



ALBERTA INTERIM POLICE ADVISORY BOARD

Report to Municipalities, Police Governance Bodies,
and Stakeholders

October 2024

Alberta Interim Police Advisory Board Communiqué

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Introduction

The purpose of this communiqué is to update municipalities, police governance bodies, and other stakeholders on the Alberta Interim Police Advisory Board’s work to date. This document provides an overview of the police funding model (PFM) implemented in 2019; Bill 6, the Police Amendment Act, which establishes a new system of police governance in Alberta; and Bill 11, the Public Safety Statutes Amendment Act, which establishes an independent police agency.

From its inception, the Interim Board has prioritized communicating and consulting with municipalities and existing police governance bodies. The Interim Board has endeavored to update stakeholders on the work it has undertaken, as well as solicit feedback through surveys and meetings to inform that work. All previous Interim Board communiqués are available on the [ABmunis policing hub](#).

Alberta Interim Police Advisory Board

History and Background

In December 2019, the Government of Alberta (GoA) introduced a new, five-year Police Funding Model (PFM) that applies to municipalities receiving police services from the RCMP under the Provincial Police Service Agreement (i.e. municipalities with populations under 5,000 and all municipal districts and counties). The following spring, the Minister of Justice and Solicitor General established the Alberta Police Advisory Board to give municipalities a stronger voice in setting RCMP policing priorities. The creation of this board aligned with Alberta Association of Police Governance (AAPG), Alberta Municipalities (ABmunis), and Rural Municipalities of Alberta (RMA) advocacy calling for municipalities to have greater oversight of policing, particularly now that they were paying directly for a portion of policing costs.

The Alberta Police Advisory Board was originally meant to be implemented in two phases; in the first year, an Interim Board would develop the structure and scope of the Advisory Board. On completion

of the Interim Board’s mandate, the work of the Operational Police Advisory Board would begin for a four-year term.

According to the [Terms of Reference](#) developed by Justice and Solicitor General, the Interim Board is made up of one representative from the AAPG Executive, four representatives from the ABmunis Board, and four representatives from the RMA Board.

Interim Police Advisory Board Current Membership

AAPG	ABmunis	RMA
Ian Sanderson Chair of the St. Albert Policing Committee	Tanya Thorn Mayor, Town of Okotoks, and Interim Board Chair	John Burrows Councillor, Woodlands County
	Tyler Gandam Mayor, City of Wetaskiwin	Paul McLaughlin Reeve, Ponoka County
	Krista Gardner, Councillor, Town of Calmar	Jason Schneider Reeve, Vulcan County
	Trina Jones Councillor Mayor, Town of Legal	Kara Westerlund Councillor, Brazeau County

The Interim Board was originally mandated with:

1. Developing the scope and terms of reference for the Operational Board.
2. Developing a recruitment and selection process for Operational Board members.
3. Developing governance documents for the Operational Board, including at minimum, a Competency Matrix for Board member appointments and review, a Code of Conduct, and a Mandate and Roles Document.
4. Providing input, advice, and recommendations to the government and RCMP “K” Division on the buildup of the provincial police service.
5. Providing input into discussions respecting the provincial policing priorities for the 2021/22 fiscal year to facilitate engagement during transition to the Operational Board.

The Interim Board fulfilled its mandate one year later, with [recommendations on governance](#) submitted to the Minister of Justice and Solicitor General, in June 2021. At the end of 2021, the Board was notified that the Ministry would be providing financial and staff support to the Board but would not be moving forward with the recommendations.

In early 2022, a new Minister was appointed as Minister of Justice and Solicitor General and the Board requested that this Minister review and reconsider the Board’s recommendations. The new Minister directed the Board to provide advice on provincial policing priorities for 2023, as well as support the transition to an Operational Board.

In June 2022, the Board was notified that recruitment for an Operational Board would likely be delayed and asked whether the Interim Board members would be willing to continue to participate on the Board until an Operational Board could be established, using the GoA’s internal recruitment and selection process instead of the recommendations that the Board had previously provided.

AAPG, ABmunis, and RMA advised that they were willing to continue serving on the Interim Board, subject to the following conditions:

- Justice and Solicitor General provides administrative support to the Board and the Board Chair.

- The mandate of the Operational Board is amended to enable the Board to be effective in its advisory role and to determine its annual work plan.
- A new Terms of Reference for the Board is created.
- The Interim Board's recommendations related to governance of the Operational board are reviewed and the Ministry provides rationale for the direction it took regarding these recommendations.

Following the October 2022 UCP leadership race and the election of Danielle Smith as party leader, Mike Ellis, MLA for Calgary-West, was appointed as Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Services.

In early 2023, the Board was advised by the Public Safety and Emergency Services staff that:

- Minister Ellis was looking for us to proceed with previous support requests.
- A new Terms of Reference would be created.
- An administrative position was in the process of being hired.

The [updated Terms of Reference](#) was finalized by the Board in May 2023. The Board's new mandate was to:

- Provide ongoing input, advice, and recommendations to the GoA and RCMP "K" Division on policing in Alberta.
- Collaborate with the GoA and RCMP "K" Division to develop annual provincial policing priorities.
- Engage with the GoA and RCMP "K" Division to provide input, advice, and recommendations on any other issues, plans, or documents as determined by the GoA.
- Provide recommendations and advice on the buildup of PPSA resources from the PFM revenue during the Board's term.
- Serve as a communications conduit between all municipalities served by the RCMP through the PPSA and the GoA/RCMP "K" Division. This includes:
 - Regularly reporting to municipal associations and PPSA municipalities on the Board's activities and other policing-related information.
 - Regularly soliciting local input from PPSA municipalities and other relevant organizations on policing issues, initiatives, and priorities.
 - Distributing at least one annual survey to seek input from PPSA municipalities seeking input or further clarification on how they are seeing these priorities improved in their communities.
 - Distributing a survey every third year to aid the Board's input into the provincial policing priorities development process.
 - Working with the GoA and RCMP "K" Division to provide information to municipal associations and communities on how police funds were spent and the resulting outcomes.
 - Creating the Board's annual work plan to assist with the completion of deliverables.
 - Providing input into the next phase of the Provincial Policing Funding Model.
 - Aid and support the ministry in the transition from the Interim Board to a Permanent Board.

Throughout 2023 and 2024, the Board has continued to meet with the RCMP and Public Safety and Emergency Services staff to provide input into the 2023 provincial policing priorities and RCMP resource allocation (see Appendix A for more details on RCMP staffing).

In February 2024, Minister Ellis announced provincial policing priorities for the upcoming year for all policing in Alberta. Consequently, the Board determined that there was no need to survey our

members on any changes to the policing priorities in the RCMP Joint Business Plan. The Board has provided input into the Police Amendment Act Regulations and advised that the consultation period on PFM renewal is not sufficient given that this model will expire in March 2025. Following the Board's July 2024 meeting with Minister Ellis, we are waiting for an update from the Ministry on the Board's next steps, including timelines and deliverables.

Board Benefits and Challenges

AAPG, ABmunis, and RMA acknowledge that participating on the Interim Board has been beneficial in building relationships with the RCMP and Ministry staff. The Deputy Commissioner and Commander of "K" Division, along with senior RCMP staff, have attended all Interim Board meetings and demonstrated a strong commitment to municipal engagement, at both the local and provincial level. AAPG, ABmunis, and RMA have noted several improvements to RCMP accountability and transparency since the establishment of the Interim Board, including:

- Standardized reporting and invoicing forms.
- Municipal education sessions on multi-year financial plans.
- The development of a performance evaluation framework for the RCMP Joint Business Plan.
- Detailed information on the allocation of PFM funds to augment RCMP resources.

Having all partners (Ministry of Public Safety & Emergency Services, RCMP and municipalities) involved in and impacted by contracted RCMP policing services at the same table has resulted in a valuable sharing of perspectives, as well as a broader understanding of all the challenges faced by each entity. Interim Board members often have access to valuable information, discussions, and updates that we wouldn't have access to otherwise. We have also gained a solid understanding of how the resources supported by PFM funding have affected crime across the province.

The Board has seen four Ministers since our inception, which has created a learning curve with each new Minister and resulted in some shifting of priorities and policy directions. With the transition to an Operational Provincial Advisory Board anticipated in early 2025, the Board is currently seeking clarity from Minister Ellis on what role he would like the Board to take in the transition, as well as any deliverables he wishes to assign to the Board.

Police Funding Model (PFM)

Background

The PFM, introduced in December 2019 and implemented in 2020-21, applies to municipalities with populations under 5,000, as well as municipal districts and counties, which are policed by the provincial police service. The PFM takes the total cost of frontline officers and redistributes a portion of those costs to these municipalities. The implementation of the PFM required those communities that had not previously paid for frontline policing to begin contributing a portion of the costs. At the time of implementation, the GoA committed that the additional revenue raised through the PFM would be reinvested into policing, with a priority on core policing.

Under the five-year model, municipalities pay 10% of provincial policing costs in Year One, 15% in Year Two, 20% in Year Three, and 30% in Years Four and Five. Each municipality's share of policing costs is calculated according to a formula that weighs equalized assessment at 50% and population at 50%, with modifiers related to shadow populations, crime severity, proximity to detachment, and existing enhanced policing positions. The province has shared a [spreadsheet](#) listing the costs for

affected municipalities over the five years, as well as [sample calculations](#) for the distribution of costs under this model.

Use of Police Funding Model (PFM) Funds

As previously mentioned, the RCMP has shared detailed information on how PFM funds have been used to augment its resources. The RCMP understands that police resource levels are important to Alberta communities, particularly under the PFM. Within the RCMP’s integrated service delivery model, detachment resources are augmented by centralized frontline support and specialized units, as well as by civilian support positions. This means that even detachments that do not receive new police officer positions benefit from additional centralized services, as these positions enable frontline officers to spend more time on community policing.

The RCMP and the Board have prioritized using PFM funds to:

- Ensure adequate resources in frontline detachments.
- Enhance specialized support services for emergency response and investigational capacity.
- Focus on community safety and well-being to help address the root causes of crime.

To help determine where to allocate new resources, the RCMP analyzed its workload at each detachment, looking at factors such as travel time, call volume, the type of crimes occurring in the area, amount of time required for investigations, the size of detachment, and the time available for proactive policing (strategic patrols, community engagement, visiting schools, and attending community events).

The following table provides a summary of the positions created using PFM funds. Additional information on position locations and types is available in Appendix A.

Year	Police Officer Positions		Civilian Support Positions	
	Positions Created	Positions Filled	Positions Created	Positions Filled
2020-21	76	76	57	57
2021-22	55	53	42	40
2022-23	40	24	52	42
2023-24	108	55	91	39
Total	279	208	242	178

The RCMP has acknowledged municipal concerns about staff recruitment and retention, vacancies, and emergency response, and has provided further information about current strategies to address these issues in Appendix B.

Invoicing and Vacancies under the PFM

The Interim Police Advisory Board also believes it is important to clarify that under the current PFM, there is no direct link between the number of positions at a detachment and the amount that communities are invoiced. As mentioned above, each municipality’s share of policing costs is calculated based on equalized assessment and population. This means that regardless of whether a detachment is at full strength or if there are vacancies, the PFM amount invoiced to communities by the GoA remains the same.

The RCMP does invoice the GoA for provincial police services based on the actual number of RCMP members that are employed full time. This means that the province does not pay for vacant

positions¹ under the Provincial Police Service Agreement, and that the province is not charged for newly created positions until they are filled. Given that the RCMP, like other police services at this time, has struggled with recruitment, the province has chosen to invest the refunds for unfilled positions into other initiatives to reduce crime and enhance public safety. The RCMP's Real-Time Operations Centre, which supports frontline members with real-time, accurate, and actionable intelligence, is one example of how these funds have been invested.

Police Funding Model (PFM) Renewal

As the PFM expires in March 2025, the Public Safety and Emergency Services Ministry is expected to begin engaging on a renewed model. The Police Advisory Board has not yet received a timeline for this engagement. Department staff have indicated that if engagement is not completed in time for the 2025-26 fiscal year, the Minister will be asked to consider extending the model for an additional year, billing municipalities at the same rate as in Year Five (30% cost recovery). The Board is still waiting for confirmation of this.

When the PFM was created in 2019, the base cost utilized to calculate each municipalities costs was \$285M. This represents the estimated cost of delivering front-line services under the RCMP contract for Alberta's provincial police service. Since then, there have been significant increases in RCMP policing costs, due to collective bargaining settlements, equipment upgrades, body-worn cameras, and so on. The GoA has paid all of these increased costs as they have not been factored into the PFM to date.

As the Ministry considers renewing the PFM, it is important for our members to understand that this escalation of costs has resulted in an increase in the cost of delivering frontline policing to a conservative estimate of \$311.4 million in 2024. Even if the GoA only changes the base cost in the original PFM formula (and not the percent of cost recovery), this will result in increased costs for all municipalities.

Police Act Amendments

New Police Governance Model

The Police Act mandates the GoA to ensure that adequate and effective policing is maintained in Alberta. Following several years of engagement with stakeholders and the public, the province passed Bill 6, the Police Amendment Act (PAA), in December 2022. According to the GoA, this legislation was intended to increase police transparency and enhance public trust to help build safer communities. In addition to other reforms, the legislation required the formation of civilian governance bodies for all municipalities in Alberta, with the intent for communities to have a role in setting policing priorities and performance goals. The PAA creates several new mandated structures for municipal input into policing:

- Communities with a population over 15,000 that are policed by the RCMP with an MPSA will be required to establish municipal policing committee.
- Communities with a population of under 15,000 policed by the RCMP with a Municipal Police Service Agreement (MPSA) will be represented by regional policing committees but will have the option to form their own municipal policing committee.

¹ The RCMP categorizes vacancies as either "hard" or "soft". Hard vacancies refer to unfilled positions, while soft vacancies refer to temporary absences such as injury or parental leave. While contract partners are invoiced for soft vacancies, they are not invoiced for hard vacancies.

- Communities policed by the RCMP under a Provincial Police Service Agreement (PPSA) will be represented by a Provincial Police Advisory Board (PPAB).

As next steps to the 2022 legislative amendments, the GoA is currently developing supporting regulations to clarify the powers, duties, functions, and composition of these new governance bodies, as well as the configuration of regional policing committees. Written submissions were accepted until mid-March 2024 and were in the form of an online questionnaire.

It is our understanding that the PPAB will be in place by early 2025. However, it is unclear what role the Interim Police Advisory Board will play moving forward with this transition. The Board has expressed through our original governance recommendations and in subsequent engagements that the PPAB should develop governance, engagement, and accountability processes that align with the fact that policing challenges and priorities are often regional or local in nature. Before the PPAB begins speaking on behalf of those it represents, it must have a plan in place to ensure that perspectives from different parts of the province, as well as different groups within communities, are adequately represented.

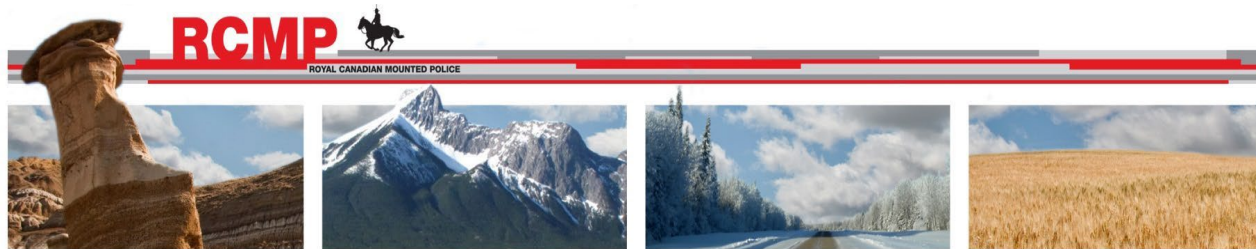
Bill 11

In March 2024, the GoA introduced Bill 11, the Public Safety Statutes Amendment Act, which permits the province to establish a new policing organization. This new organization will work alongside police services across the province. Officers in the new agency would take on the responsibility for the roles currently carried out by the Alberta Sheriffs. This agency will have the authority and jurisdiction to support the RCMP, municipal police services, and First Nations police services in Alberta, with the goal of allowing other police services across the province to spend more of their time on core operations and frontline duties.

It is important to note that there was no mention of this new policing organization in the 2024-25 provincial budget, and it is unclear where the funding for this potential transition would come from. Unfortunately, it does not appear that there was any engagement done regarding Bill 11 with municipal associations, municipalities, or any other policing organizations, such as Alberta Sheriffs. This lack of engagement is concerning, considering the community input necessary to ensure that policing reflects local needs.

Although AAPG, ABmunis, and RMA support any effort that will help make life safer and more secure for Albertans, it is unclear how Bill 11 will accomplish this. There are many unknowns regarding how this entity will work with the RCMP at the local level in terms of collaboration, the development of Community Safety Plans, gathering community input, implementing policing priorities, and so on. If supported by proper governance and local input, enhanced police capacity is beneficial to rural communities, but there are risks around having two different entities providing similar services within the same community.

The Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Services has indicated that no decision has been made on the creation of an Alberta Provincial Police Service and that this new agency is not intended to replace the RCMP. The Interim Police Advisory Board has not been involved to date with the establishment of the new policing organization and does not anticipate that the future Operational Board will have any say in its governance.



Appendix A – Police Officer and Civilian Position Detail

Funding provided through the police funding model has enabled the Alberta RCMP to grow the Provincial Police Service by adding 279 police officer positions and 242 civilian support positions. The chart below highlights how many positions were added each year, and the current staffing status as of October 1, 2024.

PFM Position Allocation						
	RM			PS		
	Allocated	Filled	% Filled	Allocated	Filled	% Filled
PFM Year 1	76	76	100.00%	57	57	100.00%
PFM Year 2	55	53	96.36%	42	40	95.24%
PFM Year 3	40	24	60.00%	52	42	80.77%
PFM Year 4	108	55	50.93%	91	39	42.86%
Total	279	208	74.55%	242	178	73.55%

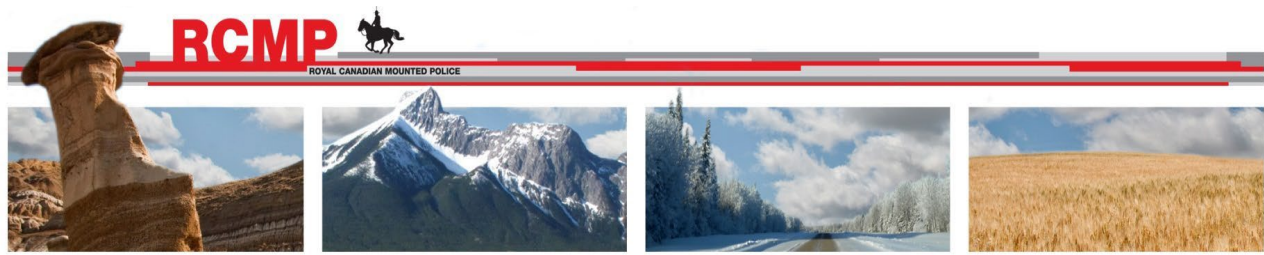
**Data as of Oct. 1, 2024. Number of filled positions fluctuate with new hires, transfers, leaves, etc.*

To ensure we provide a comprehensive policing service to Albertans, Alberta RCMP allocated positions afforded to us through the PFM to frontline policing, specialized support units and resources focused on addressing root causes of crime.

POLICE OFFICER POSITIONS

Police Officers Allocated to Detachments

Over four years, the Alberta RCMP added 136 Regular Member positions directly at detachments. When allocating police officer positions, our first priority was to ensure all detachments had adequate resources to balance the time spent responding to call for service with the time available to engage in activities such as strategic patrols, participation in community events and increased school presence. Through a workload analysis model and data related to the frequency, seriousness and type of crimes occurring, geography and population of the detachment area and travel time to calls, we determine the number of resources needed at each detachment to ensure we direct resources to where the data told us they were needed.



POLICE OFFICER POSITIONS BY DETACHMENT = 136 POSITIONS											
Central Alberta District Detachments		31	Eastern Alberta District Detachments		34	Southern Alberta District Detachments		35	Western Alberta District Detachments		36
Bashaw	Stettler		Athabasca	Viking		Airdrie	Three Hills		Beaverlodge	Spirit River	
Blackfalds	Strathcona		Bonnyville	Westlock		Bassano	Vulcan		Edson	Swan Hills	
Breton	Sylvan Lake		Cold Lake			Bow Island			Evansburg	Valleyview	
Camrose	Thorsby		Elk Point			Canmore			Faust	Whitcourt	
Innisfail	Wetaskiwin		Kitscoty			Cochrane			Grande Prairie		
Leduc			Lac La Biche			Didsbury			High Level		
Morinville			Provost			Hanna			High Prairie		
Parkland			Smoky Lake			High River			Manning		
Ponoka			St. Paul			Lake Louise			Mayerthorpe		
Rimbey			Two Hills			Okotoks			Peace Regional		
Rocky Mountain House			Vegreville			Strathmore			Red Earth Creek		

Relief Support for Detachments

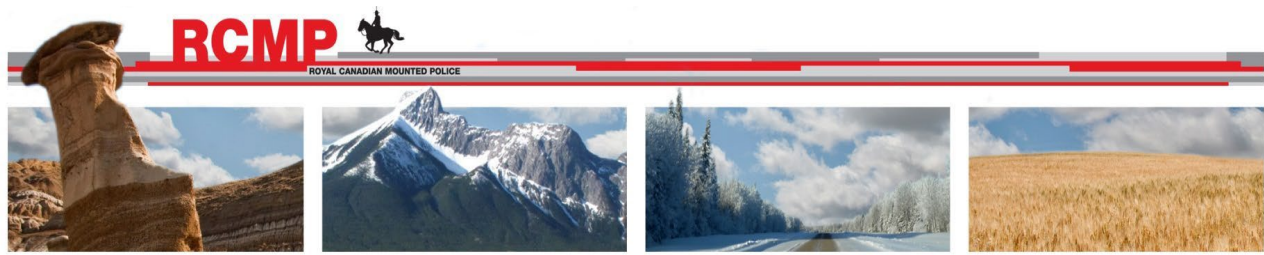
30 Positions were also allocated to Relief Teams. When staffed, these teams of police officers will be able to deploy to detachments experiencing short-term resource pressures.

Police Officers Allocated to Specialized Units

Ensuring that we have the necessary specialized services in place to support the work of the front-line officers when needed is critical to providing a comprehensive police service to our communities. To that end, the Alberta RCMP has increased capacity to a number of units that provide specialized support to detachments in areas such as investigations, forensic units, police-dog teams, and Emergency Response Teams (ERT). We were able to establish the Real Time Operations Centre (RTOC), a team of senior police officers who monitor operations in real-time, assess incident risk, coordinate resources (including with other police agencies and first responders) and manage the response. Additionally, we were able to build capacity in our teams dedicated to tackling financial and cybercrime, and in teams that provide specialized skills related to child advocacy. While these resources are not needed in each community every day, they are always available to address more dangerous situations or take on the more sensitive, complex, or serious files.

Police Officers Focusing on Root Causes of Crime

We also know enforcement alone or in isolation doesn't always work. Often, people facing addictions, mental health challenges and those who live without adequate housing are among offenders who land in a cycle of reoffending. We know there are root causes to some of this behavior, and while there are no simple solutions to address them all, there is work we can do with our community and social agency partners to achieve tangible, positive impacts to community safety. To this end, we used funding through the PFM to establish the Community Safety and Wellbeing Branch. With our partners, the Branch was able to build Rural Police and Crisis Teams (RPACT), teams of police officers and health professionals who respond to calls related to mental health. We also implemented the Virtual Opioid Dependency Program (VODP), which provides medical intervention and support to those dealing with addiction.



CIVILIAN SUPPORT POSITIONS

Civilian Supports Allocated at Detachments

Over four years, the Alberta RCMP added 77 Public Service Employee positions directly to detachments to enable police officers to be more visible with the communities they serve.

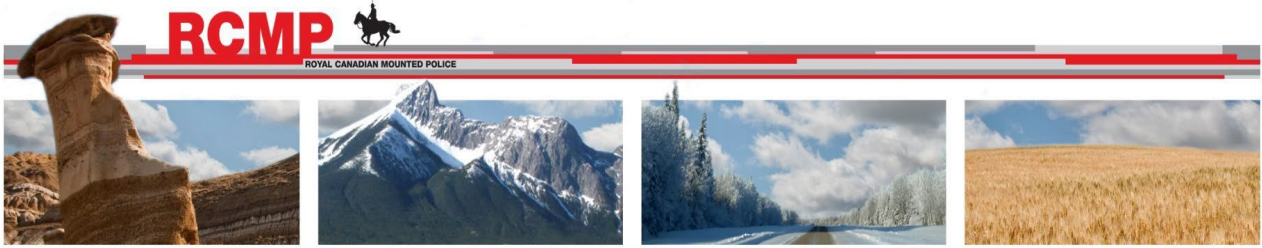
CIVILIAN SUPPORT POSITIONS BY DETACHMENT = 77 POSITIONS							
Central Alberta District Detachments		Eastern Alberta District Detachments		Southern Alberta District Detachments		Western Alberta District Detachments	
16		20		21		20	
Bashaw	Wetaskiwin	Athabasca	Wood Buffalo	Airdrie	Nanton	Beaverlodge	Swan Hills
Blackfalds		Bonnyville		Beiseker	Picture Butte	Ft. Vermillion	Valleyview
Breton		Boyle		Bow Island	Strathmore	Fox Creek	
Camrose		Cold Lake		Cardston	Turner Valley	Grande Prairie	
Innisfail		Coronation		Cochrane	Vulcan	High Level	
Rimbey		Desmarais		Crowsnest Pass		High Prairie	
Rocky Mountain House		Elk Point		Didsbury		Hinton	
Strathcona		Kitscoty		Gleichen		Manning	
Stony Plain		Lac La Biche		Lake Louise		Mayerthorpe	
Sylvan Lake		Provost		Milk River		Peace Regional	
Thorsby		Two Hills		Olds		Peace River	
Wetaskiwin		Westlock		Oyen		Red Earth Creek	

Civilian Supports in Specialized Units

The Alberta RCMP allocated a number of civilian support positions in areas such as intelligence and analytics, digital forensics and scenes of crime. We were also able to dedicate more operators to the Operational Communication Centre (OCC) and build our Remote Piloted Aircraft Systems (or drones) program, to name a few. Additionally, we invested in establishing a Return-on-Investment Team that will help us assess whether our efforts are achieving their stated goals and objectives.

Civilian Supports Focusing on Root Causes of Crime

Civilian positions in Community Safety and Wellbeing branch provide critical support to communities by working with our community partners to tackle the root causes of crime. These include the Rural Police and Crisis Teams (RPACT), and teams focused on community engagement and outreach, social engagement, alternative and restorative justice, and youth programming.



Appendix B – RCMP Strategies for Recruitment, Retention, and Emergency Response

Enhancing Recruitment Efforts

Over the past several years, recruiting has been a challenge for not only the RCMP, but for all police organizations in North America. The Alberta RCMP has made addressing this challenge a top priority.

In addition to all detachments having their own recruiting strategy, over the past year we have attended over 1,200 events and engaged with over 400,000 people to talk about a policing career with the Alberta RCMP. These efforts are paying off: in April 2023, the Alberta RCMP had 102 applicants. As of May 2024, this number has more than tripled to 318 Albertans. Depot (the RCMP training academy) is also back to having troop gate that it had prior to the pandemic.

The Alberta RCMP has also been focused on recruiting experienced police officers, and over the past couple of years a significant number of experienced police officers have joined the. Several years ago, regular member officers received a pay raise that brought their salaries in line with other police officers in Canada, and this pay raise has had a positive impact on our ability to recruit officers to the RCMP.

We're continually working to find efficiencies in the application process, and thus far have cut the time it takes to get into training to 6 months. We're examining ways to cut that timeframe down even further.

Our focus on recruiting remains, and will continue to remain, a top priority for the Alberta RCMP.

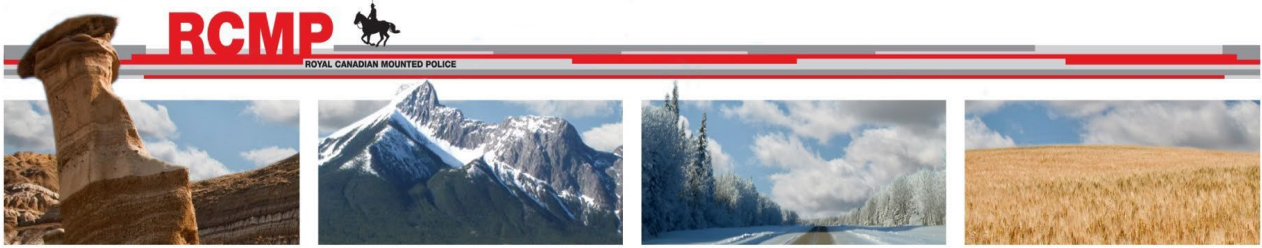
Addressing Vacancies

Increased vacancy rates have been a challenge for all police services in North America, including the Alberta RCMP. Ensuring that we have enough police officers in our detachments to respond to calls is a critical aspect of how we manage our resources. We are continually analyzing our service delivery models to ensure they are as efficient and effective as they could be. Some of this work includes regular examination of shift schedules to ensure optimal schedules are in place or looking at alternate service delivery models such as regional options, fly-in options for remote communities. This work is always done in consultation with the communities, as if the model doesn't meet their needs, it's not workable.

Our Human Resources Management dashboard allows our District Management Teams to continually monitor HR numbers at detachments to ensure they have an adequate number of police officers working at any given time. Should a detachment be experiencing a significant resource pressure, the District Management Team is able to redeploy resources from another area to address the pressure.

We share our vacancy rates with the Police Advisory Board at our meetings, and with the Ministry of Public Safety and Emergency Services on a monthly basis. As of Sept 14, 2024, our combined vacancy number is 17.3%, which includes both hard vacancies (meaning we don't have an officer to fill a position) and soft vacancies (meaning the position is encumbered, but the employee is away from work due to things such as medical or parental leave). Earlier this year, that number was closer to 20%, but we are seeing improvements every month.

The Alberta RCMP is very focused on recruiting to address hard vacancies, but we're also very focused on addressing our soft vacancies and have introduced number of initiatives to ensure we're supporting our



employees and getting them back to work as soon as they are able. These strategies include hiring additional doctors, disability case managers, nurses and psychologists and enhancing our mental health and wellness programs.

911 Call Response

The Alberta RCMP operates in a vast geographic area, which brings its own challenges. Given the geography and size of the areas we police, response times in a rural environment will be different than in an urban setting such as Calgary or Edmonton. That said, we continually monitor our response times to priority calls and implement any changes required to policy or by examining the service delivery model, ensuring we are best positioned to respond. In some cases, as a community evolves its existing detachment boundaries no longer make sense, so we examine whether adjustments to those boundaries would enhance our response.

We are also looking at ways to educate the public around proper use of 911, with the ultimate goal of reducing the number of non-emergency calls to 911. We've also hired a number of new operators in our call centers, which decreases wait times when calling 911. Additionally, the Alberta RCMP is currently working towards providing an easy-to-remember option for non-emergency calls.

The Alberta RCMP is always examining strategies that will positively impact response times and enhance our service.

24/7 Shift Coverage in all PPSA locations

In late 2000, the Alberta RCMP presented an analysis of what would be required to have police officers on shift 24/7 in each of our detachments to the Police Advisory Board. The key finding was that in order to do this, the Alberta RCMP would need to add an additional 350 police officers to the PPSA. Adding this many police officers would also require additional detachments and housing (in some locations), along with the items that our officers would need to do their job, such as equipment, vehicles and more. In order to achieve this, it required a significant increase in financial investment by the Province.

While we do not have someone on shift 24/7 in every one of our detachments, all detachments do have 24/7 coverage via our on-call officers.