



BRITISH
COLUMBIA

VIA EMAIL

Ref. 635023

December 28, 2022

Jen Ford
President, Union of BC Municipalities
60-10551 Shellbridge Way
Richmond BC V6X 2W9
Email: bsihota@ubcm.ca

Dear Jen Ford:

Thank you for your letter concerning enhancements to 911 service delivery across the province.

As Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General, I am responsible for ensuring adequate and effective policing and law enforcement in British Columbia. I understand the critical role that 911 and emergency communications play in the delivery of emergency services and ensuring public safety. I also understand that the decreased revenue from traditional funding sources, such as landline levies, and the implementation of Next Generation (NG911) have created challenges for the local governments in BC that are responsible for the cost of emergency communications services.

In your letter on behalf of the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM), you note the Special Committee on Reforming the Police Act submitted its report (the Report) to the Legislative Assembly in April 2022. The Report includes a number of recommendations that will help modernize policing and public safety in BC, including opportunities to integrate mental health within 911 call options; ensuring equitable access to high quality police and public safety services across BC, including in Indigenous communities; and, creating a fair and equitable shared funding model for municipalities.

The Province has taken the time to carefully review and analyze the recommendations and will take a phased approach to respond to the Report. The government's goal is to ensure that we engage with partners and stakeholders in a meaningful way to address the recommendations and prioritize public safety. As you are aware, beginning in May 2022, Policing and Security Branch and UBCM have been co-chairing the Local Government Policing Modernization Roundtable (the Roundtable). This forum analyzes and discusses the Report recommendations that impact local governments and will be used to co-develop policies for reformed policing legislation.

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The Province is working to protect BC communities and make them stronger. To this end, the Policing and Security Branch will be seeking government direction to support implementation of Next Generation 9-1-1 and modernization of emergency communications service delivery in BC. Policing and public safety reform are a priority and the provincial response to the challenges facing emergency communications service delivery will take these priorities into consideration. Such a response would also involve collaboration through Roundtable or other fora established to support discussions on policing and public safety reform.

Thank you again for writing.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Mike Farnworth". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Mike Farnworth
Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General
and Deputy Premier

pc: Douglas Scott, Deputy Solicitor General
David Pilling, Director, Municipal Policing Governance and Community Safety Division