

Police Protection Service Enhancement

DESCRIPTION:

Increase of 2 RCMP members to focus on internal training requirements, increasing the current contracted strength from 142 to 144.

Development of the Prince George RCMP Strategic Plan for 2021/2022 included an internal scan in relation to issues that have been the topics of considerable public discussion. In order to meet the public expectations and improved levels of service delivery, the Strategic Plan will focus strongly on providing a more robust internal training program for the detachment in several areas, including the following:

- **Mandatory firearms and use of force options:** Focus on achieving 100% compliance with mandatory re-certifications for use of force theory & skills, firearms and less lethal intervention options. Ensuring a high level of competence with these intervention options will increase member confidence in their use and decrease the risk of unnecessary injuries or fatalities.
- **Crisis de-escalation and mental health:** Advanced training in the area of mental health and crisis de-escalation. This is a high-risk area with a high number of volatile interactions. An increased level of competence in the ability to peacefully resolve these incidents will decrease the need for physical intervention. Attempts to secure additional resources from partner agencies to expand programs such as Car 60 have been unsuccessful. In order to improve service delivery in this area, unilateral training and capacity enhancements need to be developed.
- **Medical / life saving:** Training in areas such as basic traumatic medicine and swift water rescue. Police are routinely the first responders on scene of violent events. Having advanced skills in immediate treatment of traumatic wounds is critical to increasing both police safety and the survivability of victims of incidents such as gunshots, stab wounds or motor vehicle collisions. Each year, police are involved in the retrieval of several persons from hazardous environments such as rivers. Proper training to operate in those environments is critical to ensure the safety of police and victims.
- **In service training:** Locally developed training to address local service delivery gaps specific to the community of Prince George. The training section will work with community stakeholders to develop and deliver training specific to meet the policing needs of Prince George. This will include increasing awareness of local cultural groups and issues as well as improving the Detachment's cooperative response to local issues with partner agencies.

The request is for prescribed safety training officer and instructor who will be able to instruct and ensure that all required training is being met on a more consistent basis and expand the current scope of training from once a year to once a month in most areas.

Having an internal training unit will reduce the need for officers to travel down to PRTC in Chilliwack for training, thereby reducing travel/training costs, with the potential of extending the training to other North District units and recovering some of the costs associated with the training unit.

Local mandatory training is currently facilitated by instructors who have other full-time duties at the Detachment. This results in both time away from their primary job functions and an expenditure of overtime funds. Establishing a dedicated training unit would reduce the need for officers to be diverted from their primary job functions to instruct and would reduce overtime costs.

Police training and use of force has been an issue that has recently received considerable public scrutiny. It is a high priority for Prince George Detachment to establish an advanced level of training to continue to ensure a competent and professional response in challenging situations and maintain the confidence of the public. To achieve this in the immediate term, one General Duty supervisor has been seconded to full-time training duties for a six-month period as a stopgap measure, but that secondment cannot be maintained on a long-term basis.

Comparably sized RCMP detachments, such as Kamloops, have already established similar full-time training units.

FINANCIAL COST OF THE ENHANCEMENT:

Failure to develop capacity to maintain a training standard consistent with evolving legal requirements and social expectations could negatively impact service delivery, creating risk to public and officer safety and adversely affect the community's perception of public safety as well as fair and equitable police service delivery.

Due to process timing with the RCMP, the positions would be filled in the last quarter of 2021 with the estimated cost of \$96,000 funded from within the contract budget this year. The total budget cost for 2022 would be estimated at \$365,000.