

**DOCUMENTS INTRODUCED BY  
THE VPD THROUGH DCC LEPARD**

**Changes in the VPD since February 2002**

1. Recommendations: pages 334-337 of the Missing Women Investigation Review
2. Epilogue: pages 338-339 of the Missing Women Investigation Review
3. Summary of Changes Made (August 2011 document)

**Changes in the Missing Person's Unit**

4. Audit Report of John Shouten, October 2004
5. Spreadsheet of Implementation of recommendations from the Shouten report
6. Report from Sergeant Fairweather to DC LePard dated May 26, 2006
7. Spreadsheets showing performance of VPD's missing persons office
8. Draft Missing Persons Policy to placed for the police board

**Sister Watch and other Initiatives**

9. Sister Watch report
10. Sex Industry Liaison Officer summary
11. Project Lockstep Report

**Integration and Regionalization**

12. Municipal Policing in the Census Metropolitan Area
13. Discussion Paper of the Issues Surrounding Regionalization of Police Services

**Difficulties in the Relationship with the RCMP over the Missing Women Investigation**

14. Media coverage of the RCMP's role: pages 297-301 of the Missing Women Investigation Review
15. RCMP Gazette article
16. RCMP Superintendent Nash's Report
17. DC LePard's notes of reply to Superintendent Nash's report

Ex. F (1D)

**Documents Responsive to Particular Issues**

18. Newspaper article re: Cler-Cunningham Report
19. References in RCC to sightings of Tiffany Drew

the most part, did not become engaged and provide her the high-level support she needed.

A thorough analysis of the evidence pointing to Pickton was needed. Had this analysis been available and taken at a high level to the RCMP, to pressure it to aggressively pursue the investigation with an offer of continued assistance, the RCMP may have applied more resources to the Pickton investigation. Unfortunately, because of a variety of circumstances, there was a rapid turnover of managers in the Major Crime Section. Due to their own lack of inquiry, none of them were sufficiently knowledgeable about the Missing Women investigation generally, and the Pickton investigation specifically. This was also true at the Executive level.

The impact of the failed 1999 investigation into Pickton was enormous in many ways, including having a severe emotional impact on the investigators involved – particularly Sergeant Geramy Field, Detective Constable Lori Shenher, and Detective Constable Mark Chernoff.

But the impact on the investigators and the VPD pales in comparison to the tragedy that could potentially have been averted: after August 1999, 13 more sex trade workers went missing, and DNA and other evidence connects eleven of these thirteen women to the Pickton property with multiple related murder charges awaiting trial.

Steps must be taken to eliminate or minimize those barriers that derailed the original Pickton investigation. What is needed is better analysis to provide “triggers” for a major investigation; better communication between RCMP detachments, RCMP “Headquarters,” and municipal departments; and better mechanisms to more quickly create Joint Force Operations run by properly trained major case

managers. Some of these issues have been addressed to some extent recently, such as an RCMP initiative to ensure there is a pool of high level major case managers available in British Columbia, the creation of a provincial missing persons analysis unit, and integration of some homicide units. However, more work is needed to develop specific initiatives to address other systemic barriers identified in this review.

If anything good has come out of the Missing Women investigation, it is that it was a catalyst for an unprecedented Joint Force Operation investigation that has been described as a model of excellence in a number of respects, including inter-agency cooperation. Aggressive steps to improve policing in BC must be taken to ensure that all the harm in the Missing Women case caused to individuals, families and communities leads to more positive changes, and that the deaths of the Missing Women were not in vain.

## **9. RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **A. REGARDING THE PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT AND THE B.C. ASSOCIATION OF CHIEFS OF POLICE**

The VPD should encourage the Provincial Government and the BC Association of Chiefs of Police to:

#### **i. Multi-jurisdictional Investigations**

1. Create a protocol or framework for multi-jurisdictional major case investigations to ensure the timely and seamless implementation of multi-agency teams. Reference documents should include this Review, Inspector R.

Gehl's 2001 M.A. thesis on "Multi-Agency Cooperation", and Justice Campbell's Bernardo Investigation Review. The protocol should include specific guidelines, provisions for ongoing liaison between senior police officers, and reporting requirements;

2. Strike a committee to:

- Develop a mechanism for individual police agencies faced with a "major case" with a multi-jurisdictional aspect to seek assistance, including involvement of the Provincial Police;
- Develop specific criteria that set out the circumstances in which a JFO will be created and a process for providing ongoing review and reporting of the JFO's activities;
- Develop an agreement allowing the rapid creation of JFOs when needed; and
- Develop a funding model for extraordinary investigations that are beyond the capacity of a municipal police department's budget for "routine" policing;
- Examine the state of provincial standards for advanced training of police officers in British Columbia.

**ii. Regional Policing**

3. In light of the negative impact on the Pickton investigation of the current multi-agency policing system in the Lower Mainland, examine the benefits of a regionalized police force in the Lower Mainland;

**iii. Major Case Management**

4. Examine the work of the 1996 Ontario Major Case Management Committee and give consideration to developing provincial standards for the management of major cases in BC;
5. Support the RCMP developing its accreditation program for high level major case managers, so that a provincial pool of highly trained managers are available to any agency, and that the municipal police departments be encouraged and supported in participating in this initiative;

**iv. Electronic Case Management**

6. Strike a Provincial committee of key stakeholders to study and make recommendations regarding a single uniform computerized case management system, or suite of systems, for use by police agencies throughout British Columbia;
7. Ensure the selected system is mandatory for use in all serial predator investigations and all major sexual assault and homicide cases that could turn into a serial predator investigation;
8. Develop training to ensure that team commanders, investigators, file coordinators and analysts have sufficient training for their respective roles in using the system, and that this training be upgraded whenever substantive changes are made to the electronic case management system;



9. Ensure that if the Versadex PRIME-BC product is to be used for major case management, then the issue of complementary analytical software be studied, to ensure that all important functions of an electronic case management system are available, and to avoid a multiplicity of locally-developed products being used as is the case in British Columbia now;

**v. Missing Persons Investigations**

10. Continue to provide the support necessary to ensure the success of the new provincial analysis unit to examine missing persons cases, and that further attention be given to eliminating barriers to making missing persons reports;<sup>464</sup>

**B. TO THE VANCOUVER POLICE DEPARTMENT**

11. THAT all VPD supervisors and managers in charge of investigative squads receive major case management training appropriate to their responsibilities;

12. THAT the Inspector in charge of the Major Crime Section (and other investigative sections) have a background in criminal investigations;

13. THAT the Executive of the Vancouver Police Department implement a policy requiring briefings at the Executive level on major cases so that adequate resources are applied;<sup>465</sup>

14. THAT whenever a task force is created for the purpose of a major case investigation, the major case management model is followed;

15. THAT a full time supervisor or "Team Commander" is assigned on a full time basis to any major case team;

16. THAT the Team Commander in consultation with the Primary Investigator have the authority to select all team members, and to release any team member who is unable to perform to a reasonable standard, or who is otherwise counterproductive;

17. THAT all major investigations consider the need for a written media strategy as a part of its operational plan, developed by the Team Commander in consultation with the Media Liaison Unit;

18. THAT the media handling protocol set out in the current Canadian Police College's Major Case Management Manual be used as a reference in major case investigations;

19. THAT the VPD implement a process whereby any replacement officers in a major case investigation team are fully briefed on all facets of the case investigation, including both in-person meetings and via case investigation documentation;

464 For example, the author has been advocating with the RCMP to create a 1-800 number that citizens wanting to report a missing person could call anywhere in BC, and a process would be created to ensure the appropriate jurisdiction conducts an investigation, and to ensure information is effectively shared between jurisdictions.

465 This recommendation has been addressed with the 2004 creation of the VPD's "Strategic Plan Alignment Committee", on which the four Deputy Chiefs sit. The committee is responsible for ensuring resources are aligned with priorities.

20. THAT the VPD continue developing the capacity to incorporate major case management best practices;
21. THAT the current efforts by the VPD to forge improved relationships with the sex trade workers of the Downtown Eastside continue to be strongly supported by VPD management; and

**C. REGARDING THE CITY OF VANCOUVER**

The VPD should encourage the City of Vancouver to:

22. Continue to support the resource needs of the VPD, both in terms of sworn staff but also civilian support staff, such as the priority positions requested in the 2002, 2003 and 2004 Reports to Council regarding civilian staffing, especially those with technical expertise, so that no future serious investigation is compromised by a lack of sufficient staff and expertise.

## 10. EPILOGUE

This review was substantially completed by 2005; much has happened since then.

On December 9, 2007 Robert Pickton was convicted of second degree murder in the deaths of Sereena Abotsway, Adrea Joesbury, Mona Wilson, Georgina Papin, Brenda Wolfe, and Marnie Frey. He was sentenced to life in prison with no hope for parole for 25 years. The Supreme Court of Canada upheld these convictions. As a result, charges were stayed related to the 20 additional murders of Andrea Borhaven, Heather Bottomley, Heather Chinnock, Wendy Crawford, Sarah Devries, Tiffany Drew, Cara Ellis, Cynthia Feliks, Jennifer Furminger, Inga Hall, Helen Hallmark, Tanya Holyk, Sherry Irving, Angela Jardine, Patricia Johnson, Debra Jones, Kerry Koski, Jacqueline McDonell, Diana Melnick, and Dianne Rock. In addition, DNA from six other Missing Women – Sharon Abraham, Yvonne Boen, STW13 Dawn Crey, Stephanie Lane, and Jacqueline Murdock – was allegedly found on the Pickton property, but there was insufficient evidence for Crown to approve charges. By any measure, the deaths of these Missing Women was a heart-wrenching tragedy, and one which has many lessons.

Significant improvements have been made in the VPD and in policing in BC since the Missing Women investigation. All of the VPD-relevant recommendations flowing from the Review have been implemented. Supervisors and managers of investigative squads are required to have an appropriate level of investigative experience and receive major case management training. The Inspectors in charge of the three VPD sections that focus on violent crime are all former major crime investigators and supervisors, and all have major case management training. Both the Superintendent

and Deputy Chief who oversee major investigations are experienced investigators and investigative supervisors. Since the Missing Women investigation, six VPD officers have been provincially accredited as Major Case Management Team Commanders. The current Executive has implemented a system in which it is briefed daily on current cases, and is proactive in ensuring it is fully informed and engaged so that it can fulfill its leadership responsibilities. All major case and task force investigations are guided by major case management protocols, including staffing matters and media strategies.

In terms of VPD staffing levels, since the Missing Women investigation, the VPD has received extraordinary support from the City of Vancouver and Vancouver City Council in increasing both sworn and civilian staffing. Sworn staffing has been effectively increased by 243 positions since 2003, while civilian staffing has increased by well over 100 positions over the same time period. Many of the civilian positions are crime analysts, which were severely lacking during the Missing Women investigation.

The VPD has also continued to work at improving relationships with sex trade workers and other marginalized persons via advocacy groups, and has assigned a police officer who is well-respected in the Downtown Eastside, Constable Linda Malcolm, as a full-time sex trade worker liaison.

There have been many improvements in the ability of police in the Lower Mainland to respond to multi-jurisdictional crime, as evidenced by the creation of RCMP-led integrated units such as the Integrated Gang Task Force. To their credit, the Provincial Government has significantly increased funding for such integrated units, expanding the overall policing capacity in the Lower Mainland and elsewhere. In addition, the Province has funded and implemented

province-wide the Police Records Information Management Environment (PRIME) System that the VPD introduced in 2001, so that all police agencies are able to efficiently share information. In addition, major case management training has continued and its principles have become the accepted standard for the conduct of major investigations in B.C.

As noted, a provincial missing persons analysis unit has now been in place since 2005, although more work is needed to ensure it addresses the current gaps in missing persons investigations, particularly when there are multi-jurisdictional issues, and also with respect to barriers to reporting, particularly for marginalized persons.

There are, however, still some outstanding challenges that played a role in the failures in the Missing Women investigation. For example, there is still no provincial standard for electronic case management software to support major investigations and different agencies are using different applications. The VPD continues to advocate for such a system, as its lack prevents seamless multi-jurisdictional investigations, delays the transfer of information, and requires that investigators who move to a multi-jurisdictional unit from a different agency have to adapt to new systems. There should also be more attention paid to provincial standards for training. Some progress in this regard was made in 2008, but there is more work to do.

In addition, the lack of a regional police force in the Lower Mainland means that there are competing priorities, and decisions on regional issues are delayed while consensus is sought. While the level of cooperation is usually good among police leaders in the province, this situation would be enhanced with a better structure that would support police decision-making on a regional basis, rather than the fragmented system that exists now, and which

played a key negative role in the Missing Women investigation. There are times when decision-making on major multi-jurisdictional policing issues must rest with a clear governance and executive authority, supported by a unified and accountable management team. In major multi-jurisdictional cases, decisions must not be diluted or avoided because of a lack of an appropriate structure to support such decision making. While a “Joint Management Team” approach has been adopted in BC to support some integrated units, this approach does not set out a legal or practical basis for strong, rapid, and accountable decision-making that incorporates the issues of the major stakeholders. This problem should be examined by the Ministry of Solicitor General.

**THE VANCOUVER POLICE DEPARTMENT***Beyond the Call*

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**Vancouver Police Department Actions Taken Resulting from the  
Missing Women Investigation Review****1. The Missing Persons/Coroner's Liaison Unit**

At the time of the Missing Women investigation, there was no full-time supervisor in the Missing Persons Unit. The Unit was managed "off the side of a desk" by a Sergeant with full time responsibilities for a homicide squad. As a result, in 2003 a Sergeant's position was created and filled in the Missing Persons Unit.

There were also a number of problems in the Unit related to staff qualifications, record keeping, investigative practices, policies, etc. As a result, retired Inspector John Schouten (who had not only Homicide Squad experience, but was highly skilled in the audit function) was contracted to conduct a comprehensive audit of the Unit. He completed his extensive audit in 2004, making numerous recommendations with respect to staffing levels, policy, selection criteria for staff, record keeping, use of PRIME, and many others. That audit was provided to the Major Crime Section Inspector, with a requirement for a monthly report as to the progress of the implementation of the recommendations. All of the recommendations have been implemented.

With respect to policy, in 2005 changes to the VPD Regulations and Procedures Manual were recommended and approved by the Police Board. These amendments require that a field supervisor be notified immediately of any missing person reports that E-COMM was proposing not to dispatch a police officer to investigate, to ensure that no time was lost in suspicious circumstances that might not be apparent to E-COMM staff. In addition, our practice for missing persons investigations has shifted to recognize explicitly that in the absence of information that a report of a missing persons is NOT suspicious, it should be treated as suspicious.

Since the Missing Women Investigation, there has been a complete turnover of staff in the Missing Persons Unit, allowing new selection criteria to be applied. The Unit has since been functioning at a very high level and has been recognized nationally for its excellence.

In addition to improving the analytical capacity in the Missing Persons Unit by effective use of PRIME and other strategies, the VPD advocated with the RCMP to create a Provincial Missing Persons Analysis Unit within the Behavioural Sciences Group of the RCMP. The VPD also sought support from the BC Association of Municipal Chiefs of Police to fund a municipal police position in this unit. That effort was successful, but fortunately, to its credit, the RCMP subsequently agreed to fund that position as a municipal secondment from the provincial policing budget, as had originally been argued for. This provincial unit was created in 2004 and a VPD member was the successful candidate for the municipal position in the unit at the time. The mandate of this unit is to work to create harmonized policies for missing persons investigations in BC, to create systems to recognize anomalous patterns of missing persons even when they cross jurisdictions, and to ensure this information is acted on, etc.

One of the recommendations of a City of Vancouver committee involving family members of the Missing Women was the creation of a 1-800 number to reduce barriers to reporting missing persons, especially by marginalized persons. There have been discussions with the RCMP but this has not yet occurred due to resource issues.

## 2. Major Case Management

The Canadian Police College's major case management model, developed in 1994, is the accepted "best practice" for managing serious investigations. Justice Archie Campbell cited it in his review of the Bernardo investigation as "a well-thought out approach to the problems of major serial predator investigations, solidly grounded in Canadian investigative experience and the lessons learned from failures and successes."<sup>1</sup>

At the time the VPD's "Missing Women Review Team" investigation began in May 1999, only one member of the Investigation Division had received the Canadian Police College's three-week Major Case Management Program. Since that time, the VPD has ensured that this course has been provided to numerous members. The Inspectors in charge of the Major Crime Section (Homicide, Missing Persons, Robbery/Assault), the Special Investigation Section (Sexual Offence Squad and others), and the Operations Investigation Section (robberies other than financial institutions, property crime) have received Major Case Management training, as have all their Sergeants. In addition, there is a Provincial Accreditation Committee created by the RCMP that exists to evaluate the training and experience of applicants who wish to receive "accredited" status to be eligible for placement in a pool of high-level MCM managers available for major investigations in B.C. The criteria for accreditation is very onerous. The VPD currently has six officers who are provincially accredited Team Commanders, including the Inspector in charge of the Major Crime Section.

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<sup>1</sup> Justice Archie Campbell (1996). *Bernardo Investigation Review*, Government of Ontario, p. 271.

### 3. Selection Criteria for the Major Crime and Special Investigation Sections

With respect to the qualifications of Inspectors and Sergeants in the Major Crime Section and Special Investigation Section, the selection criteria have been changed to ensure that solid investigative experience is required – in addition to the other supervisor/management qualifications – for selection to these Sections. The result has been that the Inspectors in charge of both of these key Sections have extensive investigative experience at the Detective and Sergeant level. In addition, the Sergeants selected for Homicide, Robbery/Assault and Sex Offences since 2003, in every single case, have previous relevant experience as investigators in Homicide, Robbery/Assault, or Sex Offences.

### 4. Critical Analysis of Investigations

Two key strategies to move towards being a best practice learning organization are to ensure that we critically analyze extraordinary investigations to learn from our successes and failures, and that we then ensure that information is made available to others. To that end, in 2004 a practice of formally debriefing major investigations was instituted in the Investigation Division. These facilitated debriefings involve all the investigators and associated staff, and even Crown counsel where appropriate. The Inspector in charge is then required to write a report summarizing the investigation, the challenges faced, lessons learned, and recommendations for the future.

To ensure this information is easily accessible, in 2004, an Intranet-based "Knowledge Database" was created, on which major case debriefs and other relevant documentation can be made available in electronic form. In 2005, this database was significantly enhanced. It is now highly sophisticated and searchable, and includes numerous documents focused on investigative excellence. There is now a considerable library of literature available to current investigators and those who wish to improve their knowledge of investigations, and to understand the benefit from both practical and academic analyses of investigations. This database has been demonstrated to the Senior Management Team, and other steps have been taken to encourage its use both in the Investigation Division and the VPD generally.

### 5. Resources

When the VPD Missing Women investigation began in 1998, the VPD had been through a series of annual cuts in authorized strength since 1993 (and which continued to 2000). As a result, resource levels were a major issue. Since then, the VPD's authorized strength has climbed very significantly due to the support of Vancouver City Council. There are now 243 more authorized sworn positions than there were in 2000, and more than one hundred additional civilian positions, many of those in crime analyst positions, which were notably lacking during the Missing Women investigation. Many of the positions came to the Investigation Division, improving resource levels and capacity.

## **6. Management Accountability**

During the Missing Women Investigation Review, it became clear that some key information possessed by investigators was diluted as it moved up the chain of command, impairing effective decision-making. Steps have been taken to ensure there is effective communication, including senior management meeting daily with Inspectors and Sergeants in charge of investigative squads to be briefed on the status of ongoing investigations and to respond to questioning. A similar process is repeated each morning at 9:15 a.m. in the Chief Constable's office, at which time each Deputy comes similarly prepared to respond to questions from the Chief and from each other as to significant incidents.

The entire Executive examines issues from the point of view of the VPD response required, and resources are moved between Divisions on a short- or long-term basis to meet organizational needs. For example, this occurred in 2004 when resources were permanently moved from the Operations and Operations Support Divisions to address a lack of staff in the Sexual Offence Squad. More recently, resources were moved on a temporary basis from a variety of areas throughout the VPD to "front-end load" key investigations, including homicides.

## **7. External/Regional Policing Cooperation, Coordination and Collaboration**

- Formal cooperation on multi-jurisdictional issues
- PRIME BC
- Integrated Units
- Joint Forces Operations, e.g., planned responses to gang violence; unplanned response to emergent issues, e.g., kidnappings
- Direct lines of communication at investigator, managerial and executive levels among all police agencies

## **III Conclusion**

During the Missing Women investigation, there was an unfortunate "perfect storm" that contributed to failures in the VPD. Factors included the investigative challenges of an unprecedented case, a variety of internal and external problems, and the failure of the Coquitlam RCMP's investigation of Pickton in 1998-2001.

As a result of the Missing Women investigation review, there have been significant changes made to improve the capacity of the VPD to deal with challenging



investigations. These include changes in the Missing Persons Unit regarding staffing and policy; changes in the selection criteria and Major Case Management training for Inspectors and Sergeants in the Major Crime and Special Investigation Sections; the implementation of a debriefing and documentation process for major cases; the creation of a "Knowledge Database" to encourage both learning about and critical analysis of major investigations; changed practices to improve information flow from operational staff up to the Executive; and improved practices to ensure management accountability.

Externally there have been significant improvements in policing capacity in BC, and in cooperation, collaboration and coordination with police in the region on planned and unplanned multi-jurisdictional investigations.



**Vancouver Police Department**

**Investigation Division  
Major Crime Section  
Missing Person Unit**

**Missing Person Unit Review**

**Report Date:  
October 2004**

**Prepared for:  
Doug LePard – Deputy Chief Constable  
Commanding Investigation Division**

**Prepared by  
John Schouten - Inspector (Ret.)**



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## I. PREFACE

This internal review of the VPD Missing Person Unit was conducted at the request of Deputy Chief Constable Doug LePard, Commanding Investigation Division.

The review process consisted of an examination of the structure of the unit, policies, staffing, succession planning, training, and case management, and in particular use of the Vancouver Police Department Versadex Records Management System (RMS). Also included in the scope of this examination are recommendations outlining improved business practises.

The Case Management Review (1992) was used as reference in this analysis.

The objective was to ensure that VPD policies and procedures are harmonized where possible with other agencies, and that all activities related to the handling of missing person cases and files are conducted in accordance with all applicable laws, BC Municipal Police Standards, current Vancouver Police Department policies and procedures, and any other relevant criteria.

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## II. INTRODUCTION

An effective Missing Person Unit receives reports of missing persons from the public and other agencies, assesses the level of risk, and conducts an investigation based on that risk. They must have sufficient staffing to fulfill their mandate and there must be a level of commitment to the task that provides for analysis, classification of risk, and active investigation rather than just report processing.

Effective supervision and management are crucial to ensure investigative staff is able to cope with tasks within their position profile, and that they are able to obtain assistance when there are indications of foul play and a higher level of investigation is required.

Effective missing person case management provide supervisory officers a basis for reviewing work and assist them in their day to day operations by revealing deficient or improper handling of cases.

Without adequate review, which is an essential element of case management, there exists a potential for loss of prestige and credibility for the Vancouver Police Department, particularly in light of the recent missing women's investigations and media attention that has been focused on these types of cases.

A critical element in missing person cases is the distinction whether an incident is suspicious or not. Despite the overwhelming number of incidents that are non-criminal in nature, there is a high expectation from the public that the police devote adequate resources to locating missing persons. In those cases where suspicious circumstances are involved it is imperative that the police conduct a thorough investigation, at the earliest opportunity, so that no evidence is lost. In those few incidents, the scope and detail of the investigation are comparable to that expected in a homicide.

Statistically, the largest number of missing persons cases reported to the Vancouver Police Department are those involving juveniles runaways. These chronic runaway cases frequently require no follow-up investigation and many are concluded before the incident is first reviewed. This review has addressed this specific issue and made recommendations which may reduce the work load so that scarce resources may be concentrated where the real need exists.

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### III. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In response to Executive concerns, the author was requested to conduct an examination of the Missing Person Unit.

Upon interviewing past missing person investigators and reviewing the relevant documentation it was apparent that there are five key areas that need to be addressed in order to ensure that this Department and the Investigation Division, in particular, handles missing persons cases effectively, efficiently, in a manner that withstands public and media scrutiny and foremost protects the safety of those persons who go missing for any reason. These issues revolve primarily around staffing (succession planning), training, file and record management quality control, missing person file and investigation continuity, and effective management of chronic runaways.

Preliminary examination of this Unit identified the following areas as potentially significant:

1. Is there sufficient staff assigned to this function (especially police investigators)? Statistics reveal that the VPD has received 3,847 Missing Person complaints in the past year. Of these, 315 remain unsolved. There appears to be inadequate staffing to investigate the volume of new files and no staffing to investigate historical files.
2. A review of available training and transfer of skills to new investigators (ie: Do we train our sworn and civilian staff adequately?)
3. Selection criteria for Missing Person Unit staff, coaching, mentoring and performance evaluation.
4. Is a VPD missing person file adequately investigated and documented?
5. Are available investigative, technical and public resources used to the best advantage to clear a missing person file (especially chronic runaways and wanderers)?
6. Is VPD able to adequately distinguish possible foul play (especially serial crimes) from the current missing person file investigation process?
7. Is there a consistent method to assign degree of risk to missing person files?
8. The relationship of Missing Person Unit to other MCS components.
9. Level of harmonization of policies of other agencies and jurisdictions (particularly E-Comm, the RCMP and other municipal departments).



The examination's major findings are as follows:

1. The Missing Person Unit's ability to carry out its mandate is compromised by a lack of resources, both through improper deployment of the existing position and a shortage of investigators. A review is recommended to determine proper staffing levels, which appear to be inadequate given the case load, term of assignment, and qualifications for the position;
2. There is insufficient succession/resource planning;
3. There is no formal process of mentoring or performance evaluation in use;
4. There is a need for specific RMS training for Missing Person Unit and Coroner's Liaison Unit staff;
5. Specialist training for new missing person investigators is inadequate;
6. There is an absence of review of missing person cases by a sworn member. The non-sworn Missing Person Coordinator is currently the principal Missing Person Investigator and case manager and is clearly acting beyond the scope of her position profile;
7. There are lapses in record management quality control of the Versadex RMS, and PRIME-BC is not adequately used and maintained. This includes the data entry requirements as set out by Departmental policy, and the supervisory functions meant to track work assignments and incident status;
8. There appears to be insufficient scrutiny of files for potential suspicious missing person cases indicating a need for a risk assessment system/reporting protocol;
9. There is little active investigation of files not cleared within the first 48 hours beyond basic checks of indices such as RMS, CPIC, PIRS and the MHR Welfare database. This is a particularly acute problem if no patrol unit was assigned originally;
10. Investigative steps are not consistently documented in a standard fashion, which causes difficulty in the review process;
11. There is no ongoing organized file review of unsolved missing person cases. Any review that exists is informal and often undocumented;
12. Lack of missing person investigation process continuity;
13. The designated Missing Person Unit investigator has been a secondary Coroners Liaison investigator, an unapproved addition to the designated Coroner Liaison position, to the detriment of missing person investigative needs;
14. There is a need to develop clear guidelines to determine when a suspicious missing person incident becomes a Homicide investigation;
15. There are no formal guidelines for declaring a case inactive, and Departmental policies for case clearance are not adhered to;

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16. Use of non-police indices (MHR, ICBC, Immigration, Corrections, Revenue Canada, Financial Institutions) are not consistently re-checked at regular intervals;
17. Presently, as a result of shifting in the Missing Person Unit, there may be no evaluation of new missing person cases by a police supervisor or investigator for up to 84 hours on a three day holiday weekend. This has serious implications if suspicious circumstances are not identified by an E-Comm Call-taker;
18. Despite a review 2 years ago, there is again a need to again review historical incidents given the inadequate review practices employed in past years;
19. There is inadequate coordination between police agencies of found human remains and their identification to outstanding missing person files;
20. Additional investigative information returned on missing person cases submitted to and reviewed by Project Evenhanded is not being entered into RMS consistently. Project Evenhanded is reviewing VPD cases received to determine what additional information should be added to PRIME-BC ;
21. A better process must be found to manage chronic runaways.

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The recommendations of this review are:

- 1A.1 Position profiles should be reviewed to ensure they are accurate and current. The audit revealed that almost all investigation and follow-up is being done by a non-sworn member. If this is to continue, the position profile for the Missing Person Unit Coordinator must be reviewed and amended to reflect her true responsibilities. She should be compensated commensurate with these duties;
- 1A.2 One Coroner's Liaison position is authorized but at the time of the review the missing person investigator had been assigned to augment that position. As a priority it must be determined whether the Coroner's Liaison caseload justifies two investigators, particularly as this is detrimental to missing person investigations. A position analysis should review work that is being done for the Coroners Service for which the VPD has no responsibility and is not being compensated;
- 1A.3 Given the size and limited investigative resources of the Unit, an absence of external commitments should be considered as a condition of assignment for future supervisors;
- 1B.1 Historically, the selection process for staff assigned to the Unit appears flawed. It is recommended that the Investigator position not be seen as a light duties or pre-retirement position but that it is filled by a member with demonstrated investigative skills. This is clearly a developmental position that lends itself to evaluating a potential major crimes investigator;
- 1B.2 Tenure should be no less than 18 months and up to 2 years and should be seen as developmental for a senior investigative position;
- 1C.1 Staffing levels for the Unit require Executive review. It appears an increase in investigative staff is justifiable and necessary to meet workload and public expectation;
- 1C.2 Consideration might be given to re-assignment of the Missing Person Investigator(s) to the Vice Unit and transferring the responsibility for these investigations there organizationally. While that has merit, one possible detrimental factor to consider would be the impact of separating the missing person investigators from Coroner Liaison Unit and Major Crime - Homicide Section as the two functions would be in different facilities. Chronic Runaways may be more appropriately processed by Youth Squad;
- 1C.3 The discrepancy in file statistics should be audited by the Information Management Section and Missing Person Coordinator to determine what has become of the (minimum) 49 files recorded that cannot be accounted for;
- 2A.1 Training for Missing Person Unit investigators and supervisors should be reviewed and a formal list of mandatory and desirable training courses developed for the position;
- 2A.2 The Training Officer Advisory Committee should be requested to examine the viability of a specific 3-day training program for missing person investigators, and of including a one-hour block of training to recruits on missing person investigations;

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- 2A.3 That the Media Liaison Unit work with the Investigator(s) to ensure a coordinated media plan is established prior to release of information. That might include posters, the Inter and Intranet and established news media sources;
- 2B.1 The Training Unit, PRIME Trainer and the PRIME Coordinator should be requested to evaluate the level of RMS/PRIME skills of Missing Person Unit staff and provide additional training based on that need. Particular attention is required with workflow, case notes, supplementary reports and the conclusion of files;
- 2C.1 The Training Section should include a brief overview of missing person investigations in the indoctrination block presented just prior to new Members being deployed;
- 2D.1 Newly assigned Investigators should be provided with pro-active coaching and mentoring, especially in their first few weeks;
- 2E.1 To ensure staff are completing their responsibilities in an effective manner, in compliance with their position profile, both management and supervisory ranks responsible for the Missing Person Unit should engage in a regular, meaningful performance evaluation and mentoring process for both sworn and non-sworn staff as outlined in the Regulations and Procedures Manual, Section 4;
- 3A.1 That the BCACP appoint a committee to harmonize missing person policies province-wide. Timing for this is ideal given the creation of the new RCMP Rapid-ID Unit. A blending of the existing RCMP policy and Ontario Review appear to be the most comprehensive at this time;
- 3A.2 That TRT or, if TRT is not available, Patrol NCOs review and triage all incoming missing person reports;
- 3A.3 If additional staff is assigned, deployment of staff to cover as many days of the week as possible should be examined. This would reduce the risk of a potentially medium or high risk case being inadvertently overlooked when investigators are on leave;
- 3A.4 That a formalized missing person risk assessment process be implemented to augment, not replace, the professional judgement of the investigator(s) handling of missing person cases. The Indiana Data and Communications System (IDACS) criteria may serve as a guide;
- 3A.5 Creation of a missing person checklist to classify each incident by type and risk. At a glance this sheet could include basic law enforcement indices and non-police agency check boxes to ensure each missing person's history and background is checked consistently. These checklists would be useful for re-checks in the event of an extended investigation as they should be repeated at specific intervals;
- 3A.6 Major Crime Section Management should develop a clear understanding and guidelines to apply when a missing person file is determined to involve suspicious circumstances. If there is a possibility of criminal involvement, the Supervisors of the Missing Person Unit and of the Homicide Units must

- develop a joint investigative plan which clearly outlines when responsibility for an investigation is transferred and who the lead investigator is;
- 3A.7 That the Inspector i/c Major Crime Section ensures trained Major Case Management resources are made available when significant or complex investigations are encountered;
- 3B.1 Paper files maintained at the Missing Person Unit should be reviewed and:
- When a case is declared inactive or concluded it should be sent to Information Management Section for storage or archiving;
  - Repositories for these paper files should be clearly marked as to content;
- 3B.2 Files sent to Project Evenhanded must be reconciled with the original VPD missing person entry. Information in files on Evenhanded databases must match those on PRIME;
- 3C.1 Departmental case clearance policy must be followed;
- 3C.2 Investigative supervision in the Unit must be brought to a level in keeping with Departmental expectations. This includes a first review of cases by the Sergeant, particularly for possible suspicious circumstances, review of subsequent work, assignment of files and investigative follow-ups, and maintenance of RMS workflow;
- 3C.3 In addition to daily file management, a detailed case overview supplemental report in RMS should be submitted by the assigned investigator no more than 14 days into an outstanding missing person investigation;  
This report should refer to details on the missing person's profile and background, any physical evidence, medical evidence, indices checked and the results; reason for suspicion of foul play (or reasons why foul play is not suspected), investigative steps to date and an investigative plan;
- 3C.4 The investigative plan should include proposals on how to continue the investigation;
- 3C.5 The investigator's conclusions should include thoughts and theories on all aspects of the case;
- 3C.6 As per the Departmental Case Management guidelines, conflicts which arise over an investigative plan or any other portion of the overview report should be resolved immediately;
- 3C.7 Any reviews by Unit or Section supervisory staff should be recorded in the RMS;
- 3C.8 Where a missing person incident is deemed suspicious, Homicide case review policies, procedures and schedules should be implemented and the results recorded in RMS. This would include use of the Homicide case binder pre-packaged with the standardized format delineated by subject tabs;
- 3C.9 Unsolved files should be reviewed every 90 days and indices re-checked. The reportee should be contacted for updates and feedback as part of the review process. Results and an updated case assessment should be recorded in RMS;

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## Missing Persons Unit

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- 3C.10 Historical incidents, particularly those with suspicious circumstances must be reviewed again and brought up to date. Consideration should be given to entering suspicious case data (where it exists) into RMS using Document Imaging. This will likely require assignment of an additional investigator (preferably with Homicide investigative experience) for 6 to 12 months and would be required to derive a benefit from the Rapid-ID Project;
- 3C.11 A file review should identify cases not yet entered into VICLAS. Booklets should be completed and submitted;
- 3C.12 There is no complete index of cases submitted to Project Evenhanded. A file review should identify these cases and they should be updated in RMS with any investigative results;
- 3D.1 That the Vancouver Police Department promote ISO 9000 Quality Management Principles as an organizational goal;
- 4.01 The Versadex RMS is our sole repository for investigative documentation. It must be properly used and maintained to be effective. Information not entered, or entered incompletely will not be accessible for follow-up investigators, or to identify trends or possible serial crimes. Therefore,
- all investigators and clerical staff who have system access must be properly trained for their specific need;
  - all investigative steps must be documented in an approved fashion;
  - work must be reviewed by their supervisors; and
  - workflow (BFs) must be assigned and completed in a timely fashion.
- 4.02 Reports should be reviewed in workflow by the Unit supervisor who should record in RMS his/her approval or direct the file back to the investigator for further follow-up;
- 4.03 Case information currently stored on 'M' drive should be integrated with the appropriate file on RMS;
- 4.04 The Manager - Information Management Section and the VPD PRIME Coordinator should confirm the definitions for case operational status and integrate them into training;
- 4.05 Files currently assigned to retired investigators and staff no longer assigned to the Missing Person Unit should be re-assigned;
- 5A.1 As many of their subjects appear to be in common, the Missing Person Unit should develop a closer working relationship with the VPD Vice Section in general and the FACES program in particular;
- 5B.1 To address the issue of chronic runaways, the VPD IT Section should be requested to investigate the possibility of adding the direct entry and processing of these cases to VPD Internet Reporting by specific, pre-approved complainants. This would place the responsibility of maintaining these files on the Group Homes and should free time for both E-Comm reports staff, VPD Information Management Section and the Missing Person Unit staff;

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- 5C.1 The CPIC Advisory Committee, through our VPD representative (the Inspector i/c Services Liaison Section) and RCMP 'E' Division CPIC Services should be asked to evaluate the addition of at least one additional CPIC category (Youth at Risk) for chronic runaways. In almost all instances these are short term unauthorized absences and not truly missing persons. The system can flag absences in excess of 72 hours for further review;
- 5D.1 The position profile of the Missing Person Coordinator should be evaluated to determine the feasibility of expanding the position to complete routine follow up of chronic missing person files. This involvement would be at the discretion and under supervision of the Sergeant, after evaluation of the circumstances, and would cease if additional investigative steps are indicated that require the skills of a sworn investigator.
- 5D.2 In an effort to free experienced investigators for more serious cases, consideration should be given to appointing a Pre-recruit, under close supervision, for 'routine' follow-up investigations such as chronic runaways;
- 5D.3 Consideration should be given to removing responsibility for chronic juvenile runaway incidents from Missing Person Unit and instead assigning coordination of these files to Youth Squad;
- 5D.4 A legal opinion should be requested to determine the feasibility for the VPD to unilaterally cease to investigate chronic runaway reports and refer them instead to the Ministry. It should evaluate the degree of increased liability and public acceptance. Agreement and representation by the BCACP may be required to transfer this responsibility.
- 5D.5 The Planning and Research Section should be asked to complete a study on alternatives for handling of chronic runaway complaints. This study should include, but would not be restricted to:
- a. Policy;
  - b. Responsibility (is this a police or a social problem?);
  - c. Alternative reporting methods;
  - d. Enforcement options (Halifax Regional Police Force seeks a detention order on chronic runaways).

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## IV. METHODOLOGY

In order for this review to compile the necessary data for this study, the following research methods were utilized:

### 1. Interviews

A number of confidential interviews were conducted with past and present members of the Missing Person Unit. Several additional interviews were conducted with staff who support the Missing Person Unit. These include VPD IT, Records Management Section, Communications Section and E-Comm. As well, MCS management and members of the Executive were interviewed.

### 2. Document and electronic records examination

The Appendix (Section V) contains a complete list of reference documents.

### 3. Systems Analysis

The paper and data systems that support the investigative unit were examined.

### 4. Consultation with, and comparison to outside agencies

These included both police and quasi-investigative resources and private organizations that assist in the location of missing persons.

### 5. Review of additional material from diverse resources

These include the Internet, Media files.

### 6. Personal observation





## V. DETAILED FINDINGS and OBSERVATIONS

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## 1. STAFFING

### A. Recent History

In the 1990's one Detective was assigned to missing person investigations. Because of the increasing number of missing women reported from the Downtown Eastside, a second position was added approximately June 1998. A junior investigator filled that position starting in July 1998, after the third Strike Force Team was stood down in order to fill vacancies in the Division. In the spring of 2002, Planning and Research Section completed a report to Council requesting additional civilian positions and another "increment" of 30 sworn positions, to follow up on the 30 new positions approved in 2001 (pursuant to the 2000 staffing report). Council approved the 30 new sworn positions requested in 2002 and they became effective January 2003.

In late 2002 (then) Inspector LePard, assigned to Planning and Research Section began the missing women investigation review. It was determined that lack of adequate supervision in the Missing Persons Unit was a problem, and that a full-time supervisor should be added to the two authorized investigator positions. This was approved by the Executive of the day and the Sergeant position was created and eventually filled.

In late 2003 the Inspector i/c Major Crime Section determined that with three positions there was more investigative capacity than required in the Missing Person Unit, and moved one of the Constable positions to the Identification Unit as a training position. The second Ident Sergeant position was transferred to Robbery/Assault Unit to provide a second supervisory position there. The Human Resources Section confirms that there is currently one position in the Vancouver Police Department organizational chart for a missing person investigator, supervised by an Investigative Sergeant who is also responsible for Coroner Liaison and Witness Management.

### B. Responsibilities

Position profiles were obtained to assist the Audit. The position profile for the Investigator position is brief, but it captures most of the tasks expected of the assignment. The Audit found however that the position shown as the Missing Person Investigator position actually conducts Coroner's Liaison work, supplementing the Coroners Liaison Detective-Constable position, as the incumbent is about to retire.

Two position profiles for the Missing Person Coordinator position were examined, one from Human Resources (HR) Section and one from the Coordinator herself. Although similar, they were different in content. The version obtained from HR was taken as accurate. One particular task of note in the Coordinator's position profile is to 'Review all incoming reports for urgency and notify Missing Persons Detective, and NCO.' While this is not inappropriate, it should not replace the responsibility of the Sergeant to review all new missing person incidents and to make a decision on the appropriate priority for investigation.

In Audit interviews the Sergeant's position was described as one of liaison and file management. The Sergeant conducts some investigation of incidents that are suspicious in nature; however interviews, observed practice and the RMS indicate that

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the day-to-day caseload is investigated almost exclusively by the Missing Person Coordinator, a non-sworn clerical position. This may be aggravated by the other commitments of the incumbent who holds a Board position with the Vancouver Police Union and maintains an active role in the VPD Pipe Band, both of which draw him away from his assignment.

The use of the Coordinator in an investigative role contradicts the position profile for that position in which investigation of files is not an included task. The position profile indicates responsibility primarily for administrative and clerical tasks. The role for the Coordinator described in interviews included assessment of risk, assignment of files and management of workflow, visits to potential crime scenes, maintenance of investigative notes and actual investigation. This raises a concern that, despite the dedicated work that was clearly evident, a non-sworn position, without general investigative experience or training, is held accountable for work that is both investigative and supervisory in nature and should be completed by a sworn member. Entries in the Records Management System confirmed the descriptions of the duties related in the interviews. The Coordinator also completes clerical tasks for Coroners Liaison and Witness Management investigators. The incumbent has been so employed for six years with four years of prior relief experience.

When the Coordinator is away sick or on leave, a backlog of files builds. Relief staff is adequately able to process routine files however the issues described above with management of workflow and investigative responsibility are compounded when someone with less experience and training is placed in the position. It was described succinctly in the interviews: "When Emer (the Coordinator) goes away, there is a knowledge gap".

Given that risks of non-sworn staff conducting missing person investigations have been raised prior to the incumbent's placement and found to be unacceptable, it was imperative that the Department address this issue decisively and at the earliest opportunity. For that reason, the foregoing was brought to the attention of Section management prior to the submission of this report. Immediate corrective action was to be taken to re-define staff responsibilities.

#### Section 1A - Recommendations

- 1A.1 Position profiles should be reviewed to ensure they are accurate and current. The audit revealed that almost all investigation and follow-up is being done by a non-sworn member. If this is to continue, the position profile for the Missing Person Unit Coordinator must be reviewed and amended to reflect her true responsibilities. She should be compensated commensurate with these duties;
- 1A.2 One Coroner's Liaison position is authorized but at the time of the review the missing person investigator had been assigned to augment that position. As a priority it must be determined whether the Coroner's Liaison caseload justifies two investigators, particularly as this is detrimental to missing person investigations. A position analysis should review work that is being done for the Coroners Service for which the VPD has no responsibility and is not being compensated;

- 1A.3 Given the size and limited investigative resources of the Unit, an absence of external commitments should be considered as a condition of assignment for future supervisors.

### C. Succession Planning and Selection

Succession planning is a key factor in the long-term success of an organization. The Vancouver Police Department benefits when individuals are provided with skills to assume a new position with a minimum loss of productivity. A frequent turnover of personnel within this position requires that each new person must learn their role and responsibilities, as passed down by their predecessor. They must establish themselves as a credible and trustworthy recipient of information, particularly from the many non-police bodies they rely upon, but which are frequently restricted from sharing such information freely. It is accepted that the majority of the missing person cases are benign in nature but with a high investigator turnover or improper placement, there is an increased likelihood of important issues 'falling through the cracks' through inadvertent mistakes or lack of due diligence and follow through.

Therefore there is a need to review the selection process to fill positions within the Missing Person Unit. Historically, the position has been primarily one for light duties assignment, Constables who neared the end of their career or who have had physical afflictions that prevented them from working Patrol shifts or duties. This has led to the perception that this is a pre-retirement position and one that is not consistently filled by the most qualified investigators.

The Audit noted that there were several instances in recent years when junior investigators were assigned to Missing Person Unit. For example, in 1998 an entire Strike Force Team was reassigned as a result of a redeployment of staff. One of those members was assigned to work an additional position with the Missing Person Unit on the missing women issue that had been identified. Both co-workers and supervisors described that assignment as a period of improved investigation and case management. On another occasion, a Constable in mid-career was placed in the Unit temporarily to review historical files. This member also proved to be 'energetic and hard-working' according to the supervisors.

Conversely, with few exceptions, those assigned in pre-retirement have not been as successful, often with lengthy absences, diminished initiative, sometimes with scant investigative and 'people' skills. Recent years have also seen significant technology additions, with the PRIME Records Management System in particular not well embraced by some senior investigators. This resulted in inconsistencies in investigative documentation and cases where acceptable work quality was not evident.

Development of contacts and investigative skills are critical to the position. Many incidents and many of the analytical and investigative steps to resolve them are routine; however incidents where there is an indication of suspicious circumstances require the same skill set and determination possessed by a successful Major Crime investigator. It is for these reasons that this position would be an ideal proving ground and well-suited to an applicant with aspirations of moving to a more senior investigative unit.

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Aside from proven investigative aptitude, the characteristics demonstrated by an applicant should include inter-personal skills and empathy, given that the Investigator will frequently be dealing with average families in turmoil and crisis as a result of a missing loved one, and the investigator will often be the recipient of frequent telephone enquiries about the status of their case and questions of why more is not being done. These cases are overwhelmingly non-criminal and the frustrations of next of kin have resulted in Internal complaints in the past and therefore require a high degree of sensitivity and compassion. They are also emotionally stressful for the investigators.

The length of assignment must be sufficient to build the required expertise. Less than eighteen months would not be sufficient; and two years would appear to be ideal. This would allow movement to another, more senior investigative position. A staggered overlap of the two investigative positions should be implemented to enhance continuity.

#### Section 1B - Recommendations

- 1B.1 Historically, the selection process for staff assigned to the Unit appears flawed. It is recommended that the Investigator position not be seen as a light duties or pre-retirement position but that it is filled by a member with demonstrated investigative skills. This is clearly a developmental position that lends itself to evaluating a potential major crimes investigator;
- 1B.2 Tenure should be no less than 18 months and up to 2 years and should be seen as developmental for a senior investigative position.

#### D. Staffing Levels

To examine staffing levels versus caseload, a 'snapshot' of CPIC and RMS was taken on 2004-07-21. On that date, the VPD had 266 missing persons entered on CPIC. Prior to PRIME RMS implementation, 164 were already on the system. Since Prime, 102 additional records were added.

From March 2001, when RMS was implemented, to date there were 14,019 missing persons reported to the VPD. The most recent statistics were for the 12-month period of 03-07-21 until 2004-07-21. The VPD received 3,847 missing person reports of which 3,532 show as cleared although it is not indicated how quickly these were cleared or how many were under active investigation. This either leaves 315 outstanding unsolved cases for investigation during the past year, or missing persons have returned but the reports have not been properly concluded in RMS. If the former is accurate, this averaged at least 1.75 new unsolved cases per working day, conservatively estimating 180 working shifts per investigator per year.

These statistics reveal two troubling possibilities. If VPD has 266 existing CPIC missing person records, of which 164 pre-date PRIME, and 315 outstanding unsolved cases in the past 12 months, what is the status of the (minimum) 49 other persons that make up the difference? Secondly, who is actively investigating these 315 most recent unsolved cases? Optimistically, this inconsistency is due only to a lack of proper file

management in RMS, however even that is an issue of significant concern and it will be difficult to reconcile the disparity in these figures.

When last checked on 2004-10-20, the Missing Person Unit Coordinator showed 82 accumulated unsolved missing person files since 2002-01-29. Retired PC Bolton still has 4 outstanding cases which were never reassigned and retired PC Dickhout has 1 that was assigned but never followed-up.

To address a shortage of investigators, several options may be considered in addition to new positions. The first alternative would be to place more of the responsibility on the primary investigators from Operations Division. It would not be inappropriate for a District unit, with input from the Missing Person Unit Supervisor, to conduct a substantial portion of the investigation themselves, perhaps concluding it with follow-up over several shifts.

Secondly, we may have to be more dynamic on case assignment and willing to consider the priorities, for example, to assign a non-routine missing person file to a senior investigator in Robbery-Assault Squad, or a missing sex trade worker to Vice. There should be no stigma with an important missing person case being assigned elsewhere if there is an opportunity to involve a competent investigator. The key to success where this is done is to maintain accurate workflow in RMS with proper investigative review and supervision.

We might also consider placing the Missing Person Unit elsewhere in the organization if that results in increased investigative resources. An Audit review of other large Canadian Departments' Missing Person Unit staffing provided considerable insight into the different deployment models in place across the country.

The Halifax Regional Police Force integrates the function with their Vice Unit. The frequent correlation between missing sex trade workers and teenage females drawn to prostitution allow closer monitoring of missing person files with suspicious or criminal overtones. It is a 12 member unit with a shared caseload and therefore has significant human resources to properly investigate all missing person files, without issues of lack of coverage during absences, as might be the case in smaller units. Training issues are addressed by staggering tenure based on a 3 year term and placing new members with a senior mentor. The positions are coveted and there are no reported performance deficiencies.

The Regina Police Service has teamed their Missing Person Investigator with a 'cold-case' MCS detective. The unit has two investigators and a civilian clerk. The length of assignment is from 3 to 5 years and requires previous Detective Office experience. The format is described as effective as many missing person cases remain unsolved for lengthy periods, require regular indices checks and have similar investigative requirements as unsolved homicide cases.

The Winnipeg Police Service has just completed a review. They are still analyzing data and have offered to share a copy of their report once it is completed.

The Calgary Police Service deployment is similar to our own with one dedicated missing person investigator. Calgary reports similar challenges as we are currently reviewing with an excessive caseload and inability to fully investigate all incidents. No immediate changes are contemplated and there is no formal review to reference.

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Given the success reported in Halifax, consideration should be given to re-assignment of the Missing Person Investigator(s) to Vice Unit and transferring the responsibility for these investigations there. This would address the issues of insufficient investigative resources, continuity of training and succession planning. Missing person files could be assigned to individual members of that Unit, and provide close integration with the current Vice Unit mandate as a significant volume of these cases involve missing women, runaway juvenile females and particularly sex trade workers.

A further step may be to segregate chronic runaway files and assign these to Youth Squad, who have the contacts to follow-up these incidents and may have better access to the social agencies that can assist (also see Section 5 - Chronic Runaways)

Documentation has been submitted in the past to justify augmenting the investigative capability of the VPD Missing Person Unit. The earliest report found dates from 1995 and was written by Detective Jim Steinbach, the Missing Person Investigator at the time (see Additional Manpower - MP). The request was approved as a light duties assignment but was not immediately filled. It appears that after Detective Steinbach left the Unit it was filled by a light duties Member and has been so assigned several subsequent times.

The Coroner Liaison Investigator is now effectively a 2-person position, augmented by the Detective-Constable assigned to missing person investigations. This audit did not investigate the reason for this however information was provided that indicates the Coroner Liaison Unit re-investigates a number of deficient Sudden Death files submitted by patrol Division and that there is a substantial commitment to dealing with deceased's property, work that may be the responsibility of another governmental agency and that is not normally done by other police departments.

Examination of the volume of missing person incidents and the available time to properly investigate them justifies assignment of at least two full-time Investigators supported by a civilian clerk. If the Department deems it prudent to also address outstanding historical cases, a third investigator is justified, probably for a specific term of one to two years. Given the current investigative priorities and staffing shortages Department-wide, it may not be feasible to dedicate these resources however there will be no resolution of the issues identified in this Audit without a significant staffing commitment.

Two areas provide a possibility of creating additional investigative capacity for the Unit. The first requires resolving the issue of chronic runaways (see section 5). The second is an initiative under development by RCMP 'E' Division HQ and the B.C. Association of Chiefs of Police. It is termed the 'Rapid-ID' program and proposes to create a multi-jurisdictional B.C. police missing person coordination centre to catalogue known facts, evidence, DNA and dental information to index missing persons and unidentified found human remains (see Missing Persons - RCMP TE.pdf). Cases will be drawn from a province-wide list of 300 unsolved cases of which 227 have suspected foul play. The unit will analyze trends, geographic clusters of incidents, patterns, and hotspots with its initial focus the unsolved Highway 16 murders. Rather than being an investigative unit the mandate will be to provide analysis, researching trends and leads to provide investigative advice that will augment individual agency resources.



This project is not yet operational however it has office space co-located with ViCLAS, Behavioural Sciences Group, the Integrated Unsolved Homicide Unit and Provincial Major Crimes. It is currently staffed by one full-time RCMP sworn member and one civilian analyst and an additional (1 year term) analyst will be hired to assist with the initial intake of cases. The request for municipal applicants has been distributed and it is posted for VPD staff. The Unit will become operational on 2005-01-01.

#### **Section 1C - Recommendations**

- 1C.1 Staffing levels for the Unit require Executive review. It appears an increase in investigative staff is justifiable and necessary to meet workload and public expectation;
- 1C.2 Consideration might be given to re-assignment of the Missing Person Investigator(s) to the Vice Unit and transferring the responsibility for these investigations there organizationally. While that has merit, one possible detrimental factor to consider would be the impact of separating the missing person investigators from Coroner Liaison Unit and Major Crime - Homicide Section as the two functions would be in different facilities. Chronic Runaways may be more appropriately processed by Youth Squad;
- 1C.3 The discrepancy in file statistics should be audited by the Information Management Section and Missing Person Coordinator to determine what has become of the (minimum) 49 files recorded that cannot be accounted for.

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## 2. TRAINING - MENTORING - PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

### A. Courses - Seminars - Conferences

The Audit noted during the interview stage that there are no specific training programs for missing person investigators. Few of the investigators interviewed received any related training at all while some had attended the JIBC Investigator or Major Crime Investigator programs but felt these were inadequate or lacked specificity to their assignment. Feedback indicates that while each of these programs provide valuable skills, neither provide specific skills that would assist new missing person investigators, particularly those without previous Investigation Division experience.

It was confirmed by the three bodies that focus on police training, namely the Justice Institute of British Columbia (JIBC), the RCMP Pacific Regional Training Centre (PRTC) and the Canadian Police College (CPC) that no specific programs exist. Feedback indicated that a particular skill set would be useful to a missing person investigator; in particular, interviewing courses, statement analysis, media liaison, skip tracing and training in major case management were priorities on the list. The Justice Institute of B.C. (JIBC) would be prepared to provide specific training, likely in a 3-day program, if there is a request from police Training Officers.

A list of recommended training courses is included in the Appendices and would include:

1. Basic Investigators Program - This course would build a foundation for those members who have not been in an Investigation Division assignment;
2. Interviewing Skills (the Reid course) - This training seminar features a discussion of three primary topics: Behaviour Symptom Analysis (the verbal and nonverbal behavioural characteristics which can be used to distinguish a truthful person from a deceptive individual); the Behaviour Analysis Interview (a non-accusatory interview process utilizing both investigative and behaviour provoking questions); and, The Reid Nine Steps of Interrogation. It has been very well received by our Members who have participated in the past;
3. Statement Analysis - Through Statement Analysis the investigator can determine if a person is being truthful or deceptive or obtain additional information from a person's statement;
4. File Management & Coordination - The volume of cases and the complexity of some requires skills to maintain proper notes, logs and folders. Many assigned to this position have not received prior exposure to managing a caseload effectively;
5. Major Case Management - A small percentage of missing person files have suspicious overtones and may be homicides. Occasionally these become major investigations involving many leads and tips. Major case management should be offered once a Missing Person Investigator has become familiar with the

position, particularly if that individual is likely to move to a senior investigative assignment.

6. Developing and managing information sources - missing person investigations rely on development of contacts to access non-law enforcement databanks and records. In many instances these resources would not be available in a criminal investigation without a search warrant but are provided to missing person investigators in confidence for compassionate reasons. Search warrants would be impractical given the need to check the large volume of new cases to determine the status of the missing person's activities. A speedy indication of ongoing activity in a bank card can lead investigators to a person's new location and verify that they are alive therefore indications of activity in bank records, MHR and ICBC files are commonly requested. New investigators are often inexperienced in obtaining needed information and their investigations suffer or are delayed as a result. Training in developing contact building skills was seen as vital for this position.
7. DNA Sampling - A key to a subsequent identification if the missing person is deceased may be DNA. If it is a historical case, family may be difficult to locate. A DNA sample from family should be requested in all instances where there is no information that a missing person is alive if that person has been missing in excess of 90 days.
8. The Hague Convention (parental abductions) & legal issues - There are complex legal procedures when a child is taken out of the country by a parent against the wishes of the other parent, and it is not uncommon. Our investigators have been stymied in the past and have engaged in lengthy processes to determine the proper procedure to follow.
9. Stress Management - Several investigators interviewed commented that their term in Missing Person Unit was the most stressful of their career. They are usually hardened to dealing with a criminal investigation however, the nature of missing person cases can overwhelm their usual coping mechanism when they experience the psychological impacts of dealing with victim families coming to terms with a sudden, unexplained disappearance. It is therefore recommended that the annual Departmental mandatory debriefing program expand to include all Missing Person Unit staff.
10. Victim Services (Customer Relations) - For the same reasons as outlined in #9 above, missing persons' families occasionally make significant demands of the investigator. It is not uncommon for them to question the quality, quantity and direction of the investigation. Unless proper skills are used these can lead to confrontational situations played out in the media and Internal complaints. Training in dealing with victim families was seen as a useful part of a missing person investigative curriculum.
11. Media Liaison - Almost all the investigators interviewed indicated that they had experienced a need to prepare material for the media and, in at least one case, for an 'America's Most Wanted' television production. Media training was seen as important for the position for this purpose, and in dealing with confrontational situations as outlined in #10 above.

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12. **Skip tracing** – Similar to the resources used by private agencies to locate those in debt and particularly in the United States to locate 'bail jumpers', there are countless traditional and high-tech methods of tracing a person's movements. Police investigators are not always familiar with these methods however, in a significant percentage of cases, their missing person file is no different when that person is someone who does not wish to be found.
13. **Time Management and Efficiency Training** – The volume of cases is excessive and requires careful allocation of investigative time. Time management was seen as a skill that could be improved by formal training.
14. **Missing Children Registry** - National Missing Children Services provides law enforcement investigative training to national and international police agencies upon request. In 2003, eight training sessions were conducted for approximately 125 law enforcement personnel. The agency also offers:
- a. **Internet Case Assistance:** In response to an investigator's request for assistance, an operational analyst may assist by:
    - checking available data banks to gather information;
    - soliciting border, foreign affairs, immigration and justice services expertise;
    - advising or acting on the information gathered;
    - liaising with Interpol and the investigator in the country where the child is destined;
    - advising the sexual exploitation unit if exploitation is anticipated;
    - providing advice on avenues to conduct searches; and
    - liaising with not-for-profit agencies as required.
  - b. Assistance with the investigation of Internet luring cases.
  - c. Investigative assistance; and
  - d. Photo-Age Progression Service
15. **Missing Children Seminars** - These are sponsored by various accredited and police supported agencies such as ChildFind. They have been valuable in the past for contact building and general networking within the investigative community.

#### Section 2A - Recommendations

- 2A.1 Training for Missing Person Unit investigators and supervisors should be reviewed and a formal list of mandatory and desirable training courses developed for the position;
- 2A.2 The Training Officer Advisory Committee should be requested to examine the viability of a specific 3-day training program for missing person investigators, and of including a one-hour block of training to recruits on missing person investigations;

- 2A.3 That the Media Liaison Unit work with the Investigator(s) to ensure a coordinated media plan is established prior to release of information. That might include posters, the Inter and Intranet and established news media sources.

### B. DRE and Workflow RMS Training

The issues with inadequate use of the Departmental Records Management System (RMS) are addressed fully in Section 4.

The Audit found from interviews and personal observations that there is a need to provide additional training tailored to the needs of the Missing Person Unit. Currently the Investigator(s) are not fully utilizing the RMS and the Supervisor is delegating workflow management to the non-sworn Coordinator.

The Departmental PRIME Coordinator and the PRIME Trainer are prepared to provide the assistance required to permit the unit to meet the Departmental standard.

### Section 2B - Recommendations

- 2B.1 The Training Unit, PRIME Trainer and the PRIME Coordinator should be requested to evaluate the level of RMS/PRIME skills of Missing Person Unit staff and provide additional training based on that need. Particular attention is required with workflow, case notes, supplementary reports and the conclusion of files.

### C. Patrol Training

There is currently no training specific to missing person investigations provided to recruits at the JIBC. Mike Trump, Director of Police Training Services acknowledges that it would be advisable to add a one-hour component, subject to the direction of the Training Officer Advisory Committee. This component would focus on the unique issues outlined in this audit.

The VPD Training Section confirmed that there is no specific training provided to new recruits in indoctrination sessions prior to assignment to a team. While such instruction must be prioritized with other needs, in the absence of JIBC training, it would be prudent to ask an experienced missing person investigator speak on the subject before recruits begin operational duties. In particular there should be a recognition that these incidents are unique, requiring sensitivity and analysis of the facts to determine the degree of risk. Recruits should be encouraged to consult their NCO if a situation appears suspicious, to obtain details of next of kin, friends, associates, and a photo. Their General Occurrence report should be no less detailed than for any other investigation.

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## Section 2C - Recommendations

- 2C.1 The Training Section should include a brief overview of missing person investigations in the indoctrination block presented just prior to new Members being deployed.

### D. Coaching and Mentoring

Investigators, new to that function, who have been assigned to the Unit in the past expressed concern during Audit interviews that they did not receive a meaningful amount of on the job training. In one instance a new Investigator was provided only with a list of contact numbers, mostly out of date. Likely this occurs as a result of little overlap when a new Member is assigned and/or inadequate supervisory involvement. New Investigators expressed a reluctance to ask for help as this may have been interpreted as a sign of incompetence. In the past, the non-sworn Coordinator has been the most consistent source of guidance when new staff are assigned.

The Audit determined that in the past, informal consultations with senior investigators in other units can occur when a missing person investigation reaches an impasse, if the Member reaches out for assistance. The response was described as helpful and informative, assisting the junior investigator with investigative avenues that may not have been immediately apparent.

There is a requirement to ensure mentoring is offered and readily available when a new investigator is assigned.

## Section 2D - Recommendations

- 2D.1 Newly assigned Investigators should be provided with pro-active coaching and mentoring, especially in their first few weeks.

### E. Performance Evaluation

Performance Development came into effect on for the Vancouver Police Department on 2002-01-01 for all Divisions. The Operations Division went live with the electronic format on 2004-01-01 and the remainder of the VPD will go live with the electronic version effective 2005-01-01.

According to Section 4 of the VPD Regulations and Procedures manual (RPM), the Performance Development Process is designed to define and clarify work role expectations and performance standards while creating a link between individual and organizational goals and objectives. It is also meant to establish a developmental partnership encouraging open and frank communication between members, their Supervisors and Managers. The process is included in its entirety in the Appendix as Section 4 RPM - Performance Development.

Audit feedback received during the interview process disclosed an absence of formal evaluative measures and no written records. Performance evaluation could have brought to light some of the issues revealed by this audit sooner, so that remedial measures could be implemented.

#### **Section 2E - Recommendations**

- 2E.1 To ensure staff are completing their responsibilities in an effective manner, in compliance with their position profile, both management and supervisory ranks responsible for the Missing Person Unit should engage in a regular, meaningful performance evaluation and mentoring process for both sworn and non-sworn staff as outlined in the Regulations and Procedures Manual, Section 4.

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### 3. CASE MANAGEMENT

The Audit examined case management practises in use by the Unit during the fact finding phase. The results show the practices in use do not follow Departmental guidelines and require attention. Case management was examined under several categories as follows:

1. General practises
2. PRIME-BC
3. Documentary files
4. Storage and archiving
5. Case review

#### A. General Practises

The Audit took note on several occasions that the Missing Person Unit function treads a fine line between the genuine need for a police investigation and the abuse of process that might result were it to become known that the VPD is prepared to apply its resources and fully investigate any reported disappearance. There is a risk that the police become a Salvation Army style family location service. The key to this is the application of a set of guidelines that assesses the risk and nature of each case consistently, and assigns the appropriate level of response. This is not unlike the solvability factors currently applied to criminal investigations.

The missing person policies of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), various Municipal Departments and the Province of Ontario were reviewed (see Appendix: Missing Person Policy). It would be ideal if there was harmonization of policies of other agencies (E-Comm) and jurisdictions (RCMP and other municipal departments) throughout British Columbia. Unfortunately that is not yet the case. There are still incidents when a reportee of a missing person is refused due to jurisdictional boundaries. The RCMP have the most complete set of policies that were reviewed. They, and the Ontario Review, would serve as an appropriate model for a universal missing person policy that might be adopted through the BC Association of Chiefs of Police (BCACP).

The Audit also examined the call taking process. The lack of experience of some E-Comm call-taking staff and the possibility that an incident might not be investigated for days is cause for concern. To manage this risk, there should be an assumption that a missing person incident is suspicious, unless it clearly is not. This requires re-examination of the responsibilities in the missing person call handling process.

#### E-Comm's Role

The majority of missing person cases are entered by E-Comm staff, first onto a paper form, then keyed into RMS by other staff (this process will become more seamless through direct report entry with Versaterm CAD in 2005).



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It became apparent during the interview and fact finding stages of the audit that the process of taking a missing person call through E-Comm was unnecessarily complex. The Audit met with the stakeholders from both E-Comm and VPD and the process was amended to eliminate duplication of efforts and paper between the two agencies entirely. The new procedure became effective early in October and is apparently successful.

E-Comm takes the position that they are providing a call taking and dispatch service for the VPD and that their staff should not be making operational decisions. Due to high staff turnover, call-taking staff are frequently inexperienced and the risk is high that critical information may be inadvertently missed. It is only when there are extenuating circumstances that were provided to them in training, such as age, infirmity, or factors that arouse an obvious suspicion, that a Patrol Supervisor is notified and a unit may be assigned. On a holiday weekend, a missing person call may not be assessed by an investigator for up to 84 hours, and perhaps longer. The majority of incidents are entered in RMS (not on CAD unless dispatched), are routed to Transcription, which is a quality control step at VPD Information Management Section, and then entered automatically on CPIC. They are also forwarded through routing rules to the Missing Person Unit handle, where they remain until accessed by VPD staff.

The Telephone Response Team (TRT) is staffed by Operations Division. TRT has a presence on the E-Comm dispatch floor and conducts preliminary investigations on a range of non-emergency calls. As they are primarily light-duties assignments, the level and continuity of staffing is variable, and there is not a 7/24 presence. Despite this, these Members may be an appropriate first level of risk evaluation of missing person reports after they are entered by a call-taker. The report can be routed to TRT, who can make an assessment and either forward the call to Dispatch for assignment to a unit, suggest it be further evaluated by the area NCO, or process it as routine without assignment for follow up by Missing Person Unit in due course.

If TRT is not available to triage a missing person incident, the next available resource is a Patrol NCO

### The Patrol Function

Few missing person reports are investigated by Patrol under the current procedure. Mindful of the call load that Patrol already handles, there are benefits to having all missing person incidents evaluated by a trained police Member. Where TRT has not been available to do this, it is recommended that NCOs be notified when any missing person is reported in their area, not necessarily to assign a unit but as a level of call triage and risk management. The NCO can consider factors such as: age; mental and physical condition of the subject; weather; time of day, circumstances and length of absence in their determination of the appropriate response. A unit may be assigned or not depending on that assessment. Where no unit is assigned, the incident would be reviewed by the Missing Person Unit on their next working shift.

It should be noted however that there is currently no checklist to consistently show how the call-taker, investigator or Patrol NCO determines what level of risk should be applied to each individual case. Missing person cases are almost always non-criminal investigations and the usual solvability factors are not present. Still, the Audit

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indicates it is desirable to have a set of measures to prioritize the large volume of new incidents received each day.

While one cannot easily categorize all missing person cases, they generally fall into four categories:

1. Planned disappearance (chronic runaways, outstanding debt and other);
2. Medical or suicidal;
3. Accidental or misadventure; and
4. Suspicious (parental abduction and foul play)

It may be prudent to expand the foregoing to adopt the six categories of missing person investigations described in the Indiana Data and Communications System (IDACS) policy (see Indiana Data and Communications System - MP policy).

To assist the triage process, it may be of assistance to also create a series of criteria to assign a level of risk to missing person calls. These could include:

**Low Risk** = there is no apparent threat of danger to either the subject or the public; including chronic and habitual runaways and persons known to be avoiding family, legal processes or debt collectors.

**Medium Risk** = the risk posed is likely to place the subject in danger or they are a threat to themselves or others; the behaviour is completely out of character.

**High Risk** = the risk posed is immediate and there are substantial grounds for believing that the subject is in danger through evidence of suspicious circumstances, vulnerability or mental state, suicidal tendencies, or the risk posed is immediate and there are substantial grounds for believing that the public is in danger through the subject's mental state. High risk would also include incidents where there is a likelihood of misadventure, such as a lost hiker.

This type of analysis would provide for a uniform, consistent, transparent and recordable set of criteria that articulates the rationale behind the risk management decision making process and the resources required.

#### Follow-up Investigation - The Missing Person Unit

The Audit found that, despite the overwhelming number of new missing person incidents reported each day, the absence of supervisory case management and the lack of investigation of many of those files beyond basic indices checks, the Coordinator handles an impressive workload. A system has evolved whereby all new files are methodically checked against CAD, RMS, voice mail messages, faxes and e-mail. Each file is printed, notes are made in the margins and CAD and RMS are updated with information from the other sources. In the majority of cases, clearance is achieved within 48 hours.

The remaining incidents are assessed by the Coordinator and any that arouse her suspicion are forwarded to the Sergeant for review. Acting upon instruction from the Sergeant, the Coordinator performs follow-up activity such as conducting indices checks, checks of financial institutions for account activity and follow-up interviews.

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Based on information obtained, basic information is added to RMS and in many instances that is the extent of the investigation (see Indices Checksheet). Notwithstanding public expectations and the Police Department's responsibility to investigate complaints, lack of active follow-up investigation has the potential to embarrass the Vancouver Police Department and could possibly result in civil liability. In at least one instance, ChildFind located a young missing girl using a private investigator (see [REDACTED]).

As a result of a lack of active investigation, and the significant caseload, the electronic records management system is not used, or not used effectively to maintain case progress (see Section 4 - PRIME).

### Section 3A - Recommendations

- 3A.1 That the BCACP appoint a committee to harmonize missing person policies province-wide. Timing for this is ideal given the creation of the new RCMP Rapid-ID Unit. A blending of the existing RCMP policy and Ontario Review appear to be the most comprehensive at this time;
- 3A.2 That TRT or, if TRT is not available, Patrol NCOs review and triage all incoming missing person reports;
- 3A.3 If additional staff is assigned, deployment of staff to cover as many days of the week as possible should be examined. This would reduce the risk of a potentially medium or high risk case being inadvertently overlooked when investigators are on leave;
- 3A.4 That a formalized missing person risk assessment process be implemented to augment, not replace, the professional judgement of the investigator(s) handling of missing person cases. The Indiana Data and Communications System (IDACS) criteria may serve as a guide;
- 3A.5 Creation of a missing person checksheet to classify each incident by type and risk. At a glance this sheet could include basic law enforcement indices and non-police agency check boxes to ensure each missing person's history and background is checked consistently. These checksheets would be useful for re-checks in the event of an extended investigation as they should be repeated at specific intervals;
- 3A.6 Major Crime Section Management should develop a clear understanding and guidelines to apply when a missing person file is determined to involve suspicious circumstances. If there is a possibility of criminal involvement, the Supervisors of the Missing Person Unit and of the Homicide Units must develop a joint investigative plan which clearly outlines when responsibility for an investigation is transferred and who the lead investigator is;
- 3A.7 That the Inspector i/c Major Crime Section ensures trained Major Case Management resources are made available when significant or complex investigations are encountered.

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- A DNA request from next of kin no later than 30 days from the reported absence (or immediate if suspicious, this would match the RCMP 30 day policy). DNA can be difficult to obtain at a later date if the victim's family cannot be located;
- Entry into ViCLAS for all missing persons, where the circumstances indicate a strong possibility of foul play and the victim is still missing and for all non-parental abduction and attempted abductions.;
- An index of files sent to Project Evenhanded for review and entry in RMS of the updated case status when the Evenhanded investigator reports back.

The Case Management Review (1992) recommended a specific format for MCS binders. This would be useful for significant missing person files and would provide the investigator with a template of steps to complete.

### Storage and Archiving

The Information Management Section (IMS) has the mandate and expertise to categorize, archive and store files. Where files are retained by the investigative sections, uniform Departmental guidelines for file storage cannot easily be maintained. Increasingly storage is in electronic format and data based. Versadex Document Imaging will result in all documents being scanned and attached to the appropriate incident. They are then available to any workstation or investigator that may need to draw from them or add information that might assist the investigation. Police agencies also have imposed guidelines for purging files. If documentation is not centralized, these schedules cannot be maintained.

The Audit found that the Missing Person Unit has a number of long-term files in storage which are open but inactive. These should be processed by IMS to ensure no content is lost.

### Section 3B - Recommendations

- 3B.1 Paper files maintained at the Missing Person Unit should be reviewed and:
  - c. When a case is declared inactive or concluded it should be sent to Information Management Section for storage or archiving;
  - d. Repositories for these paper files should be clearly marked as to content;
- 3B.2 Files sent to Project Evenhanded must be reconciled with the original VPD missing person entry. Information in files on Evenhanded databases must match those on PRIME.

### C. File Review

The Audit received information that some reports arrive with omissions. When an incomplete report is submitted by an E-Comm Call-taker or by a Patrol Member, the Supervisor in the Missing Person Unit should provide feedback to the author on the quality of a deficient report and assign a BF on RMS.

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A complete report should refer to details on the missing person's profile and background, any physical evidence, medical evidence, indices checked and the results; reason for suspicion of foul play (or reasons why foul play is not suspected), witnesses or resources interviewed and the investigative steps to date.

The follow-up investigator should formulate an investigative plan based on the GO report. None of the files reviewed described an investigative plan for an unsolved case.

- a. The investigative plan should include written proposals on how to continue the investigation; and
- b. The investigator's conclusions should include thoughts and theories on all aspects of the case.

A supervisory file review should be conducted on a regular basis to ascertain that investigators have made correct and complete investigations. A formal file review is an integral component of good case management. This process is not completed in the Missing Person Unit other than informal discussion of a case and the round-tableing of incidents of note at the weekly NCO meeting.

The conclusions drawn by the Case Management Review (1992) regarding regular case reviews are applicable today to ensure potentially serious incidents are not overlooked and that they are properly investigated. Many of these earlier findings are echoed by this Audit in that:

- Investigations are not monitored for time, and no BF dates are set;
- There is no formal review (and no record) of quality or quantity of work, accuracy or completeness; and
- There is minimal supervisory involvement in missing person investigations.

Unique in the Missing Person Unit, and with rare exception, cases are not reviewed by a supervisor and are not assigned to sworn investigators.

At minimum, the Supervisor should:

- Assess and evaluate all new incidents;
- Maintain RMS Workflow;
- Supervise and participate in setting investigative priorities;
- Set new review and BF dates for additional investigative work; and
- Sign-off observations on investigative conduct in RMS.

In 2002 a review of unsolved suspicious cases was completed and recommendations were made on solvability factors in several investigations. No follow up has been undertaken on these files, likely due to a shortage of staff. These files are retained at the Missing Person Unit on open shelves. They date from the 1930s to the present day. There is no consistency to the format of these binders and some are in significant disarray. The audit was told that at least 20-25% are missing information. It would be reasonable to presume that many will never be solved given the age of the missing person and of the potential witnesses, however, some are likely solvable. Efforts should be made to organize these files to a Major Crime standard, archive their information, copy them to the Rapid-ID program and prioritize their assignment for follow-up.

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The audit was advised that VPD currently has approximately 200 cases that require DNA sampling. Some may be solvable through DNA testing but that the BC Coroners' office has placed a limit on funds to provide these tests. A review would be able to isolate these incidents and demonstrate the need to test DNA based on the findings.

### Section 3C - Recommendations

- 3C.1 Departmental case clearance policy must be followed;
- 3C.2 Investigative supervision in the Unit must be brought to a level in keeping with Departmental expectations. This includes a first review of cases by the Sergeant, particularly for possible suspicious circumstances, review of subsequent work, assignment of files and investigative follow-ups, and maintenance of RMS workflow;
- 3C.3 In addition to daily file management, a detailed case overview supplemental report in RMS should be submitted by the assigned investigator no more than 14 days into an outstanding missing person investigation;  
This report should refer to details on the missing person's profile and background, any physical evidence, medical evidence, indices checked and the results; reason for suspicion of foul play (or reasons why foul play is not suspected), investigative steps to date and an investigative plan;
- 3C.4 The investigative plan should include proposals on how to continue the investigation;
- 3C.5 The investigator's conclusions should include thoughts and theories on all aspects of the case;
- 3C.6 As per the Departmental Case Management guidelines, conflicts which arise over an investigative plan or any other portion of the overview report should be resolved immediately;
- 3C.7 Any reviews by Unit or Section supervisory staff should be recorded in the RMS;
- 3C.8 Where a missing person incident is deemed suspicious, Homicide case review policies, procedures and schedules should be implemented and the results recorded in RMS. This would include use of the Homicide case binder pre-packaged with the standardized format delineated by subject tabs;
- 3C.9 Unsolved files should be reviewed every 90 days and indices re-checked. The reportee should be contacted for updates and feedback as part of the review process. Results and an updated case assessment should be recorded in RMS;
- 3C.10 Historical incidents, particularly those with suspicious circumstances must be reviewed again and brought up to date. Consideration should be given to entering suspicious case data (where it exists) into RMS using Document Imaging. This will likely require assignment of an additional investigator (preferably with Homicide investigative experience) for 6 to 12 months and would be required to derive a benefit from the Rapid-ID Project;

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- 3C.11 A file review should identify cases not yet entered into VICLAS. Booklets should be completed and submitted;
- 3C.12 There is no complete index of cases submitted to Project Evenhanded. A file review should identify these cases and they should be updated in RMS with any investigative results.



**D. ISO 9000 Principles**

The Vancouver Police Department may wish to promote quality management as an organizational goal. There is a set of guidelines collectively known as the ISO 9000 Principles that may assist. The ISO (International Organization for Standardization) publishes formal international standards for a variety of disciplines. The need for a standard is usually expressed by an industry sector, which communicates this need to a national member body. The latter proposes the new work item to ISO as a whole. Once the need for an International Standard has been recognized and formally agreed, the first phase involves definition of the technical scope of the future standard. This phase is usually carried out in working groups which comprise technical experts from countries interested in the subject matter.

ISO 9000 refers to quality management principles (see ISO 9000 Principles) and list the following primary considerations:

1. Focus on your customers
2. Provide leadership
3. Involve your people
4. Use a process approach
5. Take a systems approach
6. Encourage continual improvement
7. Get the facts before you decide
8. Work with your suppliers

While the standard primarily addresses industry concerns, they nevertheless have application in policing where effectiveness, efficiency and quality of client service are no less important.

**Section 3D - Recommendations**

- 3D.1 That the Vancouver Police Department promote ISO 9000 Quality Management Principles as an organizational goal.

#### 4. RMS AND PRIME-BC

The Versadex RMS became operational in March 2001. From that time, all investigative reports, case logs, notes and Crown Counsel reports were to have been entered electronically in the system. The organization made it a Departmental priority that the system would be fully deployed and embraced as our only record management system.

The audit found that in many instances very basic facts without accompanying circumstances are recorded in RMS. This data would be difficult to interpret for a follow-up investigator and would not be useful for analysis in a serial incident. Additionally, some files are stored on the Departmental 'M' network drive that should be integrated with the applicable investigation.

The calibre of RMS (PRIME) entry is substantially lower than in some other investigative units and workflow maintenance is incomplete. The Audit interview process, supported by personal observation disclosed that, with some exceptions, those assigned to the Investigative and Supervisory position have not developed sufficient skill to function competently in the environment and delegated many of their responsibilities to the Coordinator. This may be because many have not used the system 'on the road' where the basics become a daily routine.

Departmentally, the degree of compliance is generally determined by familiarity with the system by Supervisors, who exercise a frontline quality control function for investigations. Managers are the overseers of compliance, particularly in Workflow, and must be comfortable enough with RMS to exercise their level of quality control.

To be an effective case management tool, all investigative reports, notes and logs must be entered into the system. This assists other investigators within the VPD and now, with the introduction of the Law Enforcement Information Portal (LEIP), permits access by other agencies. Storage of paper files and silos of information that is not entered decreases the effectiveness of the system and will not provide the required data needed for analysis or follow-up if a serial crime is committed.

With the arrival of LEIP, better quality control becomes increasingly necessary. Outside investigators will have access to VPD reports and attachments. Although tools for release tracking are provided in the system, incident records in RMS must be kept current or civil liability will increase. For example, if an outside agency investigator acts on outdated or incomplete information in a VPD PRIME record and that later becomes an issue, the VPD could be held liable. At the present time, Missing Person Unit records would not meet the standard of a system audit.

Ensuring that the best data is entered by all who use the PRIME system is critical to its success. Training for Investigators and Supervisors is available on request and can be tailored to match the needs of the Missing Person Unit.

## **VPD RMS/PRIME-BC**

### **Document Imaging**

Late in 2004, a new component of the Versaterm RMS will be activated. Known as Document Imaging, it provides for a means to scan paper documents such as photos, drawings, letters, statements directly into the RMS so that they form part of the overall case file. When a user accesses the system to retrieve a record, the entire file with reports and attachments is presented on the computer screen or printer. This new tool is ideal for Missing Person Unit as they deal with a variety of information not entered via keyboard. It is also a means to capture data from historical cases that are presently on file on paper in the Unit. The contents may be quickly scanned into the RMS for secure storage, with access by any system user. This will be an improvement over the current storage method whereby some unsolved files have been culled over the years to create additional storage space.

### **Workflow**

Workflow is a powerful, flexible component of the RMS that enables the automated, and semi-automated movement of cases, BF's and follow-up assignments throughout the Department. Workflow is 'electronic paper flow' and has replaced traditional paper-based tracking methods and improved existing computer-based processes, by giving PRIME agencies the ability to automatically route cases anywhere within the agency, and track them at every step of the way, from initial entry to final disposition. It allows VPD to quickly and efficiently process the large number of routine cases we deal with on a daily basis, as well as correctly route large, complex cases with several investigators and numerous follow-up assignments. When Workflow is fully implemented and used correctly, fewer resources are consumed by administrative tasks, freeing up more resources for actual police work.

Workflow's biggest advantages are efficiency and accountability. Workflow is the key RMS component for reducing or eliminating paper and moving toward a more efficient, paperless environment. Workflow is also the key RMS component for tracking officer and investigator assignments.

Workflow can also be thought of as "information sharing within the agency" because each case in Workflow remains connected to all involved personnel. A change made to a case by any user immediately generates an update to each of the involved personnel, insuring that they are kept up to date as a case develops. Agency personnel no longer have to rely on memory alone when it comes to keeping coworkers informed of the latest developments with specific cases.

When Workflow is not completed or is done incorrectly, the information ceases to reach the intended recipient, assignment supervision is lost and deficient investigations result. Because it is computer based and therefore unforgiving, and so radically different than the previous paper-based methods, it has been one of the more challenging concepts for our Supervisors and Managers to grasp since PRIME RMS go-live. Even Units with minimal staff must maintain their RMS Workflow, even if the assignment of follow-ups is to one's self.

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A number of problems were evident when the Workflow for Missing Person Unit was examined. For example, the tilde (~) character signifies that an addition has been made to the file but that it has not yet been accessed by the investigator. Numerous instances were found where this was the case. This indicates that workflow is not regularly updated or verified and that the investigator is not accessing that new information.

The synopsis is a concise overview of the nature of the incident. The synopsis is first entered when the G.O. is completed. Through investigation, the synopsis frequently changes. When this occurs, the synopsis should be updated to reflect the latest known circumstances. If this is not done and the G.O. is accessed, especially by an external agency through the law Enforcement Information Portal (LEIP), outdated information could result in another investigator taking investigative steps not based on fact, which could lead to civil liability. Of the RMS incidents reviewed, no instances of updated synopsis were evident. This was identified as a training issue.

There was confusion about the appropriate operational and CCJS status of G.O. reports in RMS, even with our Departmental experts. Operational status may be 'open', 'closed' or inactive. Closed is used when a file has been closed to any further investigation or is solved. Open reflects a file under active investigation. Inactive status of a file indicates it is not closed but is not being actively investigated. The Audit found that there was some disagreement even among the Information Management Section experts in our Department when the status should change.

One example of error in the status of a file is incident #02-76751 which indicates the missing person fit the profile of Project Evenhanded. The file was forwarded there and further investigation took place. In May 2004, the Evenhanded investigator concluded his involvement and found the victim did not match the profile of the DES missing women. The victim however is still missing. This file should therefore be 'inactive' or 'Open'; however the operational status is shown as 'Closed' on RMS. Other, similar examples were found in the Audit examination.

The Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics (CCJS) tracks reported crime and police clearance rates across Canada. CCJS status is not applicable to missing person cases unless they have criminal involvement. However, if a status error is made, the Audit found that it could lead to confusion and unintentional purging of the file from our records.

A descriptive conclusion block is required, especially in G.O. reports submitted by E-Comm and Patrol. While most concluded files gave some indication, the remarks were frequently so brief that they left questions unanswered, for example 'person returned home' is a typical conclusion. In the event of a repeat occurrence, concluding information could shed light on the whereabouts of the subject and thereby assist the investigator. If there was a requirement for a follow-up, or a review, brief remarks provide little assistance or explanation of investigative steps.

The Audit found that there were few (if any) investigative notes in randomly selected RMS files. Infrequently these are augmented by documents on the Departmental 'M' drive or in a paper file folder but that is usually not the case. Overall the standards of documentation and record keeping do not meet expectations. All electronic information should be included on the RMS. Case management suffers and there is an

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inadequate trail for subsequent investigators to resume an investigation should new information arise. While it is appropriate for an investigator to maintain a paper 'working file', the content of that file must be included in RMS along with the log of investigative steps taken as the investigation progresses and must be up to date when the file is concluded by whatever means.

Where the investigator was transferred or retired, it appears that open files were not reassigned in RMS. This leads to a concern that investigative leads that could have been pursued were abandoned and continuity of the investigation is lost.

Upon reviewing a sampling of missing person cases, the Audit found a number of instances of incorrect or missing data within the RMS. These findings were verified by the VPD PRIME Coordinator, Sgt. (WSE) Colin McEwen.

The Audit therefore finds that, as a result of a lack of active investigation, and the significant caseload, the electronic records management system is not used, or not used effectively to maintain case progress.

#### Section 4 - Recommendations

General case management recommendations are listed in Section 4 but dovetail with the following.

- 4.1 The Versadex RMS is our sole repository for investigative documentation. It must be properly used and maintained to be effective. Information not entered, or entered incompletely will not be accessible for follow-up investigators, or to identify trends or possible serial crimes. Therefore,
  - a. all investigators and clerical staff who have system access must be properly trained for their specific need;
  - b. all investigative steps must be documented in an approved fashion;
  - c. work must be reviewed by their supervisors; and
  - d. workflow (BFs) must be assigned and completed in a timely fashion.
- 4.2 Reports should be reviewed in workflow by the Unit supervisor who should record in RMS his/her approval or direct the file back to the investigator for further follow-up;
- 4.3 Case information currently stored on 'M' drive should be integrated with the appropriate file on RMS;
- 4.4 The Manager - Information Management Section and the VPD PRIME Coordinator should confirm the definitions for case operational status and integrate them into training
- 4.5 Files currently assigned to retired investigators and staff no longer assigned to the Missing Person Unit should be re-assigned.

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## 5. CHRONIC RUNAWAYS

This report would be incomplete without analysis and discussion about the primary source of reported incidents for the Missing Person Unit. Repetitive runaways, commonly referred to as 'chronic', account for the largest percentage of missing person files received. These originate primarily from group homes operated by the Provincial Ministry of Human Resources.

The majority of missing persons are youth runaways (chronic from group homes). They are usually located within hours and rarely exceed 72 hours.

As an example, for a six month period from July to Dec., 2003, there were 120 missing reports linked to one youth - one report every 1½ days. On several instances, this fellow was reported missing twice in one day, often missing for only a few hours each time. On other occasions he was missing for up to two days. The situation is not uncommon and there are thirty individual chronic runaway youths with frequent absences in the same six month period.

The Coordinator spends 2-3 hours of her daily shift routinely processing these files.

The problem results in staff frustration, dealing with same individuals, the same Group Homes and the wasted time processing their incidents.

### A. FACES

'FACES' is a tool currently employed by the Vice Unit, to specifically identify children and adolescents in the sex trade. The acronym stands for **Fight Against Child Exploitation**, and directly involves parents of these young persons in efforts to locate and rescue them from the street. Photos of children who are missing and suspected of being recruited for prostitution are obtained from parents or social workers. They are reproduced and circulated to police members who patrol neighbourhood strolls. The same photos and profiles also go to other agencies who work with "at risk" adolescents. Properly identifying children on the street is often the first step in arranging for their recovery.

Without a close working relationship with the Missing Person Unit, FACES is unable to carry out their mandate as effectively as possible. The Audit heard that FACES is concerned with the lack of investigation of missing person files and the apparent lack of resources. This gives the impression that there is no 'real' concern for these incidents. FACES would like to have access to a current list of missing persons, particularly juvenile missing females, and would prefer to see a photo included as a requirement in all missing person cases.

### Section 5A - Recommendations

- 5A.1 As many of their subjects appear to be in common, the Missing Person Unit should develop a closer working relationship with the VPD Vice Section in general and the FACES program in particular.

## B. Group Home Fax System

Approximately ten years ago, a fax system was set up specifically to reduce the administrative burden and to permit group homes to report runaways more efficiently. Group Homes that participate in the system pre-fill a report and fax them to E-Comm. There the reports are keyed into PRIME RMS, added to CPIC and, in RMS Workflow, forwarded to the Missing Person Unit. The Group Home is also responsible to notify E-Comm when the individual returns. E-Comm continued this role from the former VPD Communications Centre. Given we now have fewer call-taking staff than prior to the E-Comm transition, fewer resources are available to process other calls. 9-1-1 operators are needlessly diverted and the waiting time on non-emergency lines can be quite significant.

Internet reporting was implemented shortly after PRIME RMS became operational. Initially the system could not directly ingest reports entered by this means and Public Service Counter staff was given the responsibility to key the information from the Internet report into RMS. In 2003 Enhanced Internet Reporting was initiated. This permitted the public to enter certain classes of reports electronically from any Internet connection, directly into the RMS, in effect completing their own data entry. The process has worked well.

It is feasible to expand this process to selected and pre-approved entities such as Group Homes to replace the fax system. As the majority of these entries are routine, the risk is not substantially increased but it would reduce staff workload and free E-Comm operators for other calls. VPD-IT has submitted a report on the cost and feasibility of this and other secure Internet reporting requests (see Generic Internet Reporting).

### Section 5B - Recommendations

- 5B.1 To address the issue of chronic runaways, the VPD IT Section should be requested to investigate the possibility of adding the direct entry and processing of these cases to VPD Internet Reporting by specific, pre-approved complainants. This would place the responsibility of maintaining these files on the Group Homes and should free time for both E-Comm reports staff, VPD Information Management Section and the Missing Person Unit staff;

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### C. CPIC

Presently, chronic runaways are entered on CPIC in the same category as all other missing persons. This may result in critical files involving persons potentially at risk becoming lost in the volume of other, less critical files. The State of Indiana Data and Communications System (IDACS) has addressed this issue by creating a series of definitions for categories of missing person entries, as follows:

A missing person record shall be entered into IDACS and NCIC for the following reasons:

- a. **Disability.** A person of any age who is missing and under proven physical/mental disability or is senile, thereby subjecting himself/herself or others to personal and immediate danger.
- b. **Endangered.** A person of any age who is missing and in the company of another person under circumstances indicating that his/her physical safety is in danger.
- c. **Involuntary.** A person of any age who is missing under circumstances indicating that the disappearance was not voluntary, i.e., abduction or kidnapping.
- d. **Juvenile.** A person who is missing and declared un-emancipated as defined by the laws of his/her state of residence and does not meet any of the entry criteria set forth in a, b, c, or e.
- e. **Catastrophe Victim.** A person of any age who is missing after a catastrophe.
- f. **Miscellaneous.** A person above the age of emancipation who is missing and does not meet any of the criteria in a, b, c, or d can be entered into IDACS Files only.

These criteria are easily understood and followed and serve as a basis for consideration of recommended changes to CPIC.

While it is unlikely that the governing body for CPIC would embrace six categories as outlined above, it is proposed that the VPD lobby the CPIC Triumvirate for at least one new CPIC category such as 'Youth at Risk' that would be designated for chronic runaways and other juveniles who may be at risk. As a precaution, and as most absences are short term, a 72-hour flag can be generated by the CPIC system if the youth has not returned and at that point further investigation may be warranted.

Another less complex (and less descriptive) amendment to CPIC is entry of chronic runaways under the existing SIP category as a 'person of interest to police', with a description of the reason. Use of the SIP category for this purpose would have to be authorized and would require an amendment to the CPIC manual.



## Section 5C - Recommendations

- 5C.1 The CPIC Advisory Committee, through our VPD representative (the Inspector i/c Services Liaison Section) and RCMP 'E' Division CPIC Services should be asked to evaluate the addition of at least one additional CPIC category (Youth at Risk) for chronic runaways. In almost all instances these are short term unauthorized absences and not truly missing persons. The system can flag absences in excess of 72 hours for further review.

### D. Abandonment of Chronic Missing Person Investigations

The Audit heard representations that the VPD should unilaterally cease to investigate chronic runaway reports unless there are mitigating factors, and refer them instead to the Ministry, as they are fundamentally a social problem. That option requires careful analysis, further study and a legal opinion as it may leave the Department open to criticism and liability in the unlikely event that a chronic runaway is a victim of foul play as a result of their absence.

In the interim, and while this report has previously outlined the use of the Coordinator position outside the scope of her position profile, re-examination of that role may justify formally expanding the job description to include basic follow-up of chronic runaway files, once reviewed and assigned by the Sergeant, to free the investigators for more serious cases.

A second option would be the creation of a 3-6 month pre-recruit position to follow-up chronic runaway cases, under close supervision of the Sergeant. Training would be minimal and would provide for development of the individual, likely with increased initiative, and at lesser cost than a senior sworn position. A similar program undertaken at Document Services Unit has proven very successful.

A third option is to loan Patrol members on temporary light duties and during pregnancy to Missing Person Unit, similar to the current reassignment program in place for TRT. There is an advantage to using these Members as they have Patrol experience. This is a scarce resource and would compete with other staffing requests.

The final alternative is to segregate all juvenile runaway files from other missing person incidents. These files could be assigned to Youth Squad to take advantage of their additional resources (see also Section 1 - Staffing [c. Staffing Levels])

The issues outlined are among the most significant identified by this audit and would justify further examination by the Departmental Planning and Research Section as a project.

## Section 5D Recommendations

- 5D.1 The position profile of the Missing Person Coordinator should be evaluated to determine the feasibility of expanding the position to complete routine follow up of chronic missing person files. This involvement would be at the discretion and under supervision of the Sergeant, after evaluation of the

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## VI. LIST OF APPENDICES

### A. Resource Material - Internal

No	Source	Attachment
1	Insp. Laidler	<u>Inter-Departmental Memo outlining perceived issues in Missing Person investigations</u>
2	VPD P&R	<u>Existing Procedure re: VPD RPM Sec 28.01 - Incident Reporting</u>
3	VPD P&R	<u>Draft amendments re: VPD RPM Sec 28.01 - Incident Reporting</u>
4	VPD IMS	<u>PRIME entries for Missing Persons instructions; Missing Person - Survey Code; and Two attached e-mails with implementation instructions to E-Comm</u>
5	VPD P&R	<u>Case Management Review (1989)</u>
6	VPD P&R	<u>Working Guide of Audit Recommendations (1992)</u>
7	VPD R&P Manual	<u>Policy on completion of investigations</u>
8	VPD HR - A. Humayun	Position Profile: <u>Missing Persons Investigator</u>
9		Position Profile: <u>Missing Person Coordinator</u>
10	VPD HR - J. Kerr	<u>Missing Person Coordinator Posting</u>
11	VPD MP Unit Clerk	<u>Missing Person Coordinator daily tasks</u>
12	PC 1161 Dean Wells	<u>Wells 1161 - Review Summary.doc</u>
13	PC 1161 Dean Wells	<u>Wells 1161 - Review Summary Update.doc</u>
14	Det (Ret) Steinbach	<u>MP Paper Trail</u>

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15	Det (Ret) Steinbach	<u>Additional Manpower - MP</u>
16	Det (Ret) Steinbach	<u>MP Reports</u>
17	MP Unit	<u>Existing MP Report Form</u>
18	MP Unit	<u>Existing Juvenile MP Fax Report Form</u>
19	VPD Missing Person Unit Files	<u>Sample PRIME Report - Front Page</u>
20	VPD Missing Person Unit Files	<u>MP Unit Workflow - Sample CPIC Message</u>
21	VPD Missing Person Unit Files	<u>MP Unit Workflow - Sample E-mail</u>
22	VPD Missing Person Unit Files	<u>MP Unit Workflow - Log Book Sample Pages</u>
23	VPD Missing Person Unit Files	<u>MP Unit Workflow - VPD MP Website &amp; Log sheet sample - Active &amp; Historical cases</u>
24	VPD Missing Person Unit Files	<u>MP Unit Workflow - [REDACTED] - MP PRIME Report</u>
25	VPD Missing Person Unit Files	<u>MP Unit Workflow - [REDACTED] - MP PRIME Report</u>
26	VPD Missing Person Unit Files	<u>MP Unit Workflow - [REDACTED] - Debrief minutes</u>
27	MP Daily workflow analysis	<u>MP Workflow Analysis</u>
28	MP PRIME Workflow Analysis	<u>MP PRIME Workflow Analysis</u>
29	MP PRIME Workflow PowerPoint	<u>MP PRIME Workflow PowerPoint Slides</u>
30	FACES Program overview	<u>FACES</u>
31	Internet Reporting Update	<u>Internet Reporting - Chronic Runaways</u>

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**B. Resource material - External**

N <sup>o</sup>	Source	Attachment
1	E-Comm: Ms. K. Hay	<u>Cover letter for MP Processes</u> <u>E-Comm - Present Missing Persons Process at E-Comm</u> <u>Present Mper process explanation table with costing</u>
2	Victoria PD	<u>Missing Persons Investigations/Case Management Status</u>
3	RCMP 'E' Div HQ	<u>Missing Person Procedures</u>
4	Ontario	<u>Generic Policy Review (excerpt)</u>
5	CPC Library Ms. Tonita Murray	<u>Library Introduction</u> <u>CPC Library Missing person Investigation Resource List</u> <u>CPC Library Internet Page</u>
6	RCMP 'E' Div HQ	<u>Description of proposed BC MPERS Coordination Centre</u>
7	MWTF - McKnight	<u>MWTF Detail report sample</u>
8	Sgt Lemieux	<u>RCMP PRTC Course availability</u>
9	Kevin Begg	<u>Cover Letter</u> BC Police Standards - Policy on MP investigations and excerpts from municipal Departmental R&P manuals: <u>Abbotsford</u> <u>Central Saanich</u> <u>Delta</u> <u>Nelson</u> <u>New Westminster</u> <u>Oak Bay</u> <u>Port Moody</u> <u>Saanich</u> <u>Victoria</u> <u>West Vancouver</u>
10	Al MacIntyre Chief Supt., RCMP	<u>BCACP Missing Person Coord Centre</u>
11	Jim McKnight (MWTF)	<u>MWTF Report Sample (E&amp;R)</u>

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12	Emer Fitzgerald - MP Unit	<u>Vancouver Hospital - MP/Elopee Report Form</u>
13	ISO 9000 Principles	<u>ISO 9000 Principles</u>
14	Halifax PD Website extract	<u>Halifax Regional Police - MPERS page</u>
15	Abbotsford PD Website extract	<u>APD Online -Missing Persons</u>
16	Regina PD Org Chart	<u>Regina PS Org Chart</u>
17	Calgary PD Org Chart	<u>Calgary PS Org Chart</u>
18	Toronto PS Procedures	<u>Toronto Procedures</u>
19	Revised E-Comm MP Policy/Workflow re: CPIC and RMS	<u>VPD Missing Person proposed procedure change - E-Comm</u>
20	Amnesty Intl Report - Missing Women	<u>Amnesty Intl Report - Missing Women</u>

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## C. Media

N	Source	Attachment
1	<a href="http://fyilondon.com">http://fyilondon.com</a>	Special report: <u>"It's too late for Mistie"</u> Byline: "Anne Murray may change the way Ontario police investigate missing children, but reform will come too late to save her daughter, Mistie."
2	<a href="http://www.canada.com/vancouver/theprovince/index.html">www.canada.com/vancouver/theprovince/index.html</a> (2004-05-02)	Article Page A16-A17: <u>"Could body on beach solve mystery of Randal Gary?"</u> Byline: "Family of the missing cruise-ship passenger hopes its him, but as many as 20 other missing men could have ended up on that beach."
3	<a href="http://www.canoe.ca">www.canoe.ca</a>	Columnist Kerry Diotte, Edmonton Sun: <u>"Claims a Disservice"</u> Opposes group's claim that alleges Edmonton police treat first nations missing women investigations differently than those involving Caucasian women.
4	<a href="http://www.canoe.ca">www.canoe.ca</a>	Article: <u>"Federal Solicitor General considering DNA bank to help track missing persons"</u> Ottawa may expand national DNA data bank to help track missing persons.
5	<a href="http://www.childcybersearch.org/media/news/ott_sun.shtml">www.childcybersearch.org/media/news/ott_sun.shtml</a> 2004-10-08 08:54:06	Article: <u>"Kid search hits Internet"</u> The RCMP are hitting the information highway in a bid to find some of Canada's 50,000 missing children.

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**MISSING PERSONS...VIEW  
RECOMMENDATIONS**

<b>TASK #</b>	<b>RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	<b>RESPONSE</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITY</b>	<b>COMPLETION DATE</b>
<b>1 (P1)</b>	<p>Position profiles should be reviewed to ensure they are accurate and current. The audit revealed that almost all investigation and follow-up is being done by a non-sworn member. If this is to continue, the position profile for the Missing Person Unit Coordinator must be reviewed and amended to reflect her true responsibilities. She should be compensated commensurate with these duties.</p> <p>The MPU NCO, Sgt Dragani, has received PRIME training and has "cleared away" historical material on the MPU handle. He reviews PRIME daily and assigns cases to MPU police officers as necessary. The MPU Coordinator conducts indices checks on incoming files. Position Profiles are being reviewed by the MPU NCO.</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Position profiles have just been reviewed, amended, and submitted to Sergeant Weeks, Human Resources Section.</p>	<p>MPU NCO has been directed to upgrade his PRIME skills so that all cases are reviewed by the NCO, assigned by the NCO or the ANCO in his absence, and PRIME requirements are met. Only police personnel will "investigate" cases. The Coordinator will conduct indices checks and contact partner agencies, but will no longer "investigate" cases.</p>	<p>Insp. /lc MCS NCO /lc MPU</p> <p>Insp. /lc MCS</p> <p>Insp. /lc MCS</p> <p>Insp. /lc MCS</p> <p>Insp. /lc MCS</p> <p>Insp. /lc MCS</p>	<p>Concluded May 30/05</p>
<b>2 (P2)</b>	<p>The Coroners Liaison position staffing should be reviewed to determine the caseload in particular whether two full-time investigators are required. This review should include work that is being done for the Coroners Service for which the VPD has no responsibility and is not being compensated.</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>The MPU NCO will provide a report as to the volume of work required of this position, as well as the necessity of that work for the organization.</p>	<p>NCO /lc MPU</p> <p>Insp. /lc MCS</p> <p>Insp. /lc MCS</p> <p>Insp. /lc MCS</p> <p>Insp. /lc MCS</p> <p>Insp. /lc MCS</p> <p>Insp. /lc MCS</p>	



TASK #	RECOMMENDATIONS	RESPONSE	RESPONSIBILITY	COMPLETION DATE
Status July 7 2005	Acting Sergeant Forshaw has discussed the findings in Mr. Schouten's report with the current MPU staff. The Coroner's Liaison position is not "...effectively a two person position augmented by the D/Cst assigned to the Missing Persons Unit" as suggested by Mr. Schouten. In fact, the opposite is true. When time allows, or on a priority basis, the current incumbent, D/Cst Traversy, is assigned Missing Persons cases. This sharing of responsibility works quite well and is a necessity given our staffing. There is additional sharing of responsibilities to ensure coverage Monday through Friday, but it does not impact significantly on either position's case load. A/Sgt. Forshaw has discussed the workload issue with D/Cst Traversy and is assured that he does not exceed our expectations with regard to assistance provided to the Coroner's Service. D/Cst. Traversy does confirm there are many occasions where the follow-up necessary is the result of deficient Operations' Division members investigations (or reports). Notification, or at least identification, of next-of-kin is often left to D/Cst Traversy as a "default" responsibility, as are many of the property issues described by Schouten. Thus, much of the work in this position is "created" by the VPD, not the Coroner's Service. At the current time, the Coroner's Liaison position is appropriately staffed.	Insp. I/c MCS	Concluded July 7/05	
<b>3 (P1)</b> Status Dec. 15, 2004	External Commitments of Supervisors Given the size and limited investigative resources of the Unit, an absence of external commitments should be considered as a condition of assignment for future supervisors. The current MPU NCO has been advised that external commitments must be reduced so that adequate focus on MPU responsibilities is maintained. Adequate focus on MPU responsibilities, and the absence of external commitments, will form part of future NCO selection processes.	Insp. I/c MCS  Insp. I/c MCS	Concluded Dec 15/04	
<b>4 (P1)</b> Status Dec. 15, 2004	Investigator Qualities Historically, the selection process for staff assigned to the Unit appears flawed. It is recommended that the investigator position not be seen as a light duties or pre-retirement position but that it is filled by a member with demonstrated investigative skills. This is clearly a developmental position that lends itself to evaluating a potential major crimes investigator Two officers, Det/Cst Mark Forshaw and Det/Cst Cal Traversy, have been added to MPU since the audit findings were received. Det/Cst Forshaw had been assigned to the Sexual Offence Squad prior, while Det/Cst Traversy, who is in the Coroner's Liaison position, was formerly with Project Eventhanded. Both officers have prior investigative experience, and this played a pivotal role in their selection. Both have several years of service remaining prior to being eligible for retirement (pension without penalty). Prior, proven investigative experience will form part of all future selection processes in MPU.	Insp. I/c MCS NCO I/c MPU  Insp. I/c MCS	Concluded Dec 15/04	
<b>5 (P1)</b> Status Dec. 15, 2004	Tenure Tenure should be no less than 18 months and up to 2 years and should be seen as developmental for a senior investigative position. Det/Cst Traversy has been advised that his tenure in MPU will be at least 18 months. Det/Cst Ralla, the current MPU investigator, will remain in MPU for at least 18 months. Det/Cst Forshaw will eventually move to a Homicide Unit in MCS, and may do so in about one year, but his primary role is to address a number of issues raised by this audit, versus an operational role.	NCO I/c MPU  Insp. I/c MCS	Concluded Dec 15/04	

TASK #	RECOMMENDATIONS	RESPONSE	RESPONSIBILITY	COMPLETION DATE
<b>6 (P2)</b>	Staffing Levels	Staffing levels for the unit require Executive review. It appears an increase in investigative staff is justifiable and necessary to meet workload and public expectation.	Insp. I/c MCS	
	Dec. 15, 2004	Ongoing	Insp. I/c MCS	
	Jan. 27, 2005	Ongoing	Insp. I/c MCS	
	Feb. 28, 2005	Ongoing	Insp. I/c MCS	
	Mar. 31, 2005	Ongoing	Insp. I/c MCS	
	Apr. 29, 2005	Ongoing	Insp. I/c MCS	
	Ma 30, 2005	Ongoing	Insp. I/c MCS	Concluded May 30/05
Status	Mar. 6, 2006	Other initiatives have resulted in the elimination of one (or two) Witness Protection Unit positions. The officer assigned to the remaining position will assist with Missing Persons investigations at the MPU NCO's discretion. AMENDMENT: In September, 2005, two VPD members were seconded to the Provincial Witness Protection Unit under the RCMP's Support Services branch. One VPD Witness Management position was then eliminated and converted to an additional full-time Missing Persons investigator position.	Insp. I/c MCS	Concluded Mar. 6/06
	Dec. 15, 2004	Ongoing	Insp. I/c MCS	
	Jan. 27, 2005	Ongoing	Insp. I/c MCS	
	Feb. 28, 2005	Ongoing	Insp. I/c MCS	
	Mar. 31, 2005	Ongoing	Insp. I/c MCS	
	Apr. 29, 2005	Ongoing	Insp. I/c MCS	
	Ma 30, 2005	Ongoing	Insp. I/c MCS	
	July 7 2005	Ongoing	Insp. I/c MCS	Ongoing
Status	Feb. 10, 2006	This issue has been discussed and the Missing Persons/Coroner's Liaison Unit will remain under the Major Crime Section. Sergeant Ron Fairweather is currently working with E-Comm and BCMPC to deal with and rectify the reporting issues regarding chronic and habitual youth runaways. Liaising with Youth Services Unit will continue	Insp. I/c MCS	Concluded Feb. 10/06

TASK #	RECOMMENDATIONS	RESPONSE	RESPONSIBILITY	COMPLETION DATE
<b>8 (P1)</b>	File Stat Audit by Information Management Section	The discrepancy in file statistics should be audited by the Information Management Section and Missing Persons Coordinator to determine what has become of the (minimum) 49 files recorded that cannot be accounted for.	Insp. /lc MCS	
	Dec. 15, 2004	The MPU NCO has contacted Mr. J. Schouten in order to determine which 49 files he refers to in his report. To date, Det/Cst Forshaw has reviewed 12 Missing Persons - Open Files and has found that, in 6 of these 12 cases, the person has been located, but remains on CPIC as missing. Thus, in half of the cases reviewed to date, an administrative error has been made, but is easily remedied. We hope to confirm that Mr. Schouten's methodology in the near future.	Insp. /lc MCS	
	Jan. 27, 2005	Det/Cst Forshaw has reviewed the status of all "open" Missing Persons files reported 2003-07-21 to 2004-07-21. There were 7 files and all have been reviewed by Sgt. Dragani. Det/Cst Forshaw discovered a recurring error in over 300 General Occurrence Reports that led to Mr. Shouten's concern about outstanding unresolved cases. The source of the error is at E-Comm and Sgt. McEwen has been engaged to assist with the elimination of this problem.	Insp. /lc MCS	
	Feb. 28, 2005	Det/Cst Forshaw has completed an extensive report documenting problems with MP details pages and the resulting erroneous conclusions. Mr. Schouten has been contacted and was satisfied with the result. There are no missing files from the 20030721 to 20040721, only missing details pages. Sgt. McEwen has been advised of this problem and is taking steps to correct them for G.O.'s outside the timeframe and for any new files being created.	Insp. /lc MCS	
	Status	There are no missing files as reported - only missing "Details" pages. This has been remedied and Sgt. McEwen is correcting the Prime problem.	Insp. /lc MCS	Concluded Mar 31/05
<b>9 (P2)</b>	Training Review	Training for Missing Person Unit investigators and supervisors should be reviewed and a formal list of mandatory and desirable training courses developed for the position.	NCO /lc MPU	
	Dec. 15, 2004	Ongoing	Insp. /lc MCS	
	Jan. 27, 2005	Ongoing	Insp. /lc MCS	
	Feb. 28, 2005	Ongoing	Insp. /lc MCS	
	Mar. 31, 2005	Ongoing	Insp. /lc MCS	
	Apr. 29, 2005	Ongoing	Insp. /lc MCS	
	Ma 30, 2005	Ongoing	Insp. /lc MCS	

TASK #	RECOMMENDATIONS	RESPONSE	RESPONSIBILITY	COMPLETION DATE
Status	July 7 2005	A thorough review of the available courses suggested by Mr. Schouten has not been conducted and an additional three months needs to be allocated for this task. As noted, there is not a course designed specifically for Missing Persons investigations (and Schouten suggests one is to be created). The creation of such a course would hopefully confirm all of the criteria mentioned in Schouten's report and make this task redundant. In general, some of the training suggested by Mr. Schouten is covered (or at least mentioned) in the curriculum of the Major Crime Investigative Techniques provided at the CPC or in the General Investigators Course at the JIBC, and these courses should be made mandatory for members in this position or that are being considered for this position. Forshaw agrees with Schouten in regard to the noted courses and their content for the Missing Person's detectives, or inclusion in a specific Missing Persons course and prioritizes them as follows: <u>Mandatory:</u> The General Investigator's Course at the JIBC; Forensic Interviewing (Level I); Major Crime Investigator's Techniques (CPC) "the replacement for the MCM course relating to investigators." <u>Desirable:</u> File Management and Coordination; Reid Technique for Interviewing / Interrogation or Forensic Interviewing (Level II); Statement Analysis; Developing and Managing Information Sources; DNA Sampling; Victim Services Training; Media Liaison Training; "Skip Tracing"; Time Management and Efficiency; Missing Child seminars that include information on the Hague convention and the Missing Children's Registry.	Insp. I/c MCS	Ongoing
Status	Feb. 10, 2006	Training courses for members in the Missing Persons Unit were identified by Mr. John Schouten in his review and were acknowledged by A/Sgt Mark Forshaw. A/Sgt Forshaw further prioritized numerous courses as MANDATORY and DESIRABLE as indicated in the status update remarks of July 7th, 2005. There is a current position posting for a vacancy in the Missing Persons / Coroner's Liaison Unit. The notice on the VPD Intranet will include that applicants have completed the General Investigators Course & Forensic Interviewing (Level 1).	Insp. I/c MCS	Concluded Feb. 10/06
<b>10 (P3)</b>	3-day Training Program	The Training Officer Advisory Committee should be requested to examine the viability of a specific 3-day training program for missing person investigators, and of including a one-hour block of training to recruits on missing person investigations.	NCO I/c MPU	
	Dec. 15, 2004	Ongoing	Insp. I/c MCS	
	Jan. 27, 2005	Ongoing	Insp. I/c MCS	
	Feb. 28, 2005	Ongoing	Insp. I/c MCS	
	Mar. 31, 2005	Ongoing	Insp. I/c MCS	
	Apr. 29, 2005	Ongoing	Insp. I/c MCS	
	Ma 30, 2005	Ongoing	Insp. I/c MCS	
	July 7 2005	Ongoing	Insp. I/c MCS	
Status	Feb. 10, 2006	Del/Cst Kate Caprarie provided a report to A/Sgt Mark Forshaw on Sept. 8/05 indicating that she had met with Mr. Steve Watt, Director of the JIBC and also with Sgt. Jeff Danroth I/c Recruit Training, regarding the issue of core-specific Missing Persons Investigations training. Although there is no current training curriculum for this topic, Sgt Danroth agreed to develop and institute a 2-3 hour training block for recruits. This training program will be conducted by JIBC Police Academy instructors	Insp. I/c MCS	Concluded Feb. 10/06

TASK #	RECOMMENDATIONS	RESPONSE	RESPONSIBILITY	COMPLETION DATE
<b>11 (P2)</b>	Media Liaison Unit That the Media Liaison Unit work with the Investigator(s) to ensure a coordinated media plan is established prior to release of information. That might include posters, the Inter- and Intranet and established news media sources. Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Sgt. Ron Fairweather came into the unit at the beginning of December 2005. He has 10 years media experience, completed the CPC Media Communications Course at the CPC in Ottawa in 1997, as well as other independent media training courses. He has been a relief Media Liaison member for the Department since 1996. Sgt. Fairweather has already been involved in a number of press conferences, media releases and interviews, in relation to active missing persons files. A systematic process with the current Media Liaison officers and the Missing Persons Unit is now in place and avenues of communication are well established.	The NCO /c MPU will develop a mutual protocol for coordinated media releases with respect to missing person investigations.	NCO /c MPU  Insp. /c MCS Insp. /c MCS Insp. /c MCS Insp. /c MCS Insp. /c MCS Insp. /c MCS Insp. /c MCS Insp. /c MCS	Concluded Feb. 10/06
Status	Feb. 10, 2006		Insp. /c MCS	Concluded Feb. 10/06
<b>12 (P1)</b>	Training - Prime/RMS The Training Unit, PRIME Trainer and the PRIME Coordinator should be requested to evaluate the level of RMC/PRIME skills of Missing Person Unit staff and provide additional training based on that need. Particular attention is required with workflow, case notes, supplementary reports and the conclusions of files. Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing All MPU members have received PRIME Training, and more is scheduled for later this year.	The Insp. /c MCS will ensure that all current MPU staff have adequate PRIME skills. Any new staff will be assessed upon their assignment to MPU. <u>If any</u> deficiencies are noted, the Insp. /c MCS will ensure the appropriate training is provided.	Insp. /c MCS  Insp. /c MCS Insp. /c MCS Insp. /c MCS Insp. /c MCS Insp. /c MCS	Concluded May 30/05
Status	Ma 30, 2005		Insp. /c MCS	Concluded May 30/05
<b>13 (P2)</b>	MPU Overview to Training Unit The Training Section should include a brief overview of missing person investigations in the indoctrination block presented just prior to new members being deployed.	The NCO /c MPU will provide the requisite information for the Training Section on missing persons investigations so that new officers can be given this information during their one week indoctrination. (see recommendation 10).	NCO /c MPU	

TASK #	RECOMMENDATIONS	RESPONSE	RESPONSIBILITY	COMPLETION DATE
Dec. 15, 2004	Ongoing		Insp. /I/c MCS	
Jan. 27, 2005	Sgt. Dragani is in discussion with the Training Section and the Planning and Research Section in order to develop a recruit training package.		Insp. /I/c MCS	
Feb. 28, 2005	Ongoing		Insp. /I/c MCS	
Mar. 31, 2005	Ongoing		Insp. /I/c MCS	
Apr. 29, 2005	Ongoing		Insp. /I/c MCS	
Ma 30, 2005	Ongoing		Insp. /I/c MCS	
July 7 2005	The indoctrination package has not been completed and three more months need to be allocated to this task.		Insp. /I/c MCS	
Status			Insp. /I/c MCS	Concluded Feb 10/06
<b>14 (P1)</b>	<b>Newly Assigned investigators</b>		NCO /I/c MPU	
Dec. 15, 2004	Newly assigned investigators should be provided with pro-active coaching and mentoring, especially in their first few weeks.	The NCO /I/c MPU will ensure that newly assigned members are receiving the requisite training and assistance. This will include a weekly review meeting during each new MPU member's first three months. These meetings will be documented as part of the member's performance appraisal.	Insp. /I/c MCS	
Jan. 27, 2005	Ongoing		Insp. /I/c MCS	
Feb. 28, 2005	Ongoing		Insp. /I/c MCS	
Mar. 31, 2005	Det/Cst. Traversy is being mentored by Det/Cst Ralla, primarily around the former's duties in the Coroner's Liaison position, but also the work done by the Missing Persons Investigator.	Det/Cst. Traversy has been cross-trained in the MP role and is capable of assisting in Det/Cst. Ralla's absence.	Insp. /I/c MCS	Concluded Mar 31/05
Status			Insp. /I/c MCS	
<b>15 (P1)</b>	<b>Performance Evaluations &amp; Mentoring</b>		Insp. /I/c MCS	
Dec. 15, 2004	To ensure staff are completing their responsibilities in an effective manner in compliance with their position profile, both management and supervisory ranks responsible for the Missing Persons Unit should engage in regular meaningful performance evaluation and mentoring process for both sworn and non-sworn staff as outlined in the Regulations and Procedures Manual, Section 4.	The Insp. /I/c MCS will meet with the NCO /I/c MPU weekly to discuss operational and administrative issues, and document these meetings as part of the NCO's performance appraisal.	Insp. /I/c MCS NCO /I/c MPU	
Status			Insp. /I/c MCS	

TASK #	RECOMMENDATIONS	RESPONSE	RESPONSIBILITY	COMPLETION DATE
Jan. 27, 2005	Det/Cst Forshaw continues to address issues raised in the MPU Audit and is making significant progress (See Item 8).		Insp. /I/c MCS	
Feb. 28, 2005	Ongoing		Insp. /I/c MCS	
Mar. 31, 2005	Ongoing		Insp. /I/c MCS	
Apr. 29, 2005	Ongoing		Insp. /I/c MCS	
Ma 30, 2005	A/Sgt Forshaw continues to address remaining audit issues.		Insp. /I/c MCS	
July 7 2005	Ongoing		Insp. /I/c MCS	
Feb 10 2006	Performance Evaluations under the current SAP system as implemented by the Human Resources Section will continue, with the Sergeant making appropriate entries throughout the year*. Current members are highly skilled investigators and will be involved in the mentoring process for future candidates coming into the Unit.		Insp. /I/c MCS	Concluded Feb 10/06
* NOTE: A revised SAP for Performance Evaluations will be implemented in late February 2006				
That the BCACP appoint a committee to harmonize missing person policies province-wide. Timing for this is ideal given the creation of the new RCMP Rapid-ID Unit. A blending of the existing RCMP policy and Ontario Review appear to be the most comprehensive at this time.				
<b>16 (P3)</b>	Province-wide Policies	The Insp. /I/c MPU will provide any assistance requested to assist the BCACP with this objective. (Insp. D. Dureau is currently working on such a proposal with the BCACP.	Insp. /I/c MCS	
Dec. 15, 2004	Ongoing		Insp. /I/c MCS	
Jan. 27, 2005	Ongoing		Insp. /I/c MCS	
Feb. 28, 2005	Ongoing		Insp. /I/c MCS	
Mar. 31, 2005	Ongoing		Insp. /I/c MCS	
Ma 30, 2005	A Provincial unit has been formed, and the VPD has seconded a member, Det/Cst Kate Capraie, to that unit.		Insp. /I/c MCS	Concluded May 30/05
<b>17 (P3)</b>	TRT	The NCO /I/c MPU will develop and conduct a training program for TRT members and field NCOs so that they are familiar with missing person investigations, and so they can better assess the urgency accompanying some missing person reports (see recommendation	NCO /I/c MPU	
Dec. 15, 2004	Ongoing		Insp. /I/c MCS	
Jan. 27, 2005	Ongoing		Insp. /I/c MCS	
Feb. 28, 2005	Ongoing		Insp. /I/c MCS	
Mar. 31, 2005	Ongoing		Insp. /I/c MCS	
Apr. 29, 2005	Ongoing		Insp. /I/c MCS	
Ma 30, 2005	Ongoing		Insp. /I/c MCS	

TASK #	RECOMMENDATIONS	RESPONSE	RESPONSIBILITY	COMPLETION DATE
July 7 2005	The current "draft document" created by the BCMPC includes strict guidelines that all Missing Persons are to be regarded as "at risk" until there is significant evidence to the contrary. All Missing Persons cases are to be identified as belonging to one of five categories and there is a checklist to be followed that corresponds with each one of these categories to determine risk assessment. The Policy includes that all Missing Persons reports are to be referred to a Police Supervisor and clearly directs what that Supervisor needs to do upon receiving the report. In TRT, only a substantive or Acting NCO would be able to deal with these calls and in a very limited capacity. Completing this and other related Tasks should not be undertaken until such time as the final recommendation to the BCACP is approved.	Insp. /c MCS		
Status	Feb 10 2006	The Regulations and Procedure Manual, Section 34.06 Missing Persons / Children has been revised and posted on the Intranet as of December 19th, 2005. The enhanced process ensures that the patrol supervisors are made aware of all Missing Persons reports received by E-Comm. The Patrol supervisor, upon assessing the information will determine whether or not a Missing Persons report is assigned to a patrol unit for investigation and follow-up. Appropriate CAD and G.O. entries are required. This revised process is in line with the "draft document" that the BCMPC is currently refining.	Insp. /c MCS	Concluded Feb 10/06
<b>18 (P3)</b>	7-Day Workweek	Part of the training included in recommendation 17 will involve the advice to contact the Duty Officer if MPU personnel ought to be called out when investigators are normally on leave. (see recommendation 17).	NCO /c MPU	
Dec. 15, 2004	Ongoing	If additional staff is assigned, the deployment of staff on a 7-day per week basis should be examined.	Insp. /c MCS	
Jan. 27, 2005	Ongoing	This would reduce the risk of a potentially medium or high risk case being inadvertently overlooked when investigators are on leave.	Insp. /c MCS	
Feb. 28, 2005	Ongoing		Insp. /c MCS	
Mar. 31, 2005	Ongoing		Insp. /c MCS	
Apr. 29, 2005	Ongoing		Insp. /c MCS	
Ma 30, 2005	Ongoing		Insp. /c MCS	
July 7 2005	Ongoing		Insp. /c MCS	
Status	Feb 10 2006	The Unit is currently staffed Monday through Friday with the Detective Constables working a 4/10 shift and the civilian coordinator working a 5/8 shift pattern. Procedures for after-hours and weekends are in place with the Duty Officer and the Inspector in charge of the Investigation Division to contact and/or callout the Unit Sergeant and investigators 24/7. Seven day a week coverage is not being considered and is not necessary with the enhanced screening process as outlined in Section 34.06 of the RPM.	Insp. /c MCS	Concluded Feb 10/06
<b>19 (P3)</b>	Formalized Risk Assessment Process	The NCO /c MPU will obtain a copy of the Indiana Data and Communications System. The NCO will examine our current R&P Manual guidelines with respect to missing person investigations with a view to formalizing our risk assessment process. The NCO /c MPU will provide a written report to the Insp. /c MCS, who will forward same, with appropriate comments to the DCC Cmdg. Investigation Division.	NCO /c MPU	



TASK #	RECOMMENDATIONS	RESPONSE	RESPONSIBILITY	COMPLETION DATE
Dec. 15, 2004	Ongoing		Insp. /lc MCS	
Jan. 27, 2005	Ongoing		Insp. /lc MCS	
Feb. 28, 2005	Ongoing		Insp. /lc MCS	
Mar. 31, 2005	Ongoing		Insp. /lc MCS	
Apr. 29, 2005	Ongoing		Insp. /lc MCS	
Ma 30, 2005	Ongoing		Insp. /lc MCS	
July 7 2005			Insp. /lc MCS	
	The current "draft document" created by the BCMPC includes strict guidelines that all Missing Persons are to be regarded as "at risk" until there is significant evidence to the contrary. All Missing Persons cases are to be identified as belonging to one of five categories and there is a checklist to be followed that corresponds with each one of these categories. Although the document is only a draft, it appears that the final direction from the BCACP will include a "risk assessment" complete with a specific checklist and that this process will form part of the VPD's RPM at some point. This task should not be undertaken until such time as the final recommendation to the BCACP is approved.			
Feb 10 2006	Ongoing		Insp. /lc MCS	
<b>Status</b>	<b>Apr 20 2006</b>	<b>A formal risk assessment process is currently being developed by the BCPMPC and will form part of the overall Missing Person protocol and procedures mandated to all police agencies Province-wide. This task can therefore be deemed concluded as it falls within the responsibility of the BCPMPC.</b>	<b>Insp. /lc MCS</b>	<b>Concluded Apr 20/06</b>
<b>20 (P3)</b>	Missing Person Checklist	Creation of a missing person checklist to classify each incident by type and risk. At a glance, this sheet could include basic law enforcement indices and non-police agency check boxes to ensure each missing person's history and background is checked consistently. These checksheets would be useful for re-checks in the event of an extended investigation as they should be repeated at specific intervals.	NCO /lc MPU	
Dec. 15, 2004	Ongoing		Insp. /lc MCS	
Jan. 27, 2005	Ongoing		Insp. /lc MCS	
Feb. 28, 2005	Ongoing		Insp. /lc MCS	
Mar. 31, 2005	Ongoing		Insp. /lc MCS	
Apr. 29, 2005	Ongoing		Insp. /lc MCS	
Ma 30, 2005	Ongoing		Insp. /lc MCS	
	The MPU NCO has forwarded a draft Missing Person checklist to Planning & Research Section for evaluation. This checklist is intended for use by primary and first contact officers.			

TASK #	RECOMMENDATIONS	RESPONSE	RESPONSIBILITY	COMPLETION DATE
July 7 2005	(See Task #19 for classifying by type and associated risk) Indices checks and background will be a common practice when deciding if there is significant evidence to the contrary that the file should be investigated as "at-risk" and therefore this task appears to be redundant and should not be undertaken until such time as the final recommendation to the BCACP is approved.		Insp. /lc MCS	
Feb 10 2006	Ongoing		Insp. /lc MCS	
Status	This issue, as noted July 7, 2005, is redundant as it is covered by Task #19. The BCPMPC is in the process of developing Provincial policies and protocol which will include standardized check sheets.		Insp. /lc MCS	Concluded Mar 6/06
<b>21 (P2)</b>	<p>The Major Crime Section Management should develop a clear understanding and guidelines to apply when a missing person file is determined to involve suspicious circumstances. If there is a possibility of criminal involvement, the Supervisors of the MPU and of the Homicide Units must develop a joint investigative plan which clearly outlines when responsibility for an investigation is being transferred and who the lead investigator is.</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>The Insp. /lc MCS will develop written guidelines for re-classifying missing persons investigations as homicide investigations, and will ensure the guidelines are distributed to all MCS NCOs.</p>		Insp. /lc MCS	
Dec. 15, 2004	Ongoing		Insp. /lc MCS	
Jan. 27, 2005	Ongoing		Insp. /lc MCS	
Feb. 28, 2005	Ongoing		Insp. /lc MCS	
Mar. 31, 2005	Ongoing		Insp. /lc MCS	
Apr. 29, 2005	Ongoing		Insp. /lc MCS	
Ma 30, 2005	Ongoing		Insp. /lc MCS	
July 7 2005	Ongoing		Insp. /lc MCS	
Feb 10 2006	Ongoing		Insp. /lc MCS	
Status	When the course of a Missing Persons investigation where the circumstances are suspicious in nature and appear to indicate criminal involvement, the assigned MPU Investigator with the MPU NCO will consult with both the Sergeant and Inspector of MCS for further direction.		Insp. /lc MCS	Concluded Mar 6/06
<b>22 (P2)</b>	<p>That the Insp. /lc MCS ensures trained Major Case Management resources are made available when significant or complex investigations are encountered.</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>The Insp. /lc MCS will ensure Major Case Management training forms part of the required training for the MPU NCO and Investigator. (see recommendation 9).</p>		Insp. /lc MCS	
Dec. 15, 2004	Ongoing		Insp. /lc MCS	
Jan. 27, 2005	Ongoing		Insp. /lc MCS	
Feb. 28, 2005	Ongoing		Insp. /lc MCS	
Mar. 31, 2005	Ongoing		Insp. /lc MCS	
Apr. 29, 2005	Ongoing		Insp. /lc MCS	

TASK #	RECOMMENDATIONS	RESPONSE	RESPONSIBILITY	COMPLETION DATE
	Ma 30, 2005	Ongoing	Insp. /lc MCS	
	Feb 10 2006	Ongoing	Insp. /lc MCS	
Status	Investigator members and the NCO in the Missing Persons / Coroner's Liaison Unit will be scheduled as vacancies permit for the Major Case Management Training Course		Insp. /lc MCS	Concluded Mar 6/06
<b>23 (P3)</b>	Review of Paper Files	<p>Paper files maintained at the Missing Person Unit should be reviewed and: a) When a case is declared inactive or concluded, it should be sent to Information Management Section for storage or archiving; b) Repositories for these paper files should be clearly marked as to content.</p> <p>The MPU NCO has begun reviewing all paper copy files held in the MPU office. Any files not concluded will be forwarded to Det/Cst Forshaw for follow-up and conclusion.</p> <p>The NCO /lc MPU will ensure all outstanding MPU files are reviewed, and any that are concluded are stored in archives.</p>	NCO /lc MPU	
	Dec. 15, 2004		Insp. /lc MCS	
	Jan. 27, 2005	Ongoing	Insp. /lc MCS	
	Feb. 28, 2005	Ongoing	Insp. /lc MCS	
	Mar. 31, 2005	Ongoing	Insp. /lc MCS	
	Apr. 29, 2005	Ongoing	Insp. /lc MCS	
	Ma 30, 2005	Ongoing	Insp. /lc MCS	
	July 7 2005	Ongoing	Insp. /lc MCS	
	Feb 10 2006	Ongoing	Insp. /lc MCS	
Status	Historical Missing Persons files are currently being reviewed and entered on Prime. Appropriate follow up will be conducted and upon conclusion / closure, the original files will be sent to Archives for storage.		Insp. /lc MCS	Concluded March 6/06
<b>24 (P2)</b>	Files to Project Evenhanded - Reconciliation	<p>Files sent to Project Evenhanded must be reconciled with the original VPD missing person entry. Information in files on Evenhanded databases must match those on PRIME.</p> <p>The NCO /lc MPU will ensure that MPU files shared with Project Evenhanded are logged, and that the requisite PRIME entries are made for each of these files.</p>	NCO /lc MPU	
	Dec. 15, 2004	Ongoing	Insp. /lc MCS	
	Jan. 27, 2005	Ongoing	Insp. /lc MCS	
	Feb. 28, 2005		Insp. /lc MCS	
	Mar. 31, 2005		Insp. /lc MCS	
Status	Dev/Cst Forshaw has identified 117 files that are currently at the MWTF. He has developed methodology to create a necessary index in PRIME and to accommodate transfer of information. Sgt. Sullivan and Sgt. Mulder at MWTF are assisting. Approximately 85 files are available for transfer of documentation. The remaining 32 are SUI or charged by Evenhanded and can be tracked by Task number.			
	Dev/Cst. Forshaw is in the process of indexing all the files held by Project Evenhanded. A temporary employee did data entry for 3 days in order to complete the initial phase, but a number of files still require updating. All of the 119 files at Project Evenhanded will be dealt with on a newly created handle: HISTMP, "Historical Missing Persons." A file will only be removed from this handle after conclusion and review.			

TASK #	RECOMMENDATIONS	RESPONSE	RESPONSIBILITY	COMPLETION DATE
Apr. 29, 2005	The reconciling of the files that require transfer of ALL electronic data will be ongoing for some time as there are issues with availability of staff, equipment, etc at Evenhanded. Discussion has occurred relating to the number of files that are being "returned" to VPD. As a result, only 13 files will require full transfer of documentation and Evenhanded will retain the responsibility for further investigation on all other open files. Sgt. Sullivan is establishing a protocol at Evenhanded to ensure any "new" files are created and/or updated in PRIME immediately to eliminate any recurrence of this problem.		Insp. I/c MCS	
Ma 30, 2005	Ongoing		Insp. I/c MCS	
July 7 2005	An extensive report has been submitted by Sgt Forshaw in regard to the methodology used to identify, create and update these files into PRIME. Eleven files have been identified as returning to the VPD that did not match the MWTF profile and are in the process of being downloaded onto disk for transfer of the information into PRIME. The final determination in regard to the transfer of the [redacted] and [redacted] files remains an outstanding issue. An additional three months needs to be allocated for this task.		Insp. I/c MCS	
Feb 10 2006	Ongoing		Insp. I/c MCS	
Mar 6., 2006	Copies of all VPD files sent to Project Evenhanded Task Force have been returned to the Missing Persons / Coroner's Liaison Unit (Prime entered). Evenhanded CD attached to files. [redacted] and [redacted] historical files will be assigned to MPU investigators for follow up and conclusion / closure.		Insp. I/c MCS	Concluded Mar 6/06
<b>25 (P3) Policies</b>	<b>Case Clearance</b>	<b>The NCO I/c MPU will ensure all outstanding MPU files are reviewed and conclude any appropriate, according to departmental policy. Also, the NCO I/c MPU will ensure that a VICLAS booklet completed for all outstanding MPU files, as required.</b>	<b>NCO I/c MPU</b>	
Dec. 15, 2004	Ongoing		Insp. I/c MCS	
Jan. 27, 2005	Ongoing		Insp. I/c MCS	
Feb. 28, 2005	Ongoing		Insp. I/c MCS	
Mar. 31, 2005	Ongoing		Insp. I/c MCS	
Apr. 29, 2005	Ongoing		Insp. I/c MCS	
Ma 30, 2005	Ongoing		Insp. I/c MCS	
July 7 2005	Ongoing		Insp. I/c MCS	
Mar 6., 2006	The Missing Persons / Coroner's Liaison Unit adheres to Departmental case clearance policies. VICLAS books are completed and submitted when appropriate and a strong working relationship is in place with the VICLAS coordinator. The MPU NCO is actively monitoring all aspects in relation to case clearance.		Insp. I/c MCS	Concluded Mar 6/06

Investigative supervision in the Unit must be brought to a level in keeping with Departmental expectations. This includes a first review of cases by the Sergeant, particularly for possible suspicious circumstances, review of subsequent work, assignment of files and investigative follow-ups, and maintenance of the RMS workflow.

## 26 (P1) Supervision

The NCO I/c MPU will review all incoming cases, as well as all outstanding cases, and assign the appropriate follow-up. This will include the management of RMS workflow and subsequent entries. In addition, the NCO I/c MPU, or the ANCO in his absence, will attend the weekly MCS NCOs' meeting where significant cases are discussed. Finally, on a random monthly basis, the Insp. I/c MCS will review the RMS workflow to ensure cases are being assigned efficiently, and that follow-up work is clearly outlined.

Insp. I/c MCS  
NCO I/c MPU

Dec. 15, 2004

The MPU NCO is reviewing all incoming PRIME reports on a daily basis. The historical material has been cleared away and the PRIME handle now contains an average of 40 files - an acceptable level.

Insp. I/c MCS

Jan. 27, 2005

Sgt. Dragani continues to review all Missing Persons reports submitted and prioritizes them for immediate follow-up or longer term investigation.

Insp. I/c MCS

Feb. 28, 2005

Ongoing

Insp. I/c MCS

Mar. 31, 2005

Ongoing

Insp. I/c MCS

Apr. 29, 2005

Ongoing

Insp. I/c MCS

Status

The HMPERS handle is reviewed regularly by the MPU NCO and an entry made on every report reviewed.

Insp. I/c MCS

Concluded May 30/05

In addition to daily file management, a detailed case overview supplemental report in RMS should be submitted by the assigned investigator no more than 14 days into an outstanding missing persons investigation. This report should refer to details on missing person's profile and background, any physical evidence, medical evidence, induces checked and the results - reason for suspicion of foul play (or reasons why foul play is not suspected), investigative steps to date and an investigative plan.

The NCO will ensure all cases outstanding for 15 days are reviewed and any additional relevant information is added to the file. The NCO I/c MPU will ensure VICLAS booklets are completed as required (see recommendation 35)

## 27 (P1) File Supplemental Reports

Dec. 15, 2004

Ongoing

Insp. I/c MCS

Jan. 27, 2005

Ongoing

Insp. I/c MCS

Feb. 28, 2005

Ongoing

Insp. I/c MCS

Mar. 31, 2005

Ongoing

Insp. I/c MCS

Apr. 29, 2005

Ongoing

Insp. I/c MCS

Ma 30, 2005

Ongoing

Insp. I/c MCS



TASK #	RECOMMENDATIONS	RESPONSE	RESPONSIBILITY	COMPLETION DATE
<b>30 (P1)</b> Conflicts	As per the Departmental Case Management guidelines, conflicts which arise over an investigative plan or any other portion of the overview report should be resolved immediately. The Inspector I/c MCS has advised both Homicide Unit NCOs as well as the MPU NCO that he will resolve any conflicts that arise and cannot be resolved by them around an investigative plan.	The Insp. I/c MCS will advise the MPU NCO and Homicide Squad NCOs that disputes about the investigative plan are to be resolved immediately. If needed, the Insp. I/c MCS will resolve the conflict.	Insp. I/c MCS	Concluded Dec 15/04
Status	Dec. 15, 2004		Insp. I/c MCS	Concluded Dec 15/04
<b>31 (P1)</b> Reviews	Any reviews by Unit or Section supervisory staff should be recorded in the RMS The MPU NCO has recorded notes on all PRIME reports reviewed thus far.	The NCO I/c MPU will ensure all information regarding periodic reviews are recorded in RMS.	NCO I/c MPU	
Dec. 15, 2004	Ongoing		Insp. I/c MCS	
Jan. 27, 2005	Ongoing		Insp. I/c MCS	
Feb. 28, 2005	Ongoing		Insp. I/c MCS	
Mar. 31, 2005	Ongoing		Insp. I/c MCS	
Apr. 29, 2005	Ongoing		Insp. I/c MCS	
Ma 30, 2005	Ongoing		Insp. I/c MCS	
Status	July 7 2005	Sgt Forshaw reviews incoming files on a regular basis and includes text in PRIME document the review. This will remain standard practice in the MPU.	Insp. I/c MCS	Concluded July 7/05
<b>32 (P2)</b> Suspicious Missing Files	Where a missing person incident is deemed suspicious, Homicide case review policies, procedures and schedules should be implemented and the results recorded in RMS. This would include use of the Homicide case binder pre-packaged with the standardized form at delineated by subject tabs.	Same as recommendation 21.	Insp. I/c MCS	
Dec. 15, 2004	Ongoing		Insp. I/c MCS	
Jan. 27, 2005	Ongoing		Insp. I/c MCS	
Feb. 28, 2005	Ongoing		Insp. I/c MCS	
Mar. 31, 2005	Ongoing		Insp. I/c MCS	
Apr. 29, 2005	Ongoing		Insp. I/c MCS	
Ma 30, 2005	Ongoing		Insp. I/c MCS	
July 7 2005	Ongoing		Insp. I/c MCS	
Feb 10 2006	Ongoing		Insp. I/c MCS	
Status	Mar 6., 2006	This task response may be cross-referenced with the recommendation response indicated for Task #21	Insp. I/c MCS	Concluded March 6/06
<b>33 (P1)</b> Unsolved Files	Unsolved files should be reviewed every 90 days and indices re-checked. The reportee should be contacted for Status and feedback as part of the review process. Results in an Status case assessment should be recorded in RMS.	The NCO I/c MPU will ensure all unsolved files are reviewed not less than every 90 days, including all indices being re-checked and the original reportee being contacted. The review, as well as the results, will be recorded in RMS.	NCO I/c MPU	

TASK #	RECOMMENDATIONS	RESPONSE	RESPONSIBILITY	COMPLETION DATE
	Dec. 15, 2004	Ongoing	Insp. /lc MCS	
	Jan. 27, 2005	Ongoing	Insp. /lc MCS	
	Feb. 28, 2005	Ongoing	Insp. /lc MCS	
Status	Mar. 31, 2005	Unsolved files are reviewed every 90 days by the MPU NCO and an entry is made on the file to that effect. As well, files are noted as inactive pending further information when no other information is forthcoming.	Insp. /lc MCS	Concluded Mar 31/05
<b>34 (P3)</b>	Review of Historical Files	<p>Historical incidents, particularly those with suspicious circumstances to be reviewed again and brought up to date. Consideration should be given to entering suspicious case data (where it exists) into RMS using Document Imaging. This will likely require assignment of an additional investigator (preferably with Homicide Investigative experience) for 6-12 months and would be required to derive a benefit from the Rapid-ID Project.</p> <p>Def/Cst Forshaw has begun his review.</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Primary information from original Historical files is currently being entered on Prime and forwarded to the MPU NCO for assignment to MPU investigators. Follow up investigations are currently being shared amongst investigators. Files will be concluded and closed with VICLAS booklets submitted when appropriate. Monthly results will be reported to the MCS Inspector by the MPU NCO.</p>	<p>Insp. /lc MCS</p> <p>Insp. /lc MCS</p> <p>Insp. /lc MCS</p> <p>Insp. /lc MCS</p> <p>Insp. /lc MCS</p> <p>Insp. /lc MCS</p> <p>Insp. /lc MCS</p> <p>Insp. /lc MCS</p> <p>Insp. /lc MCS</p> <p>Insp. /lc MCS</p> <p>Insp. /lc MCS</p> <p>Insp. /lc MCS</p> <p>Insp. /lc MCS</p>	
Status	Mar 6., 2006	A file review should identify cases not yet entered into VICLAS. Booklets should be completed and submitted.	Insp. /lc MCS	Concluded Mar 6/06
<b>35 (P3)</b>	VICLAS Booklets	<p>Dec. 15, 2004</p> <p>Jan. 27, 2005</p> <p>Feb. 28, 2005</p> <p>Mar. 31, 2005</p> <p>Apr. 29, 2005</p> <p>Ma 30, 2005</p> <p>July 7 2005</p> <p>Feb 10 2006</p> <p>See recommendations 25, 27 and 34.</p>	<p>Insp. /lc MCS</p> <p>Insp. /lc MCS</p> <p>Insp. /lc MCS</p> <p>Insp. /lc MCS</p> <p>Insp. /lc MCS</p> <p>Insp. /lc MCS</p> <p>Insp. /lc MCS</p> <p>Insp. /lc MCS</p>	



TASK #	RECOMMENDATIONS	RESPONSE	RESPONSIBILITY	COMPLETION DATE
Feb 10 2006	Ongoing		Insp. /I/c MCS	
Status	Historical files continue to be assigned and reviewed by MPU investigators. ViCLAS booklets are being completed and submitted for files, meeting the appropriate criteria. The MPU continues to liaise regularly with the ViCLAS coordinator.		Insp. /I/c MCS	Concluded Mar 6/06
<b>36 (P2)</b>	Files to Project Evenhanded	There is no complete index of cases submitted to Project Evenhanded. A file review should identify these cases and they should be Status in RMS with any investigative results.	NCO /I/c MPU	
Dec. 15, 2004	Det/Cst Forshaw will be meeting with Sgt R. Mulder, Project Evenhanded, in the near future in order to assess and review the files currently held there, and to establish an acceptable reporting process with Project Evenhanded personnel.		Insp. /I/c MCS	
Jan. 27, 2005	Ongoing		Insp. /I/c MCS	
Feb. 28, 2005	Det/Cst Forshaw has identified 117 files that are currently at the MWTF. He has developed methodology to create a necessary index in PRIME and to accommodate transfer of information. Sgt. Sullivan and Sgt. Mulder at MWTF are assisting. Approximately 85 files are available for transfer of documentation. The remaining 32 are SUJ or charged by Evenhanded and can be tracked by Task number.		Insp. /I/c MCS	
Mar. 31, 2005	Det/Cst. Forshaw is in the process of indexing all the files held by Project Evenhanded. A temporary employee did data entry for 3 days in order to complete the initial phase, but a number of files still require updating. All of the 119 files at Project Evenhanded will be dealt with on a newly created handle: HISTMP, "Historical Missing Persons." A file will only be removed from this handle after conclusion and review.		Insp. /I/c MCS	
Apr. 29, 2005	A/Sgt Forshaw has now completed the index of all 199 files into PRIME and a full report will be submitted in the near future.		Insp. /I/c MCS	
Ma 30, 2005	Ongoing		Insp. /I/c MCS	
July 7 2005	On May 4, 2005, Sgt Forshaw submitted an extensive report outlining the Methodology used to create a thorough index in PRIME that included all of the files investigated at the MWTF. (This task is related to Task #24, which deals with the actual transfer of responsibility and electronic data to be entered into PRIME.)		Insp. /I/c MCS	Concluded July 7/05
<b>37 (P2)</b>	ISO 9000 Quality Mgmt Principles	That the Vancouver Police Department promote ISO 9000 Quality Management Principles as an organizational goal.	Insp. /I/c MCS	
Dec. 15, 2004	Ongoing	The Insp. /I/c MCS will obtain a copy of the ISO 9000 Quality Management Principles and discuss them with MPU staff.	Insp. /I/c MCS	
Jan. 27, 2005	Ongoing		Insp. /I/c MCS	
Feb. 28, 2005	Ongoing		Insp. /I/c MCS	
Mar. 31, 2005	Ongoing		Insp. /I/c MCS	
Apr. 29, 2005	Ongoing		Insp. /I/c MCS	

TASK #	RECOMMENDATIONS	RESPONSE	RESPONSIBILITY	COMPLETION DATE
	Ongoing		Insp. /lc MCS	
	Ongoing		Insp. /lc MCS	
	Ongoing		Insp. /lc MCS	
	<i>The Missing Persons Unit currently operates within a highly efficient, effective and accountable framework. The International Organization for Standardization (ISO 9000-1) would be a level of quality management principles set for, measured and maintained by the entire VPD. Enacting ISO 9000 for the VPD would be decided upon by the senior executive members of the department and not within the Missing Persons Unit itself. This recommendation will therefore not be acted upon.</i>		Insp. /lc MCS	Concluded Apr 20/06
<b>38 (P1)</b>	Versadex RMS	<p>The Versadex RMS is our sole repository or investigative documentation. It must be properly used and maintained to be effective. Information not entered, or entered incompletely will not be accessible for follow-up investigators, or to identify trends or possible serial crimes. Therefore: a) all investigators and clerical staff who have system access must be properly trained for their specific need; b) all investigative steps must be documented in an approved fashion; c) work must be reviewed by their supervisors; and d) workflow (BF's) must be assigned and completed in a timely fashion.</p> <p>The Insp. /lc MCS will ensure all MPU staff are adequately trained in RMS and will conduct periodic reviews to ensure compliance with departmental standards. (see recommendation 26).</p>	Insp. /lc MCS	
	Ongoing		Insp. /lc MCS	
	Ongoing		Insp. /lc MCS	
	Ongoing		Insp. /lc MCS	
	Ongoing		Insp. /lc MCS	
	Ongoing		Insp. /lc MCS	
	Ongoing		Insp. /lc MCS	
	All investigators, clerical staff and the NCO now have adequate PRIME skills for their specific needs. Business rules have been established which clearly define the need for entry of all investigative steps into PRIME in a timely manner. Investigators' work is regularly and consistently reviewed by the NCO utilizing the "Workflow" for assignment, review, approval and disposition of files. Additionally, all "details" pages (back to May 2001) have recently been updated in PRIME and statistics are now readily available on files that are "open" but not actively being investigated (i.e. inactive pending further information). The need for accuracy on the "details" pages has been identified as a priority at E-Comm and for the MPU file coordinator.		Insp. /lc MCS	
	Ongoing		Insp. /lc MCS	

TASK #	RECOMMENDATIONS	RESPONSE	RESPONSIBILITY	COMPLETION DATE
Status	Apr 20 2006	All members of the Missing Persons / Coroner's Liaison Unit process all reports and follow-ups in the PRIME Records Management System (RMS). A comprehensive Enhanced Investigation Training Program in RMS has now been set and all members of the Missing Persons / Coroner's Liaison Unit and Witness Protection Unit will participate in the mandatory training from May 2nd - 4th, 2006.	Insp. /lc MCS	Concluded Apr 20/06
<b>39 (P1)</b>	Reports to be reviewed in workflow by the Unit supervisor who should record in RMS his/her approval or direct the file back to the investigator for further follow-up. See Recommendation 26. Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Business rules are being established to standardize the conclusion of files, the documentation of the investigation and the existence of a hardcopy file or any attachments. These rules also deal with criteria to conclude a file as "inactive pending further information" and include discussion with the NCO, a roundtable between MPU members, and review and approval by the NCO in PRIME. Ongoing Ongoing	Same as recommendations 26 and 38.	Insp. /lc MCS Insp. /lc MCS Insp. /lc MCS Insp. /lc MCS Insp. /lc MCS Insp. /lc MCS Insp. /lc MCS Insp. /lc MCS	
Status	Apr 20 2006	An agreed upon process is now in place for the NCO to review files in the workflow of both Missing Persons and Coroner Liaison "handles." Many day-to-day files do not require signing off by the NCO (including chronic youth runaway reports) as they are concluded by the Unit Coordinator. Historical and long-term assigned files that are to be concluded or closed, include a "remarks" page in the General Occurrence Report with investigative comments by the MPU NCO.	Insp. /lc MCS	Concluded Apr 20/06
<b>40 (P3)</b>	Case Info on M-Drive be integrated with the appropriate file on RMS. Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing	The NCO /lc MPU will ensure any information currently stored on 'M' drive should be integrated with the appropriate file on RMS. stored on 'M' drive is integrated on RMS.	NCO /lc MPU Insp. /lc MCS Insp. /lc MCS Insp. /lc MCS Insp. /lc MCS Insp. /lc MCS Insp. /lc MCS Insp. /lc MCS Insp. /lc MCS Insp. /lc MCS	
Status	Apr 20 2006	Case information currently stored on 'M' drive should be integrated with the appropriate file on RMS. stored on 'M' drive is integrated on RMS.	Insp. /lc MCS	Concluded Apr 20/06

TASK #	RECOMMENDATIONS	RESPONSE	RESPONSIBILITY	COMPLETION DATE
Status	Apr 20 2006	M-Drive material (filed under MCS/Missing) contains administrative documents, and poster / bulletin formatting templates. M-drive does not contain information or documentation requiring integration to PRIME RMS.	Insp. /lc MCS	Concluded Apr 20/06
<b>41 (P3)</b>	<p>The Manager - Information Management Section and the VPD PRIME Coordinator should confirm the definitions for case operational status and integrate them into training.</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Sgt Forshaw has canvassed the case operational status definitions with Colin McEwen at E-Comm. Ruth Boyd and Cathy Yasui agree that Missing Persons files that are "inactive pending further information" should have an operational status of "A" for closed (including a completed conclusion block), that the "details" page exhibits an "o" for open case status and "e" for entered on CPIC (to allow for browsing and identification of these files) and that a "concluding remarks" text page describes the files as "inactive pending further information." This definition has been used to implement and establish the business rules described in Task #38.</p> <p>Files currently assigned to retired investigators and staff no longer assigned to the Missing Person Unit should be re-assigned.</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>All files have been re-assigned to serving members.</p> <p>As many of their subjects appear to be in common, the Missing Person Unit should develop a closer working relationship with the VPD Vice Section in general and the FACES program in particular.</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Insp. /lc MCS</p> <p>Insp. /lc MCS</p> <p>Insp. /lc MCS</p> <p>Insp. /lc MCS</p> <p>Insp. /lc MCS</p> <p>Insp. /lc MCS</p> <p>Insp. /lc MCS</p> <p>Insp. /lc MCS</p> <p>NCO /lc MPU</p> <p>Insp. /lc MCS</p> <p>Insp. /lc MCS</p> <p>Insp. /lc MCS</p> <p>Insp. /lc MCS</p> <p>NCO /lc MPU</p> <p>Insp. /lc MCS</p> <p>Insp. /lc MCS</p> <p>Insp. /lc MCS</p> <p>Insp. /lc MCS</p> <p>Insp. /lc MCS</p> <p>Insp. /lc MCS</p>	<p>Concluded July 7/05</p> <p>Concluded Mar 31/05</p>	
<b>42 (P1)</b>	File Re-Assignment			
Status	Dec 15, 2004			
	Jan. 27, 2005			
	Feb. 28, 2005			
	Mar. 31, 2005			
<b>43 (P3)</b>	Working Relationship with Vice and FACES			
Status	Dec 15, 2004			
	Jan. 27, 2005			
	Feb. 28, 2005			
	Mar. 31, 2005			
	Apr. 29, 2005			
	Ma 30, 2005			

TASK #	RECOMMENDATIONS	RESPONSE	RESPONSIBILITY	COMPLETION DATE
July 7 2005	Ongoing		Insp. /lc MCS	
Feb 10 2006	Ongoing		Insp. /lc MCS	
<b>Status Apr 20 2006</b>	<b>The MPU NCO will meet with Vice NCO's as necessary. Open avenues of communication and assistance are in place.</b>		<b>Insp. /lc MCS</b>	<b>Concluded Apr 20/06</b>
<b>44 (P3)</b>	Chronic Runaway Files	<p>To address the issue of chronic runaways, the VPD IT Section should be requested to investigate the possibility of adding the direct entry and processing of these cases to VPD Internet Reporting by specific, pre-approved complainants. This would place the responsibility of maintaining these files on the Group Homes and should free time for both E-Comm reports staff, VPD Information Management Section and the Missing Person Unit staff.</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>(See Task #19) The BCMCP "draft document" does not distinguish between chronic runaways and any other category of missing person. Any internet reporting will have to be established at E-Comm, a G.O. created and assessed for risk and type but still treated as "high risk" until there is significant information to the contrary. This task should not be undertaken until such time as the final recommendation to the BCACP is approved</p>	NCO /lc MPU	
Dec. 15, 2004	Ongoing		Insp. /lc MCS	
Jan. 27, 2005	Ongoing		Insp. /lc MCS	
Feb. 28, 2005	Ongoing		Insp. /lc MCS	
Mar. 31, 2005	Ongoing		Insp. /lc MCS	
Apr. 29, 2005	Ongoing		Insp. /lc MCS	
Ma 30, 2005	Ongoing		Insp. /lc MCS	
July 7 2005			Insp. /lc MCS	
Feb 10 2006	Ongoing		Insp. /lc MCS	
<b>Status Apr 20 2006</b>	<b>Chronic youth runaways account for almost 95% of the Missing Persons reports filed annually. The MPU NCO has conducted meetings with various stakeholders - those with the MCFD, E-Comm, VPD's High Risk Youth Car (Car 20) and the BCPMPG. It is the intention of the MPU to eliminate the fax-in program currently being used (and abused) by the guardians and caregivers of group homes and foster homes. A revised report procedure will be implemented in concert with appropriate training. The intention is to shift the responsibility of "resolving" the situation of the AWOL youth back to the caregiver. They must commit to a level of due diligence by attempting to locate the "wayward" youth to the same extent as any other cautious and prudent parent or guardian. It is unacceptable that a "missing persons" report is faxed to E-Comm simply because the youth has failed to return within the terms of their curfew. The MPU NCO will continue to move this initiative forward and therefore the "recommendation" as articulated in the Audit can be deemed concluded.</b>		<b>Insp. /lc MCS</b>	<b>Concluded Apr 20/06</b>

TASK #	RECOMMENDATIONS	RESPONSE	RESPONSIBILITY	COMPLETION DATE
<b>45 (P3)</b> CPIC Categories for Chronic Runaways	The CPIC Advisory Committee, through our VPD representative (the Insp. I/c Services Liaison Section) and RCMP 'E' Division CPIC Services should be asked to evaluate the addition of at least one additional CPIC category (Youth at Risk) for chronic runaways. In almost all instances, these are short-term unauthorized absences and not truly missing persons. The system can flag absences in excess of 72 hours for further reviews.	The Insp. I/c MCS will request the VPD Insp. I/c Services Liaison Section to examine the creation of a new CPIC category for chronic runaways.	Insp. I/c MCS	
	Ongoing		Insp. I/c MCS	
	Dec. 15, 2004		Insp. I/c MCS	
	Jan. 27, 2005		Insp. I/c MCS	
	Feb. 28, 2005		Insp. I/c MCS	
	Mar. 31, 2005		Insp. I/c MCS	
	Apr. 29, 2005		Insp. I/c MCS	
	Ma 30, 2005		Insp. I/c MCS	
	July 7 2005		Insp. I/c MCS	
	Feb 10 2006		Insp. I/c MCS	
<b>Status</b>	<b>The MPU NCO is currently working in collaboration with Ms. Lynne Coates, CPIC Supervisor for the VPD regarding the issue of chronic youth runaways. Although the idea of entering chronic runaways on CPIC as Special Interest to Police (SIP) was discussed, it would involve a considerable proposal to the CPIC Advisory Committee. This is a long process which, if accepted, would not be voted upon until November 2006. The planned changes to the "reporting" procedure will have a more positive impact. The subject of chronic runaways will also be addressed by the BCMPC and will include "risk assessment" measures.</b>		Insp. I/c MCS	Concluded Apr 20/06
<b>46 (P3)</b> Missing Person Coordinator Reevaluation	The position profile of the Missing Person Coordinator should be evaluated to determine the feasibility of expanding the position to complete routine follow-up of chronic missing person files. This involvement would be at the discretion and under supervision of the Sergeant, after evaluation of the circumstances, and would cease if additional investigative steps are indicated that require the skills of a sworn investigator.	The NCO I/c MPU will ensure a review of the Missing Person Coordinator position is completed, including the expansion of duties so that routine queries around chronic runaways can be done.	NCO I/c MPU	
	Ongoing		Insp. I/c MCS	
	Dec. 15, 2004		Insp. I/c MCS	
	Jan. 27, 2005		Insp. I/c MCS	
	Feb. 28, 2005		Insp. I/c MCS	
	Mar. 31, 2005		Insp. I/c MCS	
Apr. 29, 2005		Insp. I/c MCS		

TASK #	RECOMMENDATIONS	RESPONSE	RESPONSIBILITY	COMPLETION DATE
Ma 30, 2005	Ongoing		Insp. /I/c MCS	
Status	A complete review of the MPU Coordinator's position has not been completed. The implementation of a Province-wide policy for Missing Persons investigations will greatly impact on the responsibilities of the MPU in general and the Coordinator specifically. Significant changes that affect the Coordinator's position in the MPU have already been initiated.		Insp. /I/c MCS	Concluded July 7/05
	A) A/Sgt Forshaw has good PRIME skills and is able to review, assign and monitor the progress of all investigations sufficiently to ensure PRIME requirements are met.			
	B) Forshaw routinely reviews files and documents this review in PRIME.			
	C) Forshaw is also able to browse in PRIME for necessary statistical data to determine criteria for Benchmark reports for the MPU. A Benchmark report for April 2005 has been submitted which indicates the number of files dealt with in the unit, and			
	D) Forshaw has implemented business rules that allow for assignment and review of cases where the detective recommends the investigation be "inactive pending further information."			
	Ms. Fitzgerald does not conduct long-term or "high risk" investigations of any sort. In speaking with her, she contends that the current detectives are extremely active and willing to take on cases at a much earlier stage than previous members deployed in the MPU. She does however continue to assist in the preliminary stages of many investigations, utilizing indices checks, contacts and telephone queries to assist the NCO to assess risk factors of cases. These routine queries often result in the early conclusion of files. Her work is consistently submitted in PRIME reports as an "MPU Coordinator's Update." She continues to maintain a hard copy of files that are open awaiting review and/or assignment (including investigative notes). I believe this is entirely appropriate and within her position profile specifically that these are general clerical duties.			
	Ms. Fitzgerald does not assign files, manage workflow or attend crime scenes. In short, the Sergeant's or Investigators' responsibilities as outlined in Mr. Schouten's report no longer "default" to Ms. Fitzgerald and her workload more accurately reflects the position profile.			
<b>47 (P3)</b>	In an effort to free experienced investigators for more serious cases, consideration should be given to appointing a pre-recruit, under close supervision, for 'routine' follow-up investigations such as chronic runaways.	The NCO /I/c MPU will contact Human Resources Section staff to advise them that, when available, pre-recruits can be utilized in MPU to do routine follow-up work, under supervision.	NCO /I/c MPU	
	Ongoing		Insp. /I/c MCS	
Dec. 15, 2004	Ongoing		Insp. /I/c MCS	
Status	Pre-Recruit Appointment		Insp. /I/c MCS	Concluded Apr. 29/05
			Insp. /I/c MCS	
			Insp. /I/c MCS	
			Insp. /I/c MCS	
	Human Resources and Training Sections have been advised that MPU can utilize these pre-recruits, under close supervision, whenever one is available.			
	Inspector Huston, /I/c Recruiting and Training Section, and Inspector Schnitzer, /I/c Human Resources Section, have been advised of our desire for placement of pre-recruits in MPU.			
Ma 30, 2005			Insp. /I/c MCS	Concluded May 30/05
Status				Page 24

Status Ma 30, 2005  
 UPDATE: Although the conclusion indicated in May of 2005 indicates that the Training Section and Human Resources Section have been advised of the desire for placement of pre-recruits in the MPU, this is no longer the case. The MPU is appropriately staffed and "routine" follow-up investigations are conducted in a coordinated effort with the Unit coordinator, the investigators and the MPU NCO.

Insp. I/c MCS  
 Concluded Apr 20/06

48 (P3) Responsibility of Chronic Runaway Files.  
 Consideration should be given to removing responsibility for chronic juvenile runaway incidents from Missing Person Unit and instead assigning coordination of these files to Youth Squad (see also Recommendation 1.8)  
 Ongoing  
 Ongoing  
 Ongoing  
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The Insp. I/c MCS will prepare a report for the DCC Cmdg. Investigation Division addressing this issue (see recommendation 7)  
 The MPU NCO has chaired meetings with various representatives of the MCFD and has met with E-Comm staff and members of the BCPMPC in relation to the issue of chronic youth runaways (as mentioned in Task #44). Proposed changes to the "reporting" process - once implemented, should have a positive impact in reducing the number of chronic runaways entered on CPIC.  
 The responsibility of Chronic Runaway file management will remain with the MPU and will not be assigned to Youth Squad as suggested in the Audit recommendations.

Insp. I/c MCS  
 Concluded Apr 20/06

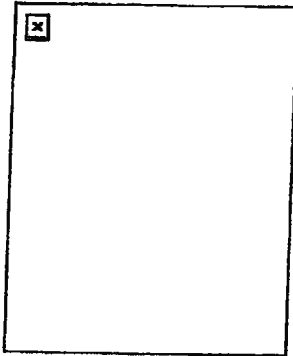
49 (P3) Request Legal Opinion  
 A legal opinion should be requested to determine the feasibility for the YPD to unilaterally cease to investigate chronic runaway reports and refer them instead to the Ministry. It should evaluate the degree of increased liability and public acceptance. Agreement and representation by the BCACP may be required to transfer this responsibility  
 Ongoing  
 Ongoing  
 Ongoing  
 Ongoing  
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 Insp. I/c MCS  
 Insp. I/c MCS

The Insp. I/c MCS will obtain a legal opinion about the feasibility of no longer accepting reports of chronic runaways. A report will be prepared for the DCC Cmdg. Investigation Division (see recommendation 50).



TASK #	RECOMMENDATIONS	RESPONSE	RESPONSIBILITY	COMPLETION DATE
July 7/05	(See Task #19) Requesting a legal opinion in regard to the feasibility of no longer accepting reports of chronic runaways would appear contrary to what the BCMPC proposes and should not be undertaken until such time as the final recommendation to the BCACP is approved.		Insp. I/c MCS	
Feb 10 2006	Ongoing		Insp. I/c MCS	
<b>Status</b>	<i>It should be completely inappropriate for the VPD unilaterally cease the investigation of chronic youth runaways. Although rebellious, they remain vulnerable to varying degrees. With pending improvements to the reporting process and the increased accountability being shifted back to guardians/caregivers and the MCFD, this task (recommendation) of obtaining a legal opinion is not necessary.</i>		<i>Insp. I/c MCS</i>	<i>Concluded Apr 20/06</i>
<b>50 (P3)</b>	<b>Chronic Runaways</b>			
	The Planning and Research Section should be asked to complete a study on alternatives for handling of Chronic runaway complaints. This study should include, but would not be restricted to: a) Policy; b) Responsibility (is this a police or a social problem?); c) Alternative reporting methods; and d) Enforcement options (Halifax Regional Police Force seeks a detention order on chronic runaways.)		Insp. I/c MCS	
Dec. 15, 2004	Ongoing		Insp. I/c MCS	
Jan. 27, 2005	Ongoing		Insp. I/c MCS	
Feb. 28, 2005	Ongoing		Insp. I/c MCS	
Mar. 31, 2005	Ongoing		Insp. I/c MCS	
Apr. 29, 2005	Ongoing		Insp. I/c MCS	
Ma 30, 2005	Ongoing		Insp. I/c MCS	
July 7 2005	Ongoing		Insp. I/c MCS	
Feb 10 2006	Ongoing		Insp. I/c MCS	
<b>Status</b>	<i>The BCMPC is in the process of developing policies and procedures for all aspects of "missing persons" from child abductions to institutional walk-aways. P&amp;R has been consulted in relation to the issue of chronic youth runaways however it is not necessary at this time to undertake an in-depth study on alternative methods in dealing with "chronic runaway" complaints.</i>		<i>Insp. I/c MCS</i>	<i>Concluded Apr 20/06</i>



**VANCOUVER POLICE DEPARTMENT**  
**MAJOR CRIME SECTION**  
**Missing Persons/Coroner's Liaison Unit**

*INB from  
 DC LePard  
 Forward  
 22 MAY 11*

**May 25th, 2006**

**To:** Deputy Chief Constable Doug LePard, Commanding Investigation Division

**Cc:** Inspector Tom McCluskie, Commanding Major Crime Section

**From:** Ron Fairweather, Sergeant I/c Missing Persons/Coroner's Liaison Unit

**Subject:** **Missing Persons Unit Review – Recommendations Completed**

The 50 recommendations (tasks) identified in the Missing Person Unit Review have now been addressed. The status of the "response actions" can therefore be deemed fully completed.

The Missing Person Unit Review, prepared by John Schouten, Inspector (Ret.) at your request, was received by you in October 2004. The extensive review consisted of an examination of the Unit's structure, policies, staffing and succession planning, training and case management, with particular focus on PRIME Records Management Systems (RMS).

**Staffing and Succession Planning**

Staffing levels for both the Missing Persons and Coroner's Liaison Unit positions have now been appropriately increased. Presently, there are two full-time Missing Person investigators and one full-time Coroner Liaison Detective Constable. The Unit includes a full-time civilian coordinator. The Unit also includes one investigator from Witness Protection and is supervised by one Sergeant.

Unit investigators work at the same level and calibre of MCS investigators and often are called to assist Homicide and Robbery Assault investigators. Therefore, the tenure has now been approved to be uniformly increased for MPU, Coroner liaison and Witness Protection Unit Investigators to five years.

**Training**

All members of the Unit currently have General Investigator and Forensic Interview training and are scheduled to take an updated DNA Evidence Collection workshop on June 16<sup>th</sup>, 2006.

The Unit NCO will further ensure that appropriate training courses are made available to members and will seek to identify workshops, conferences and education opportunities that specifically relate to Missing Persons investigations.

### **File and Records Management**

Members of the Missing Persons/Coroner's Liaison Unit and Witness Protection Unit process all reports in the PRIME Records Management System (RMS). Unit members have also completed the enhanced PRIME training for the Investigation Division.

All reports are reviewed in RMS workflow. Long term 'missing person' files are appropriately assigned to Unit investigators.

The Unit coordinator is currently in the process of entering approximately 200 historical "hand written" files onto PRIME. These files are being assigned to Unit investigators for final review and follow-up. Thirty seven of these files have now been reassigned, investigated and concluded, with no further investigation being warranted. (As per RCMP policy, "Missing Persons" remain on CPIC until they [would] have reached the chronological age of 110 years).

### **Effective Management of Chronic Youth Runaways**

One of the primary duties undertaken by the civilian coordinator is to manage the incoming files involving chronic youth runaways. Chronic youth runaways under the care and supervision of the MCFD and other contracted guardian and caregiver services, account for almost 95% of the "missing person" reports received by the VPD.

Back in 1996, following a review of the work load generated by repeated 9-1-1 calls from caregivers reporting AWOL youths, a "fax-in" process was implemented. The initial program was successful in alleviating the workload of emergency room call takers however, during the past number of years, the program slowly began to erode. Caregivers have fallen into the habit of reporting youths as "missing" that have simply gone past their designated curfew time (some for as little as 20 minutes past curfew).

I have been consistently dealing with the "chronic youth" issue for the past several months in a collaborative approach with E-Comm staff, CPIC, the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD). The "fax-in" program will eventually be rescinded once revised policies and procedures in relation to the handling of "chronic youths" have been drafted, approved and proper training has been provided to caregivers.

### **Conclusion**

The directive that an in-depth examination of the Missing Persons Unit be conducted was very proper, prudent and timely. The audit highlighted many areas that required revision. Since these findings were released in October 2004, all key areas have been addressed. There has been a continual process of enhancement in the coordination and management of missing person investigations. File documentation, record keeping and quality control issues have now been rectified.

The current team is very cohesive, diligent and highly motivated. All Unit members are clearly focused and committed to providing the absolute best service in relation to Missing Person investigations and Coroner Liaison related files.

Note: As of May 28th<sup>1</sup>, 2006 the shifting pattern for Unit staff will be enhanced to provide six day per week coverage.

Please find attached the most recent (and concluded) copy of the Missing Persons Review Recommendations.

Sincerely,

Sgt. 1090 Ron Fairweather  
Missing Persons/Coroner's Liaison Unit  
312 Main Street, Vancouver BC V6A 2T2  
604-717-252  
ron.fairweather@vpd.ca



Vancouver Police Department

Missing Person files - Female (2002-2010 YTD)

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010*	Total
# Missing Cases (Female)	2284	1872	1803	2394	1908	1483	1357	1437	1187	15845
# Solved Cases (of total cases)	2293	1971	1903	2303	1908	1483	1357	1437	1187	15842
% Solved Cases	99.96%	99.95%	100%	99.96%	100%	100%	100.00%	100.00%	100%	99.98%
# Found Alive (of all Solved Cases)	2283	1966	1901	2301	1905	1480	1354	1434	1184	15808
% Found Alive	99.6%	99.7%	99.9%	99.9%	99.8%	99.8%	99.8%	99.8%	99.7%	99.79%
# Found Deceased (of all Solved Cases)	10	5	2	2	3	3	3	3	3	34
% Found Deceased	0.44%	0.25%	0.11%	0.09%	0.16%	0.20%	0.22%	0.21%	0.25%	0.21%
# Open Cases (of total cases)	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	3
% Open Cases	0.04%	0.05%	0%	0.04%	0%	0%	0.00%	0.00%	0%	0.02%

From 2002 to 2010 (August 15th), a total of 15,845 cases involving missing females were investigated. Of those, 15,842 (99.98%) were solved, including 15,808 (99.79%) found alive and 34 (0.21%) found deceased. Only 3 (0.02%) missing cases (females) remain open and unsolved. Of the 15,845 reports to the VPD of missing females from 2002 to present, three remain missing and the files unresolved. In one of the cases, no foul play is suspected. The other two disappearances were under suspicious circumstances.

\* 2010 includes cases up to and including 2010-08-15.

## 1.6.25 Missing Persons/Children

### **POLICY**

It is well documented that Aboriginal and marginalized people face challenges that increase their risk of going missing and may be barriers to reporting. It is important that the principles of respect, compassion and empathy be emphasized, and guide all missing person investigations.

Aboriginal persons and marginalized Persons, and specifically Aboriginal women and children, are in a group who have a statistically higher risk of suffering violence, and as a result missing persons complaints must be evaluated to determine if persons belonging to any of these groups should be investigated as a high risk missing person.

Marginalized persons include the homeless, those with alcohol or drug addictions, mental disorders, sex trade workers or anyone who may be subject of a cultural bias.

Missing Persons investigations fall under one of four categories:

- a. Curfew Breaches
- b. Non-high risk people or situations
- c. High risk people or situations
- d. Aboriginal and marginalized persons

High risk people or situations include, but are not limited to, children under 12 years of age, the elderly, or persons with mental or physical disabilities and those persons included in cultural or social groups, or whose lifestyle and the circumstances of the incident may result in increased risk of violence.

High risk missing persons shall be investigated as soon as possible by patrol members, and followed up by the Missing Persons Unit (MPU).

The Department will investigate missing person reports when the person was last seen in Vancouver, or if the person resides in Vancouver and it is not known where they were last seen. In the event of a jurisdictional dispute, the safety and welfare of the missing person shall be given paramount consideration; the Department will provide assistance to any agency as needed.

### **PROCEDURE**

Curfew Breaches are categorized as a *Missing Person* incident by E-Comm. The following procedures apply.

1. Patrol Supervisors shall:
  - a. consider requesting that dispatch broadcast the information,

- b. forward the information to the MPU, and
  - c. memo the CAD call.
2. Under extenuating circumstances such as comments regarding suicide made by the young person, other unusual behaviour, assign a member to investigate.

Non-high risk missing persons shall be reported via E-Comm or by patrol members and forwarded to the MPU for follow up.

Members assigned to investigate a high risk missing person report, shall:

3. Notify a Patrol Supervisor;
4. Obtain a description of the person;
5. Also obtain the following information:
  - a. the location where they were last seen,
  - b. a possible destination,
  - c. any medical condition(s) and/or any required medication,
  - d. the identity and location of the complainant,
  - e. cell phone, credit card and bank account numbers, email accounts, Facebook and other social media access.
  - f. Employment and or school contact information and details.
  - g. a vehicle description and license plate number, if applicable, and
  - h. any history of similar incidents.
6. Search the premises where the person was last seen, including the residence or other applicable premises;
  - a. this must be done by a member, do not rely on the word of a complainant or citizen that a search has been conducted,
  - b. include small spaces where a child may hide (e.g. fridge),
  - c. consider attics, unused rooms, etc.,
  - d. look for notes, diaries,
  - e. consider examination of computers and other electronic communications devices, and,
  - f. for vehicles also check the backseat and trunk.
7. Exhaust all efforts to locate the missing person. Investigative techniques may include, but are not limited to:
  - a. conduct a PRIME search,
  - b. request EComm contact all area hospitals
  - c. attempt to contact associates, friends and family members,



- d. send CPIC messages to all relevant jurisdictions, and,
  - e. where possible, attend the past and present residences of the person.
8. Complete the General Occurrence report (GO) as soon as practicable and before the end of shift.
9. Route the GO to the Sgt. i/c Missing Persons Unit (MPU).
10. Take the following steps when the missing person may have access to a vehicle:
  - a. contact all towing companies operating within the City of Vancouver and determine if the vehicle has been impounded since the missing person was last seen,
  - b. contact the City of Vancouver Parking Enforcement "police only line" (XXX-XXX-XXXX) to determine if the vehicle has been ticketed, the number is available via EComm, and,
  - c. enter the vehicle license plate number on CPIC if the vehicle has not been located, and,
  - d. if a vehicle is located conduct a search of the vehicle.
11. Submit photographs of the missing person if possible. Ensure the photographs are recent and a true likeness of the person. E-mail digital photographs or forward hard copies to the Sgt. i/c MPU.
12. Advise the complainant that the MPU will contact them as soon as practicable for a follow-up investigation, and to contact 9-11 should the missing person return home.
13. When a missing person has been located prior to the end of the assigned member's shift, the member shall:
  - a. ensure that the missing person and their vehicle (if applicable) are removed from CPIC;
  - b. submit a supplemental page to the original GO as soon as practicable and before the end of shift;
  - c. ensure the missing person and found person PRIME reports are cross referenced; and
  - d. notify the appropriate sections and/or other jurisdictions and agencies.

Patrol Supervisors advised of a missing person incident shall consider the specifics of the incident, and whether the missing person's status as a marginalized or Aboriginal person may warrant treating the investigation as high risk. If determined that the incident is high risk, the Supervisor shall:

14. Ensure a priority one response and consider the following resources:
  - a. Traffic Section;
  - b. Dog Squad;

- c. Search and Canvass Team members;
- d. Marine Unit;
- e. Bicycle units;
- f. ERT;
- g. Victim Services Unit;
- h. Citizens Crime Watch;
- i. Assistance from other districts or nearby agencies.

15. In addition:

- a. notify the Duty Officer;
- b. notify the Sergeant i/c MPU. After hours, the Duty Officer will provide the phone number;

Duty Officer shall:

16. Consider if additional resources are required (e.g. Search and Canvass Team, Public Affairs Section);

17. Activate an *AMBER Alert* if the missing person is a child and the criteria are met as per s.1.7.2 Abduction: AMBER Alert;

18. Consider an abduction or kidnapping and refer to s.1.7.24 Child Kidnapping, Abduction or Attempted Abduction by Stranger; and,

19. Set up a command post if necessary.



# THE TRAGEDY OF MISSING AND MURDERED ABORIGINAL WOMEN IN CANADA

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## WE CAN DO BETTER

A POSITION PAPER BY THE SISTERWATCH PROJECT  
OF THE VANCOUVER POLICE DEPARTMENT  
AND THE WOMEN'S MEMORIAL MARCH COMMITTEE

JUNE 2011



VANCOUVER POLICE DEPARTMENT | *Beyond the Call*





20TH ANNUAL WOMEN'S MEMORIAL MARCH - FEBRUARY 14, 2011

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*I have a few family members missing on the Highway of Tears. I have four daughters so it really scares me... We didn't just come down here and decide to be a drug addict or an alcoholic or a prostitute. There are many reasons - usually domestic violence in the community leads a lot of the women to get away from the violence. And then they come down here and they're back into a violent situation again... There's not enough being done when it comes to First Nations women going missing. These are our loved ones, our children, and when they go missing, it tears a piece out of the whole family.*

GLADYS RADEK  
WALK FOR JUSTICE CO-FOUNDER

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The number of missing and murdered Aboriginal women in Canada is a national tragedy.

- Aboriginal women between 25 and 44 are five times more likely to die a violent death than other women.
- Aboriginal women make up four percent of the female population but the majority of missing and murdered women.
- The Native Women's Association of Canada database includes 582 known cases of missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls, the majority having occurred between 1990 and 2010.

This report is based on consultations between members of the Women's Memorial March Committee and Vancouver Police officers and outlines the current problems, actions that have been taken in response, and recommendations to address remaining gaps, including a unique police/community collaboration model called SisterWatch.

Aboriginals comprise only four percent of the population in Canada but their numbers are increasing faster than Canada's population overall. Aboriginals are more likely than other Canadians to be marginalized and are consequently significantly over-represented both as victims and suspects in crime. Aboriginal women are disproportionately the victims of violence, including murder. A longstanding concern is that the criminal justice system fails to recognize the customs, values and traditions of Aboriginal people.

Vancouver's Downtown Eastside "Missing Women" case is a tragic example of how marginalized women – including many Aboriginals – can become victims of serious

crime. In this case, the perpetrator was the notorious Robert Pickton, Canada's worst serial killer. Pickton should have been apprehended sooner and the police investigations were initially inadequate. Later on, the police in BC formed a Missing Women Task Force to investigate the disappearances and were successful in obtaining six murder convictions against Pickton. There is also an ongoing BC investigation into missing and murdered women in Northern BC along Highway 16 – also known as the "Highway of Tears." Other provinces, including Alberta and Manitoba, have also formed task forces to focus on missing and murdered women, many of them Aboriginal.

There are many challenges to investigating missing Aboriginal women, including investigative capacity; the mobility of the victims; a lack of coordination between police agencies; delays in reporting; and a lack of police access to useful databases.

In recent years, there have been many initiatives to address the problem of missing and murdered Aboriginal women as set out in this report and in Appendix "A."

There remain, however, gaps in both prevention efforts and police investigative capacity. One of the most significant challenges in missing women investigations is barriers to reporting across jurisdictions. These barriers can be reduced by creating a "clearing house" model both nationally and provincially, with 1-800 phone numbers to facilitate reporting. While Internet-based reporting and coordination has been introduced in some provinces, it does not exist Canada-wide. Moreover, marginalized people do not have ready access to the Internet and the process to report must be as barrier-free as possible.



More work by all police agencies is required to build better relationships with Aboriginal communities. There is a legacy of mistrust and perceptions of police apathy from the community that must be overcome. In addition, police must proactively target predatory offenders who prey on Aboriginal women. The Vancouver Police Department and the Women's Memorial March Committee have developed a program called "SisterWatch" to address both these issues and encourage other communities to consider a similar program.

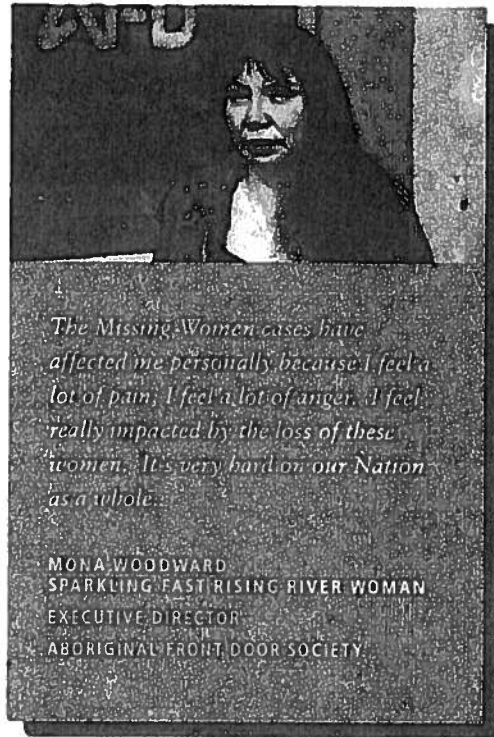
This report reiterates recommendations from previous reports on the problem of missing and murdered Aboriginal women, and also recommends a national and provincial clearing house model with 1-800 phone numbers; harmonized legislation to provide for better access to databases helpful to missing persons investigations; and consideration of the SisterWatch program for other communities.



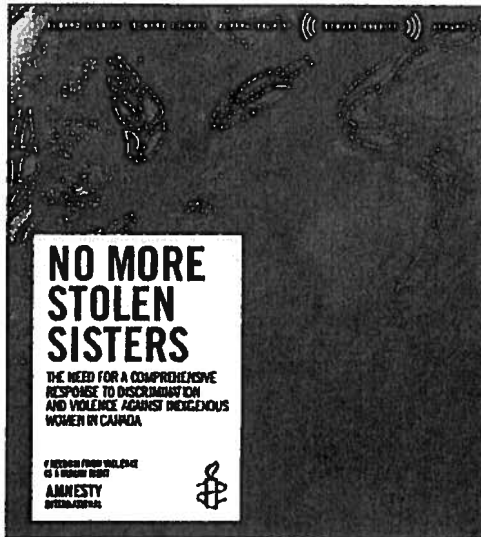
## INTRODUCTION

The number of missing and murdered Aboriginal women in Canada is a national tragedy. Despite making up only four percent of the Canadian female population, women of Aboriginal descent make up the majority of women who are missing and murdered. Aboriginal women between 25 and 44 are five times more likely to die a violent death than other women.<sup>1</sup> The issue of violence against women generally touches many; however, the Aboriginal community has obviously been impacted far more than the average Canadian family. The issue of violence against Aboriginal women is a complex one involving social, economic and cultural factors. These factors are also played out in the extraordinary number of Aboriginal women in Canada who go missing, and in some cases are murdered, each year. These stark statistics of the murdered and missing demand a national coordinated response.

Much credit must go to Amnesty International's 2004 report, *Stolen Sisters - A Human Rights Response to Violence and Discrimination Against Indigenous Women* and the follow-



up report, *No More Stolen Sisters* in 2009, and to the Native Women's Association of Canada which have been catalysts to increasing attention to this issue by governments, police agencies and police associations.<sup>2</sup>



The purpose of this report is to summarize the nature and depth of the problem; identify actions that have been taken, have been proposed, or are in progress; and to recommend what more should be done at the local, provincial and national levels to ensure an evidence-based, best practice approach to addressing an unacceptable situation. Because solutions to social challenges such as this require cooperation and collaboration in the community, this report was written as a collaborative effort between the Vancouver Police Department (VPD) and the Vancouver Women's Memorial March Committee (WMMC).<sup>3</sup> This joint committee, called the "SisterWatch Committee," was brought

together after the tragic death of a young Aboriginal woman in the Downtown Eastside in 2010 and the resulting community distress.

This committee serves to build relationships and opens doors to further collaboration. The VPD and the WMMC's SisterWatch Committee also share a sad history involving

the Missing Women of the Downtown Eastside of Vancouver and the subsequent arrest of serial killer Robert Pickton. But the SisterWatch Committee is something truly positive that came out of those sad events and now oversees a variety of initiatives to reduce violence against Aboriginal women in Vancouver, as described later in this report.

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## PART I: BACKGROUND CONTEXT

### Aboriginals in Canada

According to the 2006 census, approximately 1.1 million people in Canada (or about 4% of the total population) identified themselves as an Aboriginal person (i.e., First Nations, Métis or Inuit). While only a small percentage of the Canadian population is Aboriginal, it is growing rapidly, with a 45% increase between 1996 and 2006. Aboriginal people are increasingly living in urban areas, with significant populations in Winnipeg, Edmonton, and Vancouver. With a population of slightly more than 40,000, Vancouver has the third largest urban Aboriginal population in Canada. Finally, the Aboriginal population is much younger than the non-Aboriginal population, with almost half being under 24, compared to only 31% of the non-Aboriginal population.\*

### Violence in Aboriginal Communities

In 1996, a Canadian Royal Commission on Aboriginal People found that, “[r]epeated assaults on the culture and collective identity of aboriginal people have weakened the foundations of aboriginal society and contributed to the alienation that drives some to self-destruction and anti-social behaviour.”<sup>5</sup> Many researchers have found that, compared to non-Aboriginals, Aboriginals are more likely to live in poverty and substandard housing;<sup>6</sup> have lower levels of educational achievement;<sup>7</sup> have poorer health, including much higher rates of diabetes, HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis;<sup>8</sup> have higher rates of alcohol and drug dependency;<sup>9</sup> suffer higher rates of victimization by crime, particularly relationship violence;<sup>10</sup> have higher youth suicide rates;<sup>11</sup> and are more likely to have negative contact with the criminal justice system, including over-representation in



*All Aboriginal women are subjected to the racism and the sexualization that history has constructed around Aboriginal women as sexualized creatures of disposal. Aboriginal women have to have a reason to trust. Where there was developed a very strong feeling of distrust, police will have to do a lot more.*

GLORIA LARDOUE

ABORIGINAL FRONT DOOR BOARD MEMBER

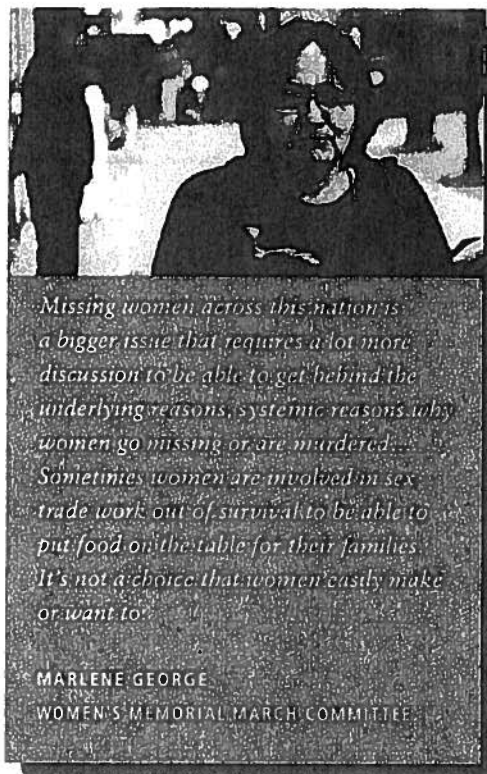
federal and provincial prisons.<sup>12</sup> Notably, the homicide rate for Aboriginals is almost seven times higher than the rate for non-Aboriginals, and Aboriginals are accused of homicide at a rate 10 times that of non-Aboriginals.<sup>13</sup>

The reasons for Aboriginals' over-representation in these negative contexts are many and complex, but certainly include a history of institutionalized racism and discrimination. Though there are many examples of this throughout history, the most visible manifestation of such discrimination was the federal government's emphasis on assimilation and the residential school system it implemented in the 1870s. It took until the 1990s for this system to be completely

dismantled and the impacts of it will be felt for many generations to come.<sup>14</sup> In 2008 Prime Minister Harper made a formal apology on behalf of all Canadians for the history and legacy of Aboriginal residential schools.<sup>15</sup>

The impacts of the injustices suffered by Canada's Aboriginal peoples have been profound. One of the most troubling is that Aboriginal women are victimized at a much higher rate than the overall rate of violence against women in Canada. For example, as described earlier, a 1996 report from the federal government notes that Aboriginal women between the ages of 25 and 44 with status under the federal *Indian Act* are five times more likely than all other women in the same age range to die as the result of violence.<sup>16</sup> Further, a 2004 government survey of Aboriginal women and a 2011 Statistics Canada report both revealed rates of violence (including domestic violence and sexual assault) up to 3.5 times higher than for non-Aboriginal women.<sup>17</sup> Like most gendered violence, much of it is difficult to quantify, and underreporting occurs for complex reasons, including distrust of authorities and shame.<sup>18</sup> A longstanding concern is that the criminal justice system fails to recognize the customs, values and traditions of Aboriginal people.

Also contributing to the level of victimization experienced by Aboriginal women is the high number that become involved in the sex trade. Many marginalized young Aboriginal women find themselves drawn into the street level sex industry and find themselves trapped in "survival sex work" because of illicit drug addictions. A 2004 survey in Vancouver of 183 women (30% of whom were Aboriginal) in the sex trade found that 65% began selling sexual services because they needed money, or because of their drug addiction.<sup>19</sup> Sadly, drug addiction was cited as the reason for continuing in the sex trade by 60% of the women surveyed.



As described in the VPD's "Missing Women Investigation Review,"<sup>20</sup> sex trade workers in Canada are frequent victims of violent attacks. They are particularly vulnerable to attacks from predatory customers, but also from pimps, boyfriends, or in drug-related incidents.<sup>21</sup> The murder risk for sex trade workers is approximately 60 to 120 times that of the general female population.<sup>22</sup> According to some research, sex trade workers are the most likely victims of a serial killer. Further, the most highly addicted and desperate sex trade workers are more likely than other sex trade workers to be the victims of a serial killer.<sup>23</sup> In Vancouver's Downtown Eastside, one media report noted that:

...the truth is that there are numerous predators attacking sex trade workers on a regular basis. A review of *The Vancouver Sun* files shows at least 25 different men charged with killing prostitutes in BC over the last 17 years. In the past month alone, Vancouver city police arrested two men suspected in a series of sexual assaults against women in the sex trade.<sup>24</sup>

## CASE STUDY ► VANCOUVER'S MISSING WOMEN CASE

Since the late 1970s, very sporadically, women had gone missing from the Downtown Eastside area of Vancouver, but so infrequently that the cases didn't raise alarm with authorities. However, in the mid-1990s, the frequency with which poor, addicted sex trade workers were going missing began to provoke considerable community concern. Many believed a serial killer was responsible; however, some in the VPD did not support this theory and this contributed to an inadequate investigative response. In addition, the investigative challenges were enormous. There were no crime scenes, no witnesses, no physical evidence, and no victims; the only evidence was the absence of an increasing number of women.

This situation was further complicated by the fact that, as it turned out, the women were being lured to a property in the Vancouver suburb of Port Coquitlam, which is policed by a detachment of the RCMP. The Coquitlam RCMP received information about Robert Pickton from informants and witnesses in 1998 and 1999 but the investigations in Coquitlam and Vancouver operated independently for the most part. The resulting investigative silos contributed to many missed opportunities to solve the case sooner than it was. Eventually, a joint investigation of the RCMP and the VPD, the Missing Women Task Force (MWTF) was created in 2001.

In February of 2002, the serendipitous execution of an unrelated firearms search warrant by a member of the

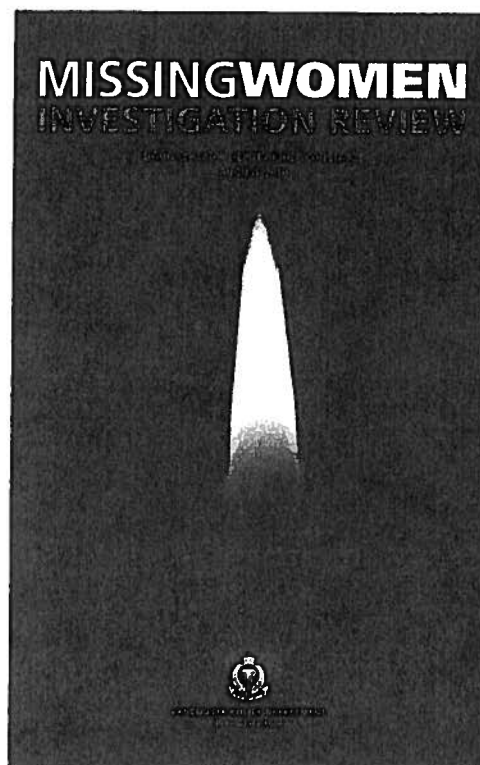


Coquitlam RCMP broke the case. Fortunately, the MWTF was able to immediately assume control of the investigation and successfully concluded the largest serial murder investigation in Canadian history. Six convictions of murder against Robert Pickton were obtained in relation to remains, DNA and other evidence found on Pickton's property involving at least 33 women who had gone missing between 1995 and 2001, inclusive. This was the same period during which the notable increase in missing women from the Downtown Eastside occurred (although some of the victims were missing from other communities in BC). Pickton boasted to an undercover police officer that he had killed 49 women. In total, Pickton was charged with 27 counts of murder. He was subsequently tried and convicted of six murders; these convictions were upheld in 2010 by the Supreme Court of Canada. Since Pickton could not receive any sentence longer than the life sentence he had already received, the Crown in BC decided to enter a stay of proceedings on the remaining 20 charges, which had been severed by the Court from the first six. (The 27th charge had been previously stayed by the trial judge.)

The VPD committed to learning what went wrong and doing so in a transparent manner. The VPD released its comprehensive report, the "Missing Women Investigation Review" (MWIR),<sup>25</sup> shortly after the conclusion of the criminal matters in 2010. (The report had been written several years earlier, but could not be released until the criminal matters were concluded.) In addition, the VPD's apology for its failings in the case was broadcast live on a national network<sup>26</sup> and received considerable media coverage.

The recommendations in the MWIR directed to the VPD have all been implemented, including the institutionalization of major case management training and protocols; changes to the criteria for the selection of staff for various affected areas; an increase in the number of provincially accredited major case management team commanders; significantly improved resources, systems, and analysis; and improved management accountability.<sup>27</sup>

Furthermore, the research for the MWIR identified significant problems in the Missing Person's Unit. As a result, a full-time sergeant's position was created in 2003 and later a detailed external audit of the Unit was commissioned. This audit resulted in 50 recommendations, all of which were implemented. The Missing Persons Unit is now viewed as a best-practice unit in Canada, has a 99% solve rate, and has received accolades for its work.<sup>28</sup>



The VPD regrets the mistakes made in this investigation and resolved to learn from them and improve current practices with the hope that other families and police agencies will benefit from these lessons in the future.

The final review of this notorious case will be conducted by the Honourable Wally Oppal, QC, in a Missing Women Commission of Inquiry that is underway as of the date of this report.

## The National Picture Regarding Missing and Murdered Aboriginal Women

Based on 2005 data, in Canada over 100,000 persons are reported missing annually.<sup>29</sup> More than half are teenagers, most of them runaways,<sup>30</sup> and the vast majority are found within weeks. Unfortunately, 4,800 persons were still recorded as missing after a year, and approximately 270 new cases of long term missing persons are reported annually.<sup>31</sup>

Aboriginal women have been disproportionately represented in these statistics. For example, a 2007 joint committee of government, Aboriginal Peoples, police and community groups in Saskatchewan reported that 60 per cent of the long-term cases of missing women in the province are Aboriginal, although Aboriginal women make up only six per cent of the population in Saskatchewan.<sup>32</sup>

Accurate numbers are difficult to obtain, particularly due to reporting issues, but a recent estimate by the Native Women's Association of Canada (March 31, 2010) suggests that there are 582 known cases of missing or murdered Aboriginal women and girls in Canada, more than half of them since 1990.<sup>33</sup> The fact that there is no official government source for such information is in itself evidence of the need for better national analysis and coordination.

The September 2010 report of the Federal/Provincial/Territorial Missing Women Working Group noted that many of the missing and murdered women in Canada were Aboriginal. The report also noted that the women had a number of characteristics in common, including living in poverty; being homeless, transient, and lacking in social networks; addicted to alcohol or drugs; involved in sex work or other

## PROJECT KARE

In Alberta in 2005, the RCMP created an integrated investigative team called Project Kare. According to its website, Project Kare is an investigational unit originally created to examine the deaths of several "high risk missing persons" who were found in rural areas surrounding the City of Edmonton. Kare has since expanded its mandate to include cases of murdered or missing high risk persons from all parts of Alberta. Project Kare includes staff from the RCMP, Edmonton and Calgary police services.

high risk practices such as hitchhiking; and experiencing mental health issues.<sup>34</sup> Moreover, according to research by the Native Women's Association of Canada, urban areas are the most risky for women and girls, finding that "70 percent of women and girls disappeared from an urban area, and 60 percent were murdered in an urban area."<sup>35</sup> This may be related to the fact that urban centres tend to have more vulnerable women as well as more predators who can perpetuate their crimes in the anonymity of a big city.

While cases of known missing and murdered Aboriginal women are concentrated in the western provinces, no region of Canada is immune; only Prince Edward Island does not have any cases listed in the Native Women's Association of Canada website.<sup>36</sup>

## National and Provincial Initiatives

As a result of high profile cases, and pressure from the community, several police agencies and associations have made significant efforts to address the problem of missing and murdered Aboriginal women. Initiatives such as task forces have been set up in several jurisdictions and a variety of actions have been taken at the municipal, provincial and federal levels, as described earlier. Several of the task forces are described in textboxes throughout this report, and Appendix "A" describes in more detail some of the major initiatives in Canada that have been implemented to support investigations and to increase awareness in both the community and among police agencies.

One of the more promising initiatives underway is a project to create a National Police Support Centre for Missing Children/Missing Persons and Unidentified Human Remains Investigations (known as "NPSCMP"). NPSCMP will encompass National Missing Children Services (NMCS) and expand support to all missing persons investigations as well as all unidentified remains investigations. Using a consolidated database and new public web site, in cooperation with regional partners, the program will put in place a network of support centres for police and coroner/medical examiner investigators across Canada. NPSCMP will operate the infrastructure and the national centre, supporting Canadian and international cases with case analysis as well as conducting research and promoting best practices for these types of investigations.

A key component of this new national databank will be a publicly-accessible website where members of the community may both review missing persons cases, and submit information to the police and other investigative agencies.

The new system (and the corresponding changes to CPIC, the Canadian Police Information Centre) will ensure that this locally-reported data gets transferred to the

## MANITOBA TASK FORCE

In 2009, Manitoba formed a murdered and missing women task force. It is comprised of experienced investigators from the RCMP and the Winnipeg Police Service. The Province of Manitoba is represented on the task force's steering committee. The mandate of the task force is to review and investigate unsolved homicide files involving female victims, review missing person files involving female victims where foul play is suspected, and to determine if any links exist between the cases.

national MC/MPUR database, and out to (yet to be fully-established) regional missing persons centres. The regional centres will also conduct comprehensive analysis and correlation of reported data, and ensure that local police departments are informed of each missing persons case, as well as trends in their jurisdiction, region, and province.

According to NPSCMP project staff, analysis of missing persons data in the new databank will be comprehensive. Leading-edge mathematical and statistical techniques will be used to sift through all of Canada's missing persons reports to identify patterns and commonalities. Spatial and temporal analyses will attempt to identify any cases which may be related, and therefore in need of focus by investigators. The NPSCMP team will communicate any significant analytical results to the appropriate regional missing persons centre.<sup>37</sup>

On October 29, 2010, the Honourable Rona Ambrose, Minister of Public Works and Government Services and Minister for Status of Women, announced at Vancouver Police Department Headquarters many important initiatives, including the MC/MPUR project described above, to address the "disturbingly high number of missing and murdered Aboriginal Women in Canada."<sup>38</sup>



Minister Ambrose also announced:<sup>39</sup>

- the investment of \$10 million over two years to improve community safety and to ensure that the justice system and law enforcement agencies can better respond to cases of missing and murdered Aboriginal women;
- a new National Police Support Centre for Missing Persons to help police forces across Canada by providing coordination and specialized support in missing persons investigations;
- a national website to encourage the public to provide tips and information on missing persons cases and unidentified human remains;
- enhancing the CPIC database to capture additional missing persons data;
- amendments to the *Criminal Code* to streamline the warrants application process where wiretaps are required in missing person cases; and
- a comprehensive list of best practices to help communities, law enforcement and justice partners in future work.

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## PART II: INVESTIGATIVE CHALLENGES

### **The Challenges to Investigations of Missing and Murdered Aboriginal Women**

It is a tragic sign of the size and scope of the problem that there have been or continue to be multiple investigations in Canada into missing/murdered women, many of whom are Aboriginal, including cases of serial murder. BC, Alberta and Manitoba have all formed large task forces/ joint operations (e.g., Missing Women Task Force, EPANA regarding the Highway of Tears case,<sup>40, 41</sup> Project Kare,<sup>42</sup> and the Manitoba Task Force<sup>43</sup>) to deal with the investigations of large numbers of women who have gone missing or been murdered.

However, there are many challenges unique to the investigation of murdered and missing Aboriginal women. These challenges are related to the lifestyle and characteristics of the victims, the nature of the crimes where foul play is involved, and the lack of adequate resourcing or expertise in some police agencies.

This report only outlines a few of the factors that impact this type of investigation. Those listed here tend to have the biggest impact on the investigation and thus are most relevant to any discussion about protection of these vulnerable women.

## Lack of Police Investigative Expertise and Capacity

While larger police forces usually have missing persons units, there are many medium-size and small police agencies in Canada that do not. For small communities in particular, the critical mass may not exist to have a specialized unit or to develop the investigative proficiency desired. Further, an Amnesty International brief points out that most police agencies do not have policies and procedures specific to the issue of missing Aboriginal women.<sup>44</sup> This is particularly relevant for Aboriginal communities. Being sensitive to the community, particularly in small rural areas, will help build the community's trust in the police and encourage them to report people who are missing.

The numbers of missing and murdered women, and the number of investigations that are needed, emphasizes the need for specialized resources within all police agencies, either directly, or through participation in a regional unit, or through the development of protocols with nearby larger agencies. National or provincial standards for the investigations would be beneficial in ensuring that every agency follows best practices for the investigation of missing persons – particularly Aboriginal and marginalized people – and that staff are adequately trained, both in relevant investigative techniques and the unique aspects of missing person investigations. It is important that the affected communities should be consulted in developing these standards. As the ones most impacted by the police actions, it will ensure that the community's needs are respected. Further, having standards for this type of investigation, clear expectations of the officers, and sensitivity to the culture of the community will help to avoid situations of perceived apathy, ignorance, or neglect of those at risk.

It is noteworthy that the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police (CACF) is advocating for such standards, they are a part of the new



*I was an addict in the Downtown Eastside. There was this program about someone arresting this pig farmer and I was feeling sick because I had just been there. I could have been one of those women. Missing and murdered Aboriginal women is... a social issue. It's important for the police in Canada to step up and say... 'this is not ok.'*

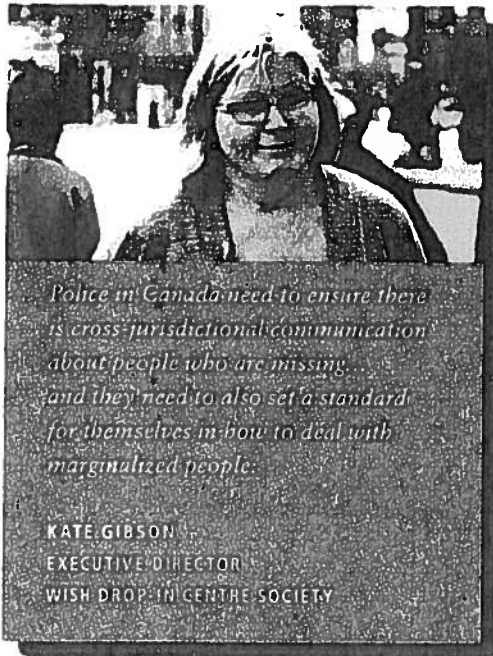
LISA YELLOW-QUILL  
BLUE THUNDERBIRD WOMAN/STRONG  
MEDICINE WOMAN/STANDING  
CO-MANAGER ABORIGINAL WOMEN'S  
PROGRAM/STV COUNSELLOR  
BATTERED WOMEN'S SUPPORT SERVICES

NPSCMP's mandate, and significant NPSCMP consultation with stakeholders is occurring.

## The Mobility of Missing Persons

Investigations into missing persons are difficult when the person is known to be transient. Obviously, those who move frequently, or who do not have a consistent place to call home, can be challenging to find. Determination of when they were last seen and where they went missing from, as well as where they can be located, is more complicated than for those who are less mobile.

As a whole, Aboriginal people living off-reserve move more frequently than other people living in Canada. A 2001 report noted that "off-reserve Registered Indian women in all age groups were the most likely to report having moved in the past five years."<sup>45</sup> This may result in missing Aboriginal women having limited community connections, posing problems for reporting and police response.



Because this is a problem that is more frequent within Aboriginal communities, it is crucially important that police agencies build good relationships with Aboriginal communities in both urban and rural settings. This may be particularly relevant in urban settings given the increased risk of victimization that Aboriginal women face there. These relationships can be built in a variety of ways, both official and unofficial, but the key is for the police to be engaged with the vulnerable populations in their communities.

### **Lack of Coordination Among Police Agencies**

The high level of mobility of Aboriginal women in Canada may result in weaker ties to community and family. Further, in many cases family members are in different jurisdictions from the missing person, complicating reporting to police. And while 81 percent of Canada's population lives in cities, only 54 percent of Aboriginals do.<sup>46</sup> This means a significant number live in small communities, in rural areas and on reserves, which may increase the challenges for effective investigations, because of a lack of specialized

resources. In addition, several different policing jurisdictions may be involved, which can create many problems. These include the potential for patterns of offending to be missed thus reducing the seriousness with which the problem is viewed, inadequate communication, and lack of policing capacity to address the problem, among others. These problems are compounded by the increased mobility of Aboriginals compared to Canadians overall. Consistent policing standards could help address these challenges, particularly in under-resourced areas.

Coordination is the most difficult to accomplish but is the most important because it has the greatest potential to impact this problem. A significant number of missing women come from small and under-resourced communities. Their police agencies (including First Nations police services) may be under-resourced as well and patterns across several communities may not be detected because the missing women are considered in isolation as "one-offs." This situation can contribute to an under-reaction by the community and by police agencies. For example, under current investigative practices, women may go missing from a number of isolated communities. These cases may be linked, and foul play may be a factor, yet this fact will not be recognized by the police community because of a lack of communication and coordination. As each case is currently reported separately to a different investigator at the victim's local police agency or detachment, the existence of multiple individual cases may not be noticed unless there is significant communication between the police agencies about cases in their areas. Potentially, a serial offender may be at work, and what may be the only evidence – an unexplained spike in the number of missing women – may not be readily apparent.

Complicating this scenario is the fact that these communities may be in different provinces, making the likelihood of the incidents being connected even lower.

Therefore, it is important that there is analysis on a regional, provincial and national level to identify anomalous patterns of missing Aboriginal women on an inter-jurisdictional basis, and to look for linkages between cases. BC and other provinces have made significant progress in this regard, as will be described later in this report. In addition, the NPSCMP is now mandated to assist with coordination. Finally, best practices developed by the NPSCMP and the CACP will also help improve the quality of analysis.

### Delays in Reporting

As was the case in Vancouver's Missing Women serial murder case, marginalized people are often not reported missing for lengthy periods of time – weeks, months, years and, in some cases, even decades after they were last seen.

This time delay creates incredible challenges for police investigators, because of a lack of a clear timeline, witnesses, forensics or suspects when foul play is involved. Historically, police did not treat a missing persons case as one of foul play unless there was clear evidence of such. Some agencies' policies have now changed to require that all missing persons cases be treated as "suspicious" until there is evidence to the contrary.<sup>47</sup> Further, police agencies have become more aware of the significance of spikes in the number of reported missing people, particularly when the missing persons are considered highly vulnerable to victimization.

### Lack of Access to Useful Databases

An important investigative strategy for locating missing persons is accessing non-police databases, such as social assistance, health, employment, bank or utilities records. In Vancouver's Missing Women case, difficulty accessing health records from other provinces was a significant barrier in the investigation, with privacy legislation often cited. With a missing persons investigation and no crime

## HIGHWAY OF TEARS

According to the BC All Chiefs' Task Force, BC's "Highway of Tears," Hwy 16 between Prince George and Prince Rupert, has seen 32 women missing or murdered since 1969, most of whom were young Aboriginal women. The RCMP's investigation, "EPANA," has a mandate to analyze each relevant file to determine if there is sufficient evidence to support the theory that a serial killer is responsible, and to develop and implement strategies that will advance the investigations. The cases span a time frame from 1969 to 2006 and cover an area from Prince Rupert to the north, Kamloops and Merritt in the south, and Hinton, Alberta to the east.

known to have occurred, no search warrant is available to overcome this problem. In the Vancouver case, persistent efforts, including written requests, assistance from the Provincial Coroner, and other appeals, helped police to overcome these barriers. Using a variety of databases, in particular provincial health records, Vancouver Police investigators were able to locate several missing women living in other provinces and the United States. These women would not have been located without police access to these databases.

One solution to this challenge would be for federal, provincial and territorial governments to develop harmonized legislation that would allow police access to personal information of persons reported missing, as has been recommended in several reports<sup>48</sup> and in a resolution by the Alberta Chiefs of Police.<sup>49</sup> In May 2011, Alberta passed the first such legislation in Canada and this could be used as a model for other provinces.<sup>50</sup> Not only would having such legislation allow police agencies access to important information to locate individuals, it would also mean that record holder agencies from different areas would

be operating from the same privacy framework thus allowing timely access to relevant information.

### **Lack of Data**

Police-reported crime data in general is known to underestimate actual crime and this is particularly relevant in missing persons cases. There are likely more missing Aboriginal (and otherwise marginalized) women than have been reported because of a variety of barriers to reporting. According to the report of the Federal/Provincial/Territorial Missing Women Working Group, barriers include a lack of public understanding of when and how to make a report, as well as systemic problems with police taking reports and regularly entering them on appropriate databases, including the national Canadian Police Information Center (CPIC) computer network.<sup>51</sup>

As a result, the data that is known about missing women is often incomplete or out of date. In part, the issues stem from police policies and practices that are not conducive to these types of cases. Further, due to delays associated with manual data entry, police databases are not able to include up-to-the-minute information. CPIC, while a good resource in many cases, is not a sufficiently searchable national database and is therefore less valuable as an investigative tool for missing persons. Finally, there are consistency problems with the data (such as whether the person is known or just suspected to be missing, and whether they have any particular risk factors) which makes it difficult to link cases where there are commonalities.<sup>52</sup>

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## **PART III: SOLUTIONS AND NEXT STEPS**

### **Closing the Gaps: What's Still Needed**

A great deal of work has occurred in government and police agencies at the municipal, provincial and national levels, and this is commendable. However, there is much more that can be done to reduce the number of missing and murdered Aboriginal women in Canada.

The majority of the efforts and improvements to date have focused on improving the police investigative response going forward, and in creating task forces for specific investigations. In addition, there have been improvements in information collection, but these efforts are inconsistent across jurisdictions, with great

variability in the level and sophistication of resources across Canada. Much more needs to be done to provide uniform systems for collecting, analyzing, coordinating and taking action on the information received. These are all areas that are currently within the power of governments and police agencies to significantly improve. More challenging, but most importantly, more needs to be done to reduce the likelihood of Aboriginal women going missing and being murdered in the first place; this will require more attention to the systemic causes of marginalization that occur among Aboriginal women. While this is a daunting, ongoing task, it must be a priority. Further, those tasks that can be accomplished in the shorter term must receive urgent attention.

Below are several proposals designed to reduce barriers to reporting, improve the response to reports of missing Aboriginal women, and improve relationships between police agencies and Aboriginal communities.

### **Provincial Centralized “Clearing Houses” With 1-800 Phone Numbers**

There are two areas for improvement related to reporting. First, in some cases, people are unclear about to whom they should report a missing person. They may live in one community but the missing person may have disappeared from another community. Second, even if they do manage to report the person missing to a local police department, the information may or may not be received by the police jurisdiction responsible for the community where the person was last seen, thus delaying (or eliminating the possibility of) a proper investigation. As demonstrated in the Vancouver Missing Women investigation, a person could be reported missing in one community, but the information wouldn't become known to the community from which the person had actually gone missing. For example, the person would be reported missing in community “A” because that's where her family lived and the information would be placed on CPIC. But community “B,” the location from which the person went missing, wouldn't be alerted and neither jurisdiction would be actively looking for her. Alternatively, a reportee in community “A” would be told they had to call the police in community “B” to make the report, but would be unable to get through to that jurisdiction's report line, or might be dissuaded because of long distance charges, a misunderstanding about the process, or inconsistent police practices.<sup>53</sup>

Obviously, it is impossible for police to investigate cases that they have no knowledge of and increasing the accessibility of reporting for missing persons would improve police

investigations and increase the probability of an earlier identification and subsequent arrest of an active serial killer. In the wake of Pickton's arrest in the Vancouver Missing Women case in 2002, then-Vancouver Councillor Lynne Kennedy chaired a committee and facilitated six meetings that included sex trade workers and grassroots advocacy groups. The Committee's goal was to identify ways to prevent such situations from occurring in the future. One of the recommendations of the committee's report to Vancouver Council was that a 1-800 phone number should be created:

Over the past 20 years we have seen too many examples of how the process for reporting missing people is seriously flawed. From the victims of Clifford Olsen to the missing women from the Downtown Eastside...we are faced with the inadequacy of the current system. One of the most important recommendations to come out of the consultation sessions was that a 1-800 number needs to be set up to report missing people. It should provide up to date information on the case as well as what the concerned individuals can do to help in the search. This tip line should be a regional source for police, so that the missing person's loved ones don't have to make a report to individual municipalities.<sup>54</sup>

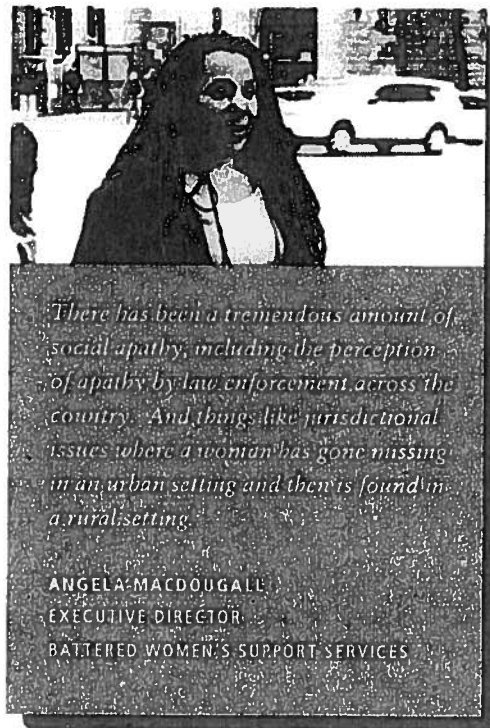
In March 2005, Ms. Kennedy, by then a member of the Vancouver Police Board, made the same recommendation to a Parliamentary Subcommittee on Solicitation Laws.<sup>55</sup>

While efforts to improve relationships between the community and police can potentially reduce barriers to reporting, they do not necessarily improve coordination between agencies, or improve access to police for families living outside of the jurisdiction where the missing person was last seen.

As a result, it is proposed that there should be a provincial 1-800 number to take reports of missing persons. The purpose would not be to replace existing intake processes in various jurisdictions; rather, it would be used to provide an additional point of access. Further, a centralized “clearing house” model would ensure that cases would not fall between the cracks, in that the clearing house could liaise with the appropriate police agency of jurisdiction to ensure an investigation is initiated and supported.

This could be accomplished in BC by increasing the capacity of the existing BC Police Missing Persons Centre. The BCPMPC currently has three authorized positions but is seeking approval for an additional three positions. Though they currently only provide services to the police community in BC, these additional resources would likely provide the capacity to develop and support an interactive website to serve the public as well. Further, a 1-800 phone number has been considered in the past by the Centre and new resources should provide the capacity to finally implement this important service. As well, increased service could be provided to reporters who are having difficulty accessing information about their cases.

By acting in this supplementary “clearing house” role, the level of analysis conducted by the BCPMPC could be enhanced to provide essentially an “early warning system” for anomalous patterns of missing persons. The BCPMPC, with appropriate software, could provide regional analysis of missing persons data, which would augment the Centre’s examination of provincial trends. In this regard, the VPD has developed a data-mining system for extracting and conducting complex analysis on the information contained within the Police Records Information Management Environment (PRIME), the records management system used by all police agencies



in BC. The VPD’s Consolidated Records Intelligence Mining Environment (CRIME) system provides the capability to analyze multi-jurisdictional data from all three PRIME servers in the province. The Analysts are able to create complex queries to identify trends and quickly identify crime series in the early stages, such as predatory sex offences, using incident details and geo-spatial patterns with advanced software applications. This analysis capacity has evolved over several years and matured into a sophisticated system that has resulted in several notable successes and has been recognized as a best-practice.<sup>56</sup>

Although PRIME is not used universally by police agencies in Canada, similar software could be used to data mine the appropriate police databases. This basic model could therefore likely be replicated in every province and formalized processes could be developed to provide for inter-provincial communication and cooperation, such as is already occurring to some extent between the RCMP in BC and Alberta, as described earlier.

## **National Clearing House with a 1-800 Phone Number**

Thus far, Canadian agencies have not yet considered a national contact number with links to each province and territory. The improvements that have been suggested have largely focused on improving police coordination rather than public involvement and engagement. Despite the MC/MPUR initiative announced by Minister Ambrose in October 2010, no mention of a national 1-800 contact number has been made. Further, while the MC/MPUR project will have the capacity to take tips on its website, it is centered on local reporting of missing persons to the victim's (and in some cases the reportee's as well) police agency of jurisdiction. Thus, it is worthwhile to consider expanding the 1-800 program to a national level.

A national system has been implemented in Australia with some success. The Australia Federal Police operates a national website funded by the federal government devoted to, among other goals, reducing the incidence and impact of missing persons. While the national website doesn't include a 1-800 phone number, there are only seven state and territorial police services in Australia and each has a missing persons unit with their phone numbers and websites linked to the federal website. Australia is similar to Canada in several regards: it has a relatively small population (~22 million) in a very large country (the sixth largest in the world and more than three-quarters the area of Canada); it has a similar history of residential schools and failed assimilation of its Aboriginal population; and it has a federal police service. Its Aboriginal population has many similarities, despite the cultural differences, to those in Canada and research has shown that Aboriginal people in Canada and Australia face very similar challenges.

Based on what has been learned from experience in BC and elsewhere, and considering the very large number of police agencies in Canada, we propose that an additional component of the national MC/MPUR project be created that will focus on deployment of a new national "800 number" for reporting missing persons, tips, and related information. Such a service would augment the tip capabilities already being created on the NPSCMP public website.

Though the world is becoming a very Internet-based global community, it is important to recognize that many isolated (and often impoverished) communities lack reliable Internet access, and the depressed social environment in many of these communities is not supportive of incident reporting (or tip passing) via the Internet as the sole method of communication. If a small community does not have Internet access, then a website will be of no use whatsoever. Use of a contact phone number is necessary for those who do not have access to, are intimidated by, or are unaware of the public website. Cell phones have become very common and so a 1-800 number is often a more practical alternative.

This model already exists for other purposes, such as the National Child Exploitation Coordination Centre,<sup>57</sup> which has a mandate to be a centralized contact point for child exploitation files, ensuring that they are sent to the appropriate jurisdictional police agency for follow-up investigation. Further, the RCMP's "National Missing Children Services" includes the website "Our Missing Children,"<sup>58</sup> which features a toll-free phone number for inquiries (although it is currently intended for police use only). It may therefore be possible to utilize existing infrastructure to accommodate a national 1-800 phone number for missing Aboriginal women to complement the proposed national website. However accomplished, this would be an important addition to reduce barriers to reporting, assist police, and provide better service to the community.



## CASE STUDY ► WHY WE MUST IMPROVE THE NATIONAL COORDINATION OF MISSING PERSONS INVESTIGATIONS

### What exists today:

A 20-year-old Aboriginal woman leaves a reservation in northern Alberta. She tells her mother she is travelling to Vancouver, but might stop off in Prince George, BC. Her mother doesn't hear from her for one month. She visits the local police agency and files a police report with a young patrol officer. The case is not given any priority because:

- the incident did not occur in their jurisdiction of the police taking the missing persons report so it is not a priority;
- the local police do not have access to databases in Alberta and BC;
- the local police do not know which policing jurisdiction to contact to ask for further assistance and police in Prince George and Vancouver aren't aware she might have gone missing from one of their jurisdictions;
- the young police officer does not have any expertise in investigating missing persons cases; and
- the local police agency is not big enough to have a specialized missing persons unit.

### What we need:

The mother of the missing northern Alberta woman phones the national toll-free phone number. She is asked for basic information to initiate a file and is instructed to visit her local police agency to file a report. The local police agency is familiar with the SisterWatch program and quickly assists the mother of the missing person, including offering culturally sensitive support to the family. Ideally, Victim Services personnel would have Aboriginal staff available, but at the least should be trained about and sensitive to Aboriginal cultural issues that may impact on the investigation. An investigator from the national or provincial centre contacts the local police agency and offers investigative assistance and advice including an offer to query various databases to determine if the missing person is accessing services. Initial queries show that the missing person is not accessing services and there is a determination that she may be the victim of foul play. If necessary, additional resources are offered to provincial or local missing persons units. An analyst in the national centre will also compare this new missing person report with other occurrences (including across provincial borders) to see if there is a trend. The national centre will further support the local police jurisdiction and may request that various police agencies (such as Prince George RCMP and Vancouver Police) conduct further inquiries. This same model could be replicated at the provincial level to create a network of provincial centres across Canada linked to the national centre. (There are many challenges to achieving such a conceptual model, and progress is being made, but gaps remain.)

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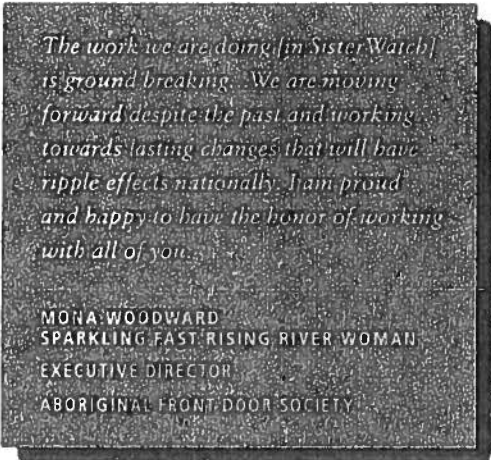
## THE SISTERWATCH PROJECT

### COMMUNITY OUTREACH

One result of the problem of *missing* Aboriginal women is *murdered* Aboriginal women. Though police response is a significant piece of the puzzle, it is essential that efforts are put towards prevention. Communities and police need to work together to reduce the risk of victimization for women, find them quickly when they are missing (if they can be found), and finally, capture and incarcerate predators quickly so that they cannot continue to victimize.

By no means has this area been ignored at the local or national levels. The Government of Canada should be commended for its recognition of the importance of prevention efforts. In its announcement in October 2010, the Department of Justice committed to providing “\$1 million to support the development of school- and community-based pilot projects to help heal, move forward and provide alternatives to high-risk behaviour for young Aboriginal women, including young offenders.”<sup>59</sup>

At the local level, the Vancouver Police Department implemented, in collaboration with a grassroots community organization called the Women’s Memorial March Committee, a program called “SisterWatch” in the fall of 2010.<sup>60</sup> SisterWatch came about because of the tragic September 2010 death of a young Aboriginal woman, Ashley Machiskinic, who fell from a window in the Downtown Eastside, leading many in the community to believe she had been murdered. Community activists occupied VPD offices demanding a meeting with the Chief Constable. A meeting with the Chief Constable occurred soon after, and as a result, a police/community partnership was born between the VPD and the “Women’s Memorial March Committee.” (The VPD originally called the program the “Guardian



*The work we are doing [in SisterWatch] is ground breaking. We are moving forward despite the past and working towards lasting changes that will have ripple effects nationally. I am proud and happy to have the honor of working with all of you.*

MONA WOODWARD  
SPARKLING FAST-RISING RIVER WOMAN  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
ABORIGINAL FRONT DOOR SOCIETY

Project.” Community committee members expressed concern that this raised the negative connotation of government guardianship and the residential school system and proposed the name SisterWatch. It was unanimously agreed the name should be changed.)

A SisterWatch committee, comprised of representatives from the VPD and the Women’s Memorial March Committee, oversees the program. Initiatives of SisterWatch include the installation of ruggedized “911-only” phones in Vancouver’s Downtown Eastside neighborhood; Town Hall meetings; a speakers’ bureau; a SisterWatch telephone tip line; a SisterWatch website; a reward for information about the death of Ashley Machiskinic; and several major proactive investigations targeting predators in the DTES that proved highly successful, resulting in numerous arrests and serious charges.

### TARGETING PREDATORS

One of the first major investigations flowing from the SisterWatch project was “Project Rescue.” Residents of the Downtown Eastside raised concerns through community forums and the SisterWatch Committee about violent drug dealers who were preying on addicted marginalized women and engaging in extreme violence against them. Beat officers had heard about these crimes, but

*The SisterWatch program is significant because the program was through collaboration with women from the community. The [SisterWatch] arrests were significant because... it seemed like the police were listening. And instead of arresting the victims of the oppression, they were now after the perpetrators.*

LISA YELLOW QUILL  
 BLUE THUNDERBIRD WOMAN/STRONG  
 MEDICINE WOMAN/STANDING  
 CO-MANAGER ABORIGINAL WOMEN'S  
 PROGRAM/STV COUNSELLOR  
 BATTERED WOMEN'S SUPPORT SERVICES

most had not been reported. As a result of this information, in September 2010, a major proactive investigation was created – “Project Rescue” – involving detectives from the VPD’s Gangs/Drugs and Major Crimes Sections. The team employed undercover operations, surveillance, and wiretaps, among other investigative strategies. The first phase of the investigation resulted in 60 serious charges against 17 individuals. Further, the VPD laid rare “criminal organization” charges for the first time in its history. The majority of the accused were held in custody resulting in more confidence in the VPD, less fear, and more victims coming forward to report serious, predatory crimes. Subsequent phases of the investigation were equally successful with arrests now totaling approximately 60 accused with 130 charges. The effect was reduced violence against marginalized women and increased community confidence in the VPD.

*Law enforcement is all we have. In most regions of Canada, law enforcement is failing... So we've come a long way now where we're sitting at the same table and don't feel that hostility and we're working collaboratively.*

ANGELA MACDOUGALL  
 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
 BATTERED WOMEN'S SUPPORT SERVICES

**SISTERWATCH TIP LINE**

Another project of SisterWatch is a tip line. Initially it was to provide a mechanism to receive information about the death of Ashley Machiskinic, but it evolved into a service for women in the DTES to provide information about any non-emergency situations or crimes in the neighborhood, and also to seek assistance for challenges they are facing. Callers use a dedicated phone number and are connected with non-emergency police dispatch staff at “ECOMM” (the regional 911 centre) who have been specially trained to respond to calls to the SisterWatch line. The SisterWatch phones have also been used by parties wanting to report assaults on other women (who may be too afraid to make a report themselves), or by anyone wishing to provide information on victimizers in a completely safe, anonymous manner. Information collected through the tip line is relayed to the appropriate VPD unit and/or community service agency. Dedicated police staff vet any information received and correlate it with information from other sources to ensure that no case “falls through the cracks.”

**DOWNTOWN EASTSIDE 911-ONLY PHONES**



The community raised the concern that most pay phones had been removed from the Downtown Eastside (because of frequent malicious damage and their use by drug dealers). The VPD responded by having several strategically-placed “911-only” “ruggedized” telephones in this at-risk neighbourhood. The special telephones

## CASE STUDY ► MARTIN TREMBLAY



At the SisterWatch meetings, the community raised concerns about a male from outside the Downtown Eastside who they believed was preying on young Aboriginal girls. After hearing community concerns, Tremblay was targeted in Project Rescue and was arrested for drug trafficking. When told about the charges, community members attended the bail hearing to support the prosecutor. The judge denied Tremblay bail, and he subsequently pleaded guilty and received an unusually high 12-month sentence for trafficking. As soon as he was sentenced, VPD Inspector Dean Robinson asked for victims and witnesses to come forward:

*We don't usually tell you about a person's extensive criminal record or that we suspect their involvement in many unsolved crimes but this time is different. We believe that the danger and damage being done to vulnerable women and, in particular, young Aboriginal women, in the Downtown Eastside is so prevalent that we need to take extraordinary measures to safeguard the women who are at risk. As a result of SisterWatch, Martin Tremblay has been charged with four counts of trafficking cocaine and one charge of possession of cocaine for the purposes of trafficking. He is currently in jail. He's a convicted sex offender who in 2002 was found guilty of five counts of sexual assault. In those cases he used alcohol and drugs to lure and incapacitate his victims.*

*We know the community is very concerned about this criminal. Even though he is in*

### TIMOTHY BEITH CASE STUDY

*A community member brought concerns about a serial predator preying on marginalized and uneducated Aboriginal to a patrol member. She worked tirelessly to confirm the information and then brought it to the SisterWatch investigative team which took over the investigation. As a result, Timothy Beith, 59, was arrested and charged with two counts of sexual assault and two counts of voyeurism. A SisterWatch committee member remarked, "To me, this is a great example of what we can accomplish together to make the community Safer for Women."*

*jail now, we believe the only way we can guarantee that he won't harm more women is if he stays in jail. In order for that to happen, we are taking this extraordinary measure of putting out his picture in hopes that other people who can give us information that will help our investigation will be able to recognize him and come forward. We are interested in hearing from anyone who has information about this man. We have resources available to offer support and reassurance to those who call or come forward. He is in jail now and can't hurt you.*



deployed for this project were purchased by the VPD from a company in California and installed at VPD expense. As is the case for all 911 calls in the region, response dispatch staff are located at the regional 911 emergency services facility, "ECOMM," so no additional costs were incurred. The hardware was a one-time only expense that the VPD could absorb, provided a needed service, and showed the VPD's commitment to responding to community concerns, which is important to build confidence in the community with the police.

### The Importance of Collaboration

As noted earlier, the relationships between the community and the police are integral to the success of investigations. If women don't trust the police to properly investigate acts of violence against them, then reporting and cooperation by victims and witnesses will suffer. This will embolden the perpetrators and, overall, the women in the community will be less safe. This collaborative approach involving the police and the community is achieving far more than would be possible with unilateral efforts.

To reduce violence against Aboriginal women and respond better when they go

### "VIVIAN HOUSE" CASE STUDY

A support worker called the SisterWatch hotline regarding a resident at Vivian House who had been assaulted. The reporter feared for the victim's safety since she suffers from serious health issues, making it difficult to protect herself. Her drug addiction and involvement in the survival sex trade added to her vulnerability. The tip was forwarded to the SisterWatch investigative team for follow-up. The victim was reluctant to cooperate with police, however, they did not deter investigators from taking steps to interview a possible suspect and ensure that safety measures were in place at Vivian House to support and protect her.

The support worker was extremely pleased with the efforts of the investigators: *"...the work you did to help protect the victim was really meaningful. There was no arrest, no case, no glory. Just really good work. This type of police work lets predators know that vulnerable people in the community are being watched over and that they can't get away with murder. I want to thank you myself and extend the thanks of many women in the community for doing what you do."*

missing, the police must always strive to have positive relationships with marginalized communities. SisterWatch is one example of the VPD's commitment to this goal, as are the assignment of police officers in Native Liaison, Sex Industry Liaison and Homeless Coordinator positions. There has been broad acknowledgment of the positive results of the VPD's efforts to improve relationships with the DTES community, and in particular with Aboriginal women, and the program is now being expanded to serve marginalized women who live in other areas of Vancouver. This model could be used as a template for other police agencies facing similar challenges.

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## CONCLUSION

Aboriginal people in Canada face many challenges that are the product of complex social, economic and cultural factors. One of the most troubling manifestations of this situation is that Aboriginal women go missing and are murdered at a rate highly disproportionate to their population. Further, marginalized Aboriginal women, especially those working in the sex trade, have been prey in several provinces for known or suspected serial killers. This tragic situation demands a broad and multi-pronged response. More resources focused on prevention are required to reduce the risk created by the marginalization of Aboriginal women that makes them easy prey for offenders. Further, there must be an improved police response to reports of missing Aboriginal women to overcome the many challenges found in these investigations.

Commendably, much has been done in recent years. The RCMP, both provincially and nationally, have made significant contributions to improving the response to missing and murdered women in Canada, as have other police agencies and associations. Initiatives include well-resourced task forces, improved information sharing and coordination between police jurisdictions, and the development of specialized resources and improved policies. In addition, the continuing development of a national Missing Persons and Unidentified Remains project, which will include a tip website and sophisticated information analysis, is well underway. The federal government has committed to significant new resources to fund this initiative and complementary resources to support improved police investigations and to engage in increased prevention at the community level.

There remains, however, more to do. Experience has shown that a variety of barriers to reporting and successful investigations still exist, but some of them can be remedied with relatively small allocations of resources.

First, a “clearing house” model with 1-800 phone numbers at the provincial and national levels would make it easier to report missing persons, especially for those in underprivileged communities without Internet access. It would also allow police to correlate information; improve information exchange between jurisdictions; and provide better service to the community. This model could likely be handled within existing provincial and national infrastructure at a relatively small incremental cost.

The SisterWatch tip line is an example of how a creative solution was reached at minimal cost by using existing infrastructure, since the capacity to answer the SisterWatch tip line already existed at ECOMM (the emergency 911 centre) and staff only required some additional training. Likewise, national and provincial 1-800 phone numbers could likely be absorbed into existing infrastructure.

Second, there needs to be harmonized legislation across Canada to provide a mechanism for police to quickly access various provincial and national non-police databases such as health and welfare records that are important to successful investigations.

Third, improved relationships between police and Aboriginal communities – particularly in urban centres – must remain a priority. More confidence in the police means improved reporting of violence against Aboriginal

women, more witnesses coming forward and more rapid reporting to police when Aboriginal women go missing or are victimized. Further, collaboration with affected communities can produce valuable suspect information allowing police to focus investigations on those predators who target Aboriginal women. The SisterWatch Program, a collaboration between the Vancouver Police Department and the Women's Memorial March Committee, has made significant progress in this regard, and may be a model helpful to other communities.

*SisterWatch is really a forward thinking initiative that can have great benefits for the future. It is groundbreaking and I think people have to understand the fact that the regular meetings are a safe place to express frustrations, praise, hopes and fears is really important. While it is a collaboration, it is not a place where we all join to pat each other on the backs...but a place where there are difficult conversations...As in any other arena, this serves to build relationships...and opens doors to further collaboration. I think it's an example that could be followed by all kinds of police forces.*

KATE GIBSON  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
WISH DROP-IN CENTRE SOCIETY

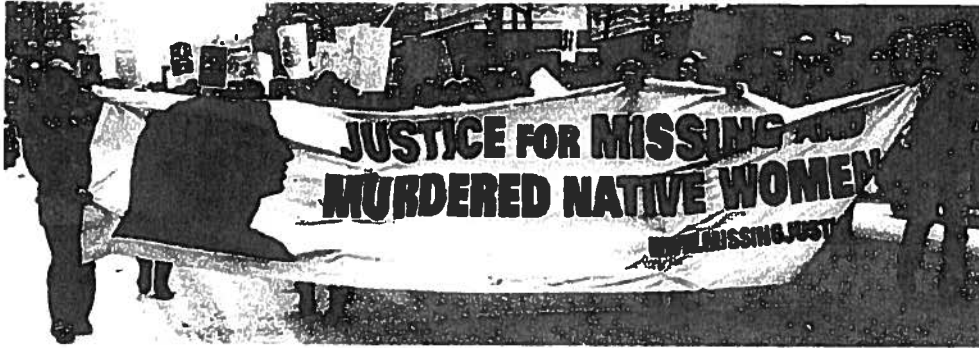
## RECOMMENDATIONS

There have been several excellent reports written in Canada on the issue of missing and murdered Aboriginal women resulting in numerous recommendations. These reports include the Amnesty International reports "Stolen Sisters" report from 2004, and the follow-up report "No More Stolen Sisters" from 2009;<sup>61</sup> the "Coordinating Committee of Senior Officials Missing Women Working Group's Report";<sup>62</sup> and the "Final Report of the Provincial Partnership Committee on Missing Persons in Saskatchewan."<sup>63</sup> Each of these reports have made very worthy recommendations, some of which have been described in this report and are reflected in recommendations 1 through 6 below. Recommendations 7 to 9 are recommendations offered by the joint Vancouver Police and Women's Memorial March SisterWatch Committee based on recent experiences and discussions.

### Summary of key existing recommendations:

1. To know the size and nature of the problem and so that resources can be effectively targeted, reliable and comprehensive statistics must be gathered. This starts with police agencies but must end with aggregation and analysis at the local, provincial and national level. A harmonized data collection scheme should be developed to accomplish this goal.
2. Police forces across Canada should implement best-practice protocols for responding to reports of missing Aboriginal women. There need to be standardized protocols for police handling of missing persons cases





including tools for fair and effective assessment of the risk to the missing individual.

3. There should be improved co-ordination of police investigations into long-term missing persons cases and unsolved murders involving Aboriginal women and other women at risk.
4. Police forces should provide specialized staffing to review and coordinate responses to missing persons cases.
5. Police should work closely with Aboriginal women's organizations and other front line groups to identify and implement appropriate and effective protocols for action on missing persons cases, with a view to developing standards for police response in keeping with the risks to Aboriginal women and girls.
6. Prevention is key to reducing victimization. There need to be more resources targeted at assisting Aboriginal women and girls to escape from dangerous circumstances, whether it involves specific circumstances such as violent domestic situations or the sex trade, or the more general danger created by poverty and addiction that results in marginalization.

#### **New SisterWatch Committee Recommendations:**

7. There should be a national 1-800 phone number in support of the MC/MPUR website and a "clearing house/centre for excellence" model that serves both the public and police agencies. There must be effective coordination with the provinces to ensure no case falls between the cracks.
8. Every province should have a 1-800 phone number and a missing persons website as part of a "clearing house/centre for excellence model" as described above. At the provincial level, in addition to supporting police agencies, there must be emphasis on ensuring reporting missing persons is simple and low-barrier, and that no report is missed or mishandled because of a lack of communication and/or coordination between jurisdictions.
9. There should be harmonized legislation in all provinces and territories, such as recently passed in Alberta, to provide rapid police access to government databases (e.g., health and social assistance) that would be useful in missing persons investigations.
10. Other police agencies facing similar challenges to Vancouver should consider using the SisterWatch program as a model for community collaboration and targeting of those engaged in predatory violence against marginalized Aboriginal women.



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## APPENDIX "A"

### ORGANIZATION

#### CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF CHIEFS OF POLICE (CACP)

### DESCRIPTION OF INITIATIVES

In 2006, the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police passed a resolution recommending that all police services in Canada consider adopting the principles incorporated in the Ontario Provincial Police Lost/Missing Persons Manual specifically with respect to Aboriginal and marginalized people.<sup>64</sup> The resolution noted that the OPP had produced a "comprehensive and holistic policy manual for dealing with lost/missing persons cases that, with regard to Aboriginal and marginalized people, is based on principles of cultural sensitivity, respect, compassion and empathy." It is unknown to what extent the resolution has been implemented in police agencies across Canada.

#### THE FEDERAL/ PROVINCIAL/ TERRITORIAL MISSING WOMEN WORKING GROUP

The BC and Alberta governments proposed a working group of federal, provincial and territorial deputy justice ministers in 2006 to examine issues associated with missing and murdered women in Canada. The goal of the working group was to determine the "extent it is possible to prevent serial sexual predation of women by identifying who is at risk of victimization or offending."<sup>65</sup> In September 2010, the working group produced a "condensed" report<sup>66</sup> and noted it would be producing its full report to federal, provincial and territorial deputy justice ministers in 2011.

#### MISSING CHILDREN/MISSING PERSONS AND UNIDENTIFIED REMAINS PROJECT (MC/MPUR)

Since 2008, a joint initiative between the CACP, the RCMP, and victims' advocacy groups to better collect and disseminate information on missing persons and unidentified human remains has grown into a well-funded project to address the problem. Concrete steps have been taken to better capture data on missing persons in CPIC, and to better communicate details of these incidents to provincial, regional, and local police forces.

#### ALBERTA MISSING PERSONS AND UNIDENTIFIED HUMAN REMAINS JOINT PROJECT

In Alberta, all police agencies and the Chief Medical Examiner have a joint website for Alberta Missing Persons and Unidentified Human Remains. Each police agency is responsible for providing information about its missing persons cases for the website, and staff can be contacted by email and by phone.<sup>67</sup> According to their website, the RCMP in Alberta began a pilot project with the RCMP in BC that has emphasized the benefits of participation by multiple jurisdictions. Discussions are being held with stakeholders in Saskatchewan and Manitoba with an objective of a "regional program/database" and website that will allow the public access to materials and information relating to Western Canadian missing person files. The project envisioned a national website, and noted the importance of protocols across police jurisdictions at the regional, provincial and national levels to provide for a consistent response.

**BC POLICE MISSING PERSON CENTRE (BCPMPC)**

In British Columbia, in 2005, with the support of the BC Association of Chiefs of Police, the RCMP created the British Columbia Police Missing Persons Centre (BCPMPC). This is an integrated unit within the RCMP E Division Major Crime Section and is comprised of both RCMP and municipal police resources. There are currently three police positions: two RCMP investigators and one municipal police service investigator. The BCPMPC is committed to the interests of all police agencies in BC. The mandate of the Unit is to provide guidance and support to investigators during the course of missing persons investigations, and it is also responsible for provincial missing persons policy development and oversight of the provincial AMBER Alert program. The BCPMPC monitors and reviews current missing persons investigations, particularly those that are identified as high risk in nature. The Unit also responds to daily requests for assistance and guidance, conducts historical file reviews upon request, and provides training for missing persons investigations. The BCPMPC is an active participant in the Canadian strategy on Missing Persons and Unidentified Human Remains.<sup>68</sup>

**BC CORONER'S OFFICE**

The BC Coroner's Service has a website for those seeking information about unidentified human remains and has a toll-free phone number. They can also be contacted by email. However, they do not have any information on missing persons.<sup>69</sup>

**MANITOBA ASSOCIATION OF CHIEFS OF POLICE**

The Manitoba Association of Chiefs of Police has a website with a missing persons portion.<sup>70</sup> There are multiple participating police agencies from Manitoba, including RCMP, municipal and Aboriginal police agencies and the Military Police that participate in this project. The site has a search capability for cases in its database. This site is maintained by the RCMP in Manitoba for "Project Disappear," Manitoba's Missing Persons/Cold Case project.

**SASKATCHEWAN ASSOCIATION OF CHIEFS OF POLICE**

The Saskatchewan Association of Chiefs of Police created a website which provides analysis of missing persons from 1940 to 2009 with race, gender and geographic location.<sup>71</sup> The website also provides detailed statistics on missing persons.

**ONTARIO PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT**

Ontario and the Provincial Coroner have a joint website for their Missing Persons and Unidentified Bodies Unit.<sup>72</sup> Citizens can provide information by email or they can phone a manned telephone line during business hours (with voice mail after business hours).<sup>73</sup>

**MUNICIPAL AGENCIES**

Many municipal and regional police agencies in Canada have missing person's websites, including the Halifax Regional Police;<sup>74</sup> the Ottawa Police Service;<sup>75</sup> the Peel Regional Police;<sup>76</sup> the Prince Albert Police Service;<sup>77</sup> the Regina Police Service;<sup>78</sup> the Saskatoon Police Service;<sup>79</sup> and the Vancouver Police Department.<sup>80</sup> Generally these sites contain information regarding current missing person cases with photographs, directions on how to make a report, contact information, links to other sites, and so on.

## ENDNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> Amnesty International, *Canada: Stolen Sisters – A human rights response to violence and discrimination against Indigenous women*, AI Index AMR 20/003/2004, October 4, 2004, available at [www.amnesty.ca/stolensisters/amr2000304.pdf](http://www.amnesty.ca/stolensisters/amr2000304.pdf).
- <sup>2</sup> These reports are available at <http://www.amnesty.ca/stolensisters/amr2000304.pdf> and [www.amnesty.ca/amnestynews/upload/AMR200122009.pdf](http://www.amnesty.ca/amnestynews/upload/AMR200122009.pdf), respectively.
- <sup>3</sup> The Women's Memorial March came about as a result of a horrific January 1992 murder in Vancouver. The women in the community were mobilized into action and out of this sense of hopelessness, frustration, outrage and feeling like no one was listening to them about the increasing violence against women in the downtown eastside, they organized a march through the streets with the names and sometimes photographs of women in the community who had died or were murdered. Each year on February 14, women (and men) take to the streets to bring attention to those women who have been murdered or gone missing. The march aims to emphasize the work that is yet to be done to prevent and end violence against women in the downtown eastside. The Women's Memorial March Committee exists to organize this event, and to do advocacy work on related issues.
- <sup>4</sup> [www12.statcan.ca/census-recensement/2006/as-sa/97-558/pdf/97-558-XIE2006001.pdf](http://www12.statcan.ca/census-recensement/2006/as-sa/97-558/pdf/97-558-XIE2006001.pdf)
- <sup>5</sup> Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP), 1996, downloaded April 26, 2011 from [www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/webarchives/20071115053257/www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/ch/rcap/sg/sgmm\\_e.html](http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/webarchives/20071115053257/www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/ch/rcap/sg/sgmm_e.html).
- <sup>6</sup> Statistics Canada. Inuit, Metis and First Nations, 2006 Census Findings, downloaded April 26, 2011 from <http://www12.statcan.ca/census-recensement/2006/as-sa/97-558/index-eng.cfm>, p. 6. Also see [www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fniah-spnia/alt\\_formats/fnihb-dgspni/pdf/pubs/aborig-autoch/2009-stats-profil-eng.pdf](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fniah-spnia/alt_formats/fnihb-dgspni/pdf/pubs/aborig-autoch/2009-stats-profil-eng.pdf).
- <sup>7</sup> Jodi-Anne Brzozowski, Andra Taylor-Butts and Sara Johnson, "Victimization and offending among the Aboriginal population in Canada", *Juristat*. Vol. 26, no. 3, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, 2006. Downloaded April 26, 2007 from [www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/85-002-x/85-002-x2006003-eng.pdf](http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/85-002-x/85-002-x2006003-eng.pdf), p. 3.
- <sup>8</sup> Health Canada. A Statistical Profile on the Health of First Nations in Canada – Self-rated Health and Selected Conditions, 2002 to 2005, downloaded from [www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fniah-spnia/alt\\_formats/pdf/pubs/aborig-autoch/2009-stats-profil-vol3/2009-stats-profil-vol3-eng.pdf](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fniah-spnia/alt_formats/pdf/pubs/aborig-autoch/2009-stats-profil-vol3/2009-stats-profil-vol3-eng.pdf).
- <sup>9</sup> See, for example, [www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fniah-spnia/alt\\_formats/fnihb-dgspni/pdf/pubs/aborig-autoch/2009-stats-profil-eng.pdf](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fniah-spnia/alt_formats/fnihb-dgspni/pdf/pubs/aborig-autoch/2009-stats-profil-eng.pdf).
- <sup>10</sup> Ibid, note 7, p. 6.
- <sup>11</sup> See, for example, [www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fniah-spnia/promotion/suicide/index-eng.php](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fniah-spnia/promotion/suicide/index-eng.php), [www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fniah-spnia/promotion/mental/index-eng.php](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fniah-spnia/promotion/mental/index-eng.php) and [www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fniah-spnia/pubs/promotion/\\_suicide/prev\\_youth-jeunes/section2-eng.php#s212](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fniah-spnia/pubs/promotion/_suicide/prev_youth-jeunes/section2-eng.php#s212).
- <sup>12</sup> Ibid, note 7, p. 13.
- <sup>13</sup> Ibid, p. 9.
- <sup>14</sup> See, for example, [www.cbc.ca/news/canada/story/2008/05/16/f-faqs-residential-schools.html](http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/story/2008/05/16/f-faqs-residential-schools.html), downloaded April 27, 2011.
- <sup>15</sup> See [www.cbc.ca/news/canada/story/2008/06/11/pm-statement.html](http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/story/2008/06/11/pm-statement.html), downloaded April 27, 2011.
- <sup>16</sup> Aboriginal Women: A Demographic, Social and Economic Profile, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, Summer 1996. Downloaded on April 26, 2011 from [www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/ai/rs/pubs/sts/awp/awp-eng.asp](http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/ai/rs/pubs/sts/awp/awp-eng.asp).
- <sup>17</sup> Ibid, note 7, and Samuel Perreault (2011) *Violent victimization of Aboriginal people in the Canadian provinces, 2009*, Juristat Article, Statistics Canada, catalogue no. 85-002-X. Available at [www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/85-002-x/2011001/article/11415-eng.pdf](http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/85-002-x/2011001/article/11415-eng.pdf).

- <sup>18</sup> It is difficult to know how many Aboriginal women and girls have been murdered or are missing in Canada. In 2005, the United Nations Human Rights Committee asked the federal government to provide statistics on this issue, but the government was apparently unable to do so. There are several reasons for the lack of data, but a significant one is the reluctance of police agencies to collect data on the race of victims; police have been criticized in the past for “racist” policies and not having a bona fide need for this information pursuant to protection of privacy legislation.
- <sup>19</sup> From the 2004 Stolen Sisters report, citing: PACE Society, *Violence against Women in the Vancouver’s Street Level Sex Trade and the Police Response*, Vancouver, 2000, p. 82, pp. 32-3, p. 6.
- <sup>20</sup> Vancouver Police Department, “Missing Women Investigation Review,” September 2010, p. 54. Available at [vancouver.ca/police/media/2010/MWInvestigationReview\\_final2.pdf](http://vancouver.ca/police/media/2010/MWInvestigationReview_final2.pdf).
- <sup>21</sup> Doreen Duchesne (1997). *Street Prostitution in Canada*. Juristat Vol. 17, no. 2, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Statistics Canada, pp. 8-9.
- <sup>22</sup> John Lowman & L. Fraser (1995). *Violence against persons who prostitute: The experience in British Columbia*. Ottawa: Department of Justice.
- <sup>23</sup> Jonathan Dudek (2001). *When Silenced Voices Speak: An Exploratory Study of Prostitute Homicide*, Doctoral dissertation, MCP Hahnemann University, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, p. 389.
- <sup>24</sup> Lindsay Kines and David Hogben, “20 outstanding files: A group of prostitutes is convinced a serial killer is responsible for disappearances in Vancouver, but the police disagree,” *National Post Online*, March 3, 1999. (Binder 3, Tab 8.5.)
- <sup>25</sup> *Ibid*, note 20.
- <sup>26</sup> The video-recording of this apology is available at [vancouver.ca/police/assets/pdf/pickton-decision-leopard-statement.pdf](http://vancouver.ca/police/assets/pdf/pickton-decision-leopard-statement.pdf).
- <sup>27</sup> See [vancouver.ca/police/assets/pdf/lessons-learned-mw-investigation.pdf](http://vancouver.ca/police/assets/pdf/lessons-learned-mw-investigation.pdf).
- <sup>28</sup> See, for example, Lori Culbert, “Lost, Not Forgotten – After a scathing audit, investigators who track down the missing are winning accolades” in the *Vancouver Sun*, December 2, 2006, available at [www.missingpeople.net/lost\\_not\\_forgotten.htm](http://www.missingpeople.net/lost_not_forgotten.htm) and Stephanie Levitz, “Lessons from tragedy: how Vancouver’s missing women changed police,” *Canadian Press*, January 7, 2007, available at [www.missingpeople.net/lessons\\_from\\_tragedy.htm](http://www.missingpeople.net/lessons_from_tragedy.htm)
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- <sup>70</sup> [www.macp.mb.ca/disappear.php](http://www.macp.mb.ca/disappear.php)
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VANCOUVER POLICE DEPARTMENT  
*Beyond the Call*





#### THE THUNDERBIRD

The land on which the City of Vancouver is established has been the territory of the Coast Salish peoples for thousands of years. Over the last century-and-a-half others have come and built their homes and businesses on this land. This was done without a treaty or ceding of land by the Coast Salish. Today we share their land as the treaty process moves forward.

The Vancouver Police acknowledge the traditional ownership of this land and the history of colonization through displaying the Coast Salish thunderbird motif on marked police cars. This display is a statement of mutual respect and friendship.

The artwork by artist Susan Point is a gift from the Musqueam Band. It was presented to the Vancouver Police in a ceremony on National Aboriginal Day, June 21, 2006.

In Coast Salish lore, the thunderbird is a majestic supernatural creature. He has a huge curved beak and three tail feathers, representing change from past to present and then into the future. The thunderbird is a guardian spirit acting on behalf of those weaker. He is greatly respected as the hero in many legends of the Coast Salish. The thunderbird symbolizes strength, principle and courage. He is also a link to the spirit world of the creator.

The artist, Susan Point, states of the thunderbird, "Thunderbird, living high in the mountains, was the most powerful of all spirits. When the thunderbird flaps his wings, thunder crashes and lightning flashes from his eyes. The thunderbird is a protective figure, representing protection for the members of the Vancouver Police Force, and the protection that they offer to the citizens of Vancouver. The crescent behind the ear represents a watchful eye."

Proudly displayed on Vancouver police cars, the thunderbird inspires security and harmony for all those today who are on these traditional lands.



**VANCOUVER POLICE DEPARTMENT**

*Beyond the Call*

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**Sex Industry Liaison Officer – Constable Linda Malcolm**

Constable Linda Malcolm began work in District 2 as a Neighborhood Police Officer in Strathcona in 2007. Upon the retirement of Constable Dave Dickson, Malcolm assumed an additional role of addressing safety concerns for the community through Ray Cam Community Centre. A large component of the work included the sex trade workers (STWs) in the District. When the VPD recognized the need for a full time liaison for the industry throughout the City, Malcolm's position as the Sex Trade Liaison Officer was created.

Malcolm's primary role is to work directly with women, men, and young adults in the sex trade industry. She offers support directly related to;

- STWs who are victims of crime - from initial investigation through to the court process
- STWs in abusive relationships
- transition into housing
- STWs exiting the industry

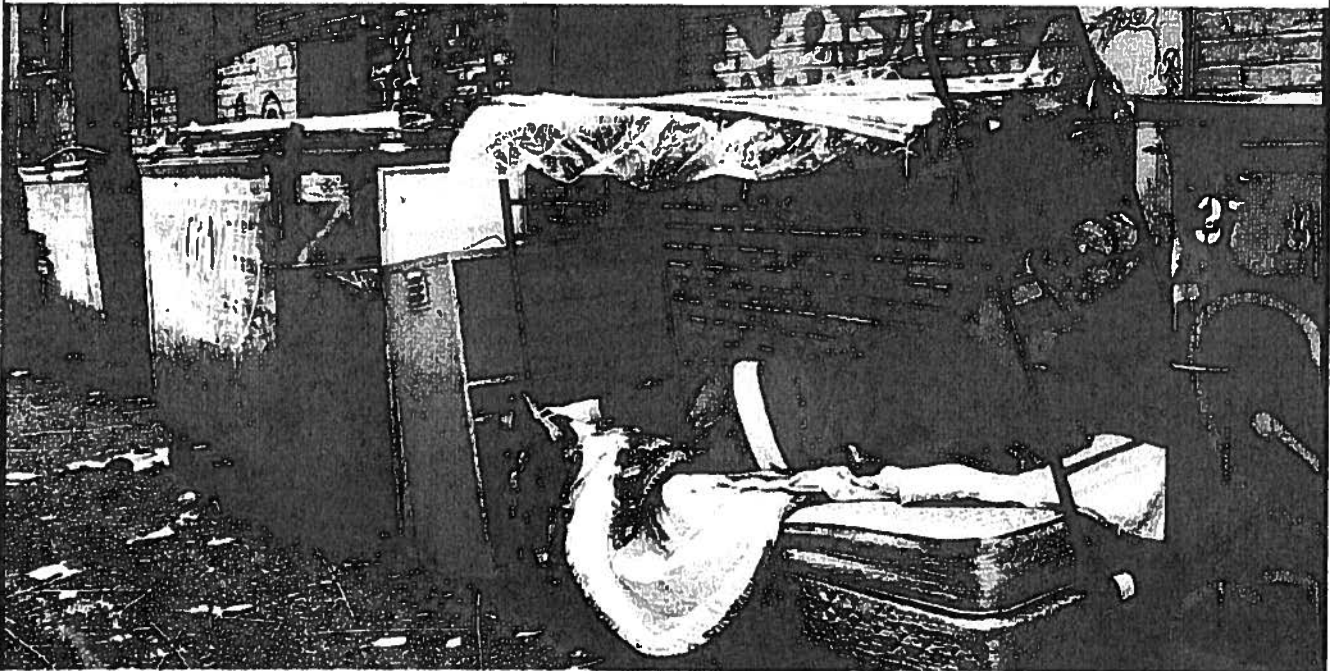
While undertaking her role, Malcolm works in conjunction with various agencies and groups, including;

- Sex Industry Worker Safety Action Group (SIWSAG)
- ASIA/Orchid: Asian Society for the Intervention of AIDS/Outreach, Research, Community, Health Initiatives and Development
- BC Centre for Excellence in HIV/AIDS (MAKA Project)
- BC Coalition of Experiential Communities (BCCEC)
- Boys 'R' Us
- HUSTLE: Men on the Move
- Prostitution, Alternatives, Counseling and Education Society (PACE)
- Prostitutes Empowerment Education Resource Society (PEERS)
- PIVOT Legal Society
- Supporting Women's Alternatives Network (SWAN)
- West Coast Cooperative of Sex Industry Professionals
- Women's Information Safe Haven (WISH) Drop-in Society
- Vancouver Aboriginal Child & Family Services Society (VACFSS)

DISCUSSION DOCUMENT

# PROJECT LOCKSTEP

A UNITED EFFORT TO SAVE LIVES IN THE DOWNTOWN EASTSIDE



FEBRUARY 4, 2009



**VANCOUVER POLICE DEPARTMENT**  
*Beyond the Call*

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

This report has benefitted greatly from the contributions of numerous individuals. Mayor Gregor Robertson and the members of the Vancouver Police Board, the staff of the City of Vancouver's Social Planning Department in particular must be thanked for sharing their insight into the problems experienced by those living in the Downtown Eastside, providing historical documents outlining the City's efforts to improve the quality of life in the area, and reviewing several versions of this report. In addition, thanks must be given to Vancouver Councillors George Chow and Kerry Jang, Vancouver City Manager Penny Ballem, General Manager of Community Services Group David McLellan, former Manager of Community Services Group Jacquie Forbes-Roberts and Director of the Schizophrenia Program at the University of BC Dr. William McEwan and to Ministers Rich Coleman and John van Dongen and their staff. Thanks are also due to all those within the Vancouver Police Department (VPD) and the Province of British Columbia who supported this endeavour. However, it should be said that the opinions expressed within this report reflect the views of the VPD and do not necessarily reflect the views of any other agency or individuals within.

## REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- ❖ The lives of many of the people residing in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside (DTES) are negatively affected by mental health issues, illicit and licit substance abuse, drug trafficking, alcoholism, physical health issues like HIV and Hepatitis C infections, substandard and insufficient housing, illegitimate businesses, crime and public disorder, an entrenched survival sex trade, and a historical reduction in police presence. There is a disproportionately high number of aboriginal people affected. These problems, crime and public disorder in particular, harm surrounding Vancouver neighbourhoods, the metro region, and the Province of BC.
- ❖ There have been major efforts to improve the DTES. There have also been deliberate and unintended policies and changes that have played significant roles in the continuation and/or worsening of the problems that are concentrated in the area.
- ❖ Typically, social, medical, police, and other services in the area have been delivered using a discipline-based approach where agencies focus on their own area of mandate and expertise.
- ❖ A change to an integrated client-based service delivery model will utilize existing agency resources more effectively.
- ❖ Interventions need to target those most in need of help and those people "living on the edge" who are in danger of a serious downturn without intervention.
- ❖ An improvement in the DTES requires that the most marginalized and vulnerable people get the assistance they require. This is a necessary condition for other neighbourhood improvement initiatives to succeed.
- ❖ This study proposes a leadership model in the form of a high level Steering Committee comprised of senior City and Provincial stakeholders. The Steering Committee would employ a "Director for the Most Vulnerable" who has the authority to:
  - establish intervention strategies,
  - provide meaningful direction,
  - hold service agencies accountable, and
  - coordinate information sharing and cooperation.

- ❖ The Director would report back to the Steering Committee regarding successes and failures both in terms of increasing collaboration as well as the specific strategies used.
- ❖ Success should be measured on the basis of outcomes rather than activity. Baseline metrics should be established and improvements should be quantifiable and focused on improving the lives of the most vulnerable.
- ❖ The Steering Committee should facilitate an information sharing process between agencies, including the Vancouver Police Department, to identify those individuals who are most in need and then work to improve the lives of those individuals by reducing or removing the barriers to success.
- ❖ Collaboration between public, private and philanthropic service providers is essential. By utilizing existing agency resources more collaboratively, the need for increasing funding can potentially be reduced. This proposal emphasizes that existing resources should be realigned into an integrated and collaborative model with central control.
- ❖ With appropriate prioritization and action, the lives of the vulnerable in the DTES can be improved and a positive “ripple effect” can be achieved in surrounding communities, and the rest of the Province through the reduction of crime, public disorder and improvements in the health crisis.

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Downtown Eastside (DTES) of Vancouver, once a thriving business district in the heart of the City, is a historic neighbourhood that is home to over 16,000 residents. Unfortunately, a serious public health and public order crisis has overwhelmed the lives of a significant number of people who live in the DTES. The deleterious effects of the high incidence of mental illness, drug addiction, disease, crime, homelessness and poverty have devastated the most vulnerable people in the community. In addition to seriously eroding the lives of the vulnerable individuals, these issues also have a substantial negative impact on all residents and stakeholders in the community. This ongoing crisis, which is well known across Canada and throughout the world, requires immediate action.

Many of those struggling to survive in the DTES suffer from mental illness, drug and alcohol addiction, or in many cases from both. These individuals often fail to find and maintain employment, and thus most live below the poverty line. Often these people become involved in criminal activity, underground economies, or the sex trade as a means to survive and support their addictions. Affordable housing is often found in squalid rooms, run by unscrupulous landlords, surrounded by criminals or is simply unavailable, leaving a growing number of individuals homeless. Health officials have declared that the DTES is in a state of crisis. High risk sex and drug activities combined with deplorable living conditions have led to rates of infection for HIV, Hepatitis C, tuberculosis and syphilis that are higher than many third-world countries.

In recent years a number of policing, social and health initiatives have attempted to address this crisis. However, despite these efforts, the levels of crime, social disorder, drug addiction and disease remain high, and the quality of life for many in the DTES continues to be poor. Efforts by all levels of government and the community to respond to the crisis facing the people in the DTES have been significant but have not added up to the robust response required to realize significant positive change. Certainly, the communities of Strathcona, Gastown and Chinatown have been willing and active participants in efforts to improve the DTES, particularly because they have been so highly affected by the disorder in the area. A number of initiatives within public health, housing, policing and criminal justice reform are underway and still need to be evaluated as to their impact on the DTES. Other current or proposed initiatives, such as the redevelopment of the Woodward's building, an increase in



market housing in the DTES, the location of a new police headquarters on Main Street, and an increase in businesses locating in the adjacent industrial areas may be instrumental in bringing economic vitality to the area. However, for these initiatives to be successful, it is vital that the most vulnerable people are given the assistance they need in order to move forward in their lives. In addition, for significant long term solutions to be achieved, both for the people and the community as a whole, there must be cooperation and collaboration among key stakeholders. It is important that collaboration occur at the local, regional, and provincial levels because the consequences of leaving the people to fend for themselves have implications for everyone in the province, if not the country. Involvement by all these stakeholders from the community and outwards improves the chances of making and sustaining change. Further, while many plans have called for increased collaboration, there has been a lack of effective administrative oversight and there is currently no established body with a specific mandate to improve life in the DTES. This discussion paper is a call for action by all stakeholders to discuss and bring forward resources and creativity in solving the problems faced by the people in the DTES.

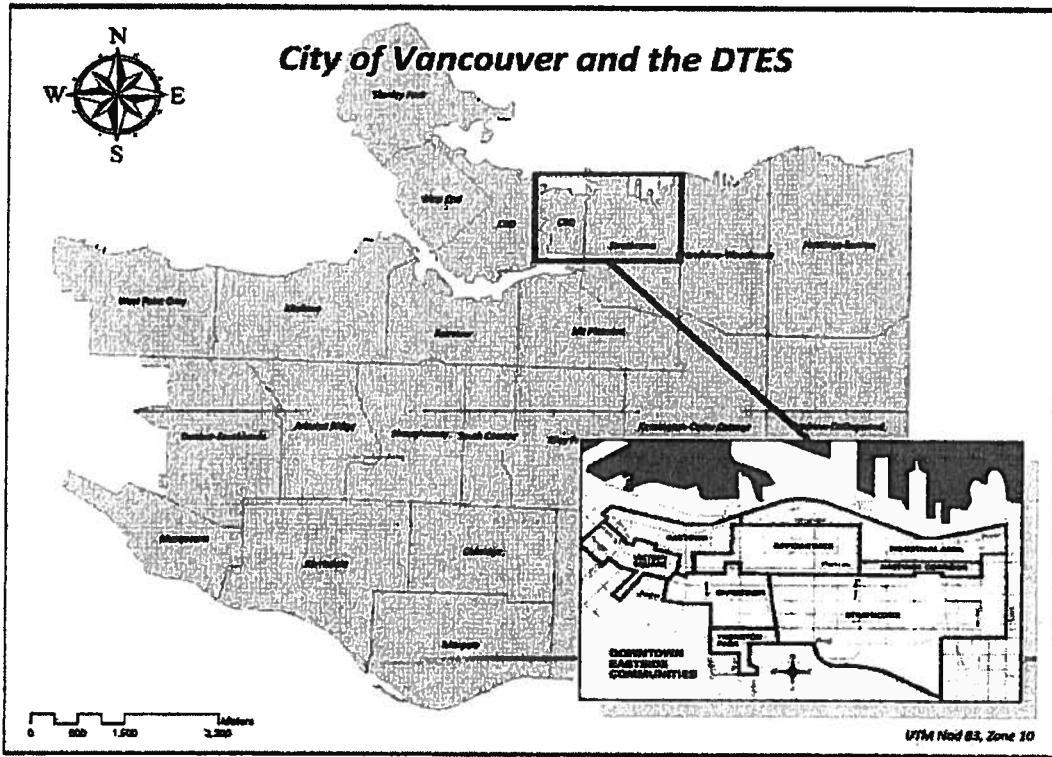
The DTES is in crisis and a mandated, coordinated approach is required to effect change and improve the lives of the people in the community. Reducing the number of people who face significant challenges in their lives by using a client centered approach will create an environment where other initiatives in the DTES will have the best chance of success. This discussion paper recommends that a steering committee of top-level decision makers be formed with representatives from the regional governments as well as the provincial and federal government. The steering committee should hire a Director who is tasked with creating a team of senior practitioners from the various service agencies to address the needs of the most vulnerable individuals in the DTES. The steering committee and its staff would need to operate under agreed upon guiding principles, ensure their actions contribute towards the evolving common vision for the area, design a coordinated plan of action, ensure accountability from government and private support agencies, establish goals, prioritize actions and develop timelines for change. In taking coordinated action, it is imperative that the decision makers involved in the steering committee have the authority and resources available to bring about meaningful change in the lives of those in the DTES.

**INTRODUCTION**

The Downtown Eastside (DTES) of Vancouver is the oldest neighbourhood in Vancouver and has many positive attributes, including strong community spirit in particular. However, like most neighbourhoods, the community has also identified improvements that are needed and desired. Unfortunately, the DTES has had to grapple with some serious problems that have been difficult to resolve despite efforts by a wide range of people, agencies and governments.

Originally a thriving business district in the heart of downtown, the shift of legitimate businesses to Granville Street in the mid-1900s significantly hurt the DTES. A confluence of factors related to both the people in the area and the economic turns affecting business have led to the gradual degradation of the DTES. Though some areas within the DTES have seen some success with the implementation of various initiatives in raising the quality of life for the residents, these successes have been more difficult to achieve for others.

Figure 1 - Map of the City of Vancouver and the DTES



The technical geographical boundaries of the DTES are Cambie Street to the west, Clark Drive to the east, the waterfront to the North, and Venables/Prior Street to the south. This area encompasses eight distinct areas: Chinatown, Gastown, Oppenheimer, Strathcona, Thornton Park, Victory Square, the Hastings Corridor and a light industrial area to the north. However, a much smaller segment of these eight areas is referred to when considering the problems facing this community. Tragically, the small area of the DTES around Main Street and East Hastings Street is well known across Canada and throughout the world for its drug market, high rate of mental illness, poverty, sex trade and homelessness. Within this area is a significant population of marginalized people. The issues facing these most vulnerable people and the need to improve their quality of life are the focus of this report.

In the past, several efforts to improve the situation in the DTES have been made by the various levels of government and non-profit organizations. These efforts have been successful in a number of communities, such as the new developments in Chinatown and Gastown. Success has been seen in a number of areas, including preserving the heritage of these neighbourhoods.

*Vancouver enjoys a beautiful sea-and-mountain setting and some increasingly ugly problems. The Downtown Eastside, a scene of battered and boarded-up buildings, is the most concentrated pocket of poverty and crime in Canada. Despite police crackdowns, an open drug bazaar still thrives on its street corners. Its back alleys, doorways and parks are home to a ragged, swelling tribe of homeless men, women and children.*

*-The Mean Streets of Arcadia  
November 18, 2004  
The Economist*

This desire for improvement and change continues both at the community and government/agency level. Interest in dealing with the issues in the DTES is high and it is recognized that many initiatives are currently underway to contribute to the revitalization of the area. Continuing to build and develop an environment that encourages inter-agency collaboration will ensure that existing plans and efforts have the greatest likelihood of making an impact on the interrelated issues that exist in this community. However, there are many obstacles and barriers to revitalization to overcome. While collaboration is a key component of success, a necessary condition of moving forward with current and future initiatives is to address the needs of the most vulnerable people in the DTES by giving

them the tools and assistance required to improve their lives.

### **STATEMENT OF INTENT**

This report is a working document and as such is not intended as a final statement about either the problems in the DTES or the method by which a solution can be found. Instead, this report is intended to facilitate discussion and build toward consensus on how to collectively improve the lives of the most vulnerable people in the DTES community. As they are often both the cause of and the victim to the problems found in the DTES, improvements in their lives will translate to a healthier community as a whole. While this report outlines an example of how it may be possible to move forward in achieving success, it is hoped that further discussion will bring forward suggestions for improvement of this example and/or new ways to move forward in a collaborative fashion.

### **EARLY HISTORY OF THE DOWNTOWN EASTSIDE**

The DTES community overall has changed dramatically over the last century. In the late 1800s, the DTES was the economic hub of Vancouver, and the area between Cambie and Carrall streets formed the main commercial center.<sup>1</sup> The Chinese community began to settle in the Pender

Street area and the whole of the DTES was a mixture of residential neighbourhoods and commercial premises that were concentrated along Hastings Street. However, after the Hotel Vancouver was built in 1887, development of the downtown area began to slowly shift west towards the Granville Street area. Although the construction of Woodward's on Hastings Street in 1904 brought thousands of people to the eastside until the 1970s, most large scale commercial businesses continued to relocate towards Granville Street.

The Depression in the 1930s hit the DTES very hard. It brought a large number of people to Vancouver seeking work, and most ended up taking refuge in the affordable rooming houses of the DTES. Many of the residents were men who were poor due to the lack of employment opportunities, or suffered from various illnesses, alcoholism being the most prevalent.<sup>2</sup> The area further deteriorated because of the demise of North Shore Ferries, the removal of the Japanese population from the DTES during World War II, and the closure of streetcar routes through the area.<sup>3</sup> Despite the issues in the DTES, Hastings Street continued to enjoy substantial popularity with shoppers. Yet, McRae et al. noted<sup>4</sup> that the area suffered continual decline throughout the

1940s and 1950s, primarily because of a lack of service development to address the issues facing the transient/migratory men who dominated the area. To help address this issue, many hotels converted their rooms into single room occupancy (SRO) units. These affordable accommodations often attracted resource workers, mostly from the fishing and forestry industries, to the area to spend their disposable income. The location was also convenient to rail yards and ports allowing for increased employment for those resource workers. Though the area was known for its beer parlours and the availability of alcohol, the DTES was considered to be relatively stable and healthy by police working in the DTES at the time.<sup>5</sup>

By the mid-1960s, the City of Vancouver had recognized that there were significant problems in the DTES. The City identified the problems as being related to the high proportion of single, often older, men who were unemployed due to a lack of skills, training and opportunity, as well as suffering from health problems, poverty, homelessness and chronic drunkenness.<sup>6</sup> A report on the area by a Sub-Committee to the Special Joint Committee on Skid-Road Problems stated:

The phenomenon of Skid Road is unique in the plethora of health and welfare problems facing the city of Vancouver since the area known as

Skid Road is relatively small and well defined and the human problems there are peculiar to the district.<sup>7</sup>

Moreover, W. Graham, the Director of the City of Vancouver Planning Department in 1965, noted that "a police 'paddy wagon' cruises the area waiting for something to happen - it usually doesn't have to wait for long".<sup>8</sup> At the time of Graham's report, a large proportion of arrests for violent crimes and for alcohol-related disorder for the City of Vancouver occurred in the DTES. Clearly, the bustling downtown core of Vancouver had changed dramatically for the worse.

By the early 1970s, the Gastown and Chinatown areas surrounding the DTES were designated as historical sites.<sup>9</sup> While beneficial for the areas protected, the DTES was hurt unintentionally as legitimate



businesses moved away from the DTES into the historical areas. This left a void that was subsequently filled by pawnshops and adult novelty stores.<sup>10</sup> By the 1980s, the DTES neighbourhood, Strathcona in particular, had almost fully transitioned from a vibrant, though tough, community into an area that was sick and in dire need

**Case Study 1: Bill**

*Bill faces a number of challenges in his daily life. He is mentally ill, diagnosed with schizophrenia and bi-polar disorder. He has a physical disability which limits his functioning and he is also addicted to drugs. He is also a chronic offender; he has had 279 documented contacts with police, and he has been charged 171 times. These factors have made it difficult for Bill to have appropriate housing and care. A coordinated approach to his treatment would assist him in getting access to appropriate treatment for his mental illnesses, his drug addiction and care for his physical disability. If those challenges are managed, he may have an easier time finding suitable housing as well.*

of attention. In the 1980s and 1990s, the community was devastated by the introduction of crack cocaine and the increasing deinstitutionalization of the mentally ill exacerbated the problems in the DTES. In addition, the burgeoning drug market in the 1980s discouraged legitimate businesses from remaining in the area and enabled illegitimate businesses to thrive.

These events created a tipping point, pushing the DTES further into despair. The high numbers of single, resource based/blue collar workers, the availability of drugs, the prevalence of mental illness, the concentration of private low-income SROs, and the concentration of services contributed to an over-representation of residents with serious mental health and addiction problems living in substandard conditions. Some have suggested that this was a de facto containment policy whereby all of these problems in the Vancouver region were concentrated in this small area.

The historical context to the DTES has contributed to its current state, in both positive and negative ways. However, for a significant proportion of the population, several critical issues have been difficult to resolve satisfactorily and for many of these people, the issues have become a matter of life and death.

**CRITICAL ISSUES**

There are several critical issues being dealt with by the most vulnerable people in the DTES. Some concerns are more focused at the individual level, like high rates of drug addiction and mental illness, while other problems are experienced by the entire community, such as the housing crisis and high levels of crime. More importantly, the

people who are dealing with these issues may be dealing with one or several of these problems at once. Though estimates of how many people could be considered most in need, it has been suggested that as many as 2,000 individuals are dealing with any or all of these most critical of issues at any given time. Given that these same individuals typically have more than one issue to address, it follows that multiple agencies are dealing with these same people. Moreover, many of these issues are inter-related and thus a collaborative and integrated approach is necessary to move forward in improving the standard of living for these individuals, and by extension, the community in which they live. Many who are not directly involved in these problems choose to live in the DTES because of the more affordable housing, yet, they are highly affected by the disorder and the poor standard of living.

Mental illness, drug addiction, the health crisis, poverty, housing problems including homelessness, illegitimate businesses, high rates of crime and public disorder, the thriving sex trade, the reduction of police presence and the disproportionate impact of all of these problems on aboriginal people are the most pervasive issues facing the DTES. Of all the problems in the DTES, these present the biggest challenges in



terms of resolution and subsequent improvement.

#### ***MENTAL ILLNESS***

According to reports written in the 1960s by the City of Vancouver, mental illness and substance use have been prevalent problems since the early 1900s. The transient population and the high levels of unemployment have been linked to alcoholism and health problems for those living in the DTES.<sup>11</sup> Treatment for those who were suffering from mental illness and substance use issues has changed quite dramatically in the last sixty years. The biggest influencing factor on the incidence of mental illness in the community has been the deinstitutionalization of the mentally ill that began in the early 1980s. This public policy shift occurred concurrently in many countries around the world and was expected to improve the quality of life for those diagnosed with a

mental illness. In British Columbia, this policy resulted in a province wide reduction of treatment beds at Riverview Psychiatric Hospital from approximately 4,600 at its peak in 1951 to only 1,000 by the early 1990s.<sup>12</sup>

A Vancouver Police Department (VPD) report, *Lost in Transition*,<sup>13</sup> noted that while the deinstitutionalization was a positive change for many people suffering from mental illness, a small proportion suffered greatly from its effects. As intended, this move into the community was beneficial and improved quality of life for those who did not require the level of supervision given by hospitals. However, for those who required more intensive care and community support, the services were often not available, leading to numerous problems. The lack of, and high demand for, community resources to adequately

care for and supply treatment for mentally ill individuals has been identified as a primary reason for the difficulties in adjusting to life in the community:

It seems the reduction in beds at Riverview and the lack of support services in the community to replace those lost are significant contributing factors to the current crisis. Those individuals with serious mental illness, and frequently with addictions, create considerable demands for police services, and destabilize communities.<sup>14</sup>

This group is often homeless or living in dangerous substandard accommodations due to poverty and an inability to work. Because they are a vulnerable population, they are often taken advantage of by unscrupulous landlords or preyed upon by drug dealers. Exposure to drugs in the DTES has been particularly problematic for this group of individuals and has led to a high number of people having to deal with both mental illness and drug addiction.

Due to the prevalence of mental illness and addiction, social service resources are more commonly found in the DTES than elsewhere in Vancouver and this helps to explain, at least in part, why so many individuals with mental illness frequent the area. Wilson-Bates found that the prevalence of social services and the fact that the DTES provides most of the affordable housing in the region for very

*People in the Downtown Eastside and elsewhere who can't cope will be cared for in safe and secure facilities until they are well. They will not be abandoned or consigned to a life of despair and destitution on the streets.*

*-Speech from the Throne  
The Honourable Steven L. Point,  
Lieutenant-Governor  
at the Opening of the Fourth Session,  
Thirty-Eighth Parliament of the Province  
of British Columbia  
February 12, 2008*

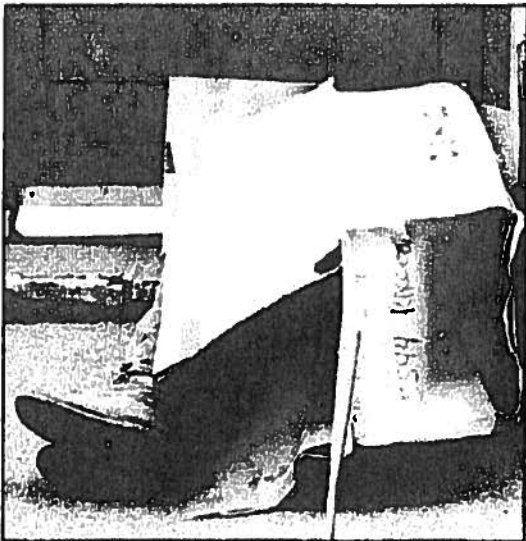


low income individuals attracts those who are dealing with mental illness.<sup>15</sup>

**DRUG ADDICTION**

It has been well documented that the DTES is home to a large-scale open-air drug market. The availability of drugs in the DTES and the “predatory” nature of the drug dealers have led to a co-occurrence of mental illness problems and drug addiction in the area.<sup>16</sup> Because of this, over half the police interactions in the DTES involve individuals who are mentally ill, addicted to drugs or both.<sup>17</sup>

Though the DTES was associated with alcoholism for much of its history, the 1970s saw an increase in the use of heroin and the 1980s saw a rise in the use of Talwin and Ritalin. In particular, the DTES was particularly negatively affected by the rise in injection drug use in the 1980s and



further by the introduction of cheap and ubiquitous crack cocaine in the 1990s. Crack cocaine has become the drug of choice in the area; it is now more prevalent than heroin and other forms of cocaine.<sup>18</sup>

During the mid-1990s, there was a call for a change in the response to drug addiction. In particular, it was felt that the health system was better placed than the criminal justice system to handle, and stop, the overdoses that were arising from drug addiction to heroin. Moreover, by 1992 there was a significant reduction in the number of drug offence charges that were prosecuted in the federal courts as well as a reduction in the average sentence length for those who were convicted. During that time, drug addiction was often dealt with through enforcement by police action as the health system organized itself to deal more specifically with the drug problem.

In 2001, the City of Vancouver adopted a new policy approach to reduce illicit drug use. The *Four Pillars* approach, as it is known, takes a more holistic view of drug addiction and incorporates prevention, treatment, enforcement and harm reduction in its attempt to address the use of drugs in the community. The approach was meant to highlight each of these areas as being equally important in addressing

drug use. In particular, this approach focuses on partnerships between agencies to address facets of each of the four pillars as well as (and most importantly) between all four pillars. The formation of partnerships to assist in the prevention of

and this has contributed in large part to the health crisis that they also are facing.

**HEALTH CRISIS**

The health issues of the DTES are not new. In 1997, a public health emergency was declared for the Downtown Eastside by the chief medical officer and that crisis has continued to grow ever since.<sup>20</sup> By far the most influential factor in the health crisis is the high level of intravenous drug use (IDU). A 2001 report stated that there were approximately 4,700 intravenous drug users in the DTES.<sup>21</sup> According to the Canadian Community Epidemiology Network on Drug Use, drug induced deaths in the DTES were more than seven times higher than for any other area of Vancouver in 2005.<sup>22</sup> After a peak in both 1993 and 1998 in illicit drug induced deaths, the number of overdose deaths has decreased dramatically, but are still higher for Vancouver than for the rest of the province.<sup>23</sup>

**Case Study 2: Angie.**

*Angie is new to the DTES. She has been a ward of the state for a number of years and was considered an at risk youth. She is now addicted to rock cocaine and works in the survival sex trade. She has had numerous dealings with police, but currently is in a grey area because she is still viewed as a child by the Province but is considered an adult by the criminal justice system. Working with Angie to manage her drug addiction may assist her in getting out of the survival sex trade, away from police and the criminal justice system and ultimately back to her home community.*

substance use was further endorsed in a 2005 report by the City of Vancouver.<sup>19</sup>

Many initiatives have been put in place related to each of the four pillars. Initiatives such as the Drug Court, Downtown Community Court, Insite, Onsite, expansion of detoxification centers and treatment options have all been developed. However, in spite of these efforts, drug use has continued to be a large problem for many people in the DTES

Intravenous drug users also experienced a corresponding dramatic increase in the rate of infection for HIV and of other contagious diseases. Christensen and Cler-Cunningham note that the pervasive level of HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis C are at the heart of the health crisis.<sup>24</sup> For example, between 1994 and 1999, IDU was the predominant mode of HIV transmission in BC.<sup>25</sup> This has changed, however, and since

2000, men who have sex with men have been the predominant mode of transmission and IDU has fallen into second position. In 1997, the rate of HIV infection in Vancouver was 0.59 per 1,000 while the rest of the province was 0.06 per 1,000.<sup>26</sup> Some improvements have been made here, as the HIV infection rate in 2005 had dropped to 0.33 per 1,000 in Vancouver and remained the same across the province.<sup>27</sup>

Historically, HIV infection rates have been much higher for aboriginal women than other groups in the DTES; as a result, aboriginal women have been more likely to die from HIV/AIDS than other segments of the female population.<sup>28</sup> Furthermore, in 1997, the infection rate for Hepatitis C was 343 per 100,000 in Vancouver, almost six times the national rate, with an estimated 70% of cases contracting the disease through IDU.<sup>29</sup> As of 2005, the Hepatitis C infection rate had dropped significantly to 88.9 per 100,000 in Vancouver and 66.5 per 100,000 in BC as a whole. While both HIV and Hepatitis C infection rates have improved in the last decade, they are still higher for Vancouver than they are for the rest of the province. These decreases may be related to the drop in the number of intravenous drug users overall, with use of heroin in particular decreasing, and an increase in crack smoking.<sup>30</sup> Outbreaks of

tuberculosis and syphilis are also disproportionately higher for the DTES than for the rest of the province.<sup>31</sup>

#### **Case Study 3: Jeff**

*Jeff is originally from the East Coast, and slowly moved across Canada. He has several non-returnable warrants stemming from his time in other areas. He is addicted to cocaine and has entered recovery programs several times. Jeff has turned to committing petty crimes to support his addiction and thus has had several contacts with police. He has expressed a desire to return home as he believes he will die if he remains in the DTES. Collaboration between Income Assistance and Health to work on his drug addiction and need to commit crime to support his habit may assist Jeff in getting back to his home community a healthier and happier person.*

#### **POVERTY**

The DTES is often described as “Canada’s poorest postal code” (V6A). While there are a few small, rural towns with lower average income levels than those observed in the DTES, this area is indisputably the poorest neighbourhood of any large urban centre in Canada. It is estimated that more than 50% of the population rely on income assistance. Benoit and Carroll cite a City of Vancouver report from 1998 stating that 75% of the population in the DTES live “at the edge of poverty, with an annual

income only one-third that of other Vancouver residents".<sup>32</sup>

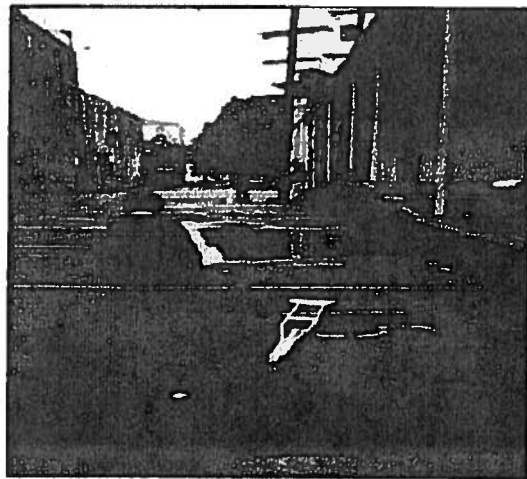
This is not a new problem for the DTES; a 1971 report by the City of Vancouver notes that at the time of the survey 86% of residents were unemployed and 57% were unemployed for at least the last year. Furthermore, they found that 30% of the population was living on a pension. A 2008 study found that 51% of those living in social housing and 12% of those in SROs were on a federal pension, while 25% of those living in social housing and 60% of those living in SROs were on social assistance.<sup>33</sup> For both groups, average monthly income was just over \$1,000 with almost 40% of their income typically going to rent payments.<sup>34</sup>

For many in the DTES, earning an income is made more complicated by the challenges of having mental health issues, drug addiction, or developmental problems such as Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS). Furthermore, a number of individuals in the DTES suffer from physical disabilities (such as missing limbs) or injuries that make physical labour impossible. Adding to the difficulties in finding employment, many have a low level of education, and few skills.

The low income issues faced by those in the DTES continue to be pervasive and the disparity between the income level of the residents of the DTES and the rest of Vancouver has grown. Specifically, the City of Vancouver noted in 2001 that while the median and average incomes of Vancouver residents were increasing, there was a decrease in the incomes of DTES residents (though this is not true for some of the neighbourhoods in the DTES, such as Gastown, which have seen a dramatic increase in income level).<sup>35</sup>

#### ***HOUSING/HOMELESSNESS***

Since the 1950s there has been a gradual concentration of low income singles in the SRO units that are found in the DTES. As a result, affordable and safe housing has long been a problem for the area. Historically, the demand for housing in the DTES also increased because of a concurrent reduction in affordable housing in other



areas of the region, including Kitsilano, Yaletown, North Vancouver and New Westminster and Fairview Slopes.<sup>36</sup> Though there were more affordable options available in the DTES compared to the rest of the Vancouver area, many of the housing options in the DTES were, and continue to be, dangerous and unhealthy. Rooming houses were noted to be providing the bulk of the housing options in the DTES by the 1970s.<sup>37</sup> Today, because of the low income of most of the residents, SRO housing can cost up to 65% of a person's income from social assistance.<sup>38</sup> Yet, the housing is typically a small single room, with a lack of security, privacy and few amenities. In addition, insect infestations (e.g., cockroaches and bed bugs) are not uncommon.

The City of Vancouver has taken several steps to improve the quality of low-income housing in the DTES and to address the growing issue of homelessness. Most of these plans and initiatives have been based on homeless counts from 2000. However, the number of homeless, though difficult to estimate, has increased both in the DTES and in the region as a whole at least in part due to changes in welfare policies, increased urban migration and the deinstitutionalization of the mentally ill. As such, it is more difficult for successes to be seen in eliminating homelessness.

Nonetheless, there have been significant changes to the housing stock available in the DTES and in the surrounding areas that have greatly influenced the area.

Specifically, since the 1970s, more than 5,000 non-market housing units have been built and the province is currently updating 17 hotels in the area to be run by non-profit operators in order to increase the low income housing stock. At the same time, the affordable housing resources have decreased in the surrounding areas, making the DTES one of few options for low income families.

Given the level of crime often found in SROs and lower income areas, the VPD has also been concerned with the quality of low-income housing in the DTES. To ensure that marginalized people are not being victimized, the VPD has conducted several undercover operations that targeted

*My problem is cockroaches. The housing part, it's not adequate. There's a lot of slumlords out there, running these hotels and they don't put money into them and they just rent them as they are, and we have to try to fix them up when we move into them. [B]ut we can't live that way. We've been there for months and the cockroaches have been there. There's a lot of germs.*

*-DTES Aboriginal Woman  
cited in Benoit & Carroll (2001)*

predatory landlords to ensure that SRO's are a safe place for people to live. These buildings house people who are addicted to substances or are suffering from a mental illness or are attempting to recover from abusing drugs/alcohol.

Hotels were targeted because of intelligence that there was criminal activity occurring, or to assess the level of compliance with bylaw and licensing regulations. The landlords that were charged as a result of these projects typically cashed an individual's social assistance cheque and gave them approximately half of the money back; the landlord then rented the room out to someone else, leaving the individual homeless and with little money. More than 35 charges involving 26 people resulted from these projects demonstrating that owners and landlords were often willing to turn a blind eye to drug dealing on or near their property and, in some cases, used drug dealing to increase their own profits.<sup>39</sup>

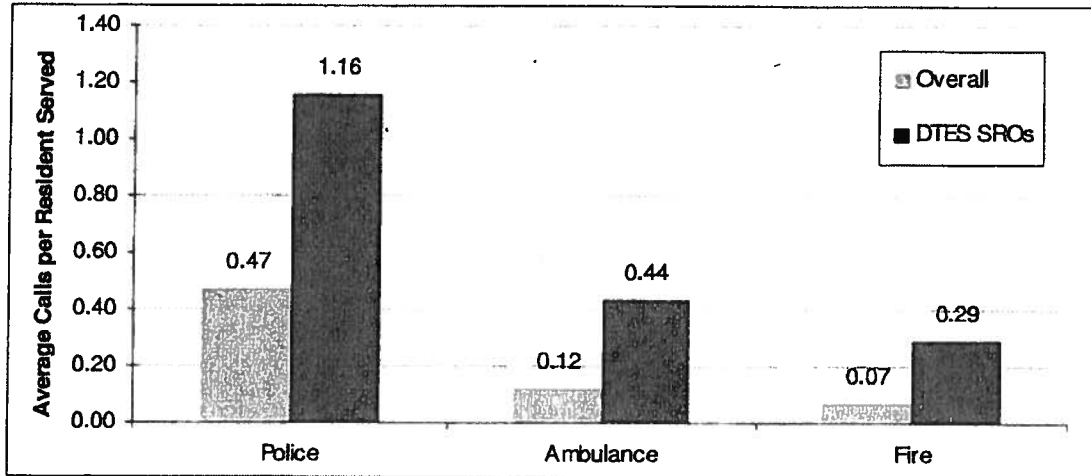
Considering the rates of mental illness and substance addiction and the difficulties those suffering from these problems have with finding and maintaining steady employment, it is not surprising that so many in the DTES live in abhorrent conditions. A 2008 report prepared for the

City of Vancouver states that many who are mentally ill have difficulties obtaining adequate housing, and the lower cost options for housing are often in poor repair, neglected and/or dangerous, leaving many with little choice but to live on the streets.<sup>40</sup> Furthermore, this group of individuals utilizes the services of police, fire and health significantly more often than the remainder of the population, putting a strain on emergency resources.<sup>41</sup>

A 2007 report, prepared as part of the Vancouver Agreement, analyzed 54 SRO hotels in the DTES. An inspection of 3,100 rooms that was part of the study revealed that 80 percent of the buildings had bed bugs and 77 percent had rodents and/or cockroaches.<sup>42</sup> In addition, this report documented the higher utilization of emergency services at these 54 SROs, (see Figure 2).

Recognizing the importance of having well managed SROs, the VPD in October 2008 partnered with the Provincial Government and the non-profit operators of 17 government-owned SROs in a project called Partners in Action. The program aims to ensure that SRO residents receive the safe, secure, and supportive housing that they deserve. To reach this goal, the project relies on increased communication between all three parties. The VPD assigns

Figure 2 - Utilization of Emergency Services at 54 SROs in the DTES



specific beat officers to work with the SROs to build a strong working relationship with staff. As a result of this cooperation, the VPD expects that the potential crime rate at these SROs will improve, thereby providing tenants with a safe environment that is free of predatory individuals.

**ILLEGITIMATE BUSINESSES**

The high poverty rate in the DTES has meant that legitimate businesses have a small consumer base to draw from, resulting in small profits (if any) and a negative perception of the neighbourhood that inhibits shopping in the area by other Vancouver residents.<sup>43</sup> The closure of Woodward's in 1993 was a serious economic hit for the DTES community.<sup>44</sup> By 2001, the storefront vacancy rate along Hastings Street between Main and Cambie

streets was 43%.<sup>45</sup> The Vancouver Agreement<sup>46</sup> noted that significant investments by other businesses or developers have been few. This decline in business in the DTES accelerated in large part with the closure of Woodward's and has continued ever since.

Though legitimate businesses have been decreasing since the Woodward's closure, illegitimate businesses have thrived. Beginning in the late 1980s, the use of crack cocaine impacted the levels of crime and illegitimate businesses. Users often turned to theft to support their addiction, selling the stolen products to second hand stores and pawnshops.<sup>47</sup> The 1990s brought an increase in the accessibility of gambling to the area, with many corner store owners placing video lottery terminals in their

*After the 1993 closure of the Woodward's department store on this stretch – generally pegged as the beginning of the end for the Downtown Eastside – the entire block emptied, leaving behind a mess of boarded-up buildings and vacant storefronts.*

*-The Eastside is Banking on Them  
October 25, 2007  
Maclean's*

businesses. It has been difficult for businesses remaining in the DTES to operate unless “they support, or at least do not interfere with, the illicit trade in property, drugs and prostitution”.<sup>48</sup>

Business improvement associations (BIAs) in the DTES area are concerned enough about the security and crime levels around their businesses that they have put a substantial portion of their funds towards private security in order to reduce the disorder affecting their businesses. The VPD has also worked towards reducing illegitimate businesses and has carried out a number of undercover projects, named Raven, Lucille, Haven and Bodega, to identify and close down businesses that were supporting and involved in crime:

Business licenses were revoked and the some 47 pawn and second hand stores in the DTES were reduced to just over a dozen. Some public houses also lost their licenses, or even voluntarily shut down after being unable to sustain operating

costs once they were forced to operate legitimately.<sup>49</sup>

Though there has been a significant decrease in the number of pawnshops in the area, an underground market for stolen goods has continued to thrive. As well, there has been an increase in the value of metals and recyclable goods that has resulted in many scavenging for these products on the street and in garbage bins in order to earn an income. Also, a rise in the value of metals has led to an increase in break & enters, mischief, and thefts in order to obtain metals to sell.

**CRIME/PUBLIC DISORDER**

The DTES is, unfortunately, infamous and has gained world-wide notoriety for its high crime rates. In the 1960s, 34% of all homicides and aggravated assaults, 10% of all rapes, 33% of all robberies and 66% of all “state of intoxication in a public place” arrests for the City of Vancouver occurred in the DTES (see Figure 1 for map of area included).<sup>50</sup> This picture has changed little, with much of the crime in Vancouver occurring in the DTES.

In particular, the DTES has a pervasive problem with violent crime. As of October 2008, the DTES accounted for 34.5% of reported serious assaults and 22.6% of robberies in the City of Vancouver (VPD



data, see Figure 3). This is particularly concerning given that many of the victims are more at risk because they are sick or elderly.

By the 1990s, there were increasing numbers of “chronic” offenders, individuals committing repeated offences primarily as a method of funding their drug addiction. A recent report by the VPD showed that Vancouver has an extensive problem with chronic offenders, particularly in the DTES (Figure 4), that appears to be unique among larger cities in the world.<sup>51</sup>

Though property crime has decreased in all areas of Vancouver since the late 1990s, the reduction of break and enters (B&Es) in the DTES has not been as significant as that in the rest of the city. The high number of

chronic offenders living in this area may explain, in part, the lack of reduction in Break and Enter occurrences in the DTES. This high rate of crime deters businesses from developing in the area and encourages legitimate businesses to leave.

The “Broken Windows” theory supports the view that the lack of social integration, the high number of vacant storefronts, the large-scale open-air drug market, and public disorder that continues to occur in the DTES creates an environment that emboldens criminal activity in the area.<sup>52</sup> However, it should be noted that order is not only provided by the police. Ordinary citizens are also valuable assets to maintain law and order in their neighbourhoods. Jane Jacobs<sup>53</sup>, a noted researcher on urban areas, states that informal social controls provided by the

Figure 3 - Crime in the DTES as a % of Total Crime in Vancouver 01/08 to 10/08

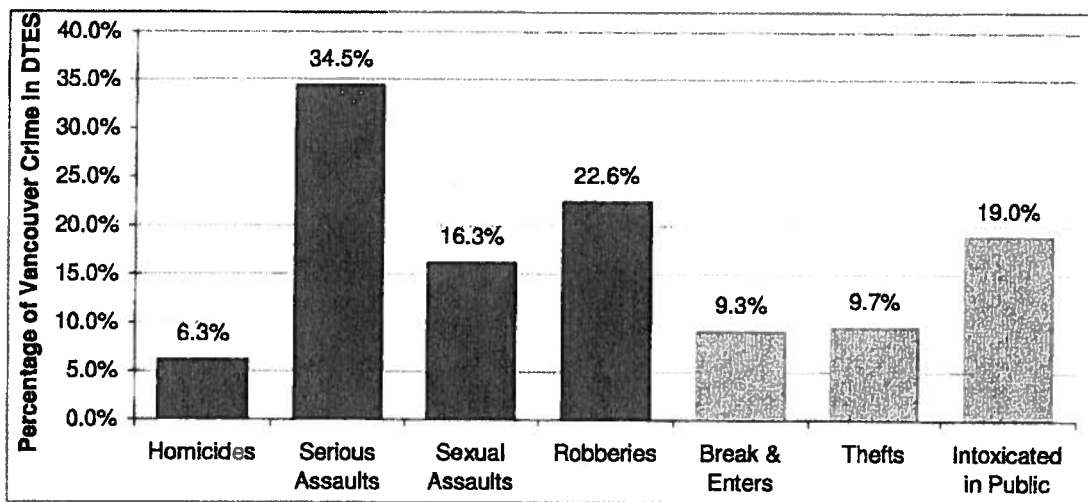
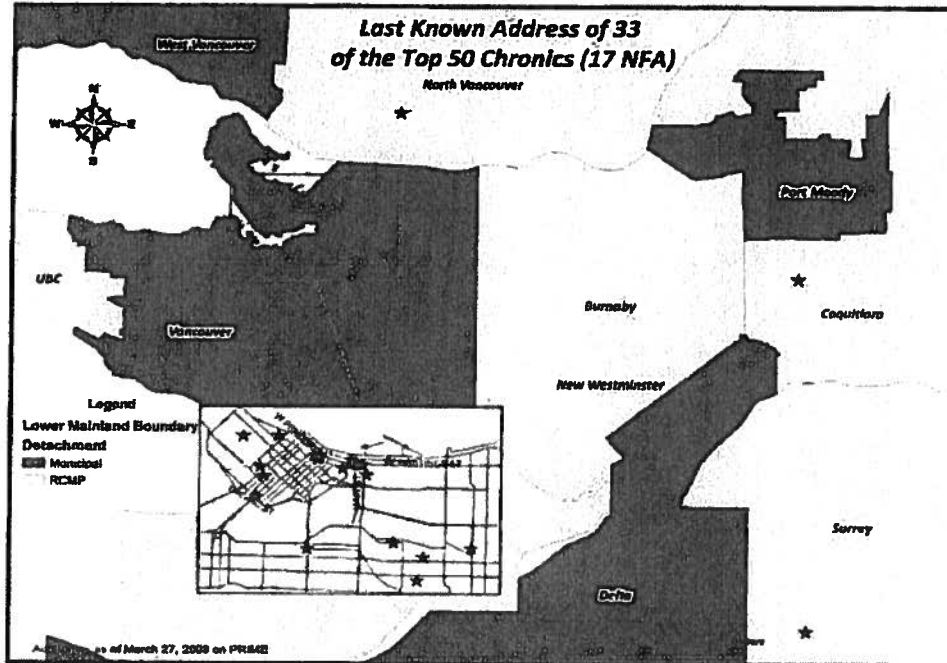


Figure 4 - Last Known Address of the Top 50 Chronic Offenders (17 have No Fixed Address)



people of the area are important and integral to the safety of an area. Increased police presence may lead to an increased civilian presence on the streets of the DTES, leading to greater feelings of security, safety, and increased use and “guardianship”, thereby reducing crime.

The extensive nature of the crime problem in the DTES can be demonstrated by the high levels of fear felt by those living, working or visiting the area. Tourism websites warn travellers to avoid the area, while the level of crime serves as a serious deterrent for businesses to develop.<sup>54</sup>

### **SEX TRADE**

The DTES has been the main area for prostitution and the sex trade since the late 1800s.<sup>55</sup> In fact, one of Canada’s first red-light districts could be found in parts of Chinatown in the early 1900s.<sup>56</sup> The size of the sex trade in the DTES grew in the mid-1980s when sex trade workers from Mount Pleasant relocated to the area due to police and community pressure and the subsequent creation of a special police task force. As well, an injunction forced sex trade workers from the West End of Vancouver. Together, the impact was that the DTES became the main location for the survival sex trade in Vancouver.

Current estimates suggest that there are between 1,000<sup>57</sup> and 1,500<sup>58</sup> sex trade workers in Vancouver and most work in the DTES. Many work on the streets though estimates of how many are difficult to establish. Primarily, these workers are women<sup>59</sup> and between 75%<sup>60</sup> and 80%<sup>61</sup> of them are regular drug users. Up to 50% of workers are involved in the sex trade in order to support a drug addiction.<sup>62</sup> This high level of drug use among sex trade workers has been a major driver in the high rates of HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis C infections in the DTES.<sup>63</sup>

Aboriginal women are disproportionately represented as sex trade workers,<sup>64</sup> with estimates as high as 70%.<sup>65</sup> Benoit and Carroll note that the average sex trade worker is 26 years of age, has three or



more children and is lacking even a high school diploma.<sup>66</sup> Christensen and Cler-Cunningham found that more than half (62%) of the sex trade workers they interviewed had never completed high school.<sup>67</sup>

Perhaps most concerning for sex trade workers is the exceptionally high rate of violence they experience. They are particularly vulnerable to attacks from predatory customers, but also from pimps, boyfriends, or violence occurring during drug-related incidents.<sup>68</sup> In the 1970s and 1980s, a STW occasionally went missing without explanation at a rate of about one every two years (some were located many years later), but between 1995 and 2001, the numbers of sex trade workers from the DTES going missing increased sharply and it eventually became clear they were likely the victims of a serial killer who was able to dispose of their bodies. In 2002, Robert Pickton was charged with the murders of 26 of the "Missing Women". (He was also charged with the murder of a 27<sup>th</sup> unidentified "Jane Doe," but the trial judge stayed the charge for technical reasons.) Pickton stands convicted in six of these deaths, with 20 murder counts still outstanding. Pickton is also the suspect in the deaths of six other Missing Women whose DNA was found on his property, but there is currently not enough evidence to

support charges. In other words, Pickton is convicted, charged, or suspected in the deaths of 33 women. Notably, Pickton claimed he had killed 49 women to an undercover police officer shortly after his arrest.

The Pivot Legal Society reports that most of the sex trade workers in the DTES earn between \$5-20 for a date, resulting in a need to work more frequently to cover living expenses and in workers accepting clients that they would otherwise refuse. The low income reported by the Pivot Legal Society is also consistent with that seen by the VPD's Vice Squad. Up to two-thirds of women working in the DTES have reported being the victims of physical or sexual assault while they were working, yet few report the victimization to the police for fear of both criminal prosecution and investigation by social assistance.<sup>69</sup>

Many sex trade workers find it difficult to find appropriate housing as landlords refuse to rent to them and social assistance is inadequate to cover their needs, particularly when children are involved. In addition, many sex workers have complex medical needs, with multiple diagnoses for mental illness and physical health problems. Lastly, exiting from the sex trade is difficult as many workers have an addiction and/or a criminal record

which inhibits many legitimate businesses from hiring them, resulting in many workers remaining in the sex trade as a matter of necessity. The lives of DTES sex trade workers are difficult, to say the least, and are often tragically short, as a result of the effects of drugs, diseases such as HIV/AIDS, and violence.

### ***REDUCTION OF POLICE PRESENCE***

Since its inception in the late 1800s, the Vancouver Police Department has been a part of the DTES community in the Main and Hastings area. The building at 312/324 Main Street was built in 1953-1954 to house a growing police department. The location of the police building meant that there was a high level of police presence in the Main and Hastings area simply because of the number of police officers who were coming and going from headquarters (HQ) as part of their regular duties. In 1994, HQ moved from 312 Main Street to 2120 Cambie Street with the Patrol Division subsequently moving its base to the new facility. As a result, the number of patrol officers that routinely passed through the DTES en route to HQ has been reduced from more than 200 per day in 1994 to 20-25 per day currently. In addition, resource pressures and various policy decisions by management at the time of the move ultimately led to a reduction in the number of beat officers in the area. Though 312

Main Street is still an integral part of a patrol officer's duties in terms of report writing and the various support units that are housed there, police presence throughout the day has been reduced significantly in the DTES.

Recognizing the impact of the reduction in police presence in the DTES, the VPD has attempted to mitigate the effects of this shift of police presence by adding specialized teams to patrol the DTES. What began as the Citywide Enforcement Team (CET) pilot project in April 2003 has turned into a permanent, though relatively small (approximately 56 Police Constables, four Sergeants and two Staff Sergeants with nine to twelve officers patrolling at any given time), group of dedicated officers who patrol the Downtown Eastside, mostly on foot. This team was re-named the Beat Enforcement Team [BET] in 2006. The positive response from members of the DTES community and from residents of the City of Vancouver in general,<sup>70</sup> particularly in terms of the increases in perceived safety while in the DTES, has suggested that enhanced police presence in the DTES would be beneficial for the community. As well, given that a major deterrent to business development in the DTES is the fear of crime, increased police presence may also assist in encouraging more legitimate business to the area.

### ***IMPACT ON ABORIGINAL POPULATION***

As has been noted, the issues facing the DTES disproportionately affect the aboriginal community, who make up a significant proportion of the population of the DTES.<sup>71</sup> The disproportionate impact on this population is particularly concerning and Benoit and Carroll note that up to 80% of aboriginal children in the DTES live in poverty. Dobell Advisory Services Inc and DCF Consulting Ltd note that aboriginals constitute 34% of the homeless population in Vancouver and most live in the DTES. Aboriginal women make up the majority of sex trade workers.<sup>72</sup> Many are infected with HIV/AIDS and in fact have been displaced from their communities due to a lack of acceptance regarding the diagnosis.<sup>73</sup>

Aboriginal women are at a higher risk of health consequences than others in the DTES due to "gender inequities in relationships"<sup>74</sup> and the fact that they are frequently involved in the sex trade. Benoit and Carroll note that "teenage births are 13 times higher in the DTES than in the general Vancouver Region... [and aboriginal women] ... are more likely than men to share needles, to be 'second on the needle', and to associate condom use or non-use with the important distinctions between work and relational sex".<sup>75</sup> However, it is important to note that the

health crisis facing the DTES affects the whole community, not only those of aboriginal descent.

## CONVERGENCE

The unique challenges experienced by the DTES have been exacerbated by the concurrence of multiple problems. The rise in the use of crack cocaine in the early 1990s, the policy of deinstitutionalizing the mentally ill, the reduction of police presence in the 1990s, the closure of low income housing elsewhere, the de facto containment policy, the HIV epidemic, and the Federal Crown's lack of capacity to prosecute "minor" drug charges, all came together. Though any one of these factors would have impacted the DTES, the synchronicity of these events reinforced the negative impacts of each. These have been felt by some individuals more than others, and have highly affected the quality of life for those living in the DTES.

These changes in the area have made the DTES an efficient, though self-defeating, system where a synergistic underground economy fuels drug use and criminal behaviour and provides little incentive or encouragement for people to leave and improve their lives. Furthermore, for those seeking to escape, the consequences of the challenges facing them in the DTES (e.g., a criminal record, access to programs to

maintain treatment progress) can act as snares, pulling them back into the DTES, despite their attempts to leave.

## DE FACTO CONCENTRATION

The problems of the DTES are large, both in number and in scale. The compounding of each issue has resulted in a neighbourhood in Vancouver with a significant number of people needing help. There has been a de facto concentration of the problems in the area because of various policies by both the public and private sector which directly or indirectly have led to a vicious cycle where people are forced to go to the DTES to access affordable housing or services. The accessibility and availability of lower income housing in the DTES has been a major draw to the area. However, the lack of affordable housing elsewhere has also pushed people into the area. As well, the

*The DTES is an international embarrassment and has been for decades. Despite hundreds of studies, dozens of plans and the best efforts of thousands of people, the situation there remains horrible. It attracts people with addiction and mental-health problems from across the province and country, making it a cesspool that exacerbates the troubles of those living there.*

*-Gary Mason, The Globe & Mail  
October 23, 2008*

accessibility of drugs is indisputably a major reason that people end up in the DTES. Arguments have been made for accessibility to services and thus a preponderance of services has been established in the DTES. However, the presence of many services and lower income housing being predominantly located in one area has meant that people are drawn to the DTES and, in fact, add to the problems experienced by those living in the neighbourhood.

The historic concentration of problems for those in the DTES has meant that making the area a base for most services and low income housing has been logical since, certainly, services need to be accessible to those who require them, and there is no question that there is a need for services in the DTES. However, encouraging these services and affordable housing to locate predominantly in the DTES, and, the lack of the service and housing availability in other areas of Greater Vancouver and the province, has meant that individuals have to move to the DTES in order to access the services and affordable housing that they need. Once there, these individuals become effectively trapped in the DTES, as the scarce supply of these services and housing outside of this area act as a barrier that prevents the individual from being able to return to their home community.

*If I go back [to Vancouver], I'm going to end up back in the downtown eastside and I'm going to kill myself. Maybe not physically, like, myself, but with the drug habit I will.*

*-Marc Sweet, ConAir offender returned to Winnipeg, media interview*

In addition, the DTES has many conditions which facilitate criminal activities. Socio-economic issues and crime are inextricably linked and thus actions by the police and the criminal justice system are highly relevant to both the current state of the problems in the DTES as well as the improvement of it. Dandurand, Griffiths, Chin and Chan have noted that the police primarily took a reactive stance towards the DTES and the problems therein; however, this has changed with the development and continuation of the BET initiative to increase proactive policing in the area.<sup>76</sup>

Furthermore, the concentration of a large number of people in a small geographic location has accelerated the spread of disease (such as HIV and Hepatitis C). Several researchers point out that, historically, disease has spread more virulently in poor communities because of the combined effects of close quarters and weakened immune systems due to

malnutrition.<sup>77</sup> This outcome forces individuals to accept services in an area where they are exposed to the numerous negative circumstances that exist in the DTES, perpetuating an already tragic situation and decreasing the likelihood for individuals to successfully deal with their addictions and other challenges. The next step is to tease apart which services are needed in the DTES because of gaps in services and which ones are not in order to help people live healthier lives.

### PREVIOUS PLANS

The need to improve the quality of life in the DTES has been a longstanding policy objective for the City of Vancouver. City of Vancouver plans with goals of effecting change in this area can be found as early as the 1965 report entitled *Skid Road: A Plan for Action*, and the 1971 report *Downtown East Side: Social Planning/Community Development*. However, much continues to be done in response to the deterioration of the area.

In July 1998, Vancouver City Council formalized its commitment to provide guidance and planning for the DTES, Chinatown, Gastown, Strathcona and Victory Square.<sup>78</sup> The goals proposed by Council involved improving conditions at the street level, reducing crime, improving access to housing, reducing drug addiction,

and helping members of the community find allies. To guide efforts aimed at achieving these goals, Vancouver City Council adopted the following principles:<sup>79</sup>

- Build from within and involve those who already live and work in the area;
- Preserve and enhance the sense of community felt by residents of the DTES and in surrounding communities;
- Listen to those most affected;
- Improve the livability and safety of the DTES for everyone; and
- Develop and implement a well understood plan that delivers results.

In the past seven years, the City of Vancouver has prepared numerous plans and undertaken several initiatives that address key issues and strive to improve conditions in the DTES. Overall, these plans largely focus on homelessness and housing, drug addiction, heritage and culture, and livability and the public realm.

The need for the three levels of government to work together to address the prevailing issues in the DTES has been well documented in many of the contemporary plans. To create a forum for this needed cooperation, the Vancouver Agreement was established between the



Government of Canada, the British Columbia Provincial Government, and the City of Vancouver in March of 2000. This agreement aimed to coordinate the efforts of all three levels of government. While the scope of this agreement covered the entire city, not just the DTES, several of its initiatives and programs specifically focussed on this community. The Vancouver Agreement is currently set to expire in March 2010. Despite the intent to bring about change through this agreement and the perception of its success by some, the DTES continues to be beset by the same issues.

### THE NEED FOR CHANGE

Previous plans and initiatives, though extensive, have often been seen by some as “the” solution for the people of the



DTES. However, these previous plans have been perhaps too diverse in their goals by trying to address all issues present at once. As well, minor or lesser successes have unfortunately been overlooked because the overall initiative did not accomplish all of its goals.

It cannot be ignored, however, that despite these plans and the best efforts of government and private sector agencies to improve the DTES, the situation in this area has remained serious. The ability to significantly improve the quality of life in the DTES is limited by the number, scale, and interrelation of the current problems. Further exacerbating the problem is the fact that most of these issues have developed and grown in the community over several decades. As a result, many of these problems are now deeply entrenched. The multifaceted nature of the problems facing the DTES means that any solution, or improvement, to the situation must also, out of necessity, be multifaceted as well.

Though there has been widespread agreement regarding the need for collaborative action, coordinating and initiating change has been challenging. Political will and competing interests have made cooperative action more difficult to achieve. A lack of effective administrative

oversight or clear path of implementation has also been problematic. Despite agreement about the need for a coordinated effort to improve the lives of those in the DTES, a lack of consensus about the “solution”, multifaceted though it may be, has meant that there is no clear direction about how to move forward.

In addition to problems becoming entrenched, failing to improve the DTES creates an environment where the existing issues can multiply. Consider 24-year-old ‘Ann’, whose name has been changed to protect her privacy. Ann’s story began as a suburban Vancouver teenager who recreationally used drugs. At the age of 19, Ann gave birth to a young daughter. Within one year, Ann’s recreational drug use had grown into a full-scale addiction to hard drugs. At 20 years of age, Ann found herself living in an SRO in the DTES. In addition to battling a drug addiction, Ann also had to struggle with mental illness. On several occasions Ann was arrested by police, as she was believed to be an immediate threat to herself. Unfortunately, Ann’s dual diagnosis of a mental illness and drug addiction is not uncommon. The Canadian Mental Health Association found that over 50% of people with a mental illness have a dual diagnosis.<sup>80</sup> The reality that there is a disproportionately large population in the

DTES with a dual diagnosis was also noted in the VPD’s *Lost in Transition* report.<sup>81</sup>

Ann’s need to support her drug addiction led her to enter the sex trade. Tragically, Ann learned that she had contracted Hepatitis C. In addition to having health issues, Ann had several problems with the police. Even though she is just 24 years of age, police records show that Ann has already had 100 documented interactions with the police, including being charged 31 times. Currently, Ann lives in the DTES, is a sex trade worker, and has an unmanaged mental illness. Despite being exposed to a myriad of health, social and justice services in the DTES, Ann’s life has continued to decline. Unfortunately, the likelihood that Ann will be able to improve her future is limited by the reality that there is no integrated framework to deal with the concurrent issues that have resulted in her current dismal circumstances.

‘Cheryl’, whose name has also been changed to protect her privacy, also highlights the interrelated problems that currently prevail in the DTES. Cheryl is a 39-year-old Aboriginal female from Northern BC. Cheryl is the mother of five children, all of whom reside in her home community. In the spring of 2008, Cheryl came to the DTES to visit family. Being

exposed to a large open-air drug market led Cheryl to experiment with hard drugs. Unfortunately, Cheryl soon found herself addicted. Predatory drug bosses quickly recognized that Cheryl was addicted but was financially unable to support her addiction. As a result, these drug bosses soon paid Cheryl a small amount of drugs in exchange for conducting their open-air drug trafficking.

In June of 2008, Cheryl was arrested by police for trafficking. Cheryl was charged with trafficking and was released from jail. Cheryl was again exploited by drug bosses in the DTES because of her drug addiction. This led to Cheryl being arrested again for trafficking in September. Cheryl was released from jail, but now finds herself facing several serious drug charges. While Cheryl recognizes that her time in the DTES has badly harmed her and her family, Cheryl states that she cannot simply leave and return to her five children. When asked why, Cheryl cites a list of reasons including not wanting to potentially expose the children to her drug use, the need to remain in Vancouver to deal with her criminal charges, and being financially unable to pay for a return trip to her home community. Like Ann, the current environment and the lack of an integrated system to deal with multiple complex issues in the DTES have combined to trap

Cheryl in the area and quickly erode her quality of life.

These individual cases highlight the gaps in a system that fails to assist people with integrated and comprehensive treatment and recovery services. Instead the system focuses on dealing with the symptoms of the problem (e.g., mental and physical health, substance addiction, conflicts with the law) instead of dealing with the overarching issues facing the community (e.g., access to housing, employment, treatment services). The more extreme and tragic outcomes amongst these individual cases can include death by chronic illness, drug overdose, homicide, or suicide. Not everyone falls prey to these outcomes but the problems faced by these individuals and others are common in the DTES.



The situation in the DTES has reached critical status, requiring immediate action that is over and above all that is being done now. Without greater action, the issues in the DTES will further entrench themselves in the community and the people will continue to suffer. While it has been difficult to achieve a meaningful level of change in the DTES, the number of agreements and plans that have been developed, and the successes that have been seen, for the area indicate that there is a broad-based desire and the ability amongst different government and non-government agencies to make a positive impact on the lives of those that live and work in this community. The best chance for the success of these initiatives is to assist those who are most in need of help. This is a necessary condition of moving forward with other bigger picture initiatives. By starting with this high need group of people, the focus remains on improving the quality of life for those in the DTES.

### **ACHIEVING CHANGE**

Despite all of the efforts that have occurred and the broad-based desire to see an improvement in this community, there is still no established body or forum with a specific mandate of ensuring that the lives of the most vulnerable in the DTES are improved. As a result, the issues facing the

vulnerable people of the DTES have become further entrenched, have had the opportunity to build, and the community continues to have a poor standard of living. This compounding of problems has led to a situation in which the problem is greater than the sum of its parts. The negative synergy in the DTES requires numerous interventions to disrupt the cycle of problems.

The multi-faceted and complex nature of the issues in the DTES requires a high level of inter-agency collaboration. In this unique environment, problems that were commonly held to be the responsibility of a single agency or small group of agencies cannot be impacted in a meaningful way without a significantly increased level of collaboration. The recommendations herein are based on the best and most effective pieces of the Vancouver Agreement and Project Civil City. Although this report proposes a particular governance structure, it is recognized that other models may be worthy of consideration (see Appendix B).

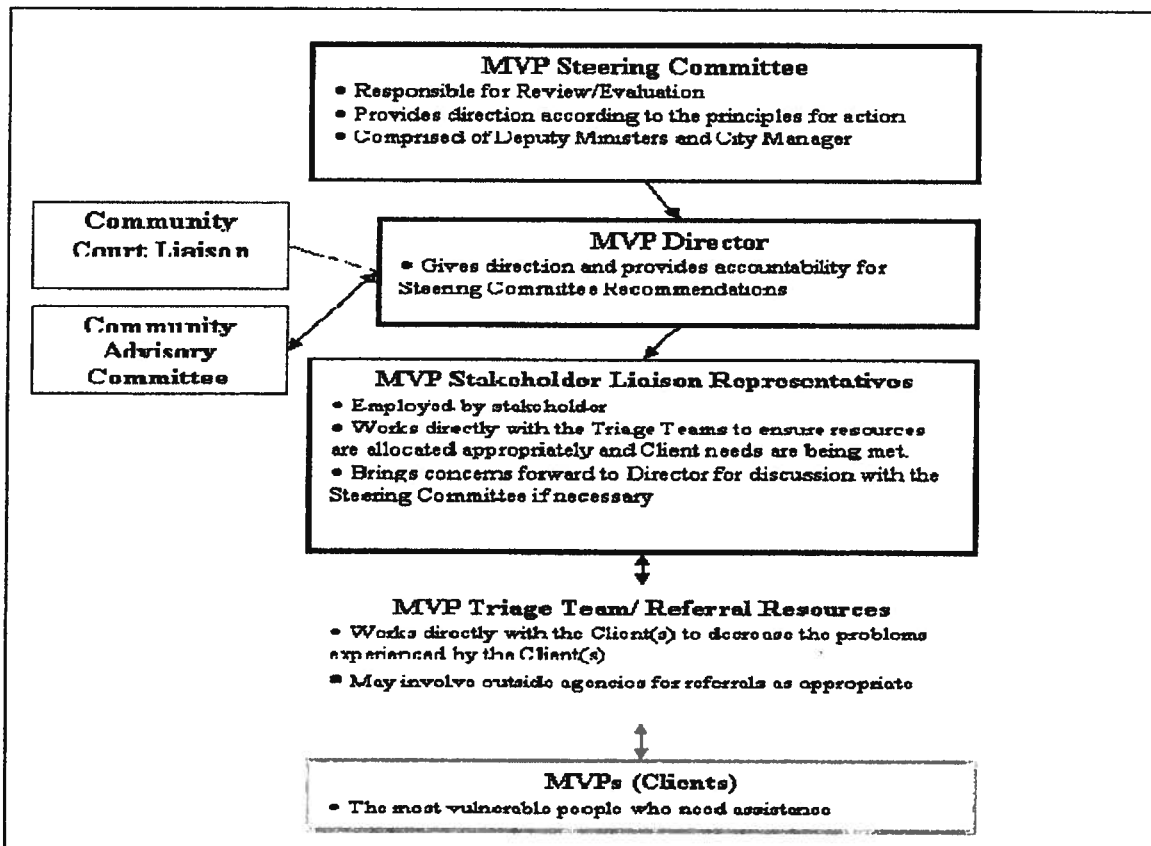
Given that the decisions of the other areas of the region and the province are highly relevant to the DTES, it is important that members of regional and provincial governments in particular are included on any initiatives to better make decisions

that benefit the people. This report recommends a client-centred approach where agencies and governments work together to support the most vulnerable.

To do this, a multi-level governance structure is proposed. This model suggests a process where funds and resources are funnelled or seconded to the initiative in order to devote them to improving the quality of life in the DTES. First, a most vulnerable population (MVP) steering committee made up of provincial and municipal government decision makers

(i.e., Deputy Ministers and City Managers for the region) of the relevant stakeholders (e.g., Health, Income Assistance) is needed for oversight and evaluation. Using the agreed upon principles for direction, they will provide recommendations where necessary to facilitate collaboration by the stakeholders (see Figure 5). As well, this committee may wish to consider what other governance structure would be best suited for the initiative. In particular, exploration of a public corporation model may be worthwhile.

Figure 5 - Organizational Chart of the Most Vulnerable Population (MVP) Initiative



An MVP Director will ensure implementation of the steering committee's recommendations to improve accountability. Knowing the importance of a passionate and committed individual in pushing things forward in a horizontal management structure such as the one proposed here, the Director will need to be a major driver in motivating and coordinating other stakeholders. As well, the Director will facilitate a team of stakeholder liaison representatives. The Director will assist them with a) collaboration between services and b) in problem solving issues that arise in managing the problems faced by the MVPs and those directly working with them.

The Representatives will remain employed by their home agency but will work together to implement protocol, resource and funding needs, priorities and vision for the initiative at both the agency and group levels. In addition, the representatives will also work with "triage" teams who work directly with the MVPs (the clients) to ensure that the teams have the resources necessary to assist their clients. The Triage teams, working with the client, will assess needs and assist that client in accessing services that are needed (e.g., housing, income assistance, treatment), either directly through the representative agencies or through referrals to other

appropriate agencies in the community. They will also report back to the Representatives to ensure that resources are being allocated appropriately at the client level.

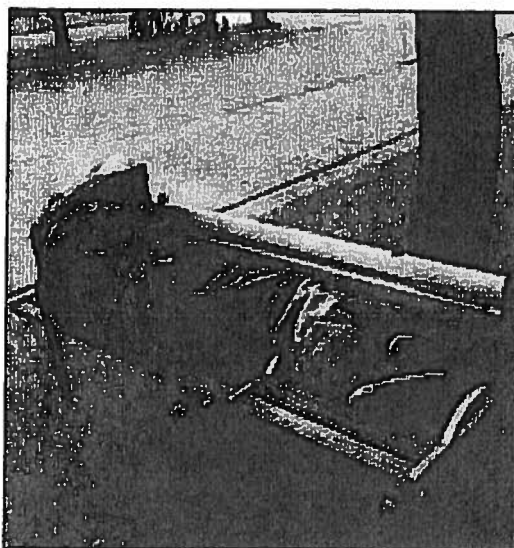
Lastly, because of the local, regional and provincial consequences to making change in the DTES, the Director and Representatives will work with a Community Advisory Committee, made up of individuals from the Strathcona, Chinatown and Gastown neighbourhoods. These communities have already been very active in revitalization efforts and should be involved in any plans that would affect them as well. Also, there would be contact with the Liaison from the Community Court. These advisory groups would be used to facilitate community support and to address any concerns that arise in the community as a whole.

#### ***INFORMATION SHARING***

One of the critical components of building a collaborative initiative is that of information sharing. To work with a client on his or her problem(s), it is far more effective for all relevant agencies/services to be working together. Moreover, addressing one issue may facilitate the effectiveness of another intervention; thus combining efforts and resources is as

beneficial to the service providers as it is to their clients.

In consideration of the collaborative initiatives proposed in this study, the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FIPPA) provides for four defined relationships pursuant to which personal information can be shared between agencies and services. First, if a client consents to the sharing of personal information between named agencies for a specified purpose, then the information can be shared according to that consent agreement. Second, information can be shared without consent if a public body determines that compelling circumstances exist that affect the health or safety of others. Though this process may apply for some of the most vulnerable people in the DTES, it is not considered to be an option that encourages personal accountability nor a positive relationship between the person and the service providing agencies. Third, personal information can be shared with consent under the protocol of a research trial or process. While a research project may provide valuable data to assist this initiative, anonymized research data alone is unlikely to meet the needs of this initiative for long term change. Lastly, public bodies, as defined by *FIPPA* (such as provincial government and municipal agencies), may share personal information



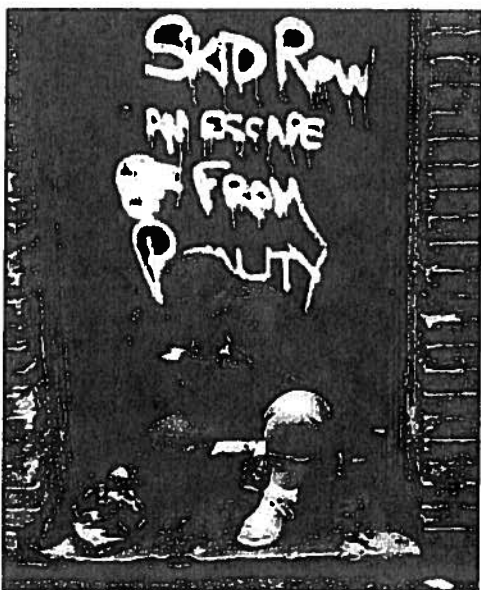
if the information is necessary for the delivery of a common or integrated program or activity [section 33.2(d), *FIPPA*].

In the program suggested here, it is argued that while clients can enter into the process in a number of ways, the most straightforward approach would be for clients to consent to the information being shared between agencies. Under this model, potential clients (i.e., the most vulnerable people identified by each agency using suitable criteria) would be referred to the integrated program and would voluntarily grant informed consent to the sharing of their personal information. The program itself would need to be developed in terms of protocol and procedure, but it could work similarly to a diversion program where the client foregoes the “traditional” route in favour

of this integrated, needs-based program. Clients would be free to enter the program from a referral by any participating agency or through self-selection. Once the client has consented, agencies would be free to share between them the information the client allowed and collaborative efforts could be made to coordinate their care. One program that has been proposed within the VPD is a "recovery car". This car would involve a police officer and an addictions specialist (doctor/nurse) who would be available to attend police calls where a vulnerable victim/witness/other person was in contact with the police and in immediate need/ready at the time to go into recovery. This would require information sharing between the medical specialist as well as the police. This method would avoid many of the

legislative challenges and give clients full control over their own situation. Consideration will need to be given to a) the length of time the consent is valid for (unless revoked by the client, which can occur at any time), and b) what would be done with the file after the client has completed or withdrawn from the program.

As well, consideration will need to be given to those who are unable to give informed consent (e.g., those lacking the capacity to understand to what they are consenting). For these individuals, it may be beneficial to consider facilitating information sharing under Section 33.2(d) of the *FIPPA* or under the considerations for public health or safety. Moreover, where public bodies taking part in this proposed initiative are able to demonstrate a shared mandate resulting in a common or integrated program or activity, consent to share personal information is not required. Importantly, section 33.2(d) may only be relied upon for information sharing between public bodies, and requires that the program is not simply sharing information but rather that the information needs are integral to the running of the program. Regardless of the method chosen, ultimately, this process of information sharing is a requirement of a collaborative, client-centered approach and a key component of providing care to





those who are the most vulnerable in the DTES.

**GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

In order to achieve this vision of assisting the most vulnerable people in the DTES, the stakeholders must coordinate their efforts so that strategies complement each other and work towards common goals. Success should be measured not by activity but by outcomes. Specifically, the stakeholders should be working towards an

increase in the overall quality of life for the community as well as concrete improvement in the lives of the most vulnerable people.

To help in the formulation of these strategies to improve the lives of those in the DTES, guiding principles should be agreed upon, such as:

- Improve the lives of the people (sex trade workers, those with addictions and/or mental health problems, the homeless, the chronically sick, and the chronic offenders) who live in the DTES, and prevent more people from drifting into a life of despair.
- Information sharing is vital between agencies to facilitate collaboration
  - Agencies must be prepared to share information on their client base in order to achieve greater coordination of efforts and to record successes and failures.
- Strategies developed must support:
  - Lowering of crime rates
  - Diversity in terms of people, incomes, businesses, housing, recreational opportunities and so on in the DTES
  - Preservation and enhancement of the heritage and cultural legacy of the neighbourhoods
  - Ensuring that health, social service, and economic supports needed by low-income communities are provided (including expansion, development, or relocation of key health and social services needed

<i>Some of the Advocates for the DTES:</i>	
Government	Private Sector
City of Vancouver	Downtown Eastside Residents Association
Business Improvement Areas	Downtown Eastside Women's Centre
Licenses & Inspections	Family Services of Greater Vancouver
Planning Department	First United Church
Social Planning Department	Franciscan Sisters Benevolent Society
Vancouver Fire & Rescue Services	Pivot Legal Society
Vancouver Police Department	Prostitution Alternatives Counseling and Education
Provincial Ministries & Agencies	Salvation Army
BC Ambulance Service	St. James Community Service Society
Liquor Control & Licensing Branch	Union Gospel Mission
Ministry of Children & Family Development	United We Can
Ministry of Community Services	Urban Native Youth Association
Vancouver Coastal Health Authority	Vancouver Area Network of Drug Users
Federal Departments & Agencies	Vancouver Economic Development Commission
Public Health Agency of Canada	Vancouver Foundation
Western Economic Diversification	WISH Drop-In Centre Society

while avoiding undue concentration of them in the DTES)

- Continuation of the Four Pillars approach on prevention, harm reduction, treatment and enforcement
  - Improving conditions on the street to provide amenities, safety and livability for all (e.g., street and lane cleaning, capital improvements on streets)
  - Business and employment development in the area
  - The availability of retail goods and services needed by all sectors of the community, including low-income residents
  - Access to civic facilities and services (e.g., parks, community centres, library, childcare) needed by all community residents is available
  - The City of Vancouver's housing policy of 1-for-1 replacement of SROs to ensure that lower income individuals are not displaced from the area
  - Involve all sectors of the community in planning and revitalization
  - Encourage tolerance and mutual respect in the diverse elements of the community
  - Affordable new market housing for moderate income households
  - Diffusion of services wherever possible to other areas of the region.
- Public and private agencies must be credited for their successes, and be

held accountable for performance inconsistent with the common goals for the DTES

These principles have been derived from the goals that have already been stated with regard to helping those living in the DTES, ensuring continuity in efforts to improve the DTES. However, the steering committee will need to add to this list with any other principles deemed necessary for the achievement of the common vision for the people of the DTES.

### **FRAMEWORK FOR MOVING FORWARD**

The history of the DTES demonstrates that effecting substantial change in this community is a daunting challenge. When establishing a plan to move forward, it is useful to examine the past planning efforts to learn from what has succeeded and what has failed. One of the major challenges of past coordinated efforts was the attempt to simultaneously achieve a large number of goals without a concrete long term vision for the DTES. In addition, though agreement regarding the problem has been more easily attained, consensus regarding the strategies to solve it has been more difficult to find. More successful outcomes were seen when efforts were focused on a single or a very small number of outcomes that were

tangible. As a result, it is recommended that a phased approach be used.

Because of the far reaching consequences and potential for a “ripple effect”, it is recommended that the initiative first focus on the people who are most in need of assistance in the DTES. The most vulnerable people in the DTES often have concurrent problems and needs that require a coordinated approach (e.g., homeless and drug addicted and HIV positive). The group of people that are most in need should be identified through collaboration and information sharing between the relevant agencies (e.g., Health, Criminal Justice, Income Assistance). Once this group has been identified, a coordinated and proactive approach to service delivery can be undertaken.

This approach will ensure that these individuals receive the services that they require and will maximize the efficient use of existing resources as well as facilitate the development of new ones. The current approach to helping those in the DTES has primarily been agencies working in relative isolation from other agencies with similar goals. Establishing an integrated service delivery model for the most marginalized individuals ensures a people-centered approach that focuses on improving the

living conditions at the street level. Taking this action as the first step will increase the likelihood of other plans being successful, such as the economic revitalization of the area. By focusing first on improving the lives of those that are most in need, it is believed that positive momentum for change can be established and ultimately the community will follow, resulting in the development of a healthy and vibrant community.

After this initial phase, additional initiatives can be undertaken in the DTES focusing on the continuation and improvement of current revitalization initiatives (e.g., economic revitalization). Phase Two would continue to encourage collaboration between agencies, but would work at the community level rather than at the individual level. For example, the VPD is currently examining its facility needs. While the VPD could consider a multitude of potential sites across the city to be a base for its operations, the reduced crime and increased perception of public safety associated with such a facility suggest that the positive impact on the city would be maximized by having it located in the DTES. Initial estimates indicate that a public safety facility could increase the police presence in the area equivalent to adding up to 23 officers 24 hours a day, seven days a week. This increased

uniformed presence would have a positive impact on the detection of street level criminal activity, the reduction of street disorder, and the apprehension of criminals.

Previous efforts have been limited in success because of the challenges created by those who are high need as they are both the cause and victims of the circumstances found in the DTES. Resolution of their problems, and the prevention of new individuals from taking their place, will result in greater success in attempts to revitalize the DTES.

Moving forward with the initiative will require feedback regarding this proposal from Vancouver City Council. In particular, approval should be sought for the next steps that need to be taken to bring this project to fruition. Those steps include consulting with the public for feedback and comment, including agencies, residents of the DTES, and businesses so as to best evaluate the present situation and assess needs of the people in the area. Further, it will be necessary to request a commitment from the three levels of government to help fund the steering committee as well as the initiatives developed to improve lives of those in the DTES.

Once a group of top-level multi-government decision makers has been formed, the steering committee will need to systematically address the following tasks to ensure that change is achieved:

- Identify key issues and stakeholders;
- Reach agreement on strategies;
- Prioritize the actions that will be taken;
- Establish timelines for action;
- Determine the metrics that can be used to quantify progress; and
- Make decisions and take action.

### ***COMMON VISION***

While it is agreed that many of the people in the DTES are facing a large number of problems, and that the problems seem to be getting worse, discussion about what the DTES should look like if plans to improve quality of life were successful is important. For an initiative to assist those who are most in need to succeed, concurrent development of a broader scale vision is necessary. Though the committee will need to have a vision or mandate, this vision should be in line with the discussions already underway in the community. For example, a neighbourhood made up of people who are physically and mentally healthy, who can afford suitable housing, who are not forced to be a part of the

survival sex trade, who have diverse income levels and who are not exposed to drug traffickers and public drug use, and where people feel safe from violence and crime and businesses thrive would be a concrete vision for the Committee to work towards.

This report emphasizes that the vision should focus first on the lives of those who are the most vulnerable. At a macro level, the vision outlined above would be appropriate. However, it is important to also consider the micro level and to formulate a vision for how best to assist the most vulnerable in the DTES.

Whatever the decision about the vision, it is important that any plan for the DTES fully delineates how to achieve the ultimate vision for the community in tangible terms that can be seen and/or measured in some way. This vision, at its best and most useful, would have short and long term goals related to Phase One and Two of the initiative. Because of the urgency of the situation in the area, the timeline for the vision should focus on short term goals, such as the direction for the DTES in the next three to five years. The vision for the DTES, and the timeline for its fruition, will assist the committee in identifying areas of need, prioritizing strategies, and measuring success. Without

an end vision or goal, determining the best course of action will be fragmented and ineffective.

### ***KEY ISSUES AND STAKEHOLDERS***

When trying to determine how to best improve the quality of life for the people in the DTES, it is useful to first consider the key challenges that exist as well as the key stakeholders that can be engaged to facilitate change. A framework for potential collaboration can be obtained by constructing an issues-stakeholders matrix (see Figure 6).

Using a matrix to simultaneously consider the issues and stakeholders encourages the use of a collaborative approach. As a result, multiple organizations can demonstrate their role in bringing about change for the most vulnerable in the DTES. Adopting a coordinated approach amongst stakeholders is essential in achieving change in the DTES, as the most vulnerable people have problems that have become entrenched and are often found in combination. The matrix framework requires being progressive when considering the potential organizations that can be utilized to bring about change. As an example, the issue of criminal behaviour was historically often believed to be the sole responsibility of the police

Figure 6 - Issues-Stakeholders Matrix

		Stakeholders					
		PD	City of Vancouver	Health	Justice	Other Provincial	Other Federal
Issues	Criminal Behaviour						
	Mental Illness						
	Alcohol and Drug Addiction						
	Street Disorder Involvement						
	Homelessness						
	Survival Sex Trade						
	Public Health Issues E.g. HIV/AIDS						

and the courts. However, the need to work with other partners is important due to the recognition that people involved in crime often have underlying issues of mental illness, homelessness, and drug addiction. As a result, strategies to reduce people's involvement in crime in the DTES have grown to include a wide range of stakeholders, many of whom were previously given little attention.

Creating an environment that encourages inter-agency collaboration can have significant positive impacts for the most vulnerable, even in areas where organizations may initially believe that they have a limited ability to be part of a solution. For example, the VPD and the City of Vancouver have recently been involved with the StreetoHome Foundation. This non-profit organization seeks to end homelessness in the City of Vancouver. Seeing an opportunity for collaboration and partnership, the parties involved in

StreetoHome recognized that police data could be used in conjunction with other data sources to identify the hardest to house individuals currently living in the City of Vancouver. This initiative is a great example of collaboration; multiple levels of government, private sector and non-profit agencies are all working together on this complex issue. It is hoped that this initiative will be able to achieve its goal of ending homelessness in Vancouver by 2015.

**COOPERATIVE STRATEGIES**

To address key issues facing the most vulnerable, relevant stakeholders should develop cooperative strategies that address the root causes of the problems. This will assist in reducing the potential for a "vacuum" effect to take place where the most in need people are continually replaced with new individuals.

The process of strategy development can begin by gathering together the existing

plans and strategies of each key stakeholder. This approach utilizes the work that has been done to date and leverages the expertise as well as the resources of each stakeholder. Collaboration between the stakeholders will allow information and ideas to be brought together; strategies can be progressively filled into the matrix by the relevant subject matter experts. An example of some of the current strategies being used at the community or individual level can be found in Appendix A. It should be noted that this matrix is by no means complete; it will take collaboration by all key stakeholders to effectively fill in this matrix (or one similar) and begin to develop collaborative person-centered strategies.

Once the existing information has been brought together, top-level decision makers will be in a position to formulate a common strategy or set of strategies to deal with each issue. It is important to note that simply populating the matrix with existing plans and strategies without ensuring that there is a forum for cooperation will not ensure success. The issue of how to address each problem facing the people of the DTES is a fundamental one and consensus here is critical to the success of the initiative. Failing to encourage greater cooperation

between stakeholders would only be an exercise in data aggregation. To ensure that the quality of life of the most vulnerable people is significantly improved, the steering committee will need to emphasize discussion and collaboration with regard to strategies to be used for the people of the DTES.

### ***PRIORITIZE ACTIONS***

With large projects, it is important to prioritize tasks and strategies. The urgent nature of the situation facing the people in the DTES requires immediate triaging in order to establish the extent of the current problems in the community and in individual lives. The number of people to be included in the initiative would need to be determined but a group of 2,500 people would provide an appropriate sample that could be followed to determine the success of strategies that are deployed. This should be the first task the stakeholders take on in order to ensure that resources are devoted to the most vulnerable people and the most prevalent issues affecting people in the DTES.

Because of the potential for a “ripple” effect to facilitate intervention in problems other than the targeted one, it is necessary to consider the consequences, both intended and unintended, of any strategy. Prioritization within the client’s



care should consider the level of need (i.e., how serious is the problem relative to others), the accessibility and availability of resources to effectively intervene in the problem, and the consequences of intervening with a given problem before another one. Appropriate ordering of the care strategies will increase the effectiveness of the interventions and strategies that are utilized. In addition, gaps in service delivery should become apparent and thus resources can be allocated towards developing services to fill those gaps. This should further assist the most vulnerable population in the DTES.

### ***TIMELINES***

As part of the action plan that the steering committee designs, it will be necessary to

develop timelines for each component. For the first phase of focused care to the most vulnerable people, the timeline for implementation will likely need to be within one to two years. Overall however, the process of determining timelines will help the steering committee to ensure that the identified goals for the community and the most vulnerable people are reached. Also, having agreed upon timelines will help guide stakeholders in their allocation of resources. In addition to helping guide year-over-year resource allocations, the establishment of common goals, strategies and timeline for the stakeholders will also enable each organization to consider how their non-reoccurring projects may be leveraged to improve the quality of life in the DTES. This is particularly true of identified service gaps where new services are developed and are the most resource intensive.

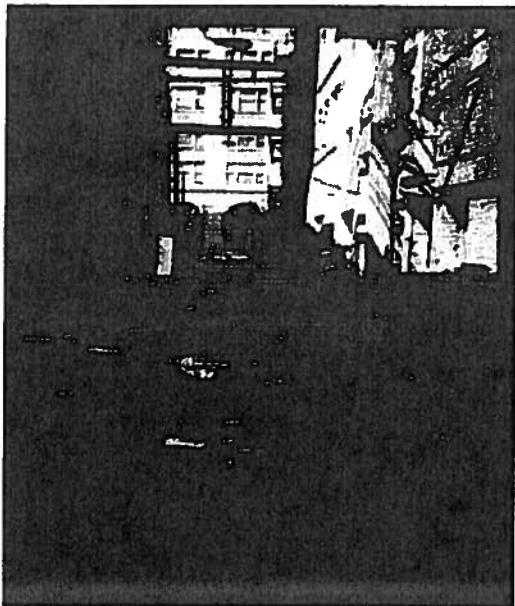
### ***METRICS***

In striving to reach a common goal or vision, it is important for the initiative to be able to quantify its successes and its areas for continued improvement. Global measures of the situation are needed, where assessments are made at the community level. Establishing “before” and “after” measures will allow direct comparisons of how the situation progresses over a given period of time.



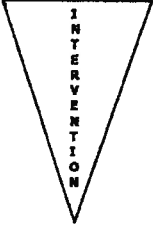
Using the measures at multiple time points (e.g., at the start, six months, one year, two years, etc.) rather than simply at the beginning and the end of a project is more realistic for any project with the people of the DTES due to the pervasive and multifaceted nature of the challenges in the area. The steering committee will need to carefully select parameters suited to the end goals and the strategies that are developed. As well, more in-depth research on the population of vulnerable people could be done to learn more about this group in a way that has not been previously done.

As well, it is necessary to assess change on a more individual level. As the first phase of the actions taken by the initiative will be directed towards improving the



standard of living for the most in need in the DTES, it is particularly important that the people are followed to ensure that the initiatives have resulted in beneficial outcomes. Consideration will have to be given to issues such as how to determine “success” for each individual. One way, shown in Figure 7, in which this could be assessed would be to determine the number of primary issues which impact the quality of life for each of the most vulnerable people. Intervening at an appropriate level based on the level of need, as defined by the number of concurrent issues, will ensure maximum benefit to the individual without overlooking those with fewer needs. This needs-based response is depicted by the inverted intervention triangle in the figure. Ultimately, this approach will reduce the size of the total population of the most vulnerable as well as the number of people at each level of need. By following this group, changes could be readily evaluated to determine what direct impact the interventions have had. In addition, the implementation of prevention strategies that have been shown to be effective in addressing the root causes of these problems will ensure that the influx of people coming into the DTES will be reduced.

Figure 7 - Possible Metrics to Assess Impact

Number of Issues	Current Situation		5 Years Later
6 +	150		50
5	250		150
4	350		300
3	450		400
2	600		500
1	700		600
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,500</b>		<b>2,000</b>

**MAKE DECISIONS AND TAKE ACTION**

This is one of the most important aspects for the team. Writing goal statements and outlining strategies will be meaningless if the group is unable to act and achieve results. Appropriate allocation of resources is an obvious place to help push the developing vision for the DTES to fruition; however, the steering committee will also need to work to inspire stakeholders and encourage them to come to the table in order to have discussions that can improve the quality of life for the most vulnerable.

Firm decision making does not mean dictating action to stakeholders; instead, it means that the committee enables the stakeholders to reach consensus about actions that need to be taken and facilitating the implementation of those actions.

**CONCLUSION**

- The lives of the most vulnerable people that reside in Vancouver’s Downtown Eastside are increasingly negatively affected by mental health issues, illicit substance abuse, physical health issues like HIV and Hepatitis C infections, poor housing, illegitimate businesses, crime and public disorder, a thriving sex trade, a historical reduction in police presence and the impact on aboriginal people.
- Despite numerous previous attempts to coordinate efforts in order to take action on these serious issues, the quality of life in this community continues to be dismal for the most vulnerable. Immediate action is required to improve the lives of those most in need in the DTES.

- There is a need to establish an initiative including top-level government decision makers who can work with ground level teams to devise and implement strategies that can significantly improve the quality of life for the most vulnerable people in the DTES to ensure meaningful change; these individuals must have the ultimate decision making ability for their organization.
- The best chance for the success of any initiative is to assist those who are most in need of help. This is a necessary condition of moving forward with other bigger picture initiatives. Thus, one of the first tasks should be to work towards facilitating information sharing between agencies so that the most in need individuals can be identified. Then, a coordinated effort can be made to improve the lives of those individuals.
- The steering committee should be supported by adequate staffing including a director and support staff of agency representatives and a triage team.
- With appropriate prioritization and action, a positive “ripple effect” could be seen within the DTES community, whereby the improved quality of life for the most vulnerable would lead to improvements in surrounding communities.
- Civic investment is important to the area and should be encouraged as part of the efforts to improve the standard of living for the most vulnerable in the DTES. An example of a catalyst for change would be the relocation of VPD HQ back to the DTES.

Despite the efforts of numerous agencies and all levels of government, the most vulnerable people in the DTES are still facing a number of critical issues. However, it is recognized that the problems that degrade the quality of life for these individuals are larger than can be addressed by any single organization. Therefore, there is a need to work together at the highest levels, where top decision makers in each organization have the authority to take action and commit their resources to bring about change.

*The goal should be to get people the help they need. Politics, or a desire to be treated in a certain way, should not be factored into any solution.*

*-Michael Smythe,  
Vancouver*

To guarantee success and facilitate the efficient use of resources, this report proposes the creation of a steering committee of top-level decision makers, support staff of agency representatives and a triage team. This essential collaboration will ensure that there is an improvement in the quality of life for the most vulnerable individuals and for the DTES community as a whole. By first focusing inter-agency efforts on identifying and assisting those who are the most in need and improving their quality of life, the health of the community will follow.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Establish a collaborative steering committee with top level decision makers with adequate support staff and community involvement as suggested in Figure 5.
2. The steering committee should facilitate an information sharing process between agencies to identify those individuals who are most in need and then work to improve the lives of those individuals.
3. The steering committee should further devise and implement strategies to significantly improve life in the DTES based on the guiding principles.
4. Evaluation and accountability must be an integral part of framework established by the steering committee. ■

**APPENDIX A: Matrix of Some of the Existing Strategies**

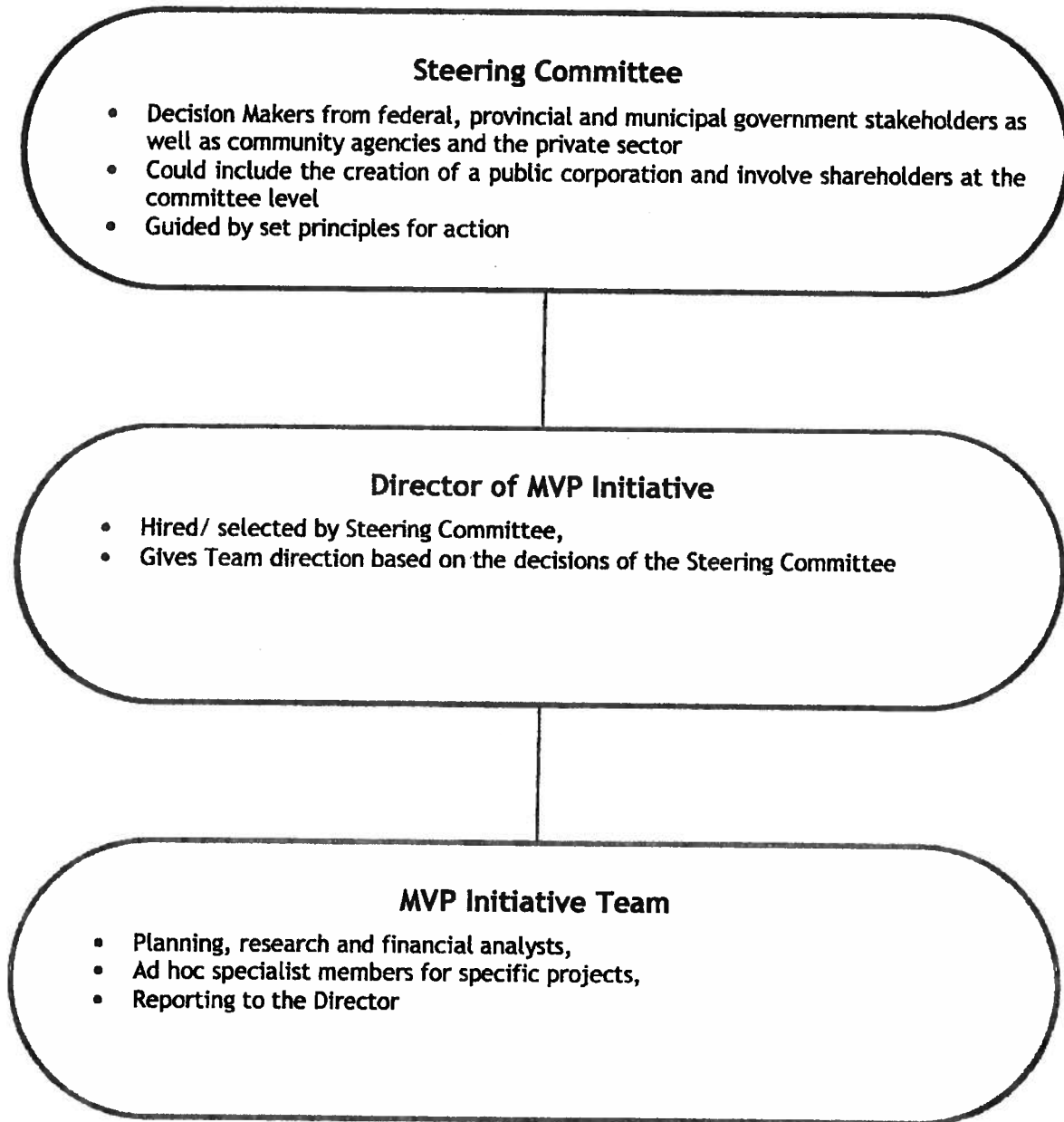
		Key Stakeholders						
		Police	City	Health	Justice	Other Provincial	Federal	Private and Non-Profit Sector
<b>Crime</b>	Beat Enforcement Team (BET)							
	Crime Free Multi-Housing							
	Con-Air Program				Downtown Community Court			ICBC Bait Car Program
	Project Old Timer							
	Safer Parking Lot Program							
	Chronic Offender Unit							
<b>Mental Illness</b>	Mental Health Car (Car 87)		Supportive Housing Strategy	Vancouver Coastal Health's Mental Health & Addictions Supportive Housing Framework				
	Lost in Transition Report			New Vancouver Coastal Health Office at 2750 East Hastings Street		Task Force on Homelessness, Mental Illness, and Addiction		
<b>Alcohol and Drug Addiction</b>			Four-Pillar Approach	Centre for Concurrent Disorders				
			Drug Policy Program	Assertive Community Treatment Program	Vancouver Drug Court	Crystal Meth Secretariat		North American Opiate Medication Initiative (NAOMI)
			Preventing Harm from Psychoactive Substance Abuse	Building on Strength Strategy Plan				
				Prism Alcohol and Drug Services				
<b>Street Disorder</b>	Beat Enforcement Team (BET)		Project Civil City					
	Police Facility at 312 Main Street		Neighbourhood Integrated Service Teams (NIST)			Safe Streets Act		Private Security/Ambassador Program
			Keep Vancouver Spectacular Program					
<b>Homelessness</b>	StreetoHome		Downtown Eastside Housing Plan			Provincial Housing Strategy	Homelessness Partnership Initiative	StreetoHome Foundation
			Homeless Action Plan			BC Housing Management Commission		
			Homeless Outreach Program					
<b>Survival Sex Trade</b>	Sex Trade Liaison Officer							Women's Information Safe Haven (WISH) Prostitution Alternatives Counselling and Education Society (PACE)

## **APPENDIX B: Alternative Governance Model**

Alternative governance structuring was considered during the development of this report. One suggestion of the many possible is included here. Based on the best and most effective pieces of the Vancouver Agreement and Project Civil City a high level multi-stakeholder steering committee could be formed to facilitate this alliance (see Figure 8). This committee could also include the creation of a public corporation whose shareholders are comprised of all relevant stakeholders, including the private sector. Given that decisions made in other areas of the region and the province are highly relevant to the DTES, it is important that high ranking members of regional and provincial governments in particular are included on the committee to better make decisions that benefit the people. Supporting this committee should be a Director and team, jointly funded by the three levels of government. To ensure success, the individuals that represent each stakeholder must have the ultimate decision making authority for their organizations, including the authority to commit resources.

Specifically, this committee will operate according to guiding principles about how to implement change in the DTES. To be most effective, the steering committee should be made up of cabinet ministers, deputy ministers or assistant deputy ministers, high level managers from the City of Vancouver and other agencies whose services impact the DTES, such as Health, Housing, Income Assistance, Justice, and the private sector, to name a few. This committee will then select a Director to supervise and manage a team of staff and resources in order to fulfill the direction of the steering committee. The Director will liaise with and report back to the Steering Committee while ensuring that the objectives of the committee are brought to fruition as well as facilitating the information sharing necessary between the agencies involved. This will assist in establishing accountability between the partners and in the coordination of public and private efforts to improve the DTES. The team of staff under the Director will be made up of planning, research and financial analysts who work to implement the strategies decided upon by the Committee. Other staff members may be brought on to work on specific projects. For example, experts or specialists in a field (such as health or crime) may be brought in to ensure that the implementation of the strategies at the ground level is as efficient and effective as possible.

Figure 8 - Alternative Model



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**ENDNOTES**

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**Municipal Policing in the  
Vancouver Census Metropolitan Area (CMA)**

**A Report for the Missing Women  
Commission of Inquiry**

**September 27th, 2011**

## **Introduction**

This paper describes briefly the municipal policing environment in the Vancouver Census Metropolitan Area (CMA) as defined by Statistics Canada.

## **Municipal Policing in BC**

In BC, the Province is responsible for providing policing and law enforcement services to municipalities with a population of up to 5,000 persons. In accordance with the BC Provincial Police Service Agreement of 1992, provincial policing services are currently provided by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP). The RCMP subsidizes 30% of all provincial policing costs. The Province pays the remaining share of 70%. Until 2007, municipalities with a population of less than 5,000 did not pay directly for the provincial police services they received. Since 2007, municipalities with a population of less than 5,000 have been required to pay a more equitable share of provincial policing costs based on a new financing model.

Under the BC Police Act, municipalities with a population of more than 5,000 people are responsible to provide municipal police services within their jurisdictions. These municipalities have three options: form their own independent police force, enter into an agreement with an existing municipal police force or contract the RCMP.

While municipalities with an independent municipal police department are responsible for 100% of their policing costs, the policing costs in municipalities policed by the RCMP are shared with and subsidized by the RCMP. In accordance with the BC Municipal Policing Agreement of 1992, municipalities with a population between 5,000 and 15,000 pay 70% of all RCMP policing costs. Municipalities of 15,000 or more policed by the RCMP are billed 90% of total costs.

Costs eligible to be shared and subsidized include all direct operational and maintenance costs such as salaries, benefits, overtime, transportation, travel, utilities, equipment, supplies, professional services and miscellaneous expenditures. They also include on a pro-rated basis fixed RCMP costs such as the cost of divisional headquarters, recruit training, the External Review Committee and the Public Complaints Commission. Office space and support staff costs remain the responsibility of each municipality. Building construction costs and legal claims are the responsibility of the federal government (on behalf of the RCMP).

In addition, there are also various types of First Nations policing agreements in place in Aboriginal communities. The First Nations Policing Policy was announced by the federal government in June 1991. It was introduced in order to provide dedicated, professional, effective, culturally appropriate, and accountable police services to First Nations. The policy is implemented across Canada through tripartite agreements negotiated between the Federal Government, the Provincial Government and the First Nation governing



body. Under these agreements, costs are shared 52% by the Federal Government and 48% by the Province. Under such agreements, First Nations obtain their own dedicated contingent of officers from an existing police service (typically the RCMP). Efforts are made to staff these positions using Aboriginal police officers. In 2007, the Tsawwassen First Nation and the Corporation of Delta entered into a policing agreement. Under the agreement, the Delta Police Department committed to dedicate one full-time officer to deliver policing in Tsawwassen. Costs are shared 52% by the Federal Government and 48% by the Province. In Vancouver, the Musqueam Band is policed by the Vancouver Police Department (VPD) also in accordance with a formal agreement.

Independent municipal police services are overseen by Police Boards and municipal police officers are accountable under the BC Police Act and to the BC Police Complaint Commissioner. RCMP officers are accountable under the federal RCMP Act and to the federal Commission for Public Complaints Against the RCMP.

Municipal police officers are trained at the JIBC Police Academy in New Westminster. The Police Academy is responsible for training all municipal police recruits in BC and also offers courses for experienced officers. RCMP recruits are trained at the RCMP Training Academy ("Depot" Division) in Regina.

### **Policing in the Vancouver CMA**

According to Statistics Canada, a census metropolitan area (CMA) consists of one or more neighboring municipalities located around a central core. A CMA must have a total population of at least 100,000 and the central core must have a population of at least 50,000. To be included in the CMA, other adjacent municipalities must have a high degree of integration with the central core, as determined by commuting flows derived from census data.

In 2009, 2,325,317 people lived in the Vancouver CMA according to Statistics Canada. The following table shows the police jurisdictions included by Statistics Canada within the Vancouver CMA, along with their authorized sworn strength as reported in the 2010 edition of Police Resources in Canada.

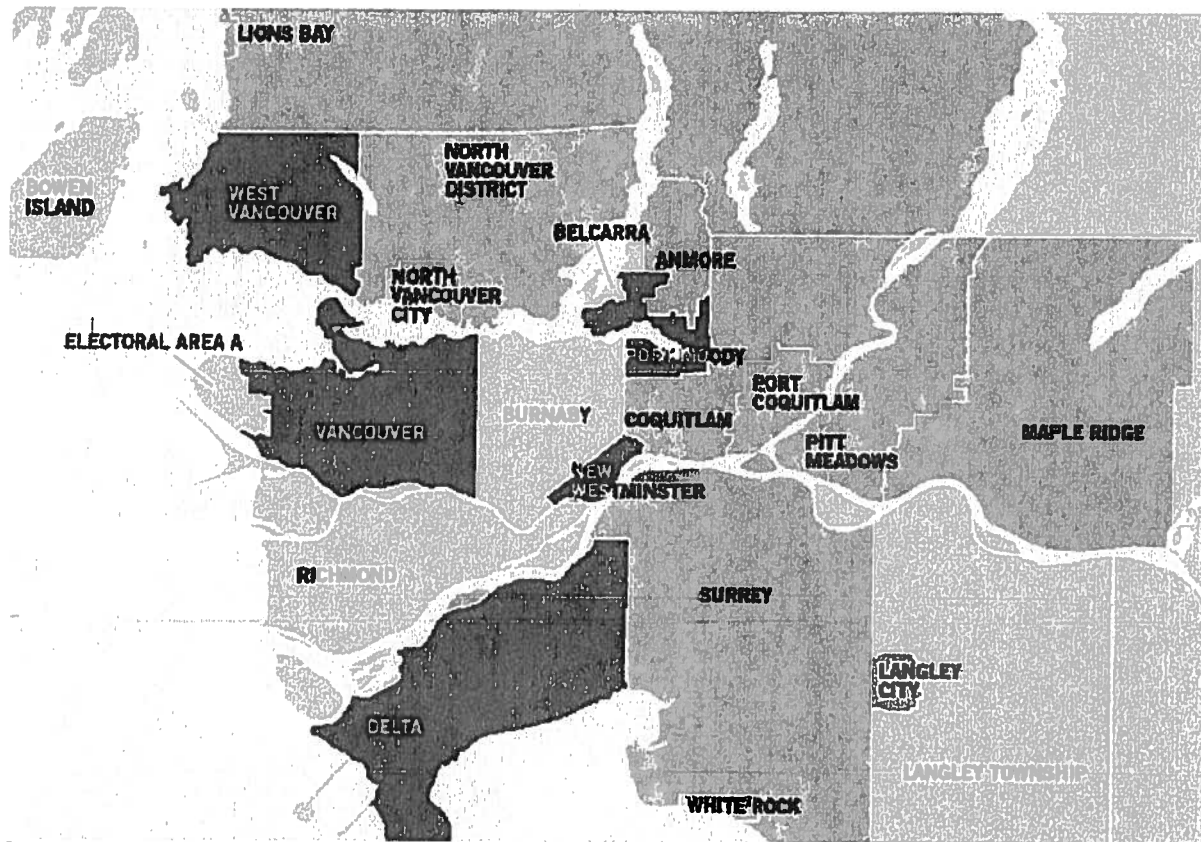
<b>Jurisdiction</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>2010 Authorized Strength</b>
Delta	Municipal	165
New Westminster	Municipal	108
Port Moody	Municipal	50
Vancouver	Municipal	1,327
West Vancouver	Municipal	81
Bowen Island*	RCMP	3
Burnaby	RCMP	280
Coquitlam	RCMP	140
Langley City	RCMP	52
Langley Township	RCMP	127

<b>Jurisdiction</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>2010 Authorized Strength</b>
Maple Ridge	RCMP	86
North Vancouver City	RCMP	64
North Vancouver District	RCMP	91
Pitt Meadows	RCMP	21
Port Coquitlam	RCMP	63
Richmond	RCMP	237
Squamish	RCMP	24
Surrey	RCMP	623
UBC*	RCMP	6
White Rock	RCMP	23
RCMP Lower Mainland Integrated Teams	Integrated	215
SCBCTAPS	Regional	170
<b>Vancouver CMA</b>		<b>3,956</b>

Source: Police Resources in Canada, 2010.

\* Authorized strength for Bowen Island and UBC was extrapolated from Police Resources in BC because it was not provided in the 2010 edition of Police Resources in Canada.

The following map describes graphically the police jurisdictions in the Vancouver CMA. Independent municipal police jurisdictions are highlighted in purple. The rest of the Vancouver CMA is policed by the RCMP. Squamish is not represented on the map but it is part of the Vancouver CMA. Squamish RCMP is responsible to police Lions Bay. Coquitlam RCMP is responsible to police Anmore and Belcarra.



Source: Vancouver Foundation, Metro Vancouver's Vital Signs 2007.

In 2010, the authorized police strength in the Vancouver CMA was 3,956 officers. This count includes officers working for the South Coast British Columbia Transportation Authority Police Service (SCBCTAPS or Transit Police) and RCMP Lower Mainland Integrated Teams.

The Vancouver CMA defined by Statistics Canada is very similar to the Greater Vancouver Regional District (GVRD), a regional agency responsible for water treatment, sewer, land use, air quality, waste management and affordable housing at the regional level. The GVRD is also known as the Metro Vancouver area. Metro Vancouver is a nonpartisan entity operating as a regional district on behalf of 21 member municipalities, one Electoral Area and one First Nation. It is one of 29 regional districts that were created by the BC government between 1965 and 1968 to ensure that all residents had access to basic services such as drinking water, sewer, and waste disposal. Abbotsford is a member of Metro Vancouver with respect to the provision of regional park services only. Excluding Abbotsford, the Metro Vancouver area is the same as the Vancouver CMA.

The RCMP in BC has created a service delivery region called the RCMP Lower Mainland District. This region includes a much larger area than the Vancouver CMA or Metro Vancouver. The following RCMP jurisdictions fall outside the Vancouver CMA or Metro Vancouver area but are included within the RCMP Lower Mainland District

definition: Agassiz, Boston Bar, Chilliwack, Hope, Kent, Mission, Pemberton, Ridge Meadows, Sechelt, Sunshine Coast and Whistler.

Although the RCMP uses the term RCMP Lower Mainland District Regional Police Service, it is not a regional police service in the usual sense of the term. In fact, the Vancouver CMA is policed by a patchwork of municipal police agencies, RCMP detachments and integrated units. Within the Vancouver CMA, five municipalities have their own independent police departments: Delta, New Westminster, Port Moody, Vancouver and West Vancouver. In addition, Transit Police is an independent Designated Policing Unit intended to supplement jurisdictional police departments on Metro Vancouver's regional transit system. Bowen Island, Burnaby, Coquitlam, City of Langley, Township of Langley, Maple Ridge, City of North Vancouver, District of North Vancouver, Pitt Meadows, Port Coquitlam, Richmond, Squamish, Surrey, UBC and White Rock are policed by the RCMP.

Other BC municipalities with an independent police department include Abbotsford, Central Saanich, Nelson, Oak Bay, Saanich and Victoria. For its part, the St'atl'imx Tribal Police is a Designated Policing Unit modeled on the structure of independent municipal police department. Around the railway system, the Canadian National Railway Police Service (CN Police) is mandated to protect CN facilities, equipment, and property. Every other jurisdiction in BC is under the responsibility of the RCMP.

### **Cross-Jurisdictional Police Services**

This section outlines what cross-jurisdictional police services are supplementing jurisdictional police (including municipal and RCMP) within the Vancouver CMA. This includes national services, regional services and integrated units.

#### *National Police Services*

National police services are specialized support services designed to assist jurisdictional police agencies throughout Canada.

The RCMP delivers a number of national police services to assist Canada's law enforcement community, many of which were implemented several decades ago. The RCMP is required by legislation to manage some national policing support services such as the Forensic Laboratory Services, National DNA Data Bank (DNA Identification Act), Canadian Firearms Program (Firearms Act) and National Sex Offender Registry (Sex Offender Information Registration Act). However, other national police services provided by the RCMP are not legislated. These include the Canadian Bomb Data Centre, Canadian Criminal Real Time Identification Services, Canadian Police College, Canadian Police Information Centre, Criminal Intelligence Service Canada and Violent Crime Linkage Analysis System.

The table in Appendix 1 outlines the main national police services provided by the RCMP. These national police services are intended to support public safety and the administration of justice, particularly where such services may not be within the resources of individual jurisdictions. These services facilitate the central collection and exchange of critical police information, intelligence and techniques beyond jurisdictional or provincial boundaries.

## *Regional Police Services*

Regional police services are specialized support services designed to assist multiple jurisdictions within provincial or regional boundaries.

Within the Vancouver CMA, the following police services are provided on a provincial or regional basis:

- 1. Emergency Communications for Southwest BC (E-Comm).** E-Comm provides 9-1-1 service for Metro Vancouver, the Sunshine Coast Regional District, Whistler, Squamish and the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District. It also owns and operates the wide-area radio network used by police, fire and ambulance personnel throughout the region. E-Comm provides radio dispatch service to 30 police and fire departments, including the following police jurisdictions: Bowen Island RCMP, Richmond RCMP, Ridge Meadows RCMP, Squamish RCMP, Sunshine Coast RCMP, UBC RCMP, RCMP Traffic Services (Freeway Patrol), Whistler RCMP, Pemberton RCMP, Vancouver Police Department and St'atli'mx Tribal Police. Member agencies are E-Comm shareholders. Under the Emergency Communications Corporations Act, E-Comm is governed by a Board of Directors nominated by E-Comm shareholders. It has an annual operating budget of approximately \$50 million. Funding is provided by member agencies through a Radio Levy (based on radios issued and traffic), a Dispatch Levy (based on direct staffing and overhead costs within the dispatch centre) and a 9-1-1 Levy (collected by Metro Vancouver region through property taxes).
- 2. Police Records Information Management Environment for British Columbia (PRIME-BC).** PRIME-BC connects every BC municipal police department and RCMP detachment through a secure province-wide electronic police records management system. It provides access to information about criminals and crimes instantly to all BC police agencies. The VPD, Port Moody Police Department and Richmond RCMP were the first jurisdictional police departments to adopt the PRIME system in 2001. The system was subsequently rolled out to the other municipal police agencies within the Vancouver CMA and to the rest of the RCMP Lower Mainland District between May 2006 and April 2007.
- 3. Justice Institute of BC (JIBC) Police Academy.** The JIBC Police Academy is responsible for training all municipal police recruits in BC. The Academy also offers advanced courses in the areas of investigation, patrol operations and leadership for experienced in-service municipal and RCMP police officers in BC.
- 4. Lower Mainland Traffic Safety Helicopter Program (Air One and Air Two).** The Lower Mainland Traffic Safety Helicopter Program is the result of a partnership between the Province, RCMP, municipal police departments and the Insurance Corporation of BC (ICBC). Two helicopters (call signs Air One and Air Two) are tasked primarily to support police during traffic enforcement efforts.

They provide an aerial perspective to ground units during crimes in progress, police pursuits and search and rescue operations.

### *Integrated Units*

Integrated units are specialized police units which are not bound geographically by individual jurisdictional boundaries, operate as centralized organizational units with a distinct command structure and are specifically mandated to assist, complement or supplement jurisdictional police agencies (including RCMP and/or independent municipal police).

The following table outlines what integrated units operate within the Vancouver CMA.

<b>Unit</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Partner Agencies</b>
BC Automated Fingerprint Identification System (BC AFIS)	Archives and searches for fingerprints. Established in 1989 as a joint forces operation. Funded and staffed by VPD and RCMP. Staffed by civilian employees who work out of VPD facilities.	RCMP VPD
BC Hate Crime Team (HCT)	Ensures the effective identification, investigation and prosecution of crimes motivated by hate. Created in 1996. The team includes representatives from the BC Ministry of Attorney General, Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General, the RCMP and the VPD. Two full-time police officers coordinate hate and bias-related investigations in the province by working with local police and communities.	Ministry of Attorney General Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General RCMP VPD
BC Municipal Undercover Program (BCMUP)	Oversees and coordinates all Level 2 undercover operations conducted by municipal police departments in BC. These include, but are not limited to, major crime undercover operations, cell mates and long term undercover projects.	Municipal Police
Combined Forces Special Enforcement Unit (CFSEU-BC) and Integrated Gang Task Force (IGTF)	Investigate, prosecute and disrupt criminal organizations. Assist other police agencies involved with organized and major crime investigations. Created to integrate the Organized Crime Agency of British Columbia (OCABC), municipal police departments and RCMP.	RCMP Municipal Police Transit Police
Criminal Intelligence Service BC and Yukon Territory (CISBC/YT)	Produces analytical products to assist in the detection and disruption of serious and organized crime in BC and Yukon. One of 10 provincial bureaus operating independently within the Criminal Intelligence Service Canada (CISC) umbrella. Staffed with seconded RCMP and VPD employees.	RCMP VPD

Unit	Description	Partner Agencies
Crisis Intervention Team (CIT)	Ensures that mentally ill persons in crisis receive continuity of care from all services involved. It is composed of representatives from health care, addiction centres, social workers, paramedics, RCMP and municipal police forces, and other first responder agencies. Piloted in 2004 and 2005 by Burnaby RCMP and Burnaby Fraser Health Authority.	RCMP Some Municipal Police Transit Police JIBC BC Ambulance Service Fraser Health Authority Vancouver Coastal Health
Integrated First Nations Unit (INFU)	Provides enhanced policing services that are culturally sensitive and responsive to the Squamish and Tseil Waututh Nations. The joint policing unit was established between the RCMP and the West Vancouver Police Department. It includes six officers, is based in North Vancouver and operates on reserves in North Vancouver, West Vancouver and Squamish.	RCMP West Vancouver
Integrated Homicide Investigation Team (IHIT)	Investigates homicides, police-involved shootings and in-custody deaths within the RCMP Lower Mainland, Abbotsford and New Westminster. Established in 2003, IHIT has slightly more than 109 employees, including more than 80 police investigators or detectives. They have one office in Surrey and one in Chilliwack. In 2010-2011, the Abbotsford Police seconded four officers and the New Westminster Police seconded two officers. The Port Moody Police seconded one officer until April 2011 but then opted out of IHIT. The Province provides funding for 19 IHIT positions (17 police officers and two civilian employees). This contribution covers IHIT investigations that take place within the provincial policing jurisdiction.	RCMP Abbotsford New Westminster
Integrated Municipal Provincial Auto Crimes Team (IMPACT)	Develops and implements strategies to reduce auto crime in BC. Operates and manages the Bait Car program and Automated Licence Plate Recognition program. Created as part of a cooperative agreement between the BC Attorney General, RCMP, municipal police departments and ICBC. Staffed with 22 specialized investigators. VPD operates its own Bait Car program within the City of Vancouver but IMPACT provides bait cars for the surrounding 16 municipalities. Funding is provided by ICBC.	RCMP Transit Police Municipal Police
Integrated Road Safety Unit (IRSU)	Conducts strategic traffic enforcement in high collision areas. Formed in 2004 and comprised of up to 110 traffic enforcement officers from the RCMP and municipal police agencies across BC. Funding is provided by ICBC.	RCMP Municipal Police



<b>Unit</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Partner Agencies</b>
Integrated Sexual Predator Observation Team (ISPOT)	Intelligence-based surveillance project that targets high-risk sexual predators. Keeps recently-released sexual offenders under surveillance to ensure they comply with probation orders and bail conditions. Created to monitor sexual predators with the objective of reducing the risk of sexual assaults and other crimes.	RCMP Municipal Police
Lower Mainland Police Dog Service (PDS)	Provides police dog capabilities within the RCMP Lower Mainland and Abbotsford. All dogs are cross-trained for tracking and searching for suspects, evidence, drugs and explosives. Three dogs are training for avalanche search and rescue. On-duty units are deployed strategically around the Lower Mainland to ensure optimal coverage. Composed of 44 police-dog units: 41 from the RCMP and three from the Abbotsford Police Department. The Province provides funding for four dog units and the Federal government provides funding for one dog unit.	RCMP Abbotsford
Lower Mainland Tactical Troop	Assists with crime scene sweeps, search and rescue efforts and public order issues. Includes officers from RCMP, Delta, Abbotsford, New Westminster and Transit Police.	RCMP Abbotsford Delta New Westminster Transit Police
Municipal Integrated Emergency Response Team (MIERT)	Provides a specialized tactical response and advice in support of frontline officers within Abbotsford, Delta, New Westminster and Port Moody. Created in 2003. Composed of 12 Incident Commanders, 25 Tactical Officers and 12 Crisis Negotiators.	Abbotsford Delta New Westminster Port Moody  Currently looking for opportunities to collaborate or integrate with VPD ERT.
National Weapons Enforcement Support Team (NWEST)	Provides investigative support to assist frontline police agencies with the gathering of evidence to prosecute persons or organizations involved in the illegal movement and criminal use of firearms. Members are seconded to NWEST through a service level agreement with their home police service.	RCMP VPD
Provincial Integrated Witness Protection Section (IWPS)	Ensures federal protection and provincial funding applications and delivery standards are adhered to. Forms partnerships to ensure all witnesses have access to the same level of service.	RCMP
Provincial Unsolved Homicide Unit (PUHU)	Performs follow-up work in historical unsolved homicide cases. Reviews previously investigated homicides and look for new or untried investigative techniques with the objective of solving the case. Established in 1996 as a joint forces operation between the RCMP and the VPD.	RCMP VPD

<b>Unit</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Partner Agencies</b>
RCMP Integrated Child Exploitation (ICE) Team	Participates in child pornography investigations. In conjunction with the RCMP Tech Crime Unit, identifies and assists child victims of sexual abuse, identifies those responsible for the abuse and lays appropriate criminal charges.	RCMP
RCMP Integrated Collision Analyst Reconstruction Section (ICARS)	Investigates all vehicle collisions that result in serious injury or death within the RCMP Lower Mainland. Composed of two civilian support staff and 20 highly trained specialists who investigate collisions to determine the cause and the sequence of events.	RCMP
RCMP Integrated Forensic Identification Services (IFIS)	Collects, processes, analyzes and interprets forensic evidence found at crime scenes within the RCMP Lower Mainland. Includes 55 Forensic Identification specialists who are specially trained police officers, 12 Forensic Identification Assistants who are civilians with a scientific expertise, seven forensic video analysts and nine support staff. The identification officers, assistants and support staff are based out of eight different RCMP detachments.	RCMP
RCMP Lower Mainland Emergency Response Team (ERT)	Provides specialized tactical response and advice in support of frontline RCMP officers within the RCMP Lower Mainland. Composed of 65 full-time ERT members and two civilian support staff who are based out of different detachments. Created in 2006. Funding is shared: 50% municipal, 30% provincial and 20% federal.	RCMP

Source: RCMP, VPD, Delta Police Department.

All Vancouver CMA agencies do not necessarily participate in each integrated unit. For example:

1. The Vancouver Police Department, the Delta Police Department, the Port Moody Police Department and the West Vancouver Police Department are not part of IHIT. The Port Moody Police Department and West Vancouver Police Department were previously in IHIT but withdrew. In 2009, the West Vancouver Police Department entered into an agreement with the VPD making the VPD Homicide Unit responsible for investigating homicides or similarly serious cases that occur in West Vancouver. In 2011, the Port Moody Police Department entered into a similar agreement with the VPD.
2. The West Vancouver Police Department also does not participate in MIERT and instead relies on the VPD to obtain tactical emergency response services on a cost-recovery basis.
3. The Lower Mainland ERT, ICE, ICARS and IFIS only provide coverage within RCMP jurisdictions.

4. Within the City of Vancouver, IRSU's mandate is limited and traffic enforcement remains primarily the responsibility of VPD Traffic Enforcement Teams.

Other police units are also considered integrated units by the RCMP but they deal primarily with federal policing responsibilities or statutes. They are listed in the Appendix 2 for completeness but they are not included in the previous tables because they do not contribute specifically to municipal policing within the Vancouver CMA.

### *Informal Regional Policing Arrangements*

Given the number of police agencies operating within the Vancouver CMA, collaboration and coordination of services is vital to reduce and solve crime. Although this need for collaboration and coordination has been partially met through the creation of formal integrated units, informal arrangements also contribute to enhance regional policing.

There is a strong spirit of cooperation in law enforcement because most situations involve the safety of the public. In fact, the BC Police Act contains a statutory requirement obligating a police agency to provide temporary assistance to another agency, if so requested. Section 68 of the Police Act states:

68 (1) The provincial police force, a municipal police department or designated unit must, on receiving a request for temporary assistance made by another police force, police department or designated policing unit, assign to the requesting police force, police department or designated policing unit the officers and equipment practicable to assign for the purpose.

(2) A police force, police department or designated policing unit that requests and receives assistance under subsection (1) is responsible for all costs of that assistance.

The Police Act directs that the agency requesting assistance is responsible for all costs but police agencies have historically not consistently billed each other for services requested and provided. This is because of the collegial relationship among agencies and difficulties in assessing the full price of each individual request for assistance.

The Regional Operational Police Managers Committee (ROPMC) illustrates the collegial relationship between Vancouver CMA policing agencies. The ROPMC is an informal monthly meeting where senior operational police managers exchange information and ideas. There is no formal mandate for the group and member departments share hosting and meeting expenses.

Beyond the ROPMC, the VPD has worked collaboratively with other policing agencies, sharing resources and providing reciprocal assistance. This reflects the fact that the VPD has taken a leadership role and developed extensive capabilities in many operational areas. For instance, the VPD is home to a variety of highly specialized investigative and operational units that remain available to assist outside jurisdictions. At the VPD, informal regional policing arrangements take many forms. For example:

1. In accordance with a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the RCMP ratified in 1998, the VPD is responsible to provide motorcade security escorts when Internationally Protected Persons (IPPs) visit Vancouver. Accordingly, the VPD Motorcycle Drill Team regularly trains with the RCMP Protective Services Section and provides VIP motorcycle escorts when designated national and international dignitaries visit the Vancouver region. Clients may include the Prime Minister, Governor General and international dignitaries such as royalty and heads of state. The VPD assumes most of the costs associated with VIP motorcycle escorts and typically do not recover costs from the RCMP Protective Services Section.
2. The VPD Training & Recruiting Section has assisted and supported other Metro Vancouver police agencies, including RCMP detachments, by supplying instructors, course seats, and coaching. Several members of other agencies have been invited to sit on various in-house VPD courses. The VPD often supplies the lead firearms instructor for the Provincial Undercover Operator's Course.
3. The VPD Strike Force is often requested by integrated units or other police agencies planning covert surveillance operations on high-level, potentially dangerous targets. Strike Force surveillance teams assist other agencies upon request but also work on targets that travel and are involved in crime across the entire Metro Vancouver area, providing a *de facto* regional surveillance service that all jurisdictions benefit from.
4. The VPD Emergency Response Team (ERT) is usually called upon when the risk associated with a critical incident is such that a safe and peaceful resolution is beyond the perceived capabilities of regular field units. ERT is occasionally asked to assist other jurisdictions with high-risk situations and major events. External agencies such as the RCMP, IGTF, CFSEU, IHIT, MIERT, and INSET regularly request the assistance of the VPD ERT. The tactical support provided by ERT ranges from basic building containment and warrant execution to full-scale hostage rescue and high-risk escorts.
5. At the end of 2008, the VPD initiated Project Rebellion. The objective of Project Rebellion was to proactively target some of the most dangerous gang members operating in the Metro Vancouver area by interceding before shootings and murders occur, arresting gangsters and proceeding with charges when possible.
6. The VPD Collision Investigation Unit is sometimes asked to investigate serious vehicle collisions in outside jurisdictions. These jurisdictions count on the VPD to assist them because they do not have the critical mass required to invest in all the specialized equipment and skills required by collision investigations. For example, the Port Moody Police Department, the Abbotsford Police Department and the Burnaby RCMP have all requested the assistance of the Collision Investigation Unit to investigate fatal collisions.

7. Other jurisdictional agencies also assist the VPD when needed. For example, during the 2011 Stanley Cup riot in Vancouver, hundreds of reinforcement officers came to Vancouver from outside jurisdictions. Post-riot, the Integrated Riot Investigation Team (IRIT) was created and it included members from the RCMP, Abbotsford Police Department, Delta Police Department, New Westminster Police Service, Port Moody Police Department, Transit Police and West Vancouver Police Department.

## **Conclusion**

This report was intended to provide a snapshot of policing in the Vancouver CMA.

Policing in the Vancouver CMA consists of a patchwork of RCMP detachments and independent municipal police agencies. The work of these police jurisdictions is complemented by national police services provided by the RCMP, various regional services and several cross-jurisdictional integrated units. It is also enhanced by informal regional arrangements and regional policing initiatives.

## Appendix 1 – National Police Services

Services	Description	Established
Canadian Criminal Real Time Identification Services (CCRTIS)	Maintains the national repository of fingerprint and criminal record information. National provider of biometric-based criminal record verifications for civil and criminal court purposes.	1908
Forensic Laboratory Services (FLS)	Provides forensic analysis services relating to criminal cases in biology, toxicology, firearms, trace evidence, and counterfeit and document examinations.	1937
National Anti-Counterfeiting Bureau (NACB)	Conducts forensic examinations of counterfeit banknotes, travel documents and payment cards. Disseminates information on counterfeiting activity and document security. Delivers services from its office in Ottawa.	1961
Canadian Police College (CPC)	Provides specialized and advanced police sciences and leadership training to foreign and Canadian senior police officers.	1966
Canadian Police Information Centre (CPIC)	Serves as a central repository that provides information on crimes and criminals.	1966
Criminal Intelligence Service Canada (CISC)	Facilitates the production and exchange of criminal information and intelligence. Delivers strategic intelligence products and services to address organized crime.	1970
Canadian Bomb Data Centre (CBDC)	Provides expertise, advice and information on illegal use of explosives, explosives disposal and post-blast investigation.	1972
Violent Crime Linkage Analysis System (ViCLAS)	National crime reporting system designed to collect information on violent offenses, identify violent crimes that may be serial in nature and track violent serial offenders.	1991
National DNA Data Bank	Serves as a central repository that captures and references DNA profiles from crime scenes and convicted offenders.	2000
National Firearms Tracing Centre (NFTC)	Helps law enforcement agencies trace where seized firearms originated from.	Transferred to RCMP in 2003
National Child Exploitation Centre (NCECC)	Investigates Internet-facilitated child sexual exploitation. Contact point for cases involving Canadian victims and suspects.	2004
National Missing Children Services (NMCS)	Assists law enforcement agencies with missing children investigations.	2004
National Sex Offender Registry (NSOR)	Serves as a central repository that provides current information about convicted sex offenders.	2004
Canadian Firearms Program	Provides operational support to the prevention and investigation of firearms crime and misuse.	Transferred to RCMP in 2006

<b>Services</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Established</b>
Police Information Portal (PIP)	National index of persons and vehicles submitted by Canadian partner agencies. Provides users with the ability to query data from multiple police jurisdictions in a single consolidated search.	2008

Source: RCMP and Status Report of the Auditor General of Canada, June 2011, Chapter 5—National Police Services.

## **Appendix 2 - Federal Integrated Units**

**Integrated Counterfeit Enforcement Teams (ICETs)** conduct major counterfeiting investigations in Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver. They investigate organized counterfeit activity and criminal organizations or individuals involved in the production and mass distribution of counterfeit currency.

**Integrated Market Enforcement Teams (IMETs)** help detect, charge and prosecute those using capital markets fraudulently. The IMET investigative pool consists of RCMP investigators, legal advisors from the Department of Justice Canada, securities regulators, representatives from other federal enforcement agencies and forensic accountants.

The **Integrated Proceeds of Crime (IPOC) Unit** is to deter money laundering and terrorist financing by identifying, assessing, seizing, restraining and forfeiting illicit wealth. IPOC conducts joint forces investigations with jurisdictional police departments on a case by case basis.

**Integrated National Security Enforcement Teams (INSETs)** collect, share and analyze national security intelligence. They include representatives of the RCMP, federal partners such as Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) and Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) as well as some municipal police services.

The **Waterfront Joint Forces Operation (WJFO)** at Port Metro Vancouver consists of partners from federal, provincial and municipal law enforcement agencies. It focuses on national security investigations, organized crime and other criminality around the port. The RCMP have also established **National Port Enforcement Teams (NPETs)** which are integrated teams that investigate federal statute offences at Canadian seaports. For its part, the **National Waterside Security Coordination Team (NWSCT)** conducts research to identify vulnerabilities and provide recommendations to improve security around the marine environment. It is staffed by seconded RCMP and municipal police members.

The **Integrated Border Enforcement Team (IBET)** protects Canada from terrorism, organized crime and other border-related criminality. It consists primarily of RCMP, CBSA, U.S. Border Patrol, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement and U.S. Coast Guard officers.





VANCOUVER POLICE DEPARTMENT

## **Options for Service Delivery in the Greater Vancouver Region:**

### ***A Discussion Paper of the Issues Surrounding the Regionalization of Police Services***

**Prepared by the  
Planning, Research and Audit Section**

**For**

**The Vancouver Police Board and  
Chief Constable Jim Chu**

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## **Executive Summary**

The creation of a regional police service in the Greater Vancouver Region (GVR) has been the subject of debate and discussion for several decades. A number of high profile incidents have served to re-focus attention on the increasingly complex challenges facing police services in the region and raised concerns with the current arrangements for the delivery of police services.

The present report was designed to provide the Chief Constable of the Vancouver Police Department and the Vancouver Police Board with an objective review of the issues and challenges confronting police services in the GVR. More specifically, the objectives of the project were 1) to identify the key issues and challenges that surround the current arrangements for police services in the GVR; 2) to consider the experiences of other jurisdictions with regional police services; and, 3) to identify implementation and integration considerations that would surround any change in the existing arrangements for police service delivery in the GVR.

The report considers the experiences of other jurisdictions with regional police services and identifies the challenges surrounding governance of a regional police service so as to ensure local accountability and input while also achieving economies of scale and a high standard of police service delivery. The issues surrounding policing in the GVR include service disparities, accountability, service gaps and economic disparities.

Three options for structuring policing in the GVR are set out and the potential strengths and limitations of each option are discussed:

1. **Option 1: Maintain the Status Quo**
  - Poses no threat to the current police agencies.
  - Would likely continue to function by utilizing integrated units and secondments.
  - However, the dysfunction within the system, including service disparities and funding inequalities, will continue, and will likely be exacerbated in the future due to the inevitable growth the GVR will see in coming years.
  
2. **Option 2: Amalgamate and Regionalize Police Forces in the GVR**
  - Essentially creates a 'blank slate' where the exact makeup and geographic territory of one (or several) regional forces would be created after careful analysis of regional needs.
  - Would allow for a unified system whereby priorities are set both locally, and regionally, and would reduce funding inequities and increase service levels to the region as a whole.
  - The difficulty with this approach lies primarily in the creation of a governance structure, which would require the cooperation of all agencies to come together in its development.
  
3. **Option 3: Create a Hybrid Model**
  - Would see a regional police force that would have responsibility for the policing priorities of the region, and local police forces that would continue the "everyday service" to that area.
  - This system would create a common governance model for all local police services, which would all support the regional service, allowing more effective and efficient policing.
  - There would be significant challenges to this approach, particularly in terms of the cooperation of the RCMP and municipal agencies, and the development of a governance and funding model for all agencies involved.

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It is the assertion of the Vancouver Police Department that any deliberations on altering the status quo for police service delivery in the GVR must consider the unique needs of each community in the region, and that communities have a voice in any new structure that is proposed. As there are numerous competing interests and stakeholders within the current structure of the GVR, the VPD advocates that any discussions of regionalizing police services be led by the provincial government, with the participation and cooperation of municipal governments. With their leadership, a unique opportunity exists for the development of collaborative and creative solutions to the challenges that exist, and for providing the best possible policing service in the interests of public safety. The specific models of policing that are ultimately considered for the GVR and the model that is ultimately selected will rest on the outcomes of additional study and extensive discussions among all of the affected parties. The VPD is prepared to assume an active, collaborative role in any discussions surrounding options that would improve the effectiveness and efficiency of policing services in the GVR.

## **Introduction**

The creation of a regional police service in the Greater Vancouver Region (GVR)<sup>1</sup> has been the subject of debate and discussion for several decades. In 1924, a local newspaper discussed the possibility of a regional police service in an article entitled, 'Regional Police Just Around the Corner' (Ministry of Attorney General, 1992: Tab A1). Between 1978 and 1994 there were eight regionalization studies conducted on police services in BC (Graham, 1994:35). More recently, the escalation of drug and gang-related violence in the GVR has led to a renewed focus on the increasingly complex challenges facing police services and how the capacities of the police in the GVR might be improved. One option that is frequently put forth is the creation of a GVR police service.

The regionalization of public sector services is a key feature of the British Columbia landscape, the most notable examples being health services and transit. To date, however, there has not been an informed public debate on possible options for policing the GVR generally, nor, specifically, the creation of a regional police service. Despite the extensive regionalization of police services in the eastern regions of the country, there has been little empirical analysis of the major issues surrounding regionalization premised on the best practices literature and the experiences of other jurisdictions. Rather, the discussions have remained primarily at a political level. As such, alternative models of police service delivery that hold considerable promise in increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of the police in the GVR have not been explored.

A close examination of the policing arrangements in the GVR would discover economic inefficiencies, service and funding disparities, separate complaint and accountability processes, and a lack of policies and procedures to facilitate collaboration and coordination among the myriad of police services in the region. An exception to this is the recently-created Greater Vancouver Regional Transit Authority Police Service (GVTAPS), a regional police service with responsibility for transit-focused policing services in 13 municipalities.<sup>2</sup>

In the early 21<sup>st</sup> century, it is recognized that the public sector, including policing, must demonstrate that resources are being utilized as effectively and efficiently as possible. Further, the structure for the delivery of public services, including policing, must serve to "maximize organizational, community, regional, and provincial policing capacities (Duda, 2003:7). Based on these premises, it is incumbent upon politicians and police practitioners to ensure that the model of police service delivery in the GVR provides the police with the highest level of effectiveness in crime prevention and crime response.

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<sup>1</sup> For the purposes of this report, the Greater Vancouver Region is viewed as including Squamish, West Vancouver, North Vancouver, Vancouver, Burnaby, Coquitlam, Port Moody, Port Coquitlam, New Westminster, Richmond, Delta, Surrey, and Langley.

<sup>2</sup> GVTAPS: The regional transit police, Canada's first armed transit police, is a regional police service, providing transit-focused policing services to 13 municipalities. This police service is organized to reflect the reality that transit services, including the SeaBus, West Coast Express, SkyTrain, and buses, move across municipal boundaries. Similarly, criminal offenders move across municipal boundaries, calling into question the rationale for utilizing municipal boundaries as the basis for deploying policing services. The creation of GVTAPS was supported by provincial and municipal politicians. The fact that GVTAPS was a new police service that did not encroach on existing policing boundaries was likely a major reason for the widespread support for the creation of this police service.

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This paper is designed to contribute to the discussions regarding options for the delivery of policing services in the GVR. It is assumed that these discussions, involving the provincial and municipal governments, the various police services in the GVR, and the affected communities, will address a wide range of issues. The intent of the authors has not been to conduct an exhaustive review of the literature and previous reports on regionalizing police services, but rather to identify a number of the key challenges that currently confront police services in the GVR, to consider the experiences of other jurisdictions with regional police services, to identify considerations for the GVR for integration and amalgamation and to consider options for the delivery of policing services in the GVR. This includes a discussion of the challenges surrounding governance of a regional police service so as to ensure local accountability and input while also achieving economies of scale and a high standard of police service delivery. To date, for a variety of reasons (including political considerations), discussions of alternative models for providing police services in the GVR have been limited and sporadic.

As a discussion paper, this document contains only a limited analysis of the issues that are raised. It is for governments, police services, and communities to take the deliberations to the next level.

It should also be noted that this discussion paper is designed to provide the Vancouver Police Board with an awareness of the issues surrounding the delivery of policing services in the GVR, the experience of regionalization in the Province of Ontario, and possible options for service delivery that might be considered in the GVR. As such, this paper is best viewed as a preliminary document that can inform and provide a catalyst for discussion among all interested parties, including the provincial government, the RCMP, and municipal governments in the GVR. To this end, there were no consultations with other municipal or RCMP police services in the region. Given that this paper was prepared for the Vancouver Police Board, the issues surrounding the delivery of policing services are, necessarily, presented from the position of the Vancouver Police Department, which is the largest municipal police service in the region. The specific models of policing that are ultimately considered for the GVR and the model that is ultimately selected will rest on the outcomes of additional study and extensive discussions among all of the affected parties. The VPD is prepared to assume an active, collaborative role in any discussions surrounding options that would improve the effectiveness and efficiency of policing services in the GVR.

Finally, it is not the intent of this paper to "advocate" for any one of the possible options for police service delivery in the GVR, nor to presuppose the components of such a model. Rather, this paper is best viewed as an "ideas and issues" paper that can contribute to discussions of effective service delivery in the region. These discussions would involve the RCMP, municipal governments, and other stakeholder groups throughout the region. It would also be important that the framework for considering the various options for service delivery in the GVR include a strong analytical component.

The experience in other Canadian jurisdictions suggests that there is a political dimension to any discussions of regionalizing police services. Municipal governments, for example, may understandably be reluctant to give up control over a local police service, particularly in situations where a "no call too small" policy exists. However, an examination of the "real costs" of "Cadillac" service and the extent to which such a model of police work is sustainable going forward remains to be conducted.

A major question that requires detailed further study is whether the current arrangements for the delivery of policing services in the GVR provide the best "value for service", the most effective and efficient utilization of resources, and the most effective structure for responding to the challenges of crime in the region.



There are, for example, a number of "hidden" costs of the current structure for policing in the GVR that should be explored in any examination of the most effective model for policing the GVR. These include competition among police services for new recruits and in-service police personnel, and the issue of whether integrated police teams are the most effective use of police resources. There is little doubt that there will be increasing socio-demographic, economic, and crime challenges to police services in the GVR in the coming years and decades, and it is prudent to begin considering what model of police service will be best positioned to meet these challenges.

As well, discussions of the best model for police service delivery should be informed by best practices, the experiences of the jurisdictions where police services have been regionalized, and on which model of service delivery will be most effective in preventing and responding to crime and disorder in the region. The creation of a regionalized police service has the *potential* to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of police service delivery, police transparency and accountability, capacity for strategic planning, administration and operations, and public safety and security. Alternatives to the current arrangements for police service delivery provide the opportunity to reduce the existing duplication of services, to reduce administration overhead and to standardize policies and practice.

The extent to which the potential of any one option for police service delivery is realized would depend upon effective, visionary leadership, effective collaboration and cooperation among the affected municipalities and police services, and the effective organization and delivery of policing services. In addition, key core capacities would have to be developed including a strong policy, planning, and analytical capacity and the ability to incorporate best practices. The creation of this administrative and operational framework and the development of goals, objectives, and performance measures in each sector of operations should be guided by best practices and accompanied by the capacity to evaluate and monitor performance on an ongoing basis. The failure to develop these capacities would limit the potential of a regional police service and perpetuate the difficulties that currently exist.

Having some form of regional police arrangement would be conducive to a regional focus on crime, as well as provide an enhanced capacity to address crime "hot spots" across the region as well as to track offenders. Regardless of what model was ultimately selected, a key objective would be the provision of a high standard of police service.



## **Objectives of the Project**

The project had a number of objectives:

- 1) to identify the key issues and challenges that surround the current arrangements for police services in the GVR;
- 2) to consider the experiences of other jurisdictions with regional police services;
- 3) to identify implementation and integration considerations that would surround any change in the existing arrangements for police service delivery in the GVR; and,
- 4) to identify potential options for the delivery of policing services in the GVR.

This discussion paper will identify the issues that surround the various dimensions of considering a regional police service for the GVR, including legislative, jurisdictional, governance, accountability, and operational issues as well as identifying the legislative, governance, and core capacities required for a "best practice" regional police service.

### **The Current Arrangements for Police Service Delivery in the GVR**

The current arrangement for policing in the GVR, whereby the RCMP are involved in policing large municipalities under contract adjacent to independent municipal police departments, is unique in Canada. Further, this arrangement was not the result of a systematic examination of what model of police service delivery would be most effective and efficient for the region.

The Commission on Policing in British Columbia (Oppal, 1994) concluded that the current arrangements for the delivery of policing services across the GVR raise issues related to economics, equity and consistency in policing, investigative continuity, and a number of human resource concerns. Numerous reports (Oppal, 1994) have raised serious questions as to whether the current arrangements for the delivery of policing services are cost effective, provide for the effective and efficient deployment of resources, and whether these arrangements actually hinder effective crime prevention and crime response.

More specifically, concerns have been raised that the fragmentation of policing services hinders effective investigation of serious crimes, crime analysis, and deployment of patrol and investigative resources. Rather than decreasing the quality of police service delivery, it has been suggested that a regional police service would result in improved service delivery.

### **Project Method**

For the present project, a "mixed method" was used to gather data. This included archival research (literature review), qualitative research (interviews), and an initial analysis of the economic costs associated with the current policing arrangements.

The regionalization of police services in Canada is most extensively developed in the province of Ontario. This regionalization took the form of amalgamation, i.e. existing police services were merged to form a new regional police service. To this end, members of the project team travelled to Ontario to gather information on the rationale, objectives, and experiences of the amalgamation in Ontario. This included speaking with the leadership of regional police services in Halton Regional Police, Durham Regional Police, Ottawa Police Service, Hamilton Police Service, Waterloo Regional Police, Niagara Regional

Police, and Toronto Police Services; members of regional police service boards; mayors and municipal and regional government officials, city councillors; sworn members; persons from the private sector; and provincial police services officials. Respondents were queried on a wide range of topics, including the origins and evolution of regional policing, the benefits, challenges, and experiences of regional policing, and the "lessons learned" from regionalizing policing in the province. Interviews were also conducted with senior police leaders from Halifax who were intimately familiar with not only an amalgamation of police services, but also the subsequent implementation of a "blended" municipal/RCMP policing model in that jurisdiction.

A caveat: Although the province of Ontario has the most extensive experience with regional police services, there was among the respondents considerable variability in their knowledge and understanding of policing arrangements in the GVR. While the senior police leaders who were interviewed had a good grasp of the major issues in the GVR, others, such as city councillors, based their responses entirely on experiences and observations in their specific jurisdictions. To this end, the information gathered from Ontario (and from Nova Scotia) should be taken as illustrative rather than as directive.

## **Issues Surrounding the Regionalization of Police Services**

### **Arguments Offered in Support of Creating a Regional Police Service**

There are a number of assertions that are generally offered to support the creation of a regional police service. Supporters of regionalization contend that a regional police service would result in improved levels of communication, standardized policies and practices across a region, improved ability to rationalize and monitor resource utilization, improved investigative and patrol capacities, reduced duplication of services, and the end of competition between police services for recruits, in-service police personnel, and civilians with specialized skills. It is important to note, however, that these assertions are generally made in the absence of supporting empirical documentation: to date, there have been no systemic evaluations of the impact of regionalization on costs, the effectiveness and efficiency of service delivery, or on any of the other above-noted assertions. Nor have controlled "before and after" studies been conducted that would facilitate a comparison of costs and policing outcomes prior to, and following, regionalization been conducted. This, however, does not detract from the viability of the arguments offered in support of regionalization, as it is equally incumbent upon supporters of the status quo to offer similar evidence in support of their position.

More specifically, proponents of regionalization contend that the creation of a regional police service would allow for enhanced:

#### **1. Communication**

There is potential for more structured information sharing among police agencies (Ministry of Attorney General, 1983:10). Currently, there is a limited ability for police services in the GVR to share information on a formal, strategic, ongoing basis and this compromises the effectiveness of the police and public safety. All agencies in the GVR currently use PRIME, which allows access to "general occurrence" reports submitted by every agency, but this is quite different than sharing strategic and tactical information. Many agencies also use the services of E-Comm. Both PRIME and E-Comm would facilitate coordinated communication in a regional police service. Examples of where GVR communication currently breaks down include sharing of information relating to crime patterns and analysis, and

operational, investigative and tactical priorities. Communication issues are discussed in more detail in the "Coordination Gaps" section of this report. The extent to which information-sharing could be improved with a regional police service, however, would depend upon a myriad of factors, including leadership and a sound organizational and operational structure.

## **2. Financial Benefits**

It is generally acknowledged that regionalizing police services, in itself, does not decrease operating costs which are the most commonly measured cost of policing, (McDavid, 2002:4). However, regionalization does hold considerable potential to reduce some of the "hidden costs" associated with having separate police services policing in the same region, e.g., competition for applicants, separate recruiting units, etc.

There are also potential savings with a large regional police service having greater purchasing power and being able to acquire equipment and supplies in large quantities. Another example is having officers in regional police service using the same model of firearm. Currently among the municipal and RCMP detachments in the GVR, officers use a variety of handguns. There are even differences in the sidearms carried by Vancouver police officers and their independent municipal counterparts, resulting in increased training costs. There will also be the potential for "economies of scale", the use of specialized resources and assistance in the purchasing and use of equipment (Ministry of Attorney General, 1992: Tab A4). There would also be potential cost savings in centralizing record systems, and regionalization has the potential to eliminate duplication in many other areas as well. Depending upon the organizational structure, a regional police service may have fewer senior police leaders and support staff (McCaffery, 1992:13). This would have the potential of reducing wage costs, as there would be fewer officers in the senior ranks (Ministry of Solicitor General, 1990:7). Perhaps most importantly, regionalization has the potential to create a more equitable distribution and sharing of resources and would enable consistent and equitable policing across the jurisdiction (Graham, 1994:6; Ministry of Attorney General, 1992: Tab A3).

## **3. Professional and Career Development**

Regionalization has the potential to create a standardized recruitment and training process, create pay equity, and provide deployment and professional development opportunities (Graham, 1994).

## **4. Community Relations**

A major concern that is often expressed about regionalization is that there will be reduced police contact with the community and that levels of service will decrease. There are a number of strategies that can be employed to address these concerns, including ensuring that patrol resources are allocated on an evidence-based model and that local precinct stations are maintained (Ross, 1978:182). Regionalization of police services provides an opportunity to give the community a more uniform view of police policies and procedures. For example, one jurisdiction may apprehend a suspect a particular way, but another jurisdiction will do it differently. Currently, citizens become confused with the differing policies that are in place (Sandrock, 2002:5).

## **5. Effectiveness in Providing Safety and Security**

The provincial government has noted that a regional police service would, with sufficient resources, have the flexibility required to provide superior service to a greater extent than a smaller police service (Ministry of Solicitor General, 1990:5). Further, given that criminal activity is becoming more

sophisticated and, in some cases, more violent, there is a need to bring as many resources to bear on crime problems as possible. Concern has been expressed that smaller police services are not adequately equipped to effectively respond to more sophisticated types of criminal activity, including conducting investigations into violent crimes that are associated with multi-jurisdictional drug syndicates. For example, cyber crime is an emerging trend and unfortunately smaller agencies might not be equipped to deal with these new types of crimes (Tully, 2001:3). Observers have argued that regional police forces can provide better service for protecting citizens, by undertaking quality investigations, adequately deploying patrol resources to deal with emergency situations, and responding faster to emergency calls (see Tully, 2001:3).

In interviews conducted with provincial and municipal officials, members of regional police boards, and senior police leaders in Ontario, a number of benefits of a regional police service were identified:

- better equipment
- more staffing
- the ability to mount, and support, specialty squads, and the ability to maintain an interface between specialty squads and the service as a whole (something which is generally not possible with the province-wide integrated units)
- the ability to back-fill positions
- the ability to move people and expertise across the region in a seamless manner
- the ability to supplement staffing levels in one district from another, should levels fall below the mandated staffing minimums

### **Arguments Offered in Opposition to the Creation of Regional Police Services**

A number of points have been raised about the efficacy of regional police services, including:

#### **1. Start up Costs**

A key question that surrounds discussions of creating a regional police service is the source of financial resources to set up the force and the unanticipated costs for any problems that might be encountered along the way (Ministry of Solicitor General, 1990:21).

#### **2. Decline in Service Levels**

Concerns are expressed, particularly in those municipalities where police have a "no call too small" policy, that there will be declines in service levels under a regional police service model. This would be accompanied by a loss of the more personal relationship that may exist between police and community residents.

#### **3. Personnel Issues**

Concerns are expressed about the impact of regionalization on collective agreements and benefits, the loss of senior positions and the impact on promotional opportunities.

#### **4. Domination**

There are concerns that a larger police service in the region might dominate the smaller forces in the region. This view is premised on the assumption that 'regionalization' would equate to 'absorption' of these services within into the largest agency.

## **5. Effectiveness**

Opponents of regionalization point out that work produced in a large police organization will not necessarily be effective. There are always problems with miscommunication, isolation, lack of co-operation, and difficulty in communication between departments within the police department (Lithopoulos and Rigakos, 2005:342).

## **6. Loss of Control**

Opponents of regionalization contend that the creation of regional police services results in a loss of community control over policing and a reduction in service levels, particularly in communities where a "no call too small" policy is in place.

# **Policing Services in the GVR: Current Arrangements and Concerns with Current Structure**

*I'm surprised that police services in Vancouver are not amalgamated.*  
Toronto City Councillor and Member, Toronto Police Services Commission

The GVR is policed by both municipal police services and RCMP under contract. There are a number of key issues that surround the current structure for the delivery of policing services in the GVR which may significantly impact the effectiveness and efficiency of policing in the region.

The current arrangements for policing in the GVR involve police forces that are subject to different legislation and have different governance structures. While the independent municipal police services are overseen by police boards and officers are accountable under the BC Police Act and to the BC Police Complaint Commissioner, RCMP officers policing under contract at the municipal level are accountable to the federal RCMP Act and to the federal RCMP Public Complaints Commissioner. Further, there are different operational policies for RCMP officers and municipal police officers. With respect to training, patrol officers receive different training regimens, with RCMP recruits being trained at Depot in Regina, and officers in the independent municipal police services receiving training at the JIBC Police Academy.

While a number of concerns have been raised with respect to municipal contract policing, a comparison of the effectiveness and efficiency of police services provided under contract and those provided by independent municipal police services has not been conducted (see Auditor General of Canada, 2005; Oppal, 1994; Bish and Clemens, 1999;).

There are a number of important questions that must be asked about the current arrangements for policing in the GVR, including:

- Do the current arrangements facilitate the delivery of effective and efficient police services?
- Do the current arrangements provide police services with the optimal ability to prevent and respond to crime?
- Would the adoption of a different model of police service delivery, including the creation of a new regional police service, address the significant issues and challenges that currently surround police service delivery?

The answers to these questions are far beyond the scope of this discussion paper. However, these questions should be part of any more detailed analysis and deliberations about creating a regional police service for the GVR.

Given the importance of the safety of the residents of the GVR and that the police have the support and confidence of the residents of the region, it is imperative that discussions surrounding the creation of a regional police service be informed by best practices and the experience of other jurisdictions, rather than by political considerations. Similarly, should a regional police service be created, it is equally imperative that this service have the capacity to respond to the demands of the region in a manner that ensures that resources are utilized effectively and efficiently. It is important that a regional police service be accountable and transparent in its operations and that the needs of specific areas in the region be incorporated into police policy and practice.

Given the questions noted above, some of the problems and issues with the current model that would have to be addressed include:

- The involvement of the RCMP in municipal contract policing presents a challenge, albeit not an insurmountable obstacle, to the creation of a regional police service in the GVR.
- The current arrangement for police services prevents the development of a comprehensive crime prevention and crime reduction strategies for the GVR.
- All else being equal, the delivery of policing services via a myriad of independent municipal and RCMP detachments hinders the effective use of problem-oriented policing, intelligence-led policing, and coordinated police initiatives to address crime hot spots, chronic offenders, transnational crimes such as human trafficking, and hinders effective intelligence collection and utilization. The current arrangements also present challenges in case investigation, information and intelligence-sharing, and in continuity of collaborative investigations. While the creation of a regional police service, in itself, would not guarantee effective police practice, it would provide a more comprehensive organizational and operational framework within which effective practices could take place, if the requisite capacities were present.
- The current arrangements for police service delivery result in a situation where the region's taxpayers do not share equally in the provision of police services. In the GVR there is a "core city" phenomenon, whereby large numbers of persons from the outlying municipalities travel into Vancouver for work, leisure, and entertainment. This creates situations where Vancouver taxpayer-supported police officers spend large amounts of time policing non-residents. This situation is exemplified by the challenges of policing the Granville Entertainment area and the escalating costs associated with policing this area, due in part to its late-hour bar closings. Many of the patrons that attend the Granville area are not residents of the city of Vancouver.
- The current arrangements for police services do not lend themselves to coordinated regional deployment in the event of a major incident or natural disaster. There is a lack of common standard procedures for consequence management for numerous types of major incidents which may occur, such as planned celebrations, riots, natural disasters, and terrorist attacks. The main issues surround how to deploy diverse groups, and whether the units from different



agencies will take direction from the central command of the jurisdiction where the event is occurring or deploy on their own initiative as per their command structure.

### **Service Disparities**

The primary focus of most independent municipal police agencies is the delivery of frontline policing services. These uniformed officers focus on rapid response, community policing, traffic enforcement, and other functions associated with general patrol. These agencies provide services to jurisdictions that do not see it as their responsibility to work on more complex and organized crime targets. The reasons for this view include:

- A lack of expertise within their agency;
- The fact that these agencies do not police the central business district or the ports, which is where many organized criminals prefer to operate; and,
- Smaller agencies cannot build up the critical mass to have an effective unit to target organized crime (CFSEU is supposed to serve this function, but generally focuses on high-level targets, leaving limited resources to target mid-level organized crime groups.

Larger agencies such as the VPD are under pressure to reduce the number of officers in specialty units that would target these types of criminals in order to increase the number of patrol officers. The end result is that, since agencies want to only look after “their backyard”, the enforcement attention paid to more sophisticated and less visible criminals is insufficient.

Across the GVR there is considerable diversity in organizational core capacities. Smaller departments do not have the capacity to investigate homicides and rely upon the Vancouver Police Department or the RCMP’s Integrated Homicide Investigation Team, respectively. Mobilizing a critical mass of investigators to respond to serious incidents, such as the 2006 kidnapping of Graham McMynn, is costly and cannot be sustained for an extended period of time. An investigation of this size would still be a strain on a regional police service’s resources, but there would be more resources to draw on quickly in order to front-end load the investigation. A regional force would have the capacity to respond to major investigations more effectively on a consistent basis, with far fewer obstacles to acquiring and organizing an effective response.

### **Comparison of Police Services**

The following are specialty squads which exist in the GVR. Not all agencies are able to provide these services and rely on the larger organizations to provide the service and expertise. The fact that smaller agencies rely on the services provided by larger agencies substantiates the case for regionalization.

#### *Examples of services provided by larger agencies*

There are numerous VPD units that provide specialty services when requested by smaller agencies. A number of these specialty units include investigative follow-up expertise for more serious or complicated offences including, Major Crimes (e.g., homicides), Sex Crimes Unit, Gangs and Drugs Sections, and the Dog Squad. These units have the investigative expertise and specialized training that smaller agencies are often not able to develop or support due to their size. A notable example is the VPD’s Strike Force (surveillance and arrest) teams, which conduct surveillance on serious criminals (e.g., homicide and robbery suspects). Not only do the Strike Force teams assist other agencies upon request, they also work on targets that are involved in crime across the GVR, providing a de facto regional surveillance service that smaller jurisdictions benefit from.

In addition to investigative expertise, the VPD provides the services of specialty units that necessitate advanced equipment or technology that may not be available in smaller agencies. These may include Forensic ID services, Polygraph services, wiretap services, the Marine Squad, and in particular, the Emergency Response Team (ERT) for their specialized weapons and tactics in highly volatile or dangerous situations.

The VPD, often due to their size, are also in a position to provide support in terms of crowd control, motorcade support, additional training seats for smaller agencies, and jail services.

#### *Services that GVR agencies share*

Some agencies within the GVR utilize the services of E-Comm to provide Computer-Aided Dispatch (CAD) and 9-1-1 call takers. This radio network is also utilized throughout Metro Vancouver by fire and ambulance personnel. In addition, E-Comm provides the records management environment (PRIME-BC) for all police agencies within the GVR, which allows for all agencies to share the same records environment and access information cross-jurisdictionally. The PRIME-BC environment, however, has only recently included all jurisdictions in the GVR, and as such, has certain data limitations for intelligence and information sharing. In 2007, the VPD's budget for E-Comm and PRIME-BC was over \$15 million.

All municipal agencies make use of the services of the JIBC for training – both recruit, and some in-service training. Additional training is provided by the Canadian Police College (under contract from the RCMP). GVR agencies also make use of other national police services, such as the Canadian Police Information Centre (CPIC), and the forensic crime laboratories and fingerprint identification services of the RCMP<sup>3</sup>. The Police Complaints Commissioner may request either municipal or RCMP investigators to conduct internal investigations for another agency.

#### *Duplication of Services*

Separate agencies have independent units that duplicate what can be done centrally. This includes planning and research to write individualized policies, financial analysis, procurement and stores, crime analysis and training.

An excellent example of this is the VPD's innovative approach to data mining and database creation for police information. In the later part of 2005, a VPD IT project team embarked on revamping the intelligence and crime analysis capabilities of the VPD. The project team, working with E-Comm, developed a "Data-Mart" extract process that captured police investigation details, dispatch information and aggregate incident data in an internal VPD database. The creation of a VPD Data-Mart containing PRIME information was the first of its kind in British Columbia and the first time this had been accomplished in North America using a Versadex Records Management System. The VPD project team accomplished what no other agency or the Versaterm vendor had been able to develop. PRIME Corp. is currently engaged in leveraging the VPD's accomplishments in the creation of a regional Data-Mart grounded in the technological achievements of the VPD system. A five agency test system, the initial component of a larger regional roll-out, is currently under construction. The result is the integration of information from a central database, thereby eliminating silos of information, which in turn helps guard against crucial data being overlooked during investigations and crime analysis. This initiative could have

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<sup>3</sup> Although the RCMP provides some fingerprint identification services, BCAFIS (Automatic Fingerprint Identification System) is a joint operation between the VPD and the RCMP, and is run by the VPD.

been developed for the entire region from the outset if the RCMP and municipal agencies were in a regional structure, avoiding duplication and delay.

### **Weak Regional Crime Voice**

#### *The (Census Metropolitan Area) CMA Phenomenon*

The majority of demographic and social statistics are compiled at the CMA level. For many cities, the city core will encompass much of the CMA, and as well, one police department is responsible for the entire metro city, and therefore, a great deal of the CMA. Statistics Canada, recognizing the difficulties with comparing cities, uses statistics compiled according to the CMA, as this encompasses both inner city cores and surrounding suburban and rural areas. They directly recognize the difficulty in comparing crime rates among police services:

A CMA is a large urban area with a core population of at least 100,000 and includes the surrounding suburban and rural areas that are socially and economically integrated with the urban centre. *The areas that police services serve may differ in their mix of urban/suburban populations, and some inner-city police services are responsible for policing many more people than the resident population, as large numbers of people enter the urban core to work and shop during the day [emphasis added].* For these reasons, it is difficult to compare crime rates among police services. This lack of comparability is addressed by analyzing crime rates by CMA. In order to present data at the CMA level, the data from all police services providing services within the boundary of the CMA, including urban, suburban and rural areas, have been combined. However, expenditures (per capita costs) are not available at the CMA level due to the number of provincial policing detachments within the CMA for which detachment-specific costs are not available.<sup>4</sup>

However, Vancouver is unique among the major cities in Canada insofar as the population within the municipality is only slightly more than one quarter of the CMA population. Due to the recognition that many people travel in to Vancouver for work, leisure and entertainment, the actual population within the municipality may fluctuate widely from the City's residential population according to the day of the week, or time of day. What this may equate to is a weaker regional voice overall, and weaker advocacy for the region as a whole. Although Statistics Canada generally only publishes data regarding Vancouver CMA, it is left to individual municipal departments and individual RCMP detachments to make cases for funding or staffing increases, which is problematic with very little published on a municipal basis that is appropriate for comparison to other municipal agencies within the Vancouver CMA. Regionalization would remove this difficulty in assessing police services and the residential population that police serve, as the region would be considered as a whole and not the sum of its very different, yet interconnected, parts.

As is shown below, the Vancouver CMA has the lowest number of officers per 100,000 population out of the five largest CMAs in Canada, and thus has the highest population per officer. This is a fact that is frequently misunderstood by politicians and the media, who allude to Vancouver's "high" rate of police to population ratio and fail to acknowledge they are comparing an anomalous core city to other jurisdictions in which the majority of the metro population is policed by one agency. When compared

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<sup>4</sup> Catalogue no. 85-225-XIE, Statistics Canada; Police Resources in Canada 2006

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on a CMA basis, the Vancouver CMA has relatively fewer officers than any major city in Canada, and has the challenge of being confronted with the highest crime rate of the largest five cities.

<sup>5</sup> Census metropolitan areas (CMA)	Population 2006	# of Police Officers ('07)	Officers per 100,000 Pop	Pop per Officer	2006 Crime Rate	% change '97 to '07
Toronto	5,418,989	9,483	175	571	5,020	9.8
Montréal	3,706,698	6,837	184	542	6,912	5.5
<b>Vancouver</b>	<b>2,181,591</b>	<b>3,236</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>674</b>	<b>10,609</b>	<b>4.8</b>
Calgary	1,108,907	1,696	153	654	6,954	11.1
Edmonton	1,059,826	1,666	157	636	10,079	12

With a regional voice, national comparisons would be made possible for policing services. This is necessary not only in terms of police strength, but would allow for the region to bring forward characteristics of the GVR that are fairly disparate as compared to other CMAs in Canada, such as the temperate climate, which arguably affects crime rates in many ways due to offenders migrating west, and a greater homeless population. The GVR, and Vancouver in particular, are often left to support social programs without the requisite ability to pay:

Municipalities have little choice when it comes to such pressing social issues as homelessness, immigration, and settlement services, drug abuse and crime. When other orders of government fail to provide adequate funding or supports to assist municipalities with these social obligations, cities are left with both the social and economic consequences. (*Big City Mayor's Caucus, 2006*)

Currently, the disparity exists not only on a national CMA-level, but also within the Vancouver CMA. As is shown below, the crime rate on average for RCMP detachments is 17% higher than the municipal detachments; however, the officers per 100,000 population in RCMP detachments is 37% below the average number of officers per 100,000 population in the municipal detachments. Such disparity in staffing and priorities would be alleviated by a regional structure.

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<sup>5</sup> Catalogue no. 85-225-XIE, Statistics Canada; Police Resources in Canada 2007

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		2005 Crime Rate per 100,000	Population 2006	Officers 2006	Officers per 100,000 2006
<b>Municipal Police</b>	Vancouver	11,719	584,701	1303 <sup>7</sup>	223
	Delta	7,372	102,661	159	155
	New Westminster	16,162	57,480	112	195
	West Vancouver	6,003	46,595	82	176
	Port Moody	6,666	28,458	44	155
	Average Municipal	9,584			181
	Median Municipal	7,372			176
<b>RCMP Detachments</b>	Surrey	12,673	393,256	483	123
	Burnaby	12,334	204,320	221	108
	Coquitlam	9,988	121,989	120	98
	Richmond	9,411	173,429	173	100
	Langley Township	10,832	97,682	125	128
	North Vancouver District	6,661	88,461	90	102
	Maple Ridge	13,598	73,531	78	106
	Port Coquitlam	11,206	57,569	58	101
	North Vancouver	11,687	47,131	50	106
	Langley	17,639	25,716	40	156
	White Rock	8,428	19,577	24	123
	Pitt Meadows	10,112	16,673	18	108
		Average RCMP	11,214		
	Median RCMP	11,019			107
	RCMP vs. Municipal Average	17%			-37%

### **Crime Analysis**

Currently, the analysis of crime patterns and the use of statistical analysis to identify crime "hot spots" and chronic offenders is fragmented across a number of independent municipal and RCMP detachments. There is currently some capacity for a region-wide analysis of crime, crime trends, and those persons involved in criminal activity that may cross municipal boundaries; however, currently there is no "one brain" to direct the analysis and make decisions about how address crime issues on a regional basis.

### **Accountability**

Officers in RCMP detachments policing under contract operate with a separate organizational and legislative framework. While police officers in the independent municipal police services are accountable under the BC Police Act and to the BC Office of the Police Complaints Commissioner, RCMP officers are policed under the federal RCMP Act and are accountable to the federal Commissioner for Public Complaints Against the RCMP.

<sup>6</sup> Catalogue no. 85-225-XIE, Statistics Canada; Police Resources in Canada 2006

<sup>7</sup> It is unclear why this number is incorrect as reported by Statistics Canada; the VPD's authorized strength at this time was 1,214.

### *Inconsistent Public Complaint Process*

In Metro Vancouver there exists two separate and distinct public complaints processes for police agencies.

The independent police agencies are under the complaint process of the *Police Act* of British Columbia. The *Act* establishes a process for the acceptance of complaints through the police agency or directly to the Police Complaints Commissioner.

Each police agency, through the authority of its Chief Constable, undertakes the investigation of the complaint. The nature of the *BC Police Act* is to be corrective in nature. Emphasis is put on informal resolution of complaints. Where a disciplinary default is proven, the *Act* emphasizes corrective discipline rather than punishment. Each Police Board has the responsibility for responding to all service and policy complaints made against their police agency.

The *Act* also establishes clear lines of authority for the investigation of complaints and the review of those investigations by the Complaint Commissioner. This includes a review of the investigation, ordering a new investigation and a review and acceptance of corrective discipline imposed against a police officer. The Police Complaint Commissioner is an independent appointment of the BC Legislature. The clear intent of this is to place the position beyond political interference.

The RCMP has a different system. The RCMP receives complaints directly from the public and investigates the complaints through their internal process. The findings of the investigation, if substantiated, are presented to a disciplinary board. The RCMP Act also establishes two separate agencies for handling complaints involving the RCMP.

The Commission for Public Complaints against the RCMP (CPC) can receive direct complaints from the public but forwards them to the relevant RCMP detachment for investigation and resolution. The CPC also has the responsibility to review RCMP handling of complaints made by a member of the public against an individual RCMP member. The CPC makes non-binding recommendations to the Commissioner with respect to their findings. The CPC can self initiate complaints and hold a public inquiry into complaints but this is rarely done. The RCMP External Review Committee (ERC) reviews and makes non-binding recommendations to the Commissioner with respect to certain types of grievances from members and appeals from disciplinary actions by management.

The existence of the two separate systems causes confusion within the public and leads to difficulties in dealing with complaints against members within integrated units. Team members are subject to different disciplinary procedures and complaint processes.

### **Liability**

The Police Act contains a statutory requirement obligating a police agency to provide temporary assistance to another agency, if so requested. Section 68 of the Police Act states:

- 68 (1) The provincial police force, a municipal police department or designated unit must, on receiving a request for temporary assistance made by another police force, police department or designated policing unit, assign to the requesting police force, police department or designated policing unit the officers and equipment practicable to assign for the purpose.

(2) A police force, police department or designated policing unit that requests and receives assistance under subsection (1) is responsible for all costs of that assistance.

These provisions act as insurance for residents in municipalities policed by smaller agencies, where the agency may not be able, or decide not to staff various specialized units itself. The Police Act directs that the agency requesting assistance is responsible for all "costs" of that assistance. The costs of assistance would clearly encompass the hourly wages and overtime of the officers assisting, as well as equipment consumed. Of course the true costs would further include wear and tear and depreciation of equipment used, a portion of the costs of the specialized training those officers had received, and various other incidentals.

The requesting agency, its police board and its municipal government commonly do not consider that the "costs" may also include liabilities incurred as a result of the actions by the assisting agency. If property is damaged or persons are injured, as a result of actions taken by assisting officers, the Police Act provides that the assisting officers' home municipality (Police Act section 20) or the provincial government (Police Act section 11) are jointly and severally liable; however, the section 68 assignment of the costs, for the assistance, to the requesting agency, may transfer those liabilities. The result is that the requesting agency's municipal government may be financially liable for the actions of officers from another agency, officers whose actions its own police board and appointed Chief Constable do not control.

Similar potentially problematic liability issues arise in relation to municipal officers seconded to integrated teams led by the RCMP. Where a plaintiff in a civil lawsuit is awarded damages arising out of the actions of a municipal officer, the home agency's municipal government is financially liable (Police Act section 20). In the first instance, the home municipality will likely incur this liability, even when its officer was acting under the direction of the RCMP and working in another municipality. Section 11 of the Police Act may also make the provincial government liable to the plaintiff, but it is unclear how liability would be apportioned between the two levels of government. In any event, the home agency remains liable for the legal costs of defending their police officers (in accordance with provisions of collective agreements). To date, secondment agreements have not effectively dealt with the assignment of liabilities between the participants in integrated units, and the secondments present liability risk not being given full consideration, or factored in as potential costs, by municipal governments.

### **Coordination Gaps**

At present, there are no formal protocols for information, crime analysis, and intelligence-sharing between the various police services in the GVR. Rather, such information sharing, when it does occur, is on a personal, ad hoc, and reciprocal basis. This arrangement is far from a best practices model for crime investigation and cannot be justified on the basis that there are a number of integrated investigative teams throughout the region. The presence of these teams does not guarantee information-sharing, as again, there are no protocols in place that require integrated teams to share information with the police services from which members of these teams are seconded, nor is there any indication that information feedback loops exist on other than an ad hoc basis. Any option designed to improve police service delivery in the GVR would have to address this issue.

Recently, the police agencies that comprise the GVR have come together to co-ordinate their efforts in order to combat significant crime problems. There is a realization that individual police agencies cannot combat multi-jurisdictional crime issues (such as gangs) on an individual basis. The municipalities realize, there is a need to coordinate and pool resources for short-term initiatives in order to effectively address serious crime issues in a timely fashion. These agencies recognize that there is a need to be proactive rather than reactive, in these instances and that there is a need for a strategic plan for the region. Not only does the province need a provincial strategic policing plan; each region needs to develop a regional strategy based on the priorities set by the province.

Currently there are no over-arching strategic plans, strategies or set priorities to address the future of youth gangs, regional crime reduction, DARE programs, human resources, training, recruiting and retention, just to name a few.

### **Investigations**

The current arrangements for policing the GVR present challenges in case investigation, information and intelligence-sharing, and in the continuity of collaborative investigations. The increasing complexity and costs of case investigations requires the adoption of one model of case management throughout the region. A recent example highlighting the difficulties associated with fragmented policing services is that the VPD is not involved in the investigation of the multiple, drug-related murders that occurred in Surrey in October 2007, despite the fact that this incident is likely related to the ongoing drug/gang violence that is occurring throughout the region. A number of recent, high profile cases, including the Missing Women's case, highlight the need for "seamless" patrol and investigative police services throughout the GVR.

When agencies do come together on an investigation whether through an integrated Unit or Joint Forces Operation, the investigators use the same command structure for investigating major files, but are trained on and use different software systems for managing information. This bifurcated approach is neither efficient nor effective and may hinder the provision of a high standard of policing services to the citizens of the GVR.

### *Priorities*

Although there are between eight and ten strike force-type (surveillance) teams across the region, there is no procedure for prioritizing targets among the different police services. While one area may have numerous high-priority targets, another area may have relatively few. If both regions have a similar amount of officers assigned to this detail, there may be instances where insufficient resources are spent on high-priority targets (which in all likelihood should be priorities for the entire region), while other low-priority targets have a disproportionate number of resources dedicated due to the compartmentalization of targets, resources and priorities. Having a regional structure would also allow for more experienced officers to be assigned to more dangerous or "heat conscious" targets, while those with less experience could be assigned as appropriate for safety and effectiveness.

### **Human Resources**

The current structure of policing the GVR presents significant challenges in the efforts of police services in the area of human resources. Among the more pressing human resource issues are:



### *Professional and Career Development*

Under the current policing model, the professional and career development of members is the responsibility of each organization, and as such, is quite unequal due to varying budgets, needs, and rank structuring. Although recruit training for the independent police agencies is standardized through the JIBC, additional training depends on each agency's policies and budget. Opportunities for operational, administrative, investigational and supervisory roles, along with promotional opportunities, are also unequal. Often this is a direct result of the size of a police service, as smaller agencies do not have as much flexibility as large ones to transfer members for career development, nor are there as many senior positions available for junior members to be promoted into. In the case of an assignment to an integrated unit, operational experience may be gained, but there is no performance management system to measure or document the experience in order to properly inform the member's agency.

Development for the supervisory, management and executive ranks needs to be addressed, as opportunities to gain experience and knowledge for advancement through each of these ranks are necessary, but vary within each department. Many independent police agencies can provide only limited development opportunities within their respective organizations due to their size.

There may be options for police service delivery in the GVR that would facilitate the standardization of recruitment, training and professional and career development.<sup>8</sup> A performance management system could be used to ensure that all members are receiving the necessary training and experience. The system would allow for the development and training of future leaders. In the United Kingdom, officers are transferred to positions of increasing responsibility in order to prepare them for higher rank.

### *Recruitment*

There is intense competition among police services (independent municipal and the RCMP) in the GVR for new recruits and for in-service officers. This competition is costly, inefficient, and hinders both planning and operations. Smaller police services may have a much more difficult time attracting and retaining police recruits.

### *Retention*

The cost associated with the loss of experienced, in-service officers to larger police services such as the RCMP and Vancouver Police Department are not included in a municipality's policing costs, yet these costs are extensive. Small police services in the GVR are being devastated by officers resigning to go to other departments, including the RCMP. The expertise and experience of officers cannot be replaced merely by hiring new officers. A separate issue concerns the recognition that in smaller agencies, younger, more energetic officers may find themselves serving areas with lower instances of crime, thereby decreasing their opportunity to learn and be challenged in the workplace. This may have the unfortunate effect of those officers leaving for larger, more "eventful" areas or agencies.

### **Secondments**

The use of integrated policing teams, composed of municipal and RCMP officers seconded to address specific issues, might be viewed as a "band-aid" solution for the lack of a regional presence. The creation of integrated units to address regional issues suggests the need for a regional police agency.

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<sup>8</sup> Another issue that bears mentioning is the recognition that while many RCMP members and Executive Officers may come from other areas of the province or even the country, on the whole, VPD officers and members of the Executive have been born and raised in the GVR, and as such, are more cognizant of local concerns and issues.

In the absence of a comprehensive plan for maximizing police resources in the GVR, the rationalization and sharing of resources has developed on an ad-hoc basis through the use of integrated teams, task forces, and secondments. This is costly and the effectiveness of this approach has never been empirically assessed. Despite the extensive reliance on integrated teams to address such issues as traffic, gang violence, and drug-related violence, and the significant costs associated with this approach, there has been no evaluation to date of the effectiveness of this strategy. There is ongoing concern among many police services with the numbers of seconded officers who are assigned to these special task forces and teams. Major concerns include the absence of information "flowback" to the officers' home departments and that officers may "disappear" into special police teams for years at a time. As well, these teams drain experienced officers from the individual police services, a significant concern given the retirement of experienced senior officers and the large number of police officers who are junior in rank throughout the GVR.

There is also concern that the police service's investigative expertise is diminished. This is of particular concern given the high percentage of officers with less than five years of experience, making even more important the presence of seasoned officers in the police service. As well, concerns exist over officers being supervised and taking direction from another agency. Most integrated teams are headed by the RCMP, which will not be familiar with the regulations and procedures and collective agreements of the municipal members' home department. Yet if a public complaint about the actions of a municipal officer is made, in part the rules and regulations of the officer's home department regulate his or her actions, and not those of the RCMP may have in place for the team. A regional police service would decrease the need for integrated police task forces and units composed of officers from municipal department and RCMP detachments. This has been the experience of the regional police services in Ontario.

## **Economic Disparities**

### **Introduction**

At the present time there are insufficient data to develop a cost benefit analysis of the various options for regionalizing police services in the GVR. The available data and information relating to costs and levels of service provided to the municipalities are not sufficiently precise to make this exercise useful. This is an area that should be investigated as the discussions of options for policing the GVR move forward. What is presented below are some of the issues that arise due to the current structure, and the disparity of funding and services in police services in the GVR.

### **Economic Inefficiencies**

Any analysis of the "costs" of policing the GVR must extend beyond the traditional measure of "costs per officer" and include the "costs" associated with failing to apprehend serious offenders in a timely fashion and the "costs" associated with not having sufficient coordination and resources to conduct an investigation at a level that ensures a conviction. One need only consider the "costs" associated with the Missing Women's case to realize that any economic analysis must consider a wide range of factors.

The cost of policing services in Vancouver reflects both the actual policing on the ground and the use of police resources by other departments. Today, as documented elsewhere in this report, there is a wide disparity of services in different policing jurisdictions in the GVR. There are differences in philosophies<sup>9</sup>,

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<sup>9</sup> For example, the "no call too small" model of service delivery is not embraced by all police agencies.

there are differences in response times to similar calls for service,<sup>10</sup> and there are differences in the number of officers responding to similar calls<sup>11</sup>.

There are a variety of economic inefficiencies associated with the current regional structure in the GVR in which six are separate municipal agencies, while 12 municipalities are served by the RCMP. Broadly speaking, the current mixture of RCMP contract and multiple independent municipal police services would be appropriate if crime were isolated in each of the different districts. In such an environment, each of the agencies would have a crime stance appropriate to its own city or municipality. Each community would bear the resource costs necessary for the level of service determined by that city or municipality as appropriate. However, it is not the case that either crime or resource allocation currently takes place in single municipalities. As a consequence there are a myriad of inefficiencies associated with the current policing structure. These inefficiencies can be described as arising from free riding, inappropriate levels of specialization, failing to take advantage of economies of scale, inadequate characterization of levels of service and costs of service provision, and a mismatch of taxation and service provision.

### **Measuring Police Costs but not Police Service**

The observation that Victoria and Vancouver have high per capita policing costs should come as no surprise. Both are the largest cities in their region, and consequently provide services outside their local communities. Vancouver is a qualitatively different policing environment than any other policing area in BC. The economic activity of the City is proportionately greater than its size as it is both a financial hub and a regional hub. It is the center for protests and the destination for tourists. Gangs are particularly active with access to both the port and the entertainment district.

The observation that Vancouver is a regional economic centre also means that the population that has to be policed may differ significantly from the population that is recorded by Statistics Canada. Estimates are that Vancouver supports a population that may be more than 40,000 higher than the resident population on average during a 24-hour period.<sup>12</sup> This leads to an increased cost of policing in the City of Vancouver in particular, as measured by the per capita cost (residential population only). What also results is that although outlying (or ambient) municipalities 'supply' much of this 40,000 person increase to Vancouver, they are in effect not paying the VPD for it, and rather, only pay their own municipal police force for their residential population (which may not be present most of the time in that municipality). Statistics Canada recognized several years ago the need to amalgamate the crime data for Metro Vancouver in order to report comparable data for other large urban areas in Canada.

Measuring policing costs is of interest to taxpayers, but equally important and generally unmeasured is the value of the service provided.<sup>13</sup> This is not easily captured by our usual financial measures since the

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<sup>10</sup> VPD Planning, Research & Audit internal report

<sup>11</sup> The decision to respond with a single officer, multiple officers, and/or ERT, is not standardized across municipalities.

<sup>12</sup> These estimates are based on research provided by private communication from Professor Martin Andresen (SFU Criminology), June 27, 2007.

<sup>13</sup> Policing services are hard to measure from the raw data provided by Statistics Canada. A police establishment's nominal size may not be its actual size.

underlying prevalence of crime is generally unmeasured.<sup>14</sup> The City of Vancouver has a more complicated crime environment than most other municipalities. Just like a big city hospital may record a higher death rate than other hospitals, it would be foolish to conclude that the city medical staff is less competent than those in the rural areas. What may occur is that the most difficult cases come or are transferred to the city hospital, and while staff may be giving significantly better and more specialized service, their case outcomes are measured as worse if the per case yardstick gives no consideration to case complexity.

Consequently, per capita policing costs may have great appeal but they suffer from the important deficiency that they do not reflect the value of the service provided. Implicitly, comparisons of per capita costs of police services assume that the services provided are identical. This is clearly untrue.

### **Tax Collection and Subsidies**

One feature of policing budgets is that they are dependent upon municipal lines. Above it was argued that the appropriate geographical extent of the police force is related to the geographical extent of the criminal activity. Similarly, police funding should be related to the location of the population whom the police are serving. Thus, if all policing were municipal because all crime was local, then it would be appropriate for the locus of budgeting to be local as well. Crimes that are regional need to be funded regionally as the regional taxpayer is the beneficiary. This is not simply a statement of philosophy, but a statement about efficiency.

To the extent that one city subsidizes the policing activities of another say, town, then a reasonable case can be made that the taxpayers of the city are supporting the taxpayers of the town who are not paying a share commensurate with the service they are receiving. Further, the level of the subsidized activity will be less than that which would be provided by the taxpayers acting in concert as a single source of financing. As it stands now, the city will tend to under-provide the service, since it is more costly than it should be to the city residents, and the town's residents will receive at least some benefit for which they do not pay. Citizens of the city will be paying more in city taxes and receiving less in city policing services than their taxes should support. This leads to an environment in which city police services are seen as delivering less service than the level of taxation should permit. Consequently, there will be constant pressure for increased city front line policing that will tend to diminish the resources for specialized police services.

Regionalization is just one of the ways to deal with this persistent problem. Other options may include charging out for services utilized by other agencies, special provincial grants, or other funding support. However, one of the key points for the present situation is the recognition that the VPD, although providing many specialty and support services to smaller agencies, does not charge out for these services on a regular basis.<sup>15</sup> Even if these services were charged out consistently to other agencies, the benefit of this approach to alleviate cross-jurisdictional policing issues is not straightforward.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Of course Crimes Known to the Police and the Social Survey provide some insight into part of the crime prevalence as they record some victimizations. But gang related, drugs, financial frauds and a host of other types of crimes are not necessarily reported or even recognized by the public except as individual cases make the press.

<sup>15</sup> It is expensive to try to break down every cost for each operation. While it can be done, it is not likely to be done easily. One can imagine the entire process degenerating into a constant tussle across municipalities about what is being charged to whom. These costs are internalized in the course of normal single unit budgeting.

<sup>16</sup> For example, a criminal may act criminally in the City of Vancouver yet not engage in offensive behaviour at 'home' in another municipality. Local police have no reason to be actively interested. However, City police need to

Although the VPD uses the services of the RCMP National Lab Service at no cost, the service is jointly funded by the Federal and Provincial Governments for service provision to all BC police agencies.

The Municipal governments in the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) identified that there is a fiscal imbalance between local government's reliance on property taxes as its major source of revenue versus ever increasing costs. This is especially true of increasing policing costs. This has been acknowledged for many large cities in Canada, although nowhere is this truer than in the GVR, as it is the last major metropolitan area without regionalized policing.

Canada's big cities, like all municipalities, are simply too dependent on only one tax source – the property tax. The lack of diversity in municipal tax tools is highly problematic. The property tax is inelastic – the revenue produced tends to grow slowly, often failing to keep pace with population growth, inflation, and economic expansion. Big city responsibilities have also expanded dramatically. Cities are finding themselves having to provide more and more services to 'people' as opposed to 'property', a task for which the property tax is ill-suited. *With more and more residents filling the beltways around our city-regions, big cities find themselves having to provide services and infrastructure to a growing population who pay their residential property taxes elsewhere [emphasis added].*<sup>17</sup>

The City of Abbotsford has undertaken an initiative to bring to the UBCM a call for equitable police funding. Their report points out that the Federal Municipal Policing Agreements provide for a contribution of federal funds towards policing services costs to municipalities with the RCMP. However, the independent police services costs are paid entirely by local municipal taxpayers. These taxpayers are required to pay twice for policing: once through federal/provincial tax and again through municipal property tax (City of Abbotsford, 2007). In January 2008, both the City of Saanich and the City of Vancouver have put forward similar initiatives.

#### *The US Example*

In the U.S. 16 states permit municipal governments to collect local income taxes. (Slack, 2005) Couple the access to these revenue sources with federal programs such as TEA-21 that provide U.S. cities with access to over \$100 billion for transportation infrastructure, and Canadian municipalities quickly lose any competitive advantage. (as cited in *Big City Mayor's Caucus, 2006*).

While most Canadian municipalities take the majority of income from property taxes, many cities in the US have a far more extensive tax sharing plan with the Federal Government. One such example is Seattle, Washington (Vander Ploeg, 2005b):

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spend resources to monitor the criminal's activities in both locations leading to both coordination issues and resource allocation issues.

<sup>17</sup> Casey G. Vander Ploeg, Senior Policy Analyst, Canada West Foundation

**LOCAL TAXES IN PLAY:**

General Retail Sales Tax  
Sales Tax on Entertainment  
Sales Tax on Gambling  
Sales Tax on Restaurants  
Sales Tax on Bars and Pubs  
Sales Tax on Vehicle Rentals  
Gross Receipts Tax  
Franchise and Utility Taxes  
Motor Vehicle Excise Tax  
Real Estate Excise Tax

**TAX-SHARING**

State Liquor Tax  
State Fuel Tax  
State Lodging Tax  
State Insurance Premium Tax  
State General Retail Sales Tax  
State Leasehold Excise Tax  
State Hazardous Waste Tax  
State Utility Tax  
State Timber Tax  
State Solid Waste Tax

**OTHER REVENUES**

Federal and State Grants  
User Fees  
Interest, Licenses, Permits, Fines

**OTHER TAXES AVAILABLE**

Employee Head Tax  
Square Footage Business Tax  
Head Tax or Poll Tax

Although a complete discussion of the federal-provincial-municipal funding arrangement is beyond the scope of this discussion document, it is an issue that should be considered in any discussion of the regionalization of police services.

**Free Riding**

As highlighted earlier, the Police Act directs that a municipal police agency must, on receiving a request for temporary assistance made by another police agency, assign to the requesting agency the officers and equipment practicable to assign for the purpose. As a result, smaller agencies can rely on receiving assistance in relation to specialized investigations (e.g., homicides) or particular policing duties (e.g., crowd control). While it has not been demonstrated that smaller agencies rely on the Police Act assistance requirement when deciding whether or not to staff their own specialized units, it is common practice for smaller agencies to make event-type-specific advance arrangements with larger agencies for the provision of services. The Police Act directs that the agency requesting assistance is responsible for all costs of that assistance; however, in practice police agencies have historically not consistently billed each other for services requested and provided, due to difficulty in assessing costs incurred and the collegial relationship among agencies. As such, there is no fixed cost associated with the level and type of service that is provided, and no consistency in whether agencies are billed or not on an ongoing basis.

Generally, larger police agencies have more specialized units than smaller agencies. These units are made available to smaller agencies, as the goal of apprehending offenders is paramount to both large and small agencies. But currently the smaller agencies do not have to pay the full cost of these standing units. The previous section on "Comparing Police Services" outlined those specialized units that larger agencies make available to other police agencies on a regular basis. Insofar as other municipalities do not bear the costs of these units, they function as a costless form of insurance for smaller units. Consequently, the size of these units is smaller than if they were funded by all the users of the services, since the taxpayer in the municipality of the larger agency sees only the municipality-related benefit, yet bears all the cost. Free riding on larger agencies as a resource both degrades service from a specialized unit of a given size, and reduces the appropriate size of the unit providing those services.

The free riding of the smaller municipalities leads to an overemphasis on the delivery of local frontline services. Community policing, rapid uniformed response and traffic enforcement (among other functions) are delivered in the smaller municipalities. With the insurance of specialized task forces – like those described in previous sections – provided by the larger forces, the smaller forces do not need to maintain specialized expertise within their personnel. This results in these agencies having little capacity to respond to complex environments, such as ports, or complex situations such as organized crime. This is problematic, and may become more so in the future as cities grow, as surely the ‘big city phenomenon’ of Vancouver and the related challenges will continually emerge in other municipalities that are far less prepared.

The VPD is subjected to two pressures: the need to provide front line policing in the City of Vancouver, and the need to provide expertise for specialized tasks for police services both within the city and to the region. The pressure within the City of Vancouver and on the VPD is to move more resources into patrol, as this is what is most visible to the taxpaying public in Vancouver. However, this can only be done at the expense of expert crime fighting services that currently provide for both Vancouver and the broader community.

### **Economies of Scale**

Larger policing agencies have the potential advantage of scale and scope. The distinction is that economies of scale arise in the application of a single police activity to a larger number of cases. For example, a department may have a small number of officers devoted to policing a particular crime which occurs with modest frequency. With a large number of cases, the same number of officers may be able to use a helicopter, or other specialized equipment that would not be justifiable otherwise. Similarly, the specialization offered in a larger force may offer more opportunity for additional training and interesting assignments. This may draw officers from smaller municipalities on a regular basis adding to their costs of recruitment.

Economies of scope occur when there are the opportunities to pursue many different activities that would not be possible without some kind of central distribution of the initial fixed costs. Thus a city like Vancouver can have a number of specialized squads while a smaller policing agency, might at best have a few.

### **Benefits of Current Structure**

#### **Cost Benefits**

With the current structure, municipalities who contract the services of the RCMP gain by way of federal subsidies comprised of 10% of salaries plus training, equipment, and some administrative costs. When the RCMP’s current contract with the Provincial Government expires in 2012, it is uncertain whether these subsidies would remain in the next contract (if renewed).

Many communities may reap the benefit from the current structure, particularly if they are in a small municipality where a police officer will respond to every 9-1-1 call, regardless of the seriousness of the incident. What the residents do not realize is that often their police agency relies heavily on larger agencies for major incidents, and would be unable to provide an acceptable level of service if a high-priority case arose and they were without outside assistance from the larger agencies.

## **Amalgamating and Regionalizing Police: The Canadian Experience**

*The two major questions were: "Is regionalization going to cost more?" and,  
"Is regionalization going to result in less service?"*  
Chief, Waterloo Regional Police

*I can't think of any downside (to regionalization) other than the uncertainty at Day One.*  
Retired Deputy Chief, Waterloo Regional Police Service

*Regional policing is good for the police and good for the public.*  
Officer, Halton Regional Police Service

*Regionalization has been a huge success. There is no question, from the very  
beginning, that it was the right thing to do.*  
Member, Halton Regional Police Service Board

*Since the regionalization of the [Hamilton] police in 1975,  
the police service has worked well.*  
Member, Hamilton Police Service Board

Regional police services have been a feature of the Canadian policing landscape for over four decades. Notably, regionalization has occurred in the eastern regions of the country, with the largest regional police services being created in the provinces of Quebec and Ontario. In the 1970s, there were over 120 municipal police departments in Ontario; as of 2006, there were 58.

The largest regional police forces in the country are found in Ontario: Durham Regional Police, Halton Regional Police, Ottawa Police Service, Toronto Police Service, Peel Regional Police, Niagara Regional Police, Hamilton Police Service and Waterloo Regional Police. A review of the evolution of regional policing in these jurisdictions suggests that a regional approach to police service delivery can provide effective, and efficient, service delivery that is premised on best practices, responsive to the needs of individual communities, and effective in the prevention and response to crime and disorder.

In 1953, 13 municipalities amalgamated into Metropolitan Toronto. It was the subsequent need to provide the citizens of the region with an effective and efficient police force that led to the amalgamation of 13 local police forces into the Metropolitan Toronto Police in 1957. This regional force was the first of its kind in Ontario and became a model for national and international agencies who wanted to improve their police service delivery in the same way. In 1998, Metropolitan Toronto merged into the City of Toronto and the police force became the Toronto Police Service.

Amalgamation and regionalization of police services have occurred in a number of other Canadian jurisdictions over the past several decades. In Eastern Canada, Bedford, Dartmouth and Halifax amalgamated into one police service in 1996 and subsequently integrated into the Halifax Regional Police. (McDavid, 2002:2).



The Service de Police de la Ville de Montreal (SPVM) was created in 1972, and included 25 smaller forces which police Montreal. SPVM is one of the largest police forces in Canada (Brodeur, 2005:256).

Regionalization took two phases in Montreal. The first was from 1987-93, the second was from 1994-2005 (Brodeur, 2005:259). Quebec felt that with regionalization there would be an optimum usage of resources, increased administration centralization, an improved structure of salaries, improved career plans, and a new structure for specialization of specific services (Commission de Police du Quebec, (No Year):19). A significant difference in the GVR is the presence of RCMP contract policing, a phenomenon that does not exist in the provinces of Ontario and Quebec. While these two jurisdictions have provincial police services, only in Ontario does the provincial police service, the OPP, engage in contract policing at the municipal level.

Significantly, provincial governments have been the primary driver of regionalization in those jurisdictions where it has occurred. As the Mayor of Milton, Ontario stated: "If the province hadn't forced us, we wouldn't have done it." Interviews with municipal mayors, municipal and regional councillors, police board members, police executives, sworn members, the private sector, provincial Police Services, and community residents relating to the performance of the regional police services resulted in the following feedback discussed below.

### **Policing Issues and Regionalization**

The following discussion draws upon materials gathered in interviews with respondents in Ontario and Nova Scotia.

**Recruiting and Retention** - A major benefit of regional policing is the elimination of competition among the various police services for recruits and in-service officers. In the GVR, the competition is ferocious. Competing police services may promise in-service officers specialty unit opportunities, while larger police services highlight the greater opportunities for a variety of policing positions that smaller departments cannot offer. Although competition exists across Canada for new recruits and especially in-service officers, in the words of a Niagara Regional Police Service Inspector, "A regional police force is more attractive to recruits."

**Growth and Crime** - The 26-year mayor of Milton, Ontario noted: "The small police departments didn't have the resources. Regionalization brought expertise, at a cost, but it was spread over a large tax base. The smaller departments couldn't deal with the growth of specialized and sophisticated crimes."

A councillor for the City of Kitchener, Ontario observed that regionalizing police services was consistent with efforts to improve other areas of the public services sector: "The development of higher standards is a trend in all areas: policing, water treatment, transit; and smaller communities don't have the capacity to meet these."

### **Patrol and Investigative Deployment**

*"Policing in Delta [B.C.] will still exist. There will be more resources to draw from."*

Mayor, Hamilton, Ontario

Regionalization appears to have a significant impact on investigative response, an Ottawa Police Service officer stated: "Communications have improved dramatically. From a policing perspective, there is huge improvement in the investigations. Especially with drugs, robberies and break and enters, where groups go from one border to the next".

The Chief of Durham Regional Police Service identified a number of benefits of being a regional police service, including being able to mobilize and move resources around the region depending upon the need. He indicated the ability to move up to 70 officers into an area. This level of resourcing would not be available in most municipal departments.

A Niagara Regional Police Service Inspector noted, "There is an increase in operational readiness; NRPS can mobilize up to 200 officers (one third of the authorized strength) at a time; there aren't those capacities in a small organization."

### **Cost Issues**

*Saving money is not a good pitch to make. Cost is not an issue that can be made.  
The advantage is a higher level of service.  
Councillor, City of Kitchener, Ontario*

*Don't tie regionalization to cost-savings. There will be other types of efficiencies and a regional police service can offer better customer service.  
Deputy Chief, Niagara Regional Police Service*

In discussing the cost issues surrounding the delivery of policing services, a Toronto city councillor and member of the Toronto Police Services Board stated:

**We can't afford to waste people's badges. We need to develop core capacities – how to make communities the priority and that the best and brightest are out there. Amalgamation requires that focus. We have to provide service for the taxpayer.**

*"Citizens don't know what the true costs of policing are.  
Low call volume-labour intensive policing is very expensive."  
Inspector, Niagara Regional Police Service*

Although it appears that regionalization may not save money, there are other efficiencies to be gained, as well as the potential for improved police effectiveness in preventing crime and responding to criminal activity. As an Inspector in the Niagara Regional Police Service noted: "Regionalization will not save money. The operating budget will go up. The benefits are the economies of scale: more efficient recruiting, purchasing, and more flexible deployment." The Mayor of Milton, Ontario stated: "It's not cheaper, but it is better. It is not any cheaper for the taxpayer."

The mayor of Hamilton, Ontario observed: "It is better to have a centralized approach to allocating resources. That makes it possible to move resources around to where they are needed."

The budget for the Ottawa-Carleton Regional Police Service, however, showed that there was a cost benefit associated with the regionalization. The statistics show that Ottawa-Carleton Region called for a total budget of \$128.8 million dollars for 2001. The amalgamation of police services for Ottawa-Carleton produced a savings of more than \$5 million (Ottawa-Carleton Regional Police Service, 2000:2). Following regionalization in Halifax, there was a significant drop in policing costs (McDavid, 2002:13).

## **The Mayors**

*The mayor is still the middleman.  
Mayor (26 years), Milton, Ontario*

Historically, mayors have been a primary obstacle to the creation of regionalized police services. The mayor of Milton, Ontario observed: "The major issue for the mayors will be giving up control. It is hard to give it up for the unknown. We didn't know how much more it was going to cost. But we had to ask the question, 'Is bigger better?' 'Is smaller smarter?'" Interestingly, this mayor recalled that more than one mayor was happy to give up the "no call too small" policy.

## **Collective Agreements**

In almost every case of regionalization in Ontario, the new collective agreements for the regional service were a result of the highest combination of benefits and wages from the amalgamated services. An Ottawa police member noted: "There should really be a consolidated collective agreement prior to amalgamation." All agreed that consolidating collective agreements could be one of the significant, unanticipated costs of the process. In the event of a GVR regionalization, the issue of consolidating collective agreements among the independent municipal agencies would likely not be a factor; the current agreements' wages and benefits are highly similar because of the sequence of negotiations and because the GVRD (now Metro Vancouver) represents the various municipalities in negotiations with the police unions.

## **The Community**

*I don't think people really care about the uniform a  
police officer is wearing when they need help.  
Halifax Regional Police Superintendent*

*The public just wants a police officer when they call one.  
Ottawa Police Service officer*

*Any referendum to return to the pre-regionalization way of providing  
police services would be defeated.  
Mayor, Milton, Ontario*

*The challenge is to find a balance between local control and input  
while getting the benefits of regional policing.  
Staff member, Ontario Police Services*

The hesitancy of community residents to have their local police service amalgamate into a larger regional police service is often cited as a primary reason for maintaining the current arrangements for police service delivery. This counter-argument, however, has not been supported by public opinion survey data. A recent (November 10, 2007) Angus Reid survey found, for example, that 65 percent of residents surveyed in the GVR support creating a regional police service. This is a significant finding that should inform discussions of a regional police service going forward. It appears that public concern with the effectiveness of the police in responding to crime and violence in the region outweighs concerns related to the creation of a larger police service and the loss of "no call too small" policing.

It appears that there may be somewhat of a disconnect between the political leadership at the municipal level and the sentiments of community residents. While a number of mayors in the GVR have expressed outright opposition to regionalization or are on the record as supporting current policing arrangements, community residents appear interested in exploring alternatives that would increase the effectiveness of the police in preventing and responding to crime.

Reflecting on the experience of regionalization in the Waterloo region, a Kitchener, Ontario city Councillor observed: "If you have established community contact and that is something that you work at all of the time and every day, then there are no downsides [to regionalization]." A member of the Hamilton Police Service Board noted the importance of maintaining contact with communities once a regional police service had been established: "Don't ignore any areas; make communities feel that their issues are important. Don't walk away from small communities."

It also appears that there is somewhat of a disconnect between the political leadership at the municipal level and the sentiments of community residents: while a number of mayors in the GVR have expressed outright opposition to regionalization or are on the record as supporting current policing arrangements, community residents appear interested in exploring alternatives that would increase the effectiveness of the police in preventing and responding to crime.

The concern of community residents over a reduction of service-delivery levels with the creation of a regional police service were addressed by a Halifax Regional Police Superintendent:

[Regionalization] was an issue for the public because there was a perceived loss of identity for the community of Dartmouth, so there was a lot of discussion over that; that everything would go to Halifax. For Bedford, they had a high level of policing, no call too small, and they were willing to pay more for it. So they were worried that once we amalgamated they'd get one car because everyone else would be pulled into Halifax. There are still references to the assertion that they had 13 officers on the street and they have less now. That's been countered with 'Yes, you may only have 12 now, but you have 16 across the bridge, and access to all these other units'.... There are those who say it's worse, that we've lost the small town feeling, but with one police, one radio, it's nice to know if we need them we've got 50 resources coming 'like that'".

With respect to levels of service, a Kitchener, Ontario City Councillor observed: "If the community wants access and the police to continue to respond to minor crimes, then they need to know the costs of this and the level of staffing that is required."

### **Community Input**

An Ottawa Police Service officer observed: "The communities do not have less input. They are very active with the Department, and there is a close working relationship with the Councillors (Ward System), that is better than it has ever been before. The policing issues we deal with now are more a matter of 'how we do business', and are not related to the amalgamation."

The mayor of Milton, Ontario noted that, prior to regionalization, his town had 15-17 officers to police a community of approximately 18,000 to 20,000 persons. The community is now 70,000 and growing rapidly. With respect to the benefits of a small, local police service, he observed: "Hominess can be good and bad. Citizens can be too close to the police and the police can be too close to the community. There can be a lot of pressures on a police officer in a small town."

The mayor noted that community input was important within the regional policing framework: "Community buy-in is important...Community consultation committees were set up. There is a dedicated police officer who attends these meetings and there are one or two elected people on it. These committees are a conduit between the community and the regional council."

The mayor further observed that: "It is important for communities to separate out their wants and needs and that they be able to demonstrate their needs."

The Chief of Waterloo Regional Police Service highlighted the importance of structuring the new regional police service so as to ensure continuity of the relationship between the police and the community:

When regionalization occurred, we lost community policing and lost touch with the communities. The communities lost the personal touch, the officers that they knew. This was due to the large number of transfers that occurred when the regional police service was created. We didn't want anyone connected with their former station. Movement was a problem.

Similarly, a Halton Regional Police Service officer stated:

Community identity and issues must be kept. The organization is regional but the police must remain committed to the needs of individual communities. It is necessary to reassure the community that they will either maintain, or gain, in the service that will be provided to them. That the communities' will not all be policed the same but that there will be community-focused districts.

### **Police Accountability to the Community**

The experience in Ontario is that police accountability to the community is not lessened with the creation of a regional police service. The mayor of Milton, Ontario stated: "I can call the Inspector at any time and they will come to council. We can discuss where we have been and where we are going. The Inspector for the District generally comes to council twice a year."

Similarly, the mayor of Wilmott, Ontario (pop. 17,000, which originally had its own small town police force), who is also a member of the Waterloo Regional Police Services Board, noted that "It's been 10-15 years since we have heard a complaint about regional policing."

A staff member from Ontario Police Services noted: "Mayors must have communication and a working relationship with local commanders; public consultation is part of the business plan. In Hamilton, there is a Division Community Advisory Group." A member of the Niagara Regional Police Service Board noted "It is also important to consider how you constitute the Board. "There must be equal representation on the Board by population." A member of the Waterloo Regional Police Services Board stated that there were mechanisms in place to address any concerns that mayors and communities might have that the regional police are not meeting their needs:

The mechanisms are in place to deal with any concerns. The mayor can go to the Division Commander. If that doesn't work, he can take it to the Regional Police Service Commission. We have never had these requests. Regionalization works well in a small municipality.

It is important to ensure that mayors and municipalities are kept apprised of policing issues and developments. The mayor of Hamilton, Ontario recalled:

When I was in the suburbs, our lament was that we never saw the police...and that they had taken away our police station. It was not necessarily an informed lament. As mayor, I am more informed about the operations of the police and the financial situation.

The mayor further noted, "[t]he regional police are very attuned to the community. The Business Plan (of the police) is based on lots of community input. The Plan represents the diversity of the region, which is changing."

## **Planning**

Respondents in Ontario noted the importance of planning should a jurisdiction decide to proceed with a regional police service. An Ottawa police officer recalled, "For the first two years we were on three completely different systems. This included radio networks, the CAD system and the records system. It was a nightmare. I don't think they were prepared enough for all of the issues".

The Chair of the Hamilton Regional Police Board recalled, "[i]t was two years from the time of the amalgamation in 1973 until the vision was realized. There were issues with regard to facilities, cars, and crests. There was a lot of prep time. Even two years was too short a time period."

## **Lessons Learned**

Respondents in Ontario, including police personnel, police services staff, and representatives from regional police boards and the municipal government level, identified a number of "lessons learned" with respect to the creation of a new regional police service.

The experience of regionalization in Ontario suggests that:

- Regionalizing police services does not result in a loss of community control over police services.
- The primary opposition to regionalizing police services has come from the political level, rather than from the police or the community.

- Regionalization has the potential to significantly improve the deployment of patrol and investigative resources.
- There is no movement toward decentralizing police services and returning to pre-regional policing arrangements.
- Concerns among municipalities that there would be a decrease in service levels and a reduced capacity for input into policing have not been realized.
- Regionalization is supported by municipal mayors and community residents and there is no indication that either stakeholder group would wish to return to pre-regionalization arrangements for the delivery of policing services.

#### *The Halifax "Blended" Policing Model*

*In the integration, I think you have to decide to use one set of policies and procedures  
or the others, because blending takes too much time and energy.*  
Superintendent, Halifax Regional Police

Police services in Halifax, Dartmouth, and Bedford Nova Scotia were amalgamated into the Halifax Regional Police in 1996. Subsequently, a "blended" model was developed involving the Halifax Regional Police (HRP) and the RCMP, which was involved in municipal contract policing in the areas surrounding the city.

Information on the experience of "blending" the RCMP and the HRP was provided in an interview with a Halifax Regional Police Superintendent. This experience is instructive, as one option for police services in the GVR is a "integrated" police service that would involve RCMP officers working alongside municipal police officers. For a variety of reasons, as documented in the comments of the Halifax Regional Police Superintendent, this model has proven to be less than effective and highlights the challenges, and limitations, of attempting to blend the RCMP and municipal police services into a regional police service.

The regionalization of policing services in Halifax was a provincially-driven initiative. Initially, there was good support from the RCMP and the HRP; however, difficulties were encountered in securing data from the RCMP and the data systems between the two police services were incompatible. One issue is span of control of the Police Board, since the RCMP are accountable to Ottawa and to federal legislation.

Although the officers are on a common radio channel, there is no integration of patrol in the HRP; rather, there are defined, and separate, patrol areas. There is however, integration in specialty units.

#### **Difficulties with the "Blended" RCMP/Municipal Model**

Numerous difficulties were encountered in attempting to "integrate" RCMP and municipal policies and procedures into a regional police service. Several of these were identified by a Halifax Regional Police Superintendent who was involved in the initiative to create the new "regional" police service:

In the investigative units, there were issues around what the standards and qualifications would be, municipal officers not meeting federal standards, etc. Communication centres and records management were big ticket items because to work together we needed to have common RMS....On the RMS/CAD issue, there was agreement that there should be one system. HRP wanted everyone on the new system.

The RCMP wanted us on theirs, but their system didn't have an integrated CAD system and didn't meet our needs...At the end of it they decided to come on and they're the only ones in Canada outside BC on Versaterm.

A review of the policing arrangements in Halifax (Perivale and Taylor, 2002) found that the HRP and the RCMP were "operating with different cultures, different pressures and different approaches to local policing...The presence of two agencies working in one jurisdiction also results in an element of competition."

### **Benefits of the "Blended" RCMP/Municipal Model**

The benefits associated with the blended RCMP/Municipal model relate to regionalization in general, and not to the merging of the two diverse agencies. A Halifax Regional Police Superintendent stated, "We are more effective amalgamated than if we'd stayed apart." He also noted that there are more opportunities for police officers to move throughout the service, and take on different roles and challenges.

The experience with the "blended" model of regionalizing police services in Halifax suggest that adoption of this model for police service delivery requires close collaboration and cooperation between the municipal police services and the RCMP and that strategic planning assumes a very important role in this endeavour.

## **Implementation and Integration: Considerations for the GVR**

*Integration for the sake of integration doesn't wash. You need to look at what you want to achieve. If it's just to say politically that you're integrated, there's too much energy spent and you're better off keeping your agencies separate, or else amalgamate them and make them one agency.*  
Superintendent, Halifax Regional Police

*Make sure you define WHY you're doing what you're going to do and decide what you want in the future, then decide how to get there. Don't do integration because it's the buzz word. Look at what you want to accomplish, then decide what's the best way to get there.*  
Superintendent, Halifax Regional Police

The experience of regionalizing police services in other Canadian jurisdictions suggests a number of key considerations that must be weighed by parties involved in a similar exercise in the GVR.

**1) The Ontario experience suggests that the provincial government must assume the lead in initiating discussions and considering options for providing police services to the GVR.**

*Regionalization in British Columbia will never happen unless the province directs it... The province of British Columbia has to be committed and say that regionalization is going to happen. The province legislates and the municipalities make it work. It will never happen if it is left to the municipalities."*  
Member, Waterloo Regional Police Service Board



It is significant that in Ontario, where regionalization is most extensively developed, a key role was assumed by the provincial government which indicated that regionalization was to occur. A similar role was assumed by the provincial government in Nova Scotia with respect to the creation of the Halifax Regional Police. This requires the provincial government to facilitate a discussion of regionalization premised on the best practices police literature and on a determination of which model of police service delivery will be the most effective and efficient.

**2. If the decision is to create a new regional police service, then this new service must have its own identity.** A common theme from police and government personnel in Ontario was that a new regional police service must have its own identity. This requires that all vestiges of the individual police services, e.g., uniforms and patrol car markings, be replaced. A Superintendent from the Halifax Regional Police expressed the view that all of the major changes should be made at the outset, rather than being phased in over time:

We really just changed shirts at first and it was only after a while we got into standardized procedures across the board. In hindsight, it may have been better to have the pain up front rather than leaving them. People thought it might just go away, but here we are 10 years later.

An Ottawa Police Service member recalled, "It has been ten years now and we all just joke about it today. It is fine today, unlike what happened in Niagara. There has been talk of guys there wearing their old department uniforms ten years after regionalization."

Ontario police personnel identified the importance of ensuring that regionalization did not occur just "on paper" and that the specific policing cultures associated with each municipal police service involved in the amalgamation did not remain intact. In Canada, the model has been to create homogeneity in the new police service by creating a new crest, uniforms, and other identifiers. This has been the practice in the U.S. as well (McDavid, 2002:5).

The determination of policing boundaries is an important factor in creating the identity of the new regional police service. The policing districts in Waterloo Regional Police Service, for example, do not coincide with the municipality boundaries; this was done intentionally to prevent isolation. The city boundaries were not kept, and the policing districts were identified based on call load.

**3. In any new arrangements for the delivery of police services, including creating a new regional police service, attention must be given to specific practices that are in place in the various police services.** As an Ottawa Police Service officer noted, "One of the problems was with badge numbers. Rather than re-issue new badge numbers, they had everyone keep their existing number and put a different prefix on it, depending on which agency you were from. Gloucester members put a '10' in front of their old number and Nepean put a '20'. It creates more problems than necessary. In policing, we identify one another by badge numbers – seniority, experience, etc. This method of adding a prefix forever identifies people with their old police department."

**4. The adoption of any new model for police service delivery in the GVR must recognize that there are different policing "cultures" that exist in the police services in the GVR.** As a Halifax Regional Police Superintendent noted with respect to Dartmouth, Bedford, and Halifax police services,

There were three very different cultures. Halifax was a command/control agency; you didn't do anything without checking with a supervisor. Dartmouth was freer. Bedford was a very high level of service agency. Just bringing together the three cultures and having common operating procedures was a challenge. That took a few years to try to decide which procedures to adopt.

**5. In any new model of policing service, core capacities must be established in order to ensure the effective delivery of police services.** To realize the full potential of a regional police model or a new regional police service and to effectively address the challenges and shortcomings that surround the current arrangements for the delivery of policing services in the GVR, it is imperative that core capacities be developed. Best practice standards for all facets of administration, policy, and practice should be included in the provincial police act, or embodied in a new set of police standards. Several provinces, including Alberta and Ontario, use police standards to ensure a consistently high level of service delivery. This will ensure that the disparities that currently exist across the GVR, e.g., Delta Police Department (with approximately 145 police members) has three full-time use-of-force trainers, while the VPD (with an authorized strength of 1,231 police members, not including over 80 secondments) has one and half full-time use of force trainers.

Several respondents in Ontario indicated the importance of maintaining a focus on community policing and of structuring the delivery of policing services to enhance police-community relations. A member of the Halton Regional Police Service described how that police service attempted to accomplish this:

You have to maintain the community focus and this can be accomplished by creating districts and hav[ing] officers dedicated to that district. Instead of patrol zones we have communities. Each district has its own investigative unit, youth officer/social worker and senior crime investigator. There is also a street crime unit in each district on a two-year, competitive rotation. All of the district police stations are open 24 hours a day. There is a Staff Sgt. on duty, 2 patrol Sgts, and a complement of patrol officers. We also use mobile community stations - temporary buildings that can be moved around. We had a problem-premises apartment building and put a temporary station there for six months with a team of officers working to resolve the issues.

**6. Any discussions of a new model of police service delivery, including the creation of a new regional police service, must include all stakeholders, including police officers.** As a member of the executive of the Halton Regional Police Service Police Association noted, "It all depends on how you label it and how you market it. You have to tell your story. We hired a corporate communications person to market the idea of becoming a regional police service." This view was echoed by the President of the Halton Regional Police Association: "It is important to let everyone know what the rules are upfront."

Similarly, an officer with the Ottawa Police Service Officer's Association stated, "Do your homework twice over... Use focus groups to flesh out the issues. Have your association and department sit together on the committees. We had great communication with our members as amalgamation moved forward."

The Chief of Waterloo Regional Police Service identified the importance of communicating with patrol officers about all facets of the regionalization process: "The biggest issue for patrol officers was the unknown. 'Is it going to be better for us? For my career? Where am I going to end up?'"

**7. There must be a strategic plan for adopting the new model of police service delivery in the GVR and transitioning from the current structure. This multi-faceted plan would include:**

- A media and public education strategy;
- A political strategy;
- Provisions for recruitment and training;
- Provisions to ensure that a “best practices” police service is created, with the capacity for ensuring that resources are deployed as effectively and efficiently as possible. This includes leading edge analytical capacity for monitoring the performance of the police service and its officers as well as for analyzing crime trends, the effectiveness of patrol and investigative units, and of crime prevention efforts;
- The provision for “report-backs” to the regional police services board; and,
- Operational procedures to ensure that police officers are familiar with the communities they police and that there is ongoing communication and consultation with local residents and municipal councils.

A member of the Durham Regional Police Board observed, “The biggest obstacle to regionalization will be the lack of an explanation for doing regionalization. There is the need to have the facts at hand. Twenty-eight years in, people are still asking why they have regional government.” This Board member went on to stress that, “There is a need for communication and liaison; need to ensure that the public has information; there are two to three solid reasons for doing regionalization; there are police reasons and community reasons...there will be economies and efficiencies to be gained; attract world class people; it will not save money.”

A number of the respondents in Ontario, including police and regional government representatives, indicated that it was important that the regionalization of police services be implemented within a regional plan and that an incremental approach be taken. The Deputy Chief of Niagara Regional Police Service recalled, “There was no planning for amalgamation and no consideration of what form it would take. Policies still have a municipal flavour. There has not been significant buy-in to regionalization in terms of what form it would take; so, the focus remained local.”

A number of the respondents mentioned that “turf and egos” were two primary obstacles to regionalization (Deputy Chief of Niagara Regional Police Service). Similarly, the mayor of Milton, Ontario noted that “Egos were the toughest thing to deal with.”

**8. There must be strong police leadership in the transition to the new model of police service delivery.**

*The front line people weren't the problem. It was the police leadership.  
Chief, Waterloo Regional Police Service*

A strong leadership base needs to occur before any regionalization initiatives will be successfully executed. There must be effective leadership not only at the municipal level, but also at the provincial and federal levels of government. (Graham, 1994:84). Strong leadership is also mandatory for a successful amalgamation, as members need someone to look to for guidance. Leaders need to match their skill with those needs of the local community. When there is a separation between these two areas, amalgamation might be a more difficult transition for members, than if they were looking towards a leader with the same ideals as theirs (O'Donoghue, 1999:10).

**9. To ensure that the concerns and priorities of individual communities are acknowledged and addressed it is important to establish community consultation committees.**

*The success of any regionalization is to focus on the neighbourhood.*  
Chief, Waterloo Regional Police Service

**10. One objective of creating a new model of policing with a regional focus should be to reduce the reliance on integrated teams and secondments. As the Chief of Waterloo Regional Police noted, "Joint forces need to be time-limited and project oriented."**

**11. Ensuring effective police service delivery.** There are mechanisms that can be put in place to ensure that regionalization does not result in a decline in the levels of service delivery across the region. In Ontario, for example, the Adequacy Standards set out a structure for police service delivery and performance benchmarks.

**12. Effective governance structures must be put into place.** A member of the Durham Regional Police Board advised that there must be a strong police board that should not give in to the political demands of the various mayors and municipal councils.

### **Options for Police Service Delivery in the GVR**

It is important to remember that crime rates in the GVR are already very high. Property crime, in particular, continues to be significantly higher than in most other Canadian cities. Metro Vancouver is the bank robbery capital of Canada. In the next 30 years, the population in the region is going to continue to grow, potentially by another 800,000 people. The complexity of the crime problems the region faces will also continue to increase. Organized criminals will continue to become more sophisticated in their operations and consequently more challenging and costly to interdict. Better transportation systems in the GVR will facilitate the movement of property criminals between communities. Technology and internet based financial crimes will be an increasing issue for police with troublesome cross-region and border enforcement issues. The current trends in case law flowing from Charter decisions are also adding to the complexity and cost of police investigations. Finally, police staffing and recruitment is projected to be a significant challenge in the next decade given the projected shortfall of young people entering the job market.

Given these significant challenges, the question is what structure should the delivery of police services have to ensure policing is best positioned to respond to these crime issues and keep our communities safe? There are a number of potential options to consider, including the following:

#### **Option 1: Maintain the Status Quo**

Retain the current arrangements for the delivery of policing services, utilizing a mix of municipal police departments and RCMP detachments. This would include continuing the practice of establishing integrated units as the need arises.

The advantage to this approach is that there is no threat to the policing styles being used in various communities. Each community is free to establish its own level of police resourcing. In communities with municipal departments, the mayor is the chair of the Police Board and Council sets the budget for policing.

This option is certainly workable, in that policing is functioning with some degree of success in the GVR and police agencies do strive to work together to be successful, although that can be a dynamic affected by the personalities of those involved in that it requires police leaders to adopt a cooperative approach. That there is a common radio system in the region and a common records management system in the Province are tremendous steps towards reducing operational barriers to policing across jurisdictions.

There are a number of potentially significant disadvantages to continuing on with the current mix of agencies. There will continue to be a lack of a strategic direction or "one brain" providing direction and focus to the problems we face and the obstacles to success. Responding both to long term issues and dynamically to an emerging crisis is far more difficult when the response requires building consensus and agreement (or not) on how to respond.

Maintaining the status quo will keep in place the significant funding inequities that exist due to the Federal Government policies around funding RCMP contracts. Inequities also exist due to the differences in communities that have different mixes of "bedroom" versus business and entertainment core compositions.

Specifically, the current situation does not favour the Vancouver Police Department. There are over 80 VPD members seconded to integrated teams primarily under RCMP control. The VPD polices a city that requires exceptional resources due to the level of visitors for business and entertainment, as well as political activism. The VPD must respond to the Downtown Eastside, which draws in homeless, mentally ill and addicted people from all over the region, province, and from across the country. However, the City must fund the appropriate policing response from the taxpayer base within the City.

## **Option 2: Amalgamate and Regionalize Police Services in the GVR**

Design and implement a regional police service or services. It might make sense to put in place two or three regional police services to best respond to the geography and current/projected community growth in Metro Vancouver. Under this model, no current police service would remain in place as is. This could be described as the "clean slate" approach to developing a policing model for the region.

Most of the advantages have been discussed above. Funding would be equalized between communities. This would address the problem of multiple agencies trying to respond to one regional problem in a number of ways that may not always be complementary. There would be "one brain". It would require the development of both a governance model and an equitable funding formula. Once in place, it would position police to be the most successful in reducing crime and responding to staffing and resourcing issues to keep the region safe.

Many communities are understandably concerned that if they give up their local municipal department or RCMP detachment, they will lose control. How would they ensure they maintain current service levels or accountability to the community? How do they ensure that the police will maintain the close bond and connection to the community that is the basis of community policing? It would be essential to create a regional force that gives each community a "chief" who is accountable to that community and who controls the resources needed to respond to the community's needs. The difference is that the chief, whose actual rank will depend on the size of the community, will report to a regional police service chief. This is similar to how communities with the RCMP function now; however, the accountability for that regional police chief will remain in the community answering to the board appointed by the community as a whole. Secondly, to ensure each community maintains the service

level it wants, each community would put in place a service agreement where it pays for the level of policing desired (as long as the base level is set and maintained at a safe level). Transfer policies within the regional service would ensure community continuity for police officers within communities.

There are two very significant challenges to moving towards complete regionalization. One is simply the current demographics. The majority of police officers in the entire region (i.e., the CMA) belong to the RCMP, although the majority of police officers in Greater Vancouver (i.e., Vancouver and the immediately adjacent police agencies) belong to independent municipal police departments. How would a new regional police service find the staffing it needs in the first instance? Implementation would have to address this issue and would likely require a staged approach.

Secondly, amalgamation would have to address issues of governance challenge. How would the large number of civic governments be able to work towards developing an agreeable model? The GVRD system of services or South Coast British Columbia Transportation Authority (formerly known as Translink) are examples of where this has been successfully done to take advantage of economies of scale and the need for integrated service. It would likely require strong leadership from the Provincial Government, along with key assurances that community needs for both accountability and service levels would be addressed.

### **Option 3: A Regional Police Service and Local Police Services**

A hybrid option must also be considered. Could local police services be maintained that provide the patrol or uniform police response to each community and then create a police service that has a separate chief that provides all other services utilizing an integrated approach? There are numerous ways this could be configured. The principle behind the idea is that it acknowledges the GVR's history of a patchwork of police services with their various traditions and connections to the communities they serve. They would continue doing that, but the regional police service would be able to respond to those issues which are best addressed on a regional basis. Responding to gang violence and financial and organized crime are regional issues. Surveillance teams to deal with crime issues and emergency response teams are highly specialized and need economies of scale to be affordable to smaller communities. The GVR currently uses a patchwork of Provincial policing management, joint management teams and various memorandums of understanding to manage the integrated units that currently exist. The GVR has not analyzed what requires a regional response and then put together one governance model, one funding system and accountability system to deal with the various issues where integration has gone ahead.

Such a system would present a number of significant issues, including whether the RCMP would wish to participate. Each community would have their own Chief and patrol service and possibly other units, such as traffic or community policing officers. Each community would be required by formula to second experienced officers and provide funding to the regional police service. Police officers would move in and out of the regional service going back to their community when it was their turn to police the streets in uniform. As above, a funding formula and governance would be essential for the regional service. One issue that could remain would be the need for the various police agencies that would continue to exist to work cooperatively together. Staffing and resourcing issues would most likely continue to be ongoing issues between the agencies and some degree of competition for staffing resources might continue between them. This system would likely be more complex to manage on an ongoing basis.

## **Conclusion**

The current policing structure in the GVR presents numerous challenges which are likely to intensify in the coming years. In addition to the difficulties associated with policing cross-jurisdictional criminals and offences, there are also inherent disparities in service levels, funding formulas, and specialized expertise. The GVR is the last major metropolitan area in Canada that does not have some type of regional police service.

The current situation also presents the provincial and municipal governments and police services in the GVR with a unique opportunity for the development of collaboration and creative solutions to the challenges that exist. There is a opportunity to incorporate lessons learned from other agencies across the country that have already gone through the process, as well as to fashion a distinctive "Made in the GVR" policing structure. As discussed in this document, there are serious questions as to whether the status quo is a viable option for ensuring that the GVR is policed in an effective and efficient manner. The extent to which the various options that have been set out will address the outstanding concerns remains to be determined and a more detailed analysis of all of the issues raised in this report are required.

Police officers across the GVR are committed to making their communities safe and to apprehending those who would cause harm. The challenge is to provide a structure within which police officers can carry out their tasks in the most effective and efficient manner possible. It is questionable as to whether the existing disparate policing structures can provide the level of service that residents of every municipality have come to expect. The smaller communities need to be aware of the consequences of 'no call too small' policing, and larger communities must recognize the inherent economic and logistic difficulty with balancing the pressure to provide patrol resources, while continuing to share expertise and specialized knowledge with smaller agencies.

It is important that any deliberations on altering the status quo for police service delivery in the GVR consider the unique needs of each community in the region and that communities have a voice in any new structure that is developed. The fact that there are numerous competing interests and stakeholders within the current structure of the GVR necessitates that any discussions of regionalizing police services will require the leadership and direction of the provincial government, along with the cooperation and willingness of municipal governments to participate. Providing the best possible policing service in the interests of public safety must be the overarching driver for future discussions.





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the Pickton information by the RCMP, assisted by the VPD, until the investigation was derailed in late 1999.) Therefore, the VPD has an interest in identifying issues of concern that have impacted on its reputation and that of individual officers.

Although the majority of the RCMP members involved were not interviewed for this review, the documentation of the actual investigation was extensive and detailed, as set out in the chronology. In addition, VPD members were intensely involved in the Pickton investigation until the end of August 1999, so they were able to describe what occurred from their vantage point. Finally, Constable Ruth Yurkiw, the investigator who took over the Pickton file from Corporal Connor in August 1999, but who is now retired from the RCMP, agreed to be interviewed for this Review. While it would have been preferable to have access to other RCMP members such as Corporal Connor and those in supervisory and management positions, Constable Yurkiw's information was helpful in understanding the dynamics and pressures at work in the Coquitlam RCMP. Her cooperation was most helpful and appreciated, and the frank and direct manner in which she provided her statement – even where identifying her own investigative shortcomings – was impressive and commendable.

## **B. THE MEDIA RESPONSE TO THE SEARCH OF THE PICKTON PROPERTY AND SUBSEQUENT MURDER CHARGES**

After the search warrants were executed on the Pickton property on February 5th and 6th, 2002, media scrutiny of the Pickton investigation was intense and sensational. Much of the reporting centred on criticism of the VPD for allegedly failing to conduct an adequate investigation into the Missing

Women case generally, and into Pickton specifically. Many allegations were made about the VPD doing nothing with information provided to it years earlier regarding Pickton. For example, the *Province* newspaper reported that despite the VPD being given a tape of Hiscox's conversation with Wayne Leng (in which Hiscox described to Leng the information he later provided to police) "[the VPD] did not investigate Robert "Willie" Pickton until February 5th, 2002, when RCMP got a search warrant."<sup>433</sup> This was obviously incorrect.

The media coverage generally inappropriately blamed the VPD for the failure to adequately investigate Pickton, despite the involvement of the RCMP throughout and despite the fact that the Pickton investigation was under the jurisdiction of the RCMP. The RCMP were generally characterized as having rescued the VPD's investigation and the theme of many media articles was that the VPD was incompetent and worse. This was in no small part due to the actions of the RCMP's media spokesperson, Constable Cate Galliford, who made misleading statements such as those broadcast November 2nd, 2002, on "Dateline Special," a popular NBC television program seen throughout North America and elsewhere. The Dateline episode was highly critical of the VPD, and included footage of a JFO media conference at which the VPD was not represented.

One of the main themes of the Dateline episode was, in summary, that the VPD was told about Pickton and his pig farm, but did not investigate and seemed not to care, probably because the victims were just "junkie prostitutes" and because most of them were aboriginal.

Dateline incorrectly described the reason the RCMP became involved as follows:

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433 Suzanne Fournier, "Pickton tape given to police in 1998: 'He's quite the strange character, eh, very, very strange'", in the (Vancouver) *Province*, April 25th, 1998, p. A3.

The marches, the vigils, the reward, and the growing number of missing women all finally got the attention of politicians outside of Vancouver. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police was brought in.

This characterization of how the RCMP became involved was patently false. In the Pickton investigation specifically (i.e., the investigation in 1998 and 1999 into the information provided by Hiscox, Calder and others), the RCMP was involved and in command from the beginning. In the Missing Women investigation generally, the RCMP became involved because of the relentless efforts of Sergeant Field, later assisted by Inspector Spencer, not because "politicians outside Vancouver" brought them in.

Constable Galliford was shown on the Dateline program stating, "I'm not in any position to make any comment with regard to the Vancouver Police Department investigation..." The narrator then states, "But Galliford acknowledged that the RCMP found ample information to go after Pickton in the Vancouver Police Department's very own files." Constable Galliford is then shown saying, "Our investigators arrived at this conclusion based on a lengthy file review." The reporter then asked, "A file review of the Vancouver Police Department?" Galliford responded, "That's correct, and any further comment with regard to that will have to be made to Vancouver City Police." The narrator then intones, "But they were nowhere to be found."

The conduct of Constable Galliford was to cause many problems, from the VPD perspective, as the investigation progressed. For example, on many occasions, she violated the media policy agreed to by the VPD and the RCMP by agreeing to interviews

outside of the scheduled press conferences. This undermined the VPD media spokesperson, who abided by the policy and consequently suffered the wrath of the media. This led to much consternation, and, according to former Chief Constable Blythe and others, led to high-level discussions between the VPD and the RCMP about removing Galliford from her assignment, although in the end she was not removed. Inspector Beach was part of the discussions and later explained:

Regarding the way the RCMP treats us, at the operational level, dealing with Don Adam, Larry Killaly, excellent relationship; we're treated like partners. At the corporate level, there's no question that the RCMP see us as bit players and they're the main act; they will do everything they can to protect the image of the RCMP and their failure to get rid of Galliford unless we got rid of Dreimel was an example of that; there was no way they were going to look like they'd lost on that issue.

The Dateline story was not factual, particularly with respect to the information leading to the search of the Pickton property and the arrest of Pickton coming as a result of the review of the VPD's files. In fact, as described in the chronology, all of the information regarding Pickton had been shared with the RCMP as it was received beginning in 1998, and throughout the intense investigation of Pickton during the summer of 1999. The Coquitlam RCMP led this investigation until it was derailed by the transfer of Corporal Connor, and after the Provincial Unsolved Homicide Unit formed the opinion that the informant information wasn't credible.

Further, the information leading to the search of the Pickton residence and the eventual arrest of Pickton

was developed independent of the information in the VPD (and RCMP) files regarding Pickton. As described in the chronology, the RCMP-led JFO was not targeting Pickton, and the case was actually solved because a junior Coquitlam RCMP member, Constable Nathan Wells, obtained a search warrant for an illegal firearm alleged to be on the Pickton property, based on information he received from an informant <sup>POI 1556</sup>. JFO members only learned of this warrant the day before it was executed, and had no involvement in the investigation to that point.<sup>434</sup>

The Dateline episode spawned intense condemnation of the VPD, and generated countless venomous emails from North America and Europe where the episode was shown. The RCMP made no public statement subsequent to the episode to correct the impression left by the show generally, and the comments of Constable Galliford specifically. (This leads to the inevitable inference that Constable Galliford's original comments, or at least the RCMP's failure to correct the misinformation, were part of a planned media strategy at senior levels of the RCMP to focus criticism on the VPD and away from the RCMP.) This was extremely hurtful to the VPD, and particularly to the key VPD investigators.

The incalculable damage to the reputation of the VPD and individual members could have been at least partially mitigated if the RCMP had responded to the "character assassination" of the VPD in Dateline. The RCMP could have briefly stated that the show was inaccurate, and that the VPD had

shared all information it received about Pickton in a timely manner, without discussing the investigation further. It did not do so. The lack of response by the RCMP was not in keeping with the finest traditions of that organization.

### C. THE COQUITLAM RCMP HAD JURISDICTION OVER THE PICKTON INVESTIGATION

The Crime Stoppers tips about Pickton, received on July 27th and August 6th of 1998, concerned allegations that Pickton had murdered Sarah de Vries, and possibly other women, on his property in Port Coquitlam.<sup>435</sup> The informant, William Hiscox, said that Pickton picked up prostitutes from Burnaby, New Westminster and Vancouver, but Hiscox indicated that the crimes had occurred on the Port Coquitlam farm.

Because the crimes were alleged to have occurred in Port Coquitlam, the primary responsibility for the investigation of the Pickton information rested with the Coquitlam RCMP. This understanding was common to both the VPD and the Coquitlam RCMP.

The RCMP, specifically Corporal Mike Connor, led an aggressive investigation into the Pickton information. The VPD members, Detective Lepine and Detective Constable Chernoff, played a supporting role in 1999 centred around handling an informant, Ross Caldwell. Throughout the investigation of Pickton in 1998 and 1999, it was always clear to all the investigators involved that the Coquitlam RCMP was leading the investigation, with the VPD offering any assistance requested.

434 In fact, the investigative premise of the JFO was that the case would be solved by identifying suspects through DNA connected to other attacks on sex trade workers. To this day [as of August 2004], Pickton has not been connected to any of the unsolved cases the JFO had in its database; there is no evidence to date that the JFO's investigative strategy with respect to DNA, although sound, would have led the JFO to Pickton. However, Inspector Adam believed the proactive team in the Downtown Eastside, and follow-up on the Joesbury file, would have eventually led the JFO to Pickton.

435 Binder 29, Tab 7.

The Police Act sets out the jurisdictional responsibilities of municipal police agencies in British Columbia (the RCMP are both the Provincial Police in BC, and also provide municipal policing services by contract to those municipalities that do not have an independent police force, such as Coquitlam/Port Coquitlam).

Section 26 (2) of the Police Act sets out that the duties and functions of a municipal police department are, amongst others, to:

- (a) enforce, in the municipality (emphasis added), municipal bylaws, the criminal law and the laws of British Columbia.
- (b) generally maintain law and order in the municipality;

By law and convention, the police agency of jurisdiction is responsible for crimes that occur in its jurisdiction. When a crime occurs in one jurisdiction, e.g., Vancouver, but the investigation requires follow-up in another jurisdiction, then the original jurisdiction can request assistance from another jurisdiction, or pursue the investigation itself. Both scenarios happen regularly.

For example, if a break and enter occurred in Vancouver, but it was determined that the suspect lived in Richmond, it would be routine for the VPD to pursue the investigation in Richmond, after notifying Richmond of their activities (as required by s. 38(4) of the Police Act). This is normal police practice. If the suspect had fled to Prince Rupert, however, because of the distance involved it is much more likely that the VPD would request assistance from the RCMP to arrest the suspects and conduct

further investigation (e.g., conducting searches or interviews). This sort of cooperation occurs regularly, and the VPD has a protocol with the RCMP for assisting jurisdictions outside of the Lower Mainland with their investigations (e.g., a witness to a crime in Prince Rupert now lives in Vancouver and the VPD is requested to interview the person).

But the situation of travelling to another police force's jurisdiction to investigate a crime that occurred in that same jurisdiction would be extremely unusual. The normal process is to pass information about a crime in another jurisdiction to the agency with jurisdictional responsibility. Any other practice would be unworkable and would create chaos. Consider, for example, a scenario where the VPD receives information that a murder (perhaps of a Vancouver citizen) has occurred in a suburb outside the city. Not satisfied that the agency of jurisdiction will competently investigate the murder, VPD members drive to the suburb and begin an investigation. The citizens of Vancouver would be wrongfully deprived of police resources they are paying for, and the VPD actions might very well compromise a confidential investigation in the suburb (for example, an undercover operation). Conversely, if a suburban agency receives information about a murder that has occurred in Vancouver, clearly that agency is not going to put its (smaller) resources into a significant investigation of a crime for which it has no jurisdictional responsibility. This is the reality of policing in a region with a patchwork of many police agencies/detachments.

The fact that many of the Missing Women lived and/or worked in the Downtown Eastside has no legal bearing on the responsibility of the RCMP to investigate crimes believed to have taken place within their jurisdiction; the determining factor is where

the crime took place. (This does not, however, take away from the fact that VPD senior management could have advocated at a high level for a better investigation by the RCMP and also offered resources for a well-run joint force operation, considering the VPD's interest in a successful resolution.)

It should also be noted that other sex trade workers (i.e., not the Missing Women group) from the Downtown Eastside were also victimized in other jurisdictions. For example, STW328 was a Downtown Eastside sex trade worker who Pickton picked up and seriously wounded on his property in 1997; the RCMP took total control of that investigation and the VPD had no involvement in it.

Similarly, sex trade workers Pipe, Olajide and STW837 were associated to the Downtown Eastside, but because they were found murdered in the Agassiz/Chilliwack area, the case was the responsibility of the RCMP in that jurisdiction. The same was true of Lidguerre, who was found in North Vancouver. If a sex trade worker (or anyone else) from a jurisdiction outside Vancouver visited Vancouver and was killed there, the VPD would be responsible for the investigation, regardless of where the victim regularly lived or worked.

On the basis of the above, there is no question that the Coquitlam RCMP had jurisdictional responsibility for the Pickton investigation (although the VPD could have done more to urge the RCMP to conduct an adequate investigation, as will be discussed later).

## **D. THE EVIDENCE SUPPORTING CONTINUED AGGRESSIVE INVESTIGATION OF PICKTON**

### **i. Introduction**

What is now clear is that in the RCMP there was a lack of effective analysis of the available information regarding Pickton. Although Corporal Connor, Detective Lepine and Detective Constable Chernoff were very familiar with the information in the file, the Provincial Unsolved Homicide Unit members were either not aware of all the evidence pointing to Pickton, or did not understand it. Even Constable Yurkiw, who took over the file from Corporal Connor, only knew Hiscox's name, but wasn't familiar with the information Hiscox had provided, which involved hearsay information but also direct evidence.

In addition, as was the case in the VPD, there is a question about whether information became diluted as it went up the ranks in the RCMP; without interviewing RCMP supervisors and managers involved in the Pickton investigation, this is difficult to know with any certainty.

When Ellingsen was interviewed by the Provincial Unsolved Homicide Unit members, she denied telling anyone that she had witnessed a murder, and they apparently believed her. Rather than relying on the totality of evidence available, too much credit was given to the opinions of the Provincial Unsolved Homicide Unit investigators.

As Detective Constable Chernoff described:

It seemed like [Unsolved Homicide] were looking for justification not to do it, rather than reasons to do it. Caldwell was a flake, everyone knew that, but they

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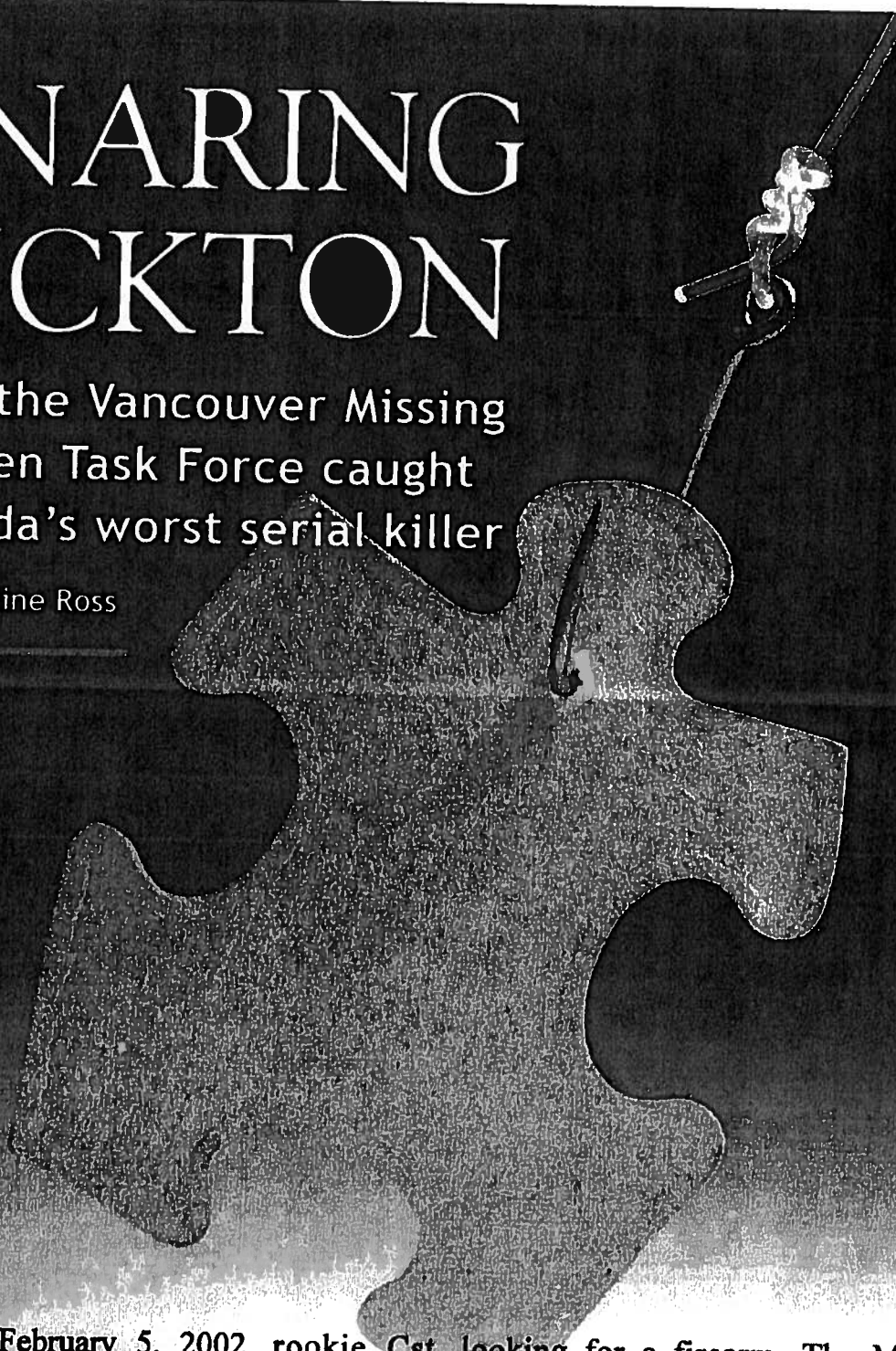
Canada



# SNARING PICKTON

How the Vancouver Missing Women Task Force caught Canada's worst serial killer

By Caroline Ross



**O**n February 5, 2002, rookie Cst Nathan Wells of the Port Coquitlam RCMP Street Enforcement Unit executed his second-ever search warrant at a pig farm outside Vancouver, B.C. Two members of the Vancouver Missing Women Task Force (MWTF) stood by off-site.

Wells and his unit colleagues were looking for a firearm. The MWTF was looking for a needle in a haystack. The task force — a joint RCMP-Vancouver Police initiative — was investigating the disappearances of some 50 women from Vancouver's Downtown Eastside. The farm was on the radar because it belonged to one of the task force's 60 persons of interest. The task force was hoping for a break. It got one.

In a trailer owned by Robert “Willie” Pickton, the search team found identification and a prescription inhaler belonging to two women who had recently gone missing from the Downtown Eastside. It was the first crack in the case against Pickton, who would later become Canada’s worst alleged serial killer, charged with the first-degree murders of 27 women whose remains or DNA were found on the farm.\*

How did the MWTF arrive at this critical break? It wasn’t luck, says Don Adam, the now-retired RCMP inspector who headed the MWTF until November 2004. It was sound methodology and solid teamwork that cracked the case — that and a willingness to assess the costs and benefits of every decision upon which the investigation was founded.

### Back to the beginning

In December 2000, Don Adam faced a puzzle. He had been asked to lead an initiative to jump-start a stalled Vancouver Police Department (VPD) investigation into the disappearances of 27 women from Vancouver’s Downtown Eastside, a notorious hang-out for sex trade workers and drug users.

The facts of the case were as follows: The VPD was looking for a serial killer — the same man who behavioural science research indicated had murdered another three women in 1995, dumping their remains off logging roads in the Fraser Valley. This “Fraser Valley killer” had left his own DNA at the crime scene, and the VPD was using that DNA profile to eliminate suspects in the Downtown Eastside investigation. VPD officers reported that no women had disappeared from the Downtown Eastside since 1999. The officers were running a historical investigation, working their suspects hard, but getting nowhere.

“When you’re faced with an enormous problem like this, the first thing to do is (conduct) an investigation of the investigation,” says Adam. “Don’t try and find the killer. Try and find out whether you believe (the previous investigators) followed a methodology that will ensure all your bases are covered.”

Adam and a small review team of RCMP and VPD officers spent the next several months assessing the foundations of the two-year-old VPD investigation. They

took nothing for granted, and as such, they uncovered a few structural flaws.

### False logic

The first weak point was the link between the Downtown Eastside disappearances and the Fraser Valley killings, says Adam. The Valley women had been dumped along accessible logging roads, whereas the Downtown Eastside women had all disappeared without a trace.

“If you (as a killer) have had 27 completely successful disappearances, why would you leave these three (bodies) to be found, when, by putting in a little extra effort to take them another three feet and roll them down a ravine, they could have been gone forever?” says Adam. “It didn’t make sense.”

The review team thus rejected the behavioural science link as too limiting on the investigation. “We decided not to accept that our killer was (also) the (killer) from the Fraser Valley,” says Adam. “That meant we were going back to square one.”

says Adam. “(As an investigator), you need to be very tuned in to any leads on similar types of offences — in our case, attempted abductions and new missing (women) — so that you can insert your task force into those investigations immediately.”

The review team wasn’t willing to accept the logic of a historical investigation until it had reviewed every bit of evidence associated with the case. Therefore, when the MWTF was officially launched in September 2001, investigators were already operating on two fronts: on one front, a section was reviewing and culling the historical files; on the other front, a section was working in the present tense, actively seeking new leads or fresh evidence that might unveil the killer. In hindsight, this multifaceted approach paid off.

### Closing the noose

Throughout 2001, task force members identified another 18 women who had disappeared from the Downtown Eastside since 1999. Two of those women would provide

“When you’re faced with an enormous problem like this, the first thing to do is (conduct) an investigation of the investigation.

Don Adam

But the team was further ahead than they could know at the time. Pickton, who had actually been eliminated as a suspect based on the Fraser Valley DNA profile, was now back in the suspect pool — and flagged as such on Canada’s national police computer system. One year later, Cst Wells would see that flag while preparing his firearms search warrant, and he would contact the MWTF to stand by during his search on February 5.

### Widening the net

The review team also questioned the decision to run a historical investigation. Assuming that the killer had gone to ground would completely close the door on the possibility that he was still active in some way — any way — even if it wasn’t murder.

“When killers are operating in the here and now, they will be making mistakes,”

the MWTF with its break on the farm on February 5. When human remains were unearthed months later, the victims’ identities were confirmed through familial DNA profiles that the MWTF had persevered in gathering and submitting to the Vancouver Forensic Laboratory’s DNA Data Bank.

Task force members were also actively investigating leads on sexual assaults, other assaults and abductions within their victim pool. The unit re-submitted old exhibits for DNA testing, became involved in new offences linked to their key suspects, and alerted municipal police forces to their expanded focus — hence their attendance at Wells’ weapons search on February 5.

Even without the break at the farm, says Adam, the team was slowly closing in on Pickton. Task force members were out on the streets, tracking sex trade workers and looking for any hint of suspect activity. The

**Sit back and assess every step you take until you're 100 per cent certain it won't cost you down the road.**

team knew that victims were still being taken from the Downtown Eastside at a rate of approximately one every six weeks, and investigators were closely examining the habits and acquaintances of the missing women. Prior to February 2002, members had identified a female subject who had transported a recently missing sex trade worker out of the city. Later, after the February 5 search, investigators would closely link this female to Pickton.

"The way we were operating, we absolutely would have got Pickton," says Adam, noting that the entire MWTF team was focused, committed and willing to think critically from the get-go.

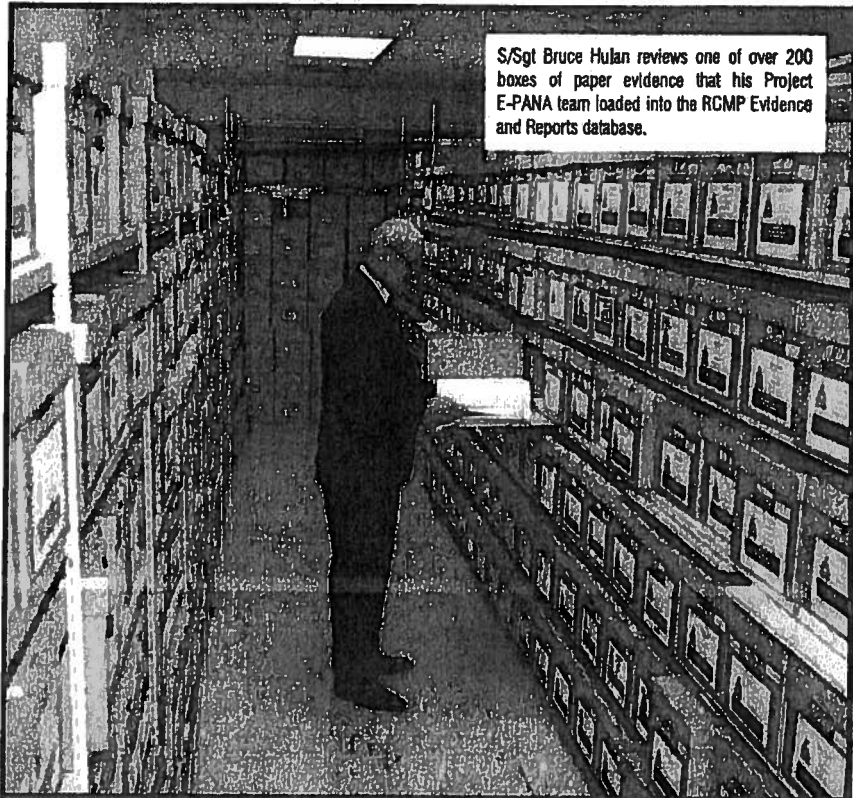
"The fact that Nathan Wells, a young member obtaining his second search warrant, got us on the farm — that was luck. The fact that we were there on the farm (in the first place), that's good policing. We positioned ourselves to win."

#### Lessons for the future

At the end of the day, Adam has one piece of advice for any new task force faced with similarly complex missing persons' cases: sit back and assess every step you take until you're 100 per cent certain it won't cost you down the road.

"In these tough investigations, we (as investigators) are desperate for anything to help give form to the investigation," says Adam. Behavioural science, past investigative decisions, investigators' "instincts" — all can provide form and direction, but they must be backed by sound methodology, says Adam. Otherwise, you risk casting your net too shallow, or in the wrong pond, and your investigation will sink while the target swims away. ■

*\* In December 2007, Pickton was convicted of six counts of second-degree murder. He awaits trial on 20 counts of first-degree murder. A 21<sup>st</sup> count was terminated by the trial judge.*



S/Sgt Bruce Hulan reviews one of over 200 boxes of paper evidence that his Project E-PANA team loaded into the RCMP Evidence and Reports database.

Sgt Ben Chang

### Project E-PANA: Building strong foundations

Project E-PANA is an RCMP initiative to determine whether a serial killer is responsible for the murders or disappearances of 18 women along highways in northern British Columbia between 1969 and 2006. Launched in 2005, E-PANA completed an extensive file review process in February 2009. Project commander S/Sgt Bruce Hulan shares some of the team's key lessons to date:

- Load paper files into an electronic database. When you're dealing with over 200 banker's boxes of paper, a database is the only sure way to catch a name that appears in box one and box 118.
- Don't underestimate the task of data entry. E-PANA expected to complete data entry in three months, but the process took close to a year, thanks to the volume of material involved. At the six-month point, E-PANA increased data-entry-staff levels from eight to 15.
- Take nothing for granted. An investigator's report from 10 years ago stating that all appropriate avenues have been exhausted may

no longer be valid given today's investigative techniques and technological advances.

- Review and audit old exhibits. E-PANA re-submitted dozens of old exhibits for modern DNA and forensic testing — and obtained several new suspect DNA profiles as a result.
- Prepare comprehensive reports for each completed file review. E-PANA's 100-page reports act as handy references for new team members and provide context for future investigative decisions.
- Hire assistants for both the file co-ordinator and the primary investigator. Assistants help lighten heavy workloads and filter requests for time and resources.
- Reach out to affected communities. Since 2006, E-PANA has held bi-annual meetings in northern B.C. to update victims' families on project status. The team even invited families to tour its Surrey offices. The meetings have helped build trust among all parties.

— Caroline Ross

Government of Canada    Gouvernement du Canada

MEMORANDUM    NOTE DE SERVICE

To                    "E" Division Deputy Criminal Operations Officer (Contract)  
A

FROM                OIC "E" Division Major Crime Section

DATE 2010-09-01
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SUBJECT            Reply to VPD Missing Women Investigation Review  
DE

Introduction

In writing this memorandum, I am well aware that in most investigations involving a serial killer, it would be accurate to state that there will be evidence or deficiencies identified after the fact that if understood earlier in the investigation could have resulted in minimizing the loss of life. Knowing now that PICKTON is a prime example of this observation and with the realization that he continued to kill innocent victims after information had been received identifying him as a suspect, I would like to express my concerns with the reports completed by Deputy Chief Constable Doug LEPARD entitled "Missing Women Investigation Review" and "Missing Women Investigation Review Summary Report" which are both dated August, 2010. The "Missing Women Investigation Review Summary Report" is an executive summary of the voluminous "Missing Women Investigation Review" and so I will restrict my comments to the larger document. I must state in the strongest of terms that I cannot accept all of the findings and conclusions reached by Deputy Chief LEPARD and made subject of this report. In order to produce a fulsome and objective report in which one can make sound decisions and offer credible conclusions, the reviewer must conduct a full fair and impartial investigation and ensure that he or she has provided an

opportunity to seek comment from those persons who have played a role in areas in which one intends to offer insight or comment. To quote from page 52 of the review;

"It is important to note that this review did not extend to interviewing the majority of RCMP members involved in the missing Women investigation, as this was beyond the scope of the Review. Therefore, any information in this Review (such as statements by VPD members) that appears critical of the RCMP should be considered in context, i.e., the RCMP members involved have not had an opportunity to respond to any criticisms that may have been made."

While Deputy Chief LEPARD offers this caveat, he then continues to make sweeping observations based solely on the formal interviews of VPD members and one retired RCMP Constable. Further to this point, Deputy Chief LEPARD wrote on page 240;

"As stated earlier, questions around the length of time it took the RCMP to become involved in the Missing Women investigation are beyond the scope of this review, particularly since interviewing RCMP members with decision-making authority was not practicable for this review."

Practicalities aside, one would expect that if Deputy Chief LEPARD felt it necessary to make comment beyond the scope of his review, then he should have at least offered the courtesy of interviewing all parties who occupied decision-making roles. In the absence of a thorough and objective analysis of all information, Deputy Chief LEPARD should have refrained from offering any comment, criticisms or opinions directed at the RCMP.

As well, it would appear that Deputy Chief LEPARD demonstrates a remarkable hindsight bias as he offers commentary that speaks to an overabundance of evidence supporting why PICKTON should have been caught earlier without providing the context of information obtained during the investigation which countered the contention that PICKTON should be considered the number one suspect. It is obvious that PICKTON was responsible for the murder of a large number of women and it is also patently obvious that he continued to kill street trade workers from the Downtown Eastside of Vancouver after the initial tips about PICKTON were received by the Vancouver Police Department and Coquitlam Detachment. To view this material in hindsight allows one to see so clearly today that which wasn't as obvious in the late 1990's.

I also find objectionable areas within the report in which Deputy Chief LEPARD has through "error in omission" attempted to paint a picture of PICKTON as someone responsible for a particular offence as the number one suspect but apparently not charged only because the victim could not identify him from a photo lineup. For example, on Page 176 and under the heading PICKTON A SUSPECT IN SEXUAL ASSAULT, the following is stated;

"On October 10<sup>th</sup>, 2001, VPD Sexual Offence Squad members met with Staff Sergeant ADAM for the purposes of identifying women who had survived attacks where it appeared they were going to be killed. Staff Sergeant ADAM was informed that on August 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2001, a woman who had been drinking in the Downtown Eastside voluntarily entered the car of a man who offered her a beer. The suspect then violently sexually assaulted her, and claimed he was the one who had killed "the girls who are missing." The victim escaped only by jumping from the suspect's moving vehicle. Constable DICKSON learned of the assault and advised Detective Constable Jim SCOTT of the VPD Sexual Offence Squad that investigators should consider PICKTON as a possible suspect. PICKTON was eventually excluded on the basis of the victim's failure to identify him from a photographic line-up."

Reading this incident would lead one to believe that PICKTON was responsible for this offence and was not charged only because the victim could not identify him. In reality, the person responsible for this offence was identified and confessed to Missing Women Task Force investigators. No weight relative to PICKTON's viability as a suspect should have been drawn from this event and a thorough and unbiased reporting of this incident would have made this clear distinction.

Inflammatory Comments and/or Factually Incorrect Statements Requiring a Response

- Pg 18; "The VPD passed on ALL information about Pickton to the RCMP when it received it, because the RCMP had jurisdiction over the investigation of information pertaining to crimes occurring in Coquitlam."
- Comment: The emphasis placed on the word "ALL" would lend one to believe that the VPD had provided all information relating to PICKTON when in fact, Deputy Chief LEPARD knows full well that this was not the case. For example, Page 265 of the Report details information that Detective Constables FELL and WOLTERS did actually link PICKTON to Downtown Eastside sex trade workers yet this information was not passed on to other VPD investigators nor the RCMP. Since Deputy Chief LEPARD offers the above comment as the fourth key finding of his



Review; does he still believe that this is an accurate statement?

Pg 19: "The RCMP accepted responsibility for investigating the Pickton information and led an investigation in Coquitlam. This investigation was intensely pursued until mid-1999, but was thereafter essentially abandoned by the RCMP, although the RCMP continued to explicitly assert authority over the investigation. RCMP management appears to have not understood the significance of the evidence they had in 1999 pointing to Pickton, and did not ensure it was collated in such a way as to allow a proper analysis."

Comment: To contend that the RCMP asserted authority over the investigation is to admit that the VPD were helpless to take any action in relation to PICKTON even though they suspected that he was responsible for abducting sex trade workers to be later killed at his residence. I find this assertion implausible. As well, comments ought not be made in reference to what RCMP management might not have understood without offering an opportunity for those individuals to make comment. That Deputy Chief LEPARD offered this as the fifth key finding is disturbing.

Pg 19: "Notwithstanding the many deficiencies in the VPD investigation, they did not cause the failure of the investigation into Pickton because the RCMP had responsibility for that investigation while the VPD focused on other investigative avenues. If the VPD investigation had been better managed, however, the VPD could have brought more pressure to bear on the RCMP to pursue the Pickton investigation more vigorously."

Comment: This is the sixth key finding of the Review and serves no purpose other than to attempt to mitigate any responsibility that the VPD would have to investigate someone who they believed was responsible for killing Downtown Eastside sex trade workers.

Pg 36: "Due to a variety of internal and external factors, the VPD overall was chronically short of sworn officers and civilian support staff during the Missing Women investigation. In addition to its "routine" work, the VPD's Major Crime Section was also dealing with an alarming series of violent home invasions against very elderly victims, and a series of armed robberies of Asian citizens in their residential garages. In addition, the homicide rate spiked over 50% from 1998 to 1999, with several extraordinary cases. Prior to and during the operation of the MWRT, considerable resources were committed to these other investigations. This made it difficult to properly resource the MWRT, and all the officers interviewed for this Review reflected on the difficulty each had coping with inadequate resources provided to the Missing Women investigation.

However, while inadequate resources contributed to the MWRT's problems by causing managers to allocate resources to investigations only when absolutely necessary, they were not the root cause of its deficiencies. If VPD management had accepted the serial killer theory as being the most likely cause of the disappearances, it was within the VPD's capacity to create a task force to investigate the Missing Women as homicide victims (notwithstanding that a multi-agency team was necessary to give the investigation a reasonable chance of success). Furthermore, if a task force was deemed necessary to conduct a serial killer investigation, more pressure could have been applied to the RCMP and to the Attorney General to contribute resources."

**Comment:** Deputy Chief LEPARD offers as a partial excuse the competing priorities of a heavy criminal code workload and a lack of resources but fails to allow this same level of understanding for identical pressures experienced by Coquitlam RCMP.

**Pg 37:** "But with respect to an unwillingness to collaborate with other police departments, that was certainly not the case with the VPD. In fact, the opposite was true. The MWRT consulted widely and Sergeant Field made repeated efforts to involve the RCMP in the Missing Women investigation. Unfortunately, she was unsuccessful for too long, despite her resolve and well-founded determination that a JFO with the RCMP was necessary for the investigation to succeed. The RCMP should have become involved in a JFO much earlier than it was, and Sergeant Field's managers in the VPD should have done more to advance this agenda. The case had little chance of being solved without the RCMP's involvement, due to the volume of potential evidence located in RCMP jurisdictions, and the likelihood that a serial killer would dispose of victims' bodies in a rural location. Furthermore, the RCMP has a much greater capacity to marshal the extraordinary resources necessary for a serial murder investigation, as it demonstrated in February 2002."

**Comment:** This certainly is not the recollection of Insp Doug HENDERSON (Ret'd) but one needs to wonder if Deputy Chief LEPARD really believes that a Sergeant from any Police Service would actually be able to advocate for a JFO with another Police Service and this would be accepted as a formal request? Would Deputy Chief LEPARD allow the VPD to enter into a JFO without the involvement of Senior Management of the VPD?

**Pg 38:** "Pickton was not arrested earlier than he was primarily because of failures in the RCMP's Port Coquitlam investigation from the summer of 1998 through to early 2000, when it essentially ended. Notwithstanding the problems in the Coquitlam RCMP's investigation and the need for a multi-



jurisdictional approach to the Missing Women investigation, the VPD investigation could have been improved in many respects. Although the end result may have been no different, that wasn't known at the time, and the VPD had a responsibility to properly manage the investigation."

Comment: This is clearly an inflammatory comment and one in which Deputy Chief LEPARD should not offer these types of comments without conducting interviews of all involved.

Pg 41 "When the Pickton case "broke" in February 2002, there was an intense media response that resulted in widespread condemnation of the VPD for allegedly failing to follow up on information about Pickton. The RCMP was characterized as having "rescued" the investigation, and of finding the information to solve the case during a review of VPD files. This was patently false. Despite many unfounded allegations made against the VPD, the RCMP chose not to issue a statement clarifying that the VPD had shared all information about Pickton, and that the RCMP had been in charge of the investigation into the Pickton information from the beginning. The lack of response by the RCMP was not in keeping with the finest traditions of that organization."

Comment: Clearly an inflammatory statement and Deputy Chief LEPARD obviously harbours some very strong feelings which would cause one to wonder how he could objectively assess the RCMP's involvement in this investigation with such a jaded perspective and without offering an opportunity for comment.

Pgs 41-43: "The investigation of Pickton prior to February 2002 was inadequate and a failure of major case management. The amount of information pointing to Pickton was such that the investigation had to continue to either eliminate Pickton as a suspect, or gather evidence against him. There was, however, a lack of effective analysis of the information pointing at Pickton, and this prevented a full appreciation of its credibility. The investigators had (a) evidence of Pickton's violent attack on (vetted); (b) the informant information from Hiscox, Caldwell, Menard and Best; (c) Ellingsen's denial to police that she'd described Pickton committing a murder to anyone, despite several informants independently and without collusion providing that information; (d) Pickton's interactions with sex trade workers in New Westminster; (e) Pickton's ability to dispose of bodies, and the informant information regarding Pickton's statements to that effect; and (f) Pickton's admission to having handcuffs, refusal to take a polygraph, and evasive answer as to the likelihood of victim DNA being found on his property. Taken together, the investigators clearly had sufficient information to justify an aggressive investigation into Pickton.

Instead, the Provincial Unsolved Homicide Unit investigators' conclusion

that Caldwell's information was not credible, combined with the transfer of Corporal Connor, effectively derailed the investigation and it languished. Corporal Connor's replacement, Constable Yurkiw, did not have Corporal Connor's experience or influence within the RCMP, and she was unable to convince her superiors to apply adequate resources to the investigation, despite her clear understanding of what needed to be done. The January 2000 interview of Pickton conducted by Constables Yurkiw and Cater was poorly conducted. Pickton was allowed to have a friend present, the interview wasn't properly planned or executed, and an evasive answer and his consent to search his property were not followed up. The failure of the RCMP to consult with the VPD or even advise that the interview was taking place is inexplicable.

After the interview there was very little investigation of Pickton by the Coquitlam RCMP, which Constable Yurkiw attributed to a lack of resources and a failure by the RCMP to give the investigation the appropriate priority.

There were many potential investigative avenues that could have been pursued had the resources been applied, including, but certainly not limited to: continuing to use Caldwell as an informant, and possibly using him as an agent; making efforts to follow up on Pickton's offer and conduct a "consent" search to find evidence or develop grounds to obtain a search warrant; continuing to pursue co-operation from Ellingsen, who eventually did become a cooperating witness against Pickton; seeking information from other potential witnesses that could have assisted the investigation; conducting a second interview/interrogation of Pickton using a highly-skilled police interrogator; revisiting the potential for charges to be laid in the (vetted) incident; and, arresting Pickton and employing a sophisticated interview and interrogation strategy using a cellmate, preceded and/or followed by a well-planned interrogation.

Pickton should not have been excluded as a suspect in the Missing Women investigation just because he was not linked to the murders of Pipe, Younker and Olajide. It was an error to assume that only one serial killer could have operated in a geographical area as large as the Lower Mainland and Fraser Valley, over the span of time involved.

An obvious question is, why didn't the JFO target Pickton? There was considerable information available pointing to him, but it appears that despite the JFO's expertise, their understanding of the investigation of Pickton that had taken place was limited, which highlights the crucial need for mechanisms to ensure information is properly analyzed and effectively shared.

The Pickton investigation was extraordinary because, like the Missing Women case generally, it concerned an allegation of murder where there was no body or other concrete evidence to confirm a murder had actually occurred. Were there a body, no doubt the information would have been treated differently. But personality conflicts or opinions about credibility without supporting evidence should never have derailed a murder investigation. Decisions must be made based on careful analysis of the information, and in consideration of the nature of the investigation: the more serious the allegations and the greater the risk to lives, the greater the care that must be taken in making decisions about how those allegations will be investigated. The opinion of the Provincial Unsolved Homicide Unit investigators that the informant information was not credible was an opinion only. Neither that opinion nor the lack of resources in the Coquitlam RCMP detachment should have been sufficient to derail an investigation when the allegations were so serious. The information available was so compelling that it demanded a continued aggressive investigation."

**Comment:** These statements are examples of hindsight bias which are made without providing the context in which this information was considered in 1999 and without allowing the benefit of investigators and managers to provide appropriate context. Deputy Chief LEPARD must surely be aware of the absolute necessity to prove the veracity/credibility of individuals providing information if such information is to be acted upon and to offer that the PICKTON investigation was derailed as a direct result of personality conflicts and the opinion of Provincial Unsolved Homicide Investigators (one of which was a VPD member) that CALDWELL's information was not credible is a failure to grasp the variables at play and to objectively conduct a review.

**Pg 43:** "Those in positions of authority in the Coquitlam RCMP and the Provincial Unsolved Homicide Unit must bear primary responsibility for the failure to effectively manage this investigation. The Provincial Unsolved Homicide Unit didn't believe in the veracity of the informant information and declined to assist, thereby derailing the investigation. The Coquitlam RCMP's investigation into Pickton was inadequate. The Coquitlam RCMP maintained control over the file, but did not treat it with the seriousness it demanded; after the summer of 1999, the only substantive work on the file was the inadequate interview of Pickton in January of 2000. Furthermore, after the summer of 1999, the RCMP did not seek assistance from the VPD, which had a vested interest in the success of the investigation. There was a lack of effective high-level communication between the RCMP and the VPD regarding the management of the Pickton investigation."

- Comment:** Clearly inflammatory comments that again could only be made with the taint of hindsight bias. With all due respect, these are conclusions that one could not make in all good conscience without first conducting a fair, impartial and objective investigation and one in which Deputy Chief LEPARD has clearly not conducted. To offer comment in the report that his mandate did not include interviewing RCMP members and Senior Management and to then make these types of inflammatory comments demands an explanation by Deputy Chief LEPARD.
- Pg 43:** "Had the Coquitlam RCMP investigation into Pickton been successful, the future inadequacies of the VPD Missing Women investigation would have been moot because the case could have been solved within months of the MWRT beginning its work in the spring of 1999."
- Comment:** An inflammatory statement that seeks to minimize VPD's role in this investigation by accentuating what Deputy Chief LEPARD views as a failure of the RCMP. An example of hindsight bias used to mitigate concerns with the VPD investigation.
- Pg 44:** "Ironically, even had the VPD's MWRT been a model for investigative excellence, it would likely have made no difference in the absence of a proper investigation of Pickton by the RCMP in Coquitlam. The VPD passed on all information in its possession about Pickton and assisted the RCMP-led investigation in every way it could. That investigation failed because it was mismanaged by the RCMP. The VPD's mistake in the Pickton investigation was to not demand more forcefully, and at a more senior level, that the RCMP do more."
- Comment:** Another extremely inflammatory statement made without a proper review being conducted. How can Deputy Chief LEPARD come to the conclusion and declare that the investigation failed "because it was mismanaged by the RCMP" without first conducting a full, objective and impartial investigation which should have included interviewing those RCMP Officers and Regular Members who were involved in the decision-making process? Such a sweeping allegation should not be made based only on the review of a file, interviews of VPD members and the interview of one retired RCMP investigator who lacked sufficient knowledge of the entire matter. As earlier stated in this memorandum, Deputy Chief LEPARD ought also to be aware that all information held by the VPD was not passed along to Coquitlam investigators.
- Pg 55-56:** "Extraordinary effort went into investigating the missing women from the Downtown Eastside, in the context of a missing persons investigation. However, at some point, it became clear that the possibility of a serial killer being responsible for the missing women was the most likely

explanation for so many women going missing without a trace. An investigative unit, the "Missing Women Review Team" (MWRT) was created and did have a focus on suspects for a time, but faced many challenges.

We know now, of course, that DNA or remains of 29 of the Missing Women (and three unidentified women) were found at the Port Coquitlam pig farm of Robert "Willy" Pickton, and that he has been charged with the murders of 27 Missing Women. A serial killer was indeed at work, and his victims were many of the women missing from the Downtown Eastside.

It must be recognized at the outset that the investigation into the Missing Women was extremely challenging for a number of reasons. First, while it is now known many of the women were murdered, during the investigation there were no bodies. As a result, at the outset it was not clear whether the investigation was a murder investigation or a missing persons investigation. Bodies also provide a large amount of forensic evidence that is a foundation for investigative strategies. Here there were no bodies, no "dump sites," no witnesses, and no forensic evidence of any kind. Second, many of the women were not reported missing for months and even years since they had last been seen. Determining exactly where and when they went missing was often impossible.

Compounding these challenges, the number of serious sexual predators in our communities at any given time is frightening. Traditional methods of narrowing down the list of suspects in a murder, such as establishing timelines of activity and investigating alibis for a particular date or location, were of no use in this case due to the considerable time that had typically elapsed between the last known sighting of the victims, and when they were reported missing. In addition, because sex trade workers have multiple contacts with strangers on a daily basis – and these "clients" were the most likely suspects – the traditional investigative strategy of starting the investigation by focusing on individuals known to the victim was of little utility.

Finally, the multi-jurisdictional aspect of the investigation presented further challenges. The Crown's theory on Pickton is that he "lured or procured the attendance of sex trade workers to his home...in Port Coquitlam" and killed them there. The Pickton farm, where it is believed many of the Missing Women from the Downtown Eastside were actually killed, is located in the jurisdiction of the Port Coquitlam RCMP. The Pickton investigation suffered as a result of the jurisdictional divide, due to a lack of continuity between the VPD and RCMP investigations, and serious mistakes that were made during the course of the RCMP's investigation.

There is also a question as to whether an investigation into a serial killer can be the responsibility of any single police department, considering the typically multi-jurisdictional aspect of the crime, the need to efficiently integrate information from many police agencies, and the level of resourcing required.

Understanding the challenges faced by the VPD investigators is critically important to balancing the bias of hindsight in a review of this nature. These challenges were compounded by a number of organizational and operational issues that functioned to hinder the effective investigation of the Missing Women between 1998 and 2002. These challenges are examined as well in the following discussion.”

Comment: I find it remarkable that Deputy Chief LEPARD can apply such a level of understanding of the various compounding challenges that made this a difficult investigation for the VPD in order to provide balance to the bias of hindsight but refuses to allow any notion of balance when referring to the RCMP investigation. Deputy Chief LEPARD demonstrates a bias towards the RCMP and this begs the question about his objectivity. Deputy Chief LEPARD also makes comment about the typical multi-jurisdictional aspect of this type of crime and comments how this aspect presented challenges to the investigation. This insight causes one to ponder the question as to why the VPD would continue to resist participation in the Integrated Homicide Investigation Team since this integrated Unit works across multi-jurisdictions and has demonstrated an ability to target serial killers as seen in the successes experienced relating to the investigations of KEMBO (which included a Vancouver homicide) and BUTORAC.

Pg 134: “Constable Yurkiw (who retired in 2001 and agreed to be interviewed for this Review) agreed that the Coquitlam RCMP did not put enough resources into the case after the Provincial Unsolved Homicide Unit investigators found the informant information not credible:

[an RCMP polygraphist] was very effective for the most part but he became very opinionated and he just thought we were little grunts from Coquitlam and he thought Henley had the experience to read these people. But right from the point Henley went to Ellingsen's door banging on it and calling her names, he was so arrogant about it and you just don't do that. He was so arrogant about things and we were just little nothings. I think this was the point that the file got sidelined because Henley was believed. Connor was so passionate about it, and he had a lot of credibility in Coquitlam because of all his experience, but when he left the file he just washed his hands of it.

Unsolved Homicide didn't believe it, and so therefore those above us may have been disbelievers and also just didn't think they had enough to put resources into this file.”

**Comment:** These are clearly unfair and inflammatory comments and worthy of a reply from Deputy Chief LEPARD as to why he would not offer the courtesy to Coquitlam Senior Management, Sgt HUNTER (Ret'd) or Cpl HENLEY (Ret'd) to provide their perspective and especially with the recognition that this document would be made public?

**Pg 142:** "Sergeant Field later commented that the profilers advised her that "they talked to Gary Bass (about the Joint Forces Operation proposal) and were told that he wanted to help but didn't have the manpower."

**Comment:** I would suggest that Deputy Chief LEPARD could easily have asked Deputy Commissioner BASS whether this comment (heard third hand) was in fact true but I am left to wonder if he wanted to actually learn the correct answer? There is ample evidence on file to prove that Deputy Commissioner BASS was tremendously supportive and to suggest otherwise is an insult requiring a public apology.

**Pg 187:** "As discussed in the Introduction to Part I of this Review, its purpose is to attempt to identify what went wrong in the investigation of the Missing Women, and to determine how the VPD – and other police agencies – can learn from those mistakes and do a better job in the future. Therefore, "Part II" of this Review provides a detailed analysis of the conduct of the investigation to identify the internal and external factors that contributed to a serial killer operating unchecked for so long.

There were a number of internal challenges in the VPD that hindered the effective investigation of the case, including a lack of resources; a lack of consistency and effectiveness in those in leadership and investigative positions; personality conflicts; and the command and control hierarchy. External challenges included the reluctance of sex trade workers to admit to their knowledge of Pickton and the absence of the bodies of the victims. Further, relations with the RCMP were sometimes characterized by a lack of cooperation, poor lines of communication, and a lack of consistency in the investigative activities of the RCMP. Other external challenges included the lack of continuity in leadership and line officers in the RCMP; the failure of the RCMP to share information in a timely manner; the difficulty in "getting the attention" of the Provincial Unsolved Homicide Unit; and the failure of the RCMP to capitalize on information provided by key informants (e.g., Caldwell and Hiscox). The VPD had sole control over some of the internal challenges, but much less control over the external challenges.

In addition, the Review explores how the external challenges persisted partly because of internal difficulties within the VPD, e.g., an under-resourced investigative team and the failure of senior police managers to

pressure their RCMP counterparts. Further, the Analysis attempts to provide an understanding of why certain decisions were made, how the approach might be different in the future, and what factors should be given attention in order to ensure that the same errors are not repeated.

It should be noted that the VPD's MWRT did an incredible amount of good work (as did Corporal Connor in the RCMP), but the VPD investigation of the Missing Women certainly could have been improved. However, a variety of internal and external factors, and a poor investigation of Pickton by Coquitlam RCMP and the Provincial Unsolved Homicide Unit, resulted in Pickton not being arrested until his farm was searched in February 2002 by a junior RCMP constable investigating information about an illegal firearm. Had this serendipitous investigation not occurred, a person who may become Canada's, and North America's, most notorious serial killer may have escaped undetected. How the problems with the VPD's investigation fit into the larger issue of how Pickton was able to allegedly murder numerous women in the Lower Mainland before being caught is the subject of analysis in this Review."

**Comment:** These comments are unfair and inflammatory and appear to serve no purpose other than being editorial in nature. Deputy Chief LEPARD should explain where he believes there was a lack of cooperation, poor lines of communication, a lack of consistency in the investigative activities of the RCMP, lack of continuity in leadership and line officers in the RCMP, failure of the RCMP to share information, etc. One should also question whether Deputy Chief LEPARD believes that these issues are still prevalent today.

**Pg 232-233:** "As discussed above, the VPD's willingness and ability to resource priority investigations, whatever the cost to the VPD as a whole, has been demonstrated on several occasions, particularly since 2003. Inadequate resources contributed to the problems by encouraging the status quo, and meant that VPD management was certainly not going to lightly establish a new task force. However, while insufficient resources were a significant contributing factor to the problems in the Missing Women investigation, they were not the primary cause of the root deficiencies.

It should be said, however, that the VPD's challenges have dramatically increased in the last decade. As summarized earlier, the reasons include significant increases in the city and region's population, and a dramatic increase in the complexity of criminal investigations, amongst other factors. Unfortunately, the VPD's staffing levels have remained essentially unchanged over the last decade. The mantra of some senior staff at the City of Vancouver that the VPD could continue with roughly the same staff it had a decade ago by simply becoming more efficient is specious. It



does not consider the impact of an increase in population over the last decade that is equal to that of the city of Delta, the challenges that are created by the core city phenomena, and the well-documented issue of the increasing complexity of police work, an issue that has had resonance in other cities. As stated in an internal analysis In 2000, the VPD concluded that:

[O]ne of the greatest stresses in an investigation is attempting to acquire and maintaining enough human resources...Whenever there is an extraordinary investigation such as that into the missing women in the Downtown Eastside or the home invasions of the elderly, investigators are borrowed from other squads whose workload is such that they can't be spared...This creates stress for the investigators, stress in the organization, and increased overtime whenever staff shortages are created. There are not enough investigators available to provide the flexibility to create short- and medium-term task forces when an extraordinary need arises.

Without significant increases in both sworn and civilian staffing in the VPD, the lack of resources will continue to be a significant obstacle to effectively investigating serious crimes in Vancouver, as well as addressing the many other demands on police services. (In 2005, in response to an independent consultant's report that determined the VPD needed an immediate increase of 92 police officers, Council acknowledged staffing shortages and approved 50 police officers and 57 civilian positions for 2005 and tentatively approved additional positions for 2006, subject to a report back on a variety of issues.)"

Comment: The VPD does not own a patent on human resource pressures and I would ask Deputy Chief LEPARD why he would not apply this consideration to the RCMP? Does he actually believe that human resource issues do not affect the RCMP as a whole and Coquitlam Detachment in particular, or does he hold the opinion that this is a consideration which he needs not give attention or comment?

Pg 234-235: Although a multi-jurisdictional approach was not employed from the outset, the VPD consulted and involved other police agencies throughout the investigation, and the need for a multi-jurisdictional operation was regularly discussed among investigators working in the VPD and in the RCMP. The issue of the timing of a multi-jurisdictional JFO eventually became the subject of media scrutiny.

For example, on September 21st, 2001, the *Vancouver Sun* published a major article on the Missing Women investigation. Chief Constable Blythe was interviewed regarding the timing of the JFO:

Blythe refrained from criticizing another police agency, but the RCMP only became directly involved in the case earlier this year. RCMP media relations

Constable Danielle Efford said the Mounties formed the review team as soon as they were asked, arguing it was a file that fell under Vancouver's jurisdiction until that point.

Constable Efford's statement that the RCMP became involved as soon as requested was incorrect. In fact, in addition to consulting frequently with the RCMP, the VPD had made several attempts at various levels to formally bring the RCMP (which is BC's provincial police force) generally, and the Provincial Unsolved Homicide Unit specifically, into the Missing Women investigation. The VPD also consistently made efforts to consult with other agencies with relevant experience. A summary of these efforts is set out below.

- On April 9th, 1999, Detective Constable Shenher, Deputy Chief Constable McGuinness, and Staff Sergeant Boyd met with the Attorney General and other public officials. Deputy Chief Constable McGuinness recalled that:

The purpose of that meeting was to try to get the Provincial Unsolved Homicide Unit involved in the case. It was very shortly before the AG got involved in offering the increased reward. The RCMP didn't want to get involved because they said it wasn't historical, and there was no evidence of a homicide. Everyone was looking saying this would be intensive, and no one had the resources. The AG didn't want to throw any money in except for the reward. At that time I think there were 31 women on the list. All that came out of that meeting was the AG came up with \$70,000 for the reward. The RCMP said if we got anything hard, or if we wanted them to review the file, they would. But that's all that came out of that. I think it was the AG that called the meeting. We said we wanted the Provincial Unsolved Homicide Unit, but they said "show us a body, you don't have a homicide." I'm sure they saw it as Vancouver trying to dump it on them and that they were missing from Vancouver, not the RCMP [jurisdiction]."

**Comment:** This is an area in which the recollection of RCMP members would be diametrically opposed to the opinions expressed here and Deputy Chief LEPARD ought not to have expressed these sentiments without ensuring that he had provided an equal opportunity for the RCMP to offer insight.

**Pg 238:** "Clearly, there were extensive efforts made by the VPD to convince the RCMP to get involved in the Missing Women case. Understanding the RCMP's reluctance to get involved, despite the advocacy of some of their own members (e.g., Staff Sergeant Davidson) is an issue beyond the scope of this review. However, it should be underscored that the RCMP's own expert, Staff Sergeant Davidson, believed that the RCMP needed to become involved because of the likelihood that the victims' bodies would be found in rural RCMP jurisdictions. In addition, there was never any evidence to suggest that the Missing Women had been the victim of any crimes in the City of Vancouver relating to their disappearance, despite

their connection to the Downtown Eastside. What is now known is that Pickton's victims allegedly willingly visited his property, and were only victimized once there."

**Comment:** To state that the victims "allegedly willingly visited" PICKTON's property cannot be relied upon to be an accurate statement. For example, investigators are aware that the victim (subject of publication ban) had attempted to exit PICKTON's vehicle on the drive to his residence but was restrained from getting away. Deputy Chief LEPARD should be aware of this aspect since he refers to this event a number of times during his review. To also state that there was a "reluctance to get involved" is a misleading statement which requires an explanation from Deputy Chief LEPARD.

**Pg 243:** "That was certainly the case in the Pickton investigation, where the VPD investigators (and some RCMP investigators) strongly believed there needed to be further investigation into Pickton. But the MWRT had to rely on the RCMP, because the alleged crime scene was in Port Coquitlam; the VPD had no control over the RCMP investigation. And the Port Coquitlam RCMP's Serious Crime Unit was too small to handle such an investigation so turned to the Provincial Unsolved Homicide Unit – an integrated team – for help. The Provincial Unsolved Homicide Unit, which had no vested interest in the investigation like the VPD or the Coquitlam RCMP, wouldn't agree to continue the investigation because they did not believe the informant information, so the investigation was derailed. As Constable Yurkiw later explained, "I don't think IHIT would have changed anything, because you needed someone to recognize that the file needed to be worked on." Had the Coquitlam RCMP and the VPD been part of a regional force, it is conceivable that many of the jurisdictional obstacles to a successful investigation would have been reduced or eliminated."

**Comment:** Deputy Chief LEPARD demonstrates an ignorance of the role of the Unsolved Homicide Unit in this investigation as members of this Unit and the Serious Crime Unit were only provided to assist Coquitlam Detachment in this investigation and never took any decision-making roles. To espouse that they resulted in the derailing of the investigation when they only worked in an assistance capacity is unfair commentary. As well and as previously stated, VPD's inclusion in IHIT may actually have been able to deal with any jurisdictional obstacles as this Unit has demonstrated an ability to successfully investigate serial killers.

**Pg 297-299:** "After the search warrants were executed on the Pickton property on February 5th and 6th, 2002, media scrutiny of the Pickton investigation was intense and sensational. Much of the reporting centred on criticism of the VPD for allegedly failing to conduct an adequate investigation into

the Missing Women case generally, and into Pickton specifically. Many allegations were made about the VPD doing nothing with information provided to it years earlier regarding Pickton. For example, the *Province* newspaper reported that despite the VPD being given a tape of Hiscox's conversation with Wayne Leng (in which Hiscox described to Leng the information he later provided to police) "[the VPD] did not investigate Robert "Willie" Pickton until February 5th, 2002, when RCMP got a search warrant." This was obviously incorrect.

The media coverage generally inappropriately blamed the VPD for the failure to adequately investigate Pickton, despite the involvement of the RCMP throughout and despite the fact that the Pickton investigation was under the jurisdiction of the RCMP. The RCMP were generally characterized as having rescued the VPD's investigation and the theme of many media articles was that the VPD was incompetent and worse. This was in no small part due to the actions of the RCMP's media spokesperson, Constable Cate Galliford, who made misleading statements such as those broadcast November 2nd, 2002, on "Dateline Special," a popular NBC television program seen throughout North America and elsewhere. The Dateline episode was highly critical of the VPD, and included footage of a JFO media conference at which the VPD was not represented.

One of the main themes of the Dateline episode was, in summary, that the VPD was told about Pickton and his pig farm, but did not investigate and seemed not to care, probably because the victims were just "junkie prostitutes" and because most of them were aboriginal. Dateline incorrectly described the reason the RCMP became involved as follows:

The marches, the vigils, the reward, and the growing number of missing women all finally got the attention of politicians outside of Vancouver. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police was brought in.

This characterization of how the RCMP became involved was patently false. In the Pickton investigation specifically (i.e., the investigation in 1998 and 1999 into the information provided by Hiscox, Calder and others), the RCMP was involved and in command from the beginning. In the Missing Women investigation generally, the RCMP became involved because of the relentless efforts of Sergeant Field, later assisted by Inspector Spencer, not because "politicians outside Vancouver" brought them in.

Constable Galliford was shown on the Dateline program stating, "I'm not in any position to make any comment with regard to the Vancouver Police Department investigation..." The narrator then states, "But Galliford acknowledged that the RCMP found ample information to go after Pickton

in the Vancouver Police Department's very own files." Constable Galliford is then shown saying, "Our investigators arrived at this conclusion based on a lengthy file review." The reporter then asked, "A file review of the Vancouver Police Department?" Galliford responded, "That's correct, and any further comment with regard to that will have to be made to Vancouver City Police." The narrator then intones, "But they were nowhere to be found."

The conduct of Constable Galliford was to cause many problems, from the VPD perspective, as the investigation progressed. For example, on many occasions, she violated the media policy agreed to by the VPD and the RCMP by agreeing to interviews outside of the scheduled press conferences. This undermined the VPD media spokesperson, who abided by the policy and consequently suffered the wrath of the media. This led to much consternation, and, according to former Chief Constable Blythe and others, led to high-level discussions between the VPD and the RCMP about removing Galliford from her assignment, although in the end she was not removed. Inspector Beach was part of the discussions and later explained:

Regarding the way the RCMP treats us, at the operational level, dealing with Don Adam, Larry Killaly, excellent relationship; we're treated like partners. At the corporate level, there's no question that the RCMP see us as bit players and they're the main act; they will do everything they can to protect the image of the RCMP and their failure to get rid of Galliford unless we got rid of Dreimel was an example of that; there was no way they were going to look like they'd lost on that issue.

The Dateline story was not factual, particularly with respect to the information leading to the search of the Pickton property and the arrest of Pickton coming as a result of the review of the VPD's files. In fact, as described in the chronology, all of the information regarding Pickton had been shared with the RCMP as it was received beginning in 1998, and throughout the intense investigation of Pickton during the summer of 1999. The Coquitlam RCMP led this investigation until it was derailed by the transfer of Corporal Connor, and after the Provincial Unsolved Homicide Unit formed the opinion that the informant information wasn't credible.

Further, the information leading to the search of the Pickton residence and the eventual arrest of Pickton was developed independent of the information in the VPD (and RCMP) files regarding Pickton. As described in the chronology, the RCMP-led JFO was not targeting Pickton, and the case was actually solved because a junior Coquitlam RCMP member, Constable Nathan Wells, obtained a search warrant for an illegal firearm alleged to be on the Pickton property, based on information he received

from an informant (——). JFO members only learned of this warrant the day before it was executed, and had no involvement in the investigation to that point.

The Dateline episode spawned intense condemnation of the VPD, and generated countless venomous emails from North America and Europe where the episode was shown. The RCMP made no public statement subsequent to the episode to correct the impression left by the show generally, and the comments of Constable Galliford specifically. (This leads to the inevitable inference that Constable Galliford's original comments, or at least the RCMP's failure to correct the misinformation, were part of a planned media strategy at senior levels of the RCMP to focus criticism on the VPD and away from the RCMP.) This was extremely hurtful to the VPD, and particularly to the key VPD investigators.

The incalculable damage to the reputation of the VPD and individual members could have been at least partially mitigated if the RCMP had responded to the "character assassination" of the VPD in Dateline. The RCMP could have briefly stated that the show was inaccurate, and that the VPD had shared all information it received about Pickton in a timely manner, without discussing the investigation further. It did not do so. The lack of response by the RCMP was not in keeping with the finest traditions of that organization."

Comment: I find these comments particularly distasteful, offensive and completely without merit. One would wonder and I believe should demand from Deputy Chief LEPARD whether his comments about "a planned media strategy at senior levels of the RCMP" as an attempt to besmirch the reputation of the VPD, is a position held by Chief Constable CHU either then or now? To make such an outrageous statement and to follow it up with comments about how the lack of a response by the RCMP hurt the feelings of the VPD, is just further confirmation that Deputy Chief LEPARD had no intention of remaining objective in his review. Certainly anyone seeking to offer such bizarre criticism of an organization would do more than rely on one version of a story? Can Deputy Chief LEPARD confirm that he is aware that retired VPD Sgt Bob COOPER was present during the taping of the Dateline program and certainly should have been able to address the media at that time or at least offer some context as to how the taping transpired? It should also not come as a surprise to Deputy Chief LEPARD that comments attributed to then Cst GALLIFORD were actually taken out of context. A proper investigation by Deputy LEPARD would have identified two briefings of the Missing Women Task Force in which then Cst GALLIFORD provided information relative to this Dateline show and which were attended by Senior NCO's from the VPD. 1

believe that Deputy Chief LEPARD should offer a public apology for these comments.

**Next Steps**

Since the unfortunate leak of an original draft of the VPD Review has nullified any opportunity to discuss and correct various contentious/inaccurate areas of Deputy LEPARD's report, a process is presently underway to scrutinize the complete report and offer comment where inaccuracies are found so as to provide a balanced and contextual record. I would suggest that upon completion of this report, it should be forwarded to the Province of British Columbia so that it can be utilized in whatever process is deemed most appropriate. As publically stated, the RCMP should remain committed to cooperating in whatever process the Province of British Columbia elects and I am certain that the final work product will offer a fulsome and accurate accounting. I also suggest that there should be no intention of sharing this analysis with the VPD prior to its delivery to the Province of British Columbia as to do so would serve no practical utility or purpose, in my humble opinion.

Please advise if you require any further information or comment.

R.T. NASH, Superintendent  
Officer in Charge  
"E" Division Major Crime Section

**DC LePard's Response to Supt Nash's Critique  
of the Missing Women Investigation Review**

1. **Page 2, first full paragraph.** Supt Nash states that I made "sweeping observations based solely on the formal interviews of VPD members and one retired RCMP constable." This is not correct. In fact, before I even started writing my report, I had the benefit of reading the RCMP's 2002 Williams report, in which all the key players were interviewed other than Cst. Yurkiw. While I was informed by it, I didn't note it in my report because it had been given to me on the understanding it was confidential and I didn't want to breach that trust. I was certainly informed by its contents though, which, other than the conclusion, supported my observations and findings for the most part.
2. **Page 2, last paragraph.** Supt Nash states I demonstrate "remarkable hindsight bias" in asserting that there was a lot of information pointing to Pickton and he should have been caught earlier without "providing the context of information obtained during the investigation which countered the contention that Pickton should be considered the number one suspect." This is not correct. At the time of the 1998-2001 Coquitlam investigation, Pickton was Coquitlam's only suspect to investigate. The entire context of the information is provided in my report, contrary to his assertion. Further, it is certainly not only with the benefit of hindsight that the information about Pickton is clear – it was very clear at the time when viewed in its totality, something that then-Cpl. Nash seems not to have appreciated when he was part of the group questioning the credibility of the information he was aware of at the time. It was very clear to several VPD and RCMP members that the information was very compelling and absolutely required further investigation.
3. **Page 3, first two paragraphs.** Supt Nash suggests that I was somehow biased in noting that Pickton had been brought to Evenhanded's attention when he was discussed in a meeting between Insp Adam and the VPD's Sexual Offence Squad on October 10, 2001, as a potential suspect in a violent sexual assault. Frankly, I don't understand the point that Supt Nash is making. The event is part of the narrative and the point is quite clear that I was not suggesting that Pickton was a viable suspect for that sexual assault, but that Det/Cst Scott's report of the meeting indicated that (then) Staff Sgt Adam was not fully informed about the Pickton file because he is recorded as stating that he was unsure "if the information on the Picktons was fact or urban myth." That is the point of including the passage in the report.
4. **Page 3, last two paragraphs.** Supt Nash makes the point that my assertion that all info pointing to Pickton was provided to the RCMP was incorrect because the VPD didn't provide the information Det/Const Fell and Wolther's had that Pickton had been identified by STWs they had interviewed. I accept that technically he is correct. However, the VPD as an organization didn't even know that information existed until I did my review. Further, the context of that assertion was the repeated allegations in the media that the VPD received the Hiscox tips in 1998 but did nothing with the information until the RCMP got a search warrant in 2002 and solved the case. Those allegations were false, and that's the context in which I made that finding. I accept that I didn't clarify this small point, but, again, it was only learned of by the VPD after Pickton's arrest and wasn't what was being referred to in that finding. What was being referred to was all the information known to the VPD provided by the informants. All of that information was provided to the RCMP.



5. Page 3, second and third paragraphs. Supt Nash states that, "To contend that the RCMP asserted authority over the investigation is to admit that the VPD were helpless to take any action in relation to Pickton even though they suspected that he was responsible for abducting sex trade workers to be later killed at his residence." First, he has completely avoided addressing the question of jurisdiction and responsibility regarding Coquitlam RCMP and his statement is completely non-responsive to the point. Second, there is no evidence that any victim was "abducted" from the streets of Vancouver (or anywhere else). That was not the evidence in the Crown brief, it was not the evidence at trial, and it was not the Crown theory. As we know, many STWs frequented the pig farm of their own free will. We don't know why Pickton killed some women and not others, or when he decided to kill. Finally, the VPD had much other information to investigate relating to the Missing Women case but the Coquitlam RCMP took on responsibility for an allegation of murder in their jurisdiction. I have clearly stated that the VPD failed to ensure appropriate lines of communication were open with Coquitlam RCMP and to advocate for an improved investigation.
6. Page 4, paragraph 4. Supt Nash asserts the 6<sup>th</sup> key finding of my review (that deficiencies in the VPD's investigation did not cause the failure of the investigation into Pickton in Coquitlam because that was the RCMP's investigation) "*serves no purpose other than to mitigate any responsibility that the VPD would have to investigate someone who they believed was responsible for killing Downtown Eastside sex trade workers.*" This is not correct. It is a point of fact, and again, Supt Nash simply doesn't respond to the question of the Coquitlam RCMP's responsibility for investigating the Pickton information, which they accepted, and did not at any time suggest the VPD should take responsibility for.
7. Page 5, paragraph 2. Supt Nash claims I offer our resource difficulties as a "partial excuse" for our failings. This is not correct. I clearly state resources were not the root cause of deficiencies in the VPD investigation. Rather, the difficulties the VPD faced as a result of lacking resources are provided as context. I do note there were resource difficulties in Coquitlam as well, but point out, as I did with the VPD, that resource problems could not be used to excuse the lack of follow-up in the circumstances. The VPD had options to deal with the resource problems, and the RCMP had even more.
8. Page 5, paragraph 4. Supt Nash notes that Insp. Henderson's recollections do not agree with my analysis regarding the RCMP's resistance to a JFO. I believe the documentary record supports my analysis not to mention the statements of multiple witnesses, including Insp Adam, who stated the RCMP could have and should have engaged much earlier. I note that Insp. Henderson's statement in 2002 is very short on facts in terms of the sequence of events. In my view, his recollections cannot be relied upon. Regarding Supt Nash's questioning of whether a sergeant could "*actually advocate for a JFO,*" I agree and wrote that management should have become more involved, but a sergeant could certainly do the preliminary work, and in fact Sgt. Field WAS the one who eventually convinced S/Sgt. Henderson to enter into a JFO.
9. Page 6, first full paragraph. Supt Nash describes my analysis as "inflammatory" (as he does frequently) and again notes that I should have interviewed all involved. That wasn't possible, because of the "admit nothing" policy of the RCMP (as it was described to me by a very high ranking RCMP member), but again, I did have the benefit of the Williams report in which all key RCMP players but Cst Yurkiw were interviewed.

10. Page 8, second paragraph. Supt. Nash comments on my observations regarding UHU derailing the investigation because of their opinion about Ellingsen's credibility. Supt. Nash discounts my analysis as hindsight bias without context. I would emphasize that my comments were not based on hindsight; they were based on the information that was known/available at the time. Investigators such as Cpl. Connor were very familiar with the information and thought it demanded further investigation. Then Supt. Nash makes the statement, "*LePard must surely be aware of the absolute necessity to prove the veracity/credibility of individuals providing information if such information is to be acted upon ...*" This is an extraordinary statement to make, in my view. If Supt. Nash believes there is an "absolute necessity" to "prove" the credibility of witnesses before taking action, then that speaks volumes. The point of continuing the investigation was because the information was so compelling and had not been disproved, other than an opinion about credibility, in the face of multiple pieces of disparate information pointing in the same direction. That information had to be resolved. Since it had not been, the investigation had to continue, given the seriousness of the subject matter. To suggest that because the information hadn't been absolutely proved, despite opportunities to do so not having been exhausted, was justification not to continue the investigation is, to me, an astounding comment. The fact was that the totality of the information was extremely compelling and demanded further investigation. If then-Cpl. Nash believed the multiple, non-colluding informants weren't credible, it would have been simple to seek to polygraph them, especially since Caldwell and Best were both completely cooperative.
11. Page 9, paragraph 3. Supt. Nash asserts that my comment seeks to minimize the role of the VPD. I think any fair reading of my report would not conclude that I minimized the failings of the VPD, since the majority of the report is concerned with the problems in the VPD investigation, and it has often been characterized as a "scathing" review of the VPD's mishandling of the investigation.
12. Page 9, paragraph 5. Supt Nash asserts that I came to my findings about the Coquitlam RCMP investigation without a proper review being conducted. My report is not contradicted by the statements of the investigators appended to the Williams report. The conclusions of my report and the Williams report are different. I did not find the conclusions of the Williams report credible.
13. Page 11, paragraph 2. Supt Nash asserts that the VPD has resisted participation in IHIT. In fact, the RCMP and VPD were in agreement that there was no business case for the VPD to join IHIT. Supt. Nash wasn't part of those discussions.
14. Page 12, paragraph 1. Supt Nash comments that my report was unfair to Sgt. Hunter and Cpl. Henley in that I didn't ask for their perspectives on Cst Yirkiw's comments. First, from my experience in dealing with the RCMP, I do not believe that they would have been provided. Second, Cpl Henley's perspective was set out in his interview for the Williams report and I had the benefit of that.

15. Page 12, paragraph 3. Supt. Nash comments that there is ample evidence on file to prove that Deputy Commissioner Bass was *"tremendously supportive and to suggest otherwise is an insult requiring a public apology."* Being supportive of an investigation in my view requires action, not just words. I do not see evidence of tremendous support because despite the efforts of his own member, S/Sgt. Keith Davidson, the requested resources were not provided when requested, as S/Sgt. Davidson documented.
16. Page 13, full paragraph 2. Supt. Nash asserts that my criticism of Coquitlam's investigation as having been "poor" and the discovery of Pickton as "serendipitous" were *"unfair and inflammatory and appear to serve no purpose other than being editorial in nature"* and that I should support those comments with analysis. I don't know why he says this because in my analysis, I explain at length the basis for my criticism, mostly from the large documentary record, including extensive RCMP documentation.
17. Page 14, full paragraph 3. Supt Nash asserts that I should have given more consideration to the RCMP's resource difficulties. According to Insp. Moulton, resources weren't an issue and he didn't know what he would have done with more resources. It's true his subordinates thought there was more that could be done, so the question is, where is the proper business case to obtain more resources? Henderson stated in his interview with DCC Evans that if he'd received a proper business case, resources would not have been a problem. I agree that the Coquitlam RCMP was very busy with serious investigations. So given the lack of resources, what efforts were made to overcome the resource challenges, such as a proper analysis and business case to E Division, or a request to the VPD for assistance? Like the VPD, the much-larger RCMP had the capacity to reprioritize its resources to ensure the Pickton investigation could proceed appropriately.
18. Page 15, paragraph 4. Supt Nash states that the recollection of the RCMP members would be *"diametrically opposed"* to my account of the meeting between the VPD, RCMP and Attorney General. The VPD has documentation of that April 1999 meeting which notes that the Unsolved Homicide Unit would only be willing to become involved if there was clear evidence of a murder. Cpl Connor made similar notes in 1998, to the effect that UHU found the information "interesting" but otherwise insufficient to become involved. Insp Henderson has stated that the meeting occurred in 1997, two years before it occurred, so his recollections cannot be relied upon.
19. Page 16, full paragraph 1. Supt. Nash claims that my assertion that it appears the victims willingly visited the Pickton property *"cannot be relied upon to be an accurate statement"* and that was not the case with Victim 1997, who tried to leave the vehicle. Yet even though that was so with Victim 1997, there was no suggestion that the VPD should have any role in that investigation, as clearly the most serious offence occurred in Coquitlam. It appears Supt. Nash did not follow the evidence in the preliminary hearing or the trial, nor does it appear he read the 198-page Crown brief, in which it is clear that many sex trade workers willingly visited the Pickton property many times. For example, Evenhanded interviewed 13 STWs who stayed at the Pickton property with Pickton for at least one night, all of whom were not harmed. It is known that victims such as Ms. Chinnock visited Pickton many times before she was killed. Supt. Nash also asserts in this paragraph that my statement that "there was a reluctance to get involved" is *"misleading,"* but does not explain why he says that. The documentary record is clear that the RCMP were reluctant to get involved, frustrating the RCMP's own members, such as Staff/Sgt. Keith Davidson.

20. Page 16, full paragraph 3. Supt Nash asserts that it was *"unfair"* to claim that UHU and E-Div Serious Crime's actions derailed the investigation and that I was *"ignorant"* of their role. He should look at the sequence of events and where the investigation stalled, and then look at the statements of the Coquitlam RCMP investigators involved. The fact is that the assessment of Caldwell and Ellingsen's credibility was critical to the stalling/failure of the investigation. That he cannot acknowledge the role the E-Division members played in the failure of this investigation speaks for itself, given the factual record, and given that Supt. Nash himself was one of the E-Division investigator s involved. (I find it curious that someone who was involved in the investigation in a significant way is given the responsibility to critique my report and thereby defend his own actions.) The involvement of E-Division members and the transfer of Cpl Connor were clearly the two factors that derailed the investigation, combined with a lack of prioritization.
21. Page 19, full paragraph 3. With reference to my comments about the damage to the VPD's reputation following the Dateline episode, the RCMP's failure to correct the record and my questioning of whether that silence might have been a media strategy, Supt Nash states that he finds these comments *"distasteful"*, *"completely without merit"*, *"outrageous"*, *"bizarre"* and warranting a *"public apology"*. The hubris is astounding. The RCMP wasn't on the receiving end of the intense criticism. One would think the RCMP would have some empathy, given the erosion in public confidence in the RCMP in more recent years due to intense media scrutiny of their actions. Supt. Nash also raises the point that a VPD member was present at the taping and I should have offered some context as to how the taping transpired. The circumstances of the taping are irrelevant; what matters is what was edited and broadcast and that the RCMP took no steps to correct the inaccurate information widely disseminated.
22. Conclusion. In conclusion, as I found with the Williams report, I find it incredible that there is not a single reference to the RCMP having made a mistake, at any point, in any respect. It appears from reading the Williams and Nash reports that the RCMP didn't make a single error and are blameless; the VPD are simply wrong, to blame, biased, etc, and that my whole report is inflammatory and inaccurate in every respect where it refers to failings of the RCMP. Having now read DCC Evans' report, which makes findings of fact and conclusions highly consistent with mine, I think that speaks to the objectivity and accuracy of my report. It also speaks to the complete lack of merit to Supt Nash's comments, which DC Evans' report contradicts extensively. As I found with the Williams report, I do not think the posture Supt. Nash took in his critique served the RCMP well in terms of being able to make informed judgements as to how to respond.
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# VANCOUVER EASTSIDE MISSING WOMEN

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## **Police deny officers tried to rape prostitutes**

Courtesy of The Province Thur 14 June 2001  
Mark Wilson

Vancouver police yesterday dismissed allegations that prostitutes are at equal risk of attempted rape by a cop as by a pimp.

The allegations are contained in a report on violence against Vancouver prostitutes. The report, written for the Prostitution Alternatives Counselling and Education Society, was funded by the former NDP government. It's based on interviews with 183 prostitutes.

"It is a very accusatory document and members of the force are offended by it," said police spokesman Det. Scott Driemel.

"We don't know what research was done, or not done, or whether the allegations are based on information that is subjective, objective, hearsay or innuendo."

The report says that police officers were blamed by the women for six instances of attempted rape with a weapon; this is the same number of similar offences attributed to pimps.

It also says prostitutes revealed five instances of police officers insisting on unprotected sex.

Driemel said some prostitutes may have made the allegations out of anger at police who arrested them.

John Turvey, executive director of the Downtown Eastside Youth Activities Society, said it is hard to believe that officers would engage in unprotected sex.

"It is also a bit bewildering that nothing of this has come up before. We have regular safety meetings and the women who attend are very outspoken.

"There is also an active rumour mill, so you would have expected to hear word if there are rogue cops out there. I know that if a sex trade worker came into my office complaining of being assaulted by an officer, I would be reaching for the telephone to contact a lawyer who could represent her."

He noted the report says there are 4,700 injection drug users in the Downtown Eastside, about four times the count in a recent mayoral report on the problem.

[PACE Report on violence against sex trade workers-June 2001](#)

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Updated: January 01, 2007

seen again.

While searching the contents of a sewage pit extending from inside and beyond Site "B" underground, Coroner STAIR located a small piece of bone. Forensic examination of that bone fragment was found to match the known DNA typing profile of Wendy CRAWFORD.

**Jennifer FURMINGER - D.L.S. December 27<sup>th</sup>, 1999**

The established date last seen for Jennifer FURMINGER is December 27<sup>th</sup>, 1999. On that date, FURMINGER had an appointment with the Ministry of Human Resources.

FURMINGER's roommate, [REDACTED] was the person who initially reported her missing to the police. [REDACTED] identified clothing that he believed to have belonged to FURMINGER, that had been found on the PICKTON farm, including clothing that he claimed she was wearing the last time he saw her. From his review of the photograph(s) of the clothing item exhibits, he was "adamant and without doubt in his identification".

The clothing that [REDACTED] had identified as belonging to Jennifer FURMINGER had been found in Site "A". DNA profiles identified to FURMINGER were found on various articles of clothing. Of note, a brown leather jacket was examined which had stains that were indicative of blood identified to FURMINGER and a partial profile of Robert PICKTON located "on the front middle at zipper cover" of the same jacket. FURMINGER's profile was also noted on a hooded pullover jacket found in Site "A", from blood stain(s) examined on that jacket.

In Site "B", a black "digitech" watch with a broken strap was located on a shelf on the east wall. [This was the same shelf as was found items upon which the DNA typing profile of Cara ELLIS was observed] DNA recovered from portions of the clasp and band of this watch was of mixed origin, having originated from two or more individuals. The major component was identified to Jennifer FURMINGER.

The DNA typing profile of FURMINGER was found on a "saw all Milwaukee electric tool" that had been found in Site "B".

**Tiffany DREW - D.L.S. March 10<sup>th</sup>, 2000**

The established date last seen for Tiffany DREW was March 10<sup>th</sup> 2000, which was the date of a street check by a V.P.D. officer which occurred at 1610 hours. The officer made notes in her notebook of that street check.

In Site "A", a syringe [plunger and needle] containing bluish fluid was found and the DNA profile of Tiffany DREW was identified on that syringe. The R.C.M.P. lab analyzed the bluish liquid and found it to be "windshield washer fluid". The lab also consulted as to the possible effect on a human, should one be injected with windshield washer fluid.

Additional information about syringes and bluish fluid: