

# Local Government RCMP Contract Management Committee update

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On October 15, the Local Government RCMP Contract Management Committee (LGCMC) met with provincial government and B.C. RCMP representatives to discuss issues related to the Municipal Police Unit Agreements, and policing more broadly in British Columbia. Key issues discussed at the meeting are summarized in this article.

## UBCM Convention – Meetings with Local Governments

As part of the 2024 Annual Convention, the Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General attended meetings with 26 local governments on issues related to policing and public safety. Provincial staff participated in an additional six meetings. Issues discussed during these meetings included provincial resourcing, vacancy concerns, the cost of policing, the impact of complex social issues, 911 emergency services, repeat offenders, protests, increases in crime, funding for outreach initiatives, and the Surrey police model transition. The Province and B.C. RCMP have met to discuss these issues and other relevant matters raised at the Convention.

The B.C. RCMP met with 10 local governments during the Convention regarding a variety of issues, including local crime, service delivery, community services, right-

sizing command and accommodations.

At the time of the October LGCMC meeting, both the B.C. RCMP and Ministry were preparing follow-up correspondence to local governments involved in these meetings.

## **Second Collective Agreement and Retroactive Liability for Collective Agreements**

The LGCMC received an update on the second (i.e., current) Collective Agreement, delivered by the B.C. RCMP. The current Collective Agreement expires on March 31, 2025, and the National Police Federation, the union representing RCMP Regular Members and Reservists below the rank of Inspector, can issue a notice to bargain as early as December 2024. It is expected that this will occur.

RCMP Members have begun receiving lump sum payments for retroactive pay resulting from the current Collective Agreement. This will be billed to local governments in three payments ending in Q4 2024/25. Q4 will also include a reconciliation for any outstanding amounts. B.C. RCMP representatives advised that each local government should receive an estimate of the total financial impact associated with retroactive pay, and if there are additional questions, they should speak with their local detachment's finance department.

Unlike the first Collective Agreement, the federal government has not provided an extended payment schedule option for any contract jurisdiction to resolve their retroactive liability. In accordance with their Municipal Police Unit Agreements, local governments are responsible for making full payment within 45 days of an invoice being issued.

LGCMC members were reminded that for local governments that chose the two-year payment period for retroactive amounts related to the first Collective Agreement, their amount owing to Canada must be paid by March 31, 2025.

## **Third Round of Collective Bargaining – Engagement and Submission**

Provincial representatives provided an update on federal Treasury Board's engagement with contract partners related to the upcoming third round of collective bargaining. The engagement included a confidential federal questionnaire that was distributed to the LGCMC and local governments in B.C. This engagement, which is being framed as a way to help inform federal Treasury Board during collective bargaining, was developed following advocacy by members of the national Contract Management Committee (CMC) regarding the need for increased consultation and engagement with contract partners. Feedback provided by contract partners was provided to the CMC secretariat, who shared it with the federal government.

The LGCMC local government co-chair noted that this was not UBCM's ideal engagement approach, and that direct engagement with the federal government would have been preferred.

## **Status Update on Provincial Investment**

Provincial representatives provided an update on the Province's \$230 million investment into the Provincial Police Service, which includes a commitment to fill 256 existing vacancies. The provincial investment is in year two of three, and according to the B.C. RCMP is ahead of schedule, with 123 Regular Member (RM) and 39 Public Service Employee (PSE) positions filled as of August 16<sup>th</sup>. This includes the following:

- Critical Response Unit: 10 RM and 4 PSE
- Investigative Services: 25 RM and 3 PSE
- Rural and Remote Detachment Policing: 43 RM and 12 PSE
- Other Units in the Provincial Police Service: 4 RM and 18 PSE

This investment has added resources to 33 rural and remote communities, as well as additional resources to investigative and district-based services.

In response to a question about the source of these new RCMP Members, the B.C. RCMP advised that positions are being filled by cadets from Depot Division and Experienced Police Officers.

Another question was raised regarding the number of Members that are being assigned to frontline policing. Provincial representatives noted that 46 RMs are in patrol. The B.C. RCMP added that resources added to General Investigative Services and Major Crime are also frontline and allow more resources to be devoted to proactive policing.

## **Body Worn Cameras**

The B.C. RCMP provided an update on the phased implementation of body worn cameras (BWCs), which will begin in mid-November. The initial 'Wave Zero' sites include Mission, Tofino/Ahousaht, Kamloops, Cranbrook (City and B.C. Highway Patrol), and Prince George. It is expected to take 15-18 months to get BWCs operational in all RCMP-policed communities in B.C. E Division Body Worn Camera and Digital Evidence Management System teams will support this initiative, and perform services such as transcription, translation and redaction.

BWC costs will be billed at a per Full Time Equivalent (FTE) utilization, which is used when common expenses cannot be easily divided among contract partners. In 2024/25, the BWC cost is projected to be \$1,640 per FTE. This is expected to rise to \$2,570 in 2025/26 and \$2,892 in 2026/27. The final rate will be based on reconciliation of actual costs at the end of each fiscal year. While all contract partners will be billed this year, those that do not receive cameras prior to March 31, 2025, will receive a credit to offset charges.

In response to a question about billing, the B.C. RCMP confirmed that local governments that do not receive all BWCs before the end of the fiscal year (March 31) will be invoiced pro rata, based on the number of BWCs they have received and how long they have been operational.

## **RCMP Recruitment and Vacancies**

B.C. RCMP representatives advised that the recruitment and vacancy situation in B.C. continues to be positive. The province is receiving 35-37% of cadets from Depot Division, which is the largest share among all RCMP Divisions. Depot Division is currently operating 40 troops of 32 cadets, and it is possible that this could increase in the future. Depot Division is projected to graduate 391 cadets this year.

In British Columbia, E Division is processing approximately 200 applications per month and has more than 2,600 in progress. The B.C. RCMP has also hired 92 Experienced Police Officers this year. E Division is also operating a suitability pilot project, assessing cadets that wish to return to British Columbia after completing their training at Depot Division. Other ongoing recruitment initiatives include the Diverse and Inclusive Cadet Experience and B.C. Indigenous Cadet Initiative.

In response to a question regarding the competition between police agencies for members, the B.C. RCMP noted that more cadets, increased applications and other favourable circumstances are benefiting RCMP recruitment efforts.

Another LGCMC question was posted regarding the re-introduction of allowances for Members to serve in northern and remote locations. In response, B.C. RCMP representatives noted that these allowances are common with other police agencies in their Collective Agreements.

Following a brief discussion regarding the need for Members in rural and remote areas, a Committee member noted that local governments may be able to play a role in attracting candidates to northern and remote postings. Soon after, the national Contract Management Committee (CMC) advised that any contract partners interested in helping to promote their jurisdictions are invited to connect with RCMP resources where they are located. If requiring more information, please contact [Bhar Sihota](#), UBCM Senior Policy Analyst and CMC Associate Member.

## **Major Events and Operational Initiatives – Impacts on Local Governments**

The B.C. RCMP provided an update on several major events and operational issues, including gang activity, illegal firearms seizures, and protests.

## **Surrey Transition & Impacts on Local Governments**

Provincial representatives provided an update on the status of the Surrey police model transition. Since the last LGCMC meeting, the City and Province have signed a Contribution Agreement, which includes a financial contribution from the Province to support the completion of the transition. The Surrey Police Service (SPS) will become the police agency of jurisdiction on November 29<sup>th</sup>, consistent with an

announcement made by the Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General earlier this year. After November 29<sup>th</sup>, the Provincial Police Service will remain in Surrey to provide temporary support for the remainder of the transition period.

A question was asked regarding impacts on other local governments resulting from the Surrey Police Service recruitment process. Provincial representatives noted that the current environment for recruitment is very competitive, and concerns have been raised regarding recruitment from police agencies across Canada, including the SPS. It was noted that a significant number of SPS recruits have come from outside the province.

The likelihood for the transition to be completed in 2-3 years will depend on a number of factors, notably recruitment efforts by the SPS. The Province continues to monitor impacts on local governments and has shared a [backgrounder](#) on Divisional Administration costs.

## **National Contract Management Committee (CMC) Outlook**

Provincial representatives provided an update on discussions that will be taking place at November's CMC meeting. Key issues on the agenda for upcoming meetings include collective bargaining, recruitment and vacancy initiatives, and preliminary discussions on the future of contract policing. With respect to the latter, Canada recently confirmed its intention to negotiate Police Service Agreements beyond 2032. Since that time, federal, provincial and territorial deputy ministers have held preliminary discussions, which will help set the stage for future negotiations.

## **Other Items**

The LGCMC continues to work on several outstanding issues suggested by UBCM members, including issues related to the administration and management of RCMP detachments in the province.

The RCMP provided a written update on the status of the new Auxiliary Program, which launched earlier this year. As part of this update, it was noted that there are currently 13 B.C. detachments with Auxiliary candidates working through the application process.

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