policing for BC. For integrated detachments, there are many benefits and efficiencies to be gained, such as: sharing administrative services; improved coverage during officer absence (leave, training, or illness); greater access to back-up; and the mutual benefit of using unallocated time from one area to respond to calls in another area.

Service levels and police resources for each portion of an integrated provincial/municipal detachment, must balance workload demands and policing priorities as determined by the respective jurisdictions, yet operate as a single police force. Resource levels, however, must additionally be commensurate to the workload draw of the jurisdiction they are assigned to, and accountable to that jurisdiction.

Ministry staff actively liaise with the RCMP to ensure adequate and effective service levels in the provincial areas, this includes resource analysis reviews for integrated detachments. With respect to increasing resources for provincially policed areas, the RCMP maintains a process whereby the local detachment may report internal pressures to RCMP Headquarters to identify and address resourcing needs. Local requests for increases are prioritized and considered in the context of the larger needs of the Provincial Police Service. Any business cases forwarded through these processes are carefully considered.

Other Response

Royal Canadian Mounted Police

BC RCMP Operations Strategy Branch continues to work closely with the Province and will promptly action requests that may result from the response of the Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General to UBCM Resolution B6.

I have also requested Assistant Commissioner Eric Stubbs, BC RCMP Criminal Operations Officer - Core Policing, to monitor and track this item to ensure it is properly addressed.