July 13, 2021
Ref: 621299

Councillor Craig Hodge
Co-Chair, Local Government Contract Management Committee c/o UBCM
60 - 10551 Shellbridge Way
Richmond BC V6X 2W9

Dear Councillor Craig Hodge:

I am writing to provide the Local Government Contract Management Committee (LGCMC) with an update on the potential impacts of the current wildfire situation in the province on local governments who employ the RCMP under a Municipal Police Unit Agreement (MPUA).

Multiple large wildfires are currently threatening several communities and surrounding areas within the province. This situation constitutes an "Emergency" as defined by the Provincial Police Service Agreement (PPSA) and the Municipal Police Service Agreement (MPSA) under which we deliver RCMP services within the province. As you know, major evacuations, firefighting efforts and humanitarian responses are already underway.

An "Emergency" refers to a policing emergency, meaning an urgent and critical situation of a temporary nature that requires additional police resources to maintain law and order, keep the peace or ensure the safety of persons, property or communities. A key component of an emergency is that the local jurisdictional police do not have sufficient resources to deal with the situation within their geographical boundaries.

While emergencies under the policing agreements are rare occurrences, it is critical in this instance that police, as first responders, have access to extra resources as necessary. Under the framework of our agreements with Canada and local governments, resources can be redeployed from a Unit elsewhere within the Provincial Police Service, a municipal or federal Unit within the Province, or RCMP resources from a different province or territory. I have advised the RCMP to rely upon the Provincial Police Service resources prior to redeploying municipal resources.

Redeployment of members occurs when members are temporarily assigned to a different geographic location or Unit than where they are normally posted. For example, a member attached to a Municipal Unit is considered redeployed if they are temporarily assigned to a Provincial or Federal Unit to respond to an Emergency.

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Local RCMP detachments across the province may be called upon to redeploy some of their municipal members to assist. As planning continues, local detachment commanders will be assessing their local needs and operational ability to assist and should be consulting with their Mayors or their delegates. I would emphasize that the Commanding Officer is acutely aware of the need to ensure continued adequate and effective policing in all communities under RCMP jurisdiction and their staff will work with affected local governments to answer any questions or address any matters of concern.

Pursuant to the Agreements, the Province is obligated to pay the costs of the redeployment including salary, transportation and maintenance at the applicable cost-share. The jurisdiction supplying the members (e.g., municipality, another PT or Canada) will not bear the costs directly related to the redeployment; however, jurisdictions are encouraged to work closely with their local detachment commanders to manage any indirect impacts.

I trust the information outlined above provides the LGCMC with clarity on the steps being taken to ensure the safety and security all British Columbians. The RCMP "E" Division and Policing and Security Branch staff will provide ongoing communication and consultation with you regarding the situation as it evolves.

I want to thank you, UBCM, the LGCMC for your support in responding to this emergency.

Regards,

Wayne Rideout
Assistant Deputy Minister
  And Director of Police Services
Policing and Security Branch

pc: Deputy Commissioner Dwayne McDonald, Commanding Officer, BC RCMP
       Mark Sieben, Deputy Solicitor General
       Ward Lymburner, Executive Director of Police Agreements & Law Enforcement
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