

NO: P001

DATE: **February 16<sup>th</sup>, 2015**

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## **POLICE COMMITTEE**

TO: **Mayor & Council (Police Committee)**

DATE: **February 4<sup>th</sup>, 2015**

FROM: **Bill Fordy, Chief Superintendent  
Officer in Charge, Surrey RCMP**

FILE:

SUBJECT: **Community Safety Patrols Update – Commissionaires Contract**

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## **RECOMMENDATION**

The Surrey RCMP recommends that:

- a) The Police Committee receive this report as information; and discontinue the use of the Commissionaires in performing the community safety patrol function (i.e. do not renew contract beyond pilot period).

## **INTENT**

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the “Community Safety Patrol” pilot project that was initiated by the City in April 2014 to inform future resourcing and deployment decisions. An analysis of the project was conducted in order to ascertain whether the objectives were being met with respect to enhanced policing and public safety.

## **BACKGROUND**

In February 2008, RCMP “E” Division, Lower Mainland District initiated a pilot project for Community Safety Officers (CSO). Surrey was one of the Detachments that participated in the program and 9 CSO’s were recruited. The objective of the CSO program was to contribute to community safety through visible, accessible policing and crime prevention services. Their primary purpose was to provide increased police visibility and operational support, while assisting in the delivery of crime prevention and public reassurance programs. The CSO program was a key initiative under the Surrey Crime Reduction Strategy and represented the first step towards a tiered policing model in Surrey.

In January 2013, the CSO pilot Project was discontinued by the RCMP and it was determined that CSOs would transition into alternate roles. By the end of 2013 the transition options were presented to existing CSO members. Options included converting to regular RCMP members, Community Constables (uniformed and armed) or Community Program Officers (non-uniform and unarmed).

In April 2014, the Police Committee supported a transition to the Community Constable model in Surrey to allow for expanded authority (power to arrest and carry a firearm), while maintaining a focus on community and crime prevention programs. The Police Committee also authorized a 36 week Community Safety Patrol (CSP) pilot project. The City subsequently signed a contract with the BC Commissionaires to provide 10 uniformed CSP personnel who would conduct regular foot, vehicle and static patrols in areas of the City that have been the source of community concern.

In October 2014, the Police Committee endorsed a recommendation to increase the establishment of the Surrey RCMP from 703 police officers to 803. Once realized, the addition will afford front line officers more time to build relationships with citizens and become familiar with the unique characteristics of each community, but will also increase front line capacity to perform proactive duties on a consistent basis (including high visibility patrols and engaging with the community outside of an enforcement role).

In November 2014, as a result of tragic events in Ottawa and New Brunswick, and following up on a national RCMP directive, Senior Managers at RCMP "E" Division decided that Community Safety Officers and Auxiliary Constables should be provided with direct armed oversight when working in police uniforms. While some discretion remains at the Detachment level, a risk assessment must be conducted on a case-by-case basis to determine the relative threat and level of oversight required to ensure their safety.

The contract with the Commissionaires has been extended until February 28, 2015 to allow for a decision to be made on the future direction of the CSP program. The pilot project was evaluated to determine the impact with respect to crime reduction, as well as client satisfaction and community perception based on feedback from the community and Police Managers.

## **DISCUSSION**

The Detachment conducted an internal review of the Community Safety Patrol pilot; the results of that analysis are attached (see Appendix I). While Commissionaires demonstrated professionalism and dedication to duty throughout the pilot, the long term value in terms of enhanced policing was not evident. Despite the increased presence, there was no noticeable reduction in crime in the areas patrolled by the Commissionaires. Further there was little in the way of incident reports generated or intelligence gathered during the pilot period.

Informal comments/feedback from the community, local businesses and other clientele with which Commissionaires interacted (including offenders) is generally positive. The high visibility nature of the patrols, as well as the dress and deportment of the patrollers themselves, was well received. However, the impact of reassurance patrols and community interaction by Commissionaires on public perception of safety is difficult to quantify without a pre- and post-survey.

A specific area of concern centred on the limited power/authority of the Commissionaires, and community expectations that they could provide a more robust first response (i.e., be able to address a situation directly rather than just observe and report). Business stakeholders also expressed a desire for CSP personnel to take on more of a property security role.

From an RCMP perspective, there is also an inherent risk and liability issue with the current contract arrangement whereby CSP personnel are 'directed' by District Commanders. There is also concern that CSP personnel could be confronted with situations for which they are not properly trained or equipped to handle. These issues and concerns were only magnified by recent attacks targeting uniformed law enforcement and military personnel in Canada and abroad.

There is also an opportunity cost (lost) to Commissionaires performing the patrol and community 'point of contact' functions. Aside from the fact that some situations can be dealt with more effectively with enforcement in the first instance, having a regular member performing foot patrols and other reassurance policing activities (i.e., engaging and interacting with the public directly, building relationships and shared understanding of local issues) provides firsthand knowledge and familiarity required for effective file follow up and working collaboratively with the community stakeholders on other problem oriented policing efforts.

## **SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS**

Community safety patrols support the overall objectives of the City's Sustainability Charter, and more specifically, creating a safe and secure environment for the City's residents, businesses and visitors. In particular, the project supports the Charter's goal to "Create a City that is, and is perceived as being safe and secure".

## **OTHER STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS**

Surrey RCMP led community safety patrols and reassurance policing efforts supports three strategic priority areas within the Surrey RCMP 2013-2017 Strategic Framework, and the following objectives in particular:

- a) Community Safety & Crime Reduction – to work with the community to address special events, signal crimes and nuisance behavior that impact perceptions of safety and quality of life.
- b) Community Engagement – to increase public involvement and positive interaction with police and police programs; to improve overall community satisfaction with Surrey RCMP engagement efforts.

## **CONCLUSION**

The Community Safety Patrol project utilizing BC Commissionaires is approaching the end of the pilot contract period. The CSP project provided the City an opportunity to pilot a new approach within the context of a broader high visibility patrol response strategy. While the Commissionaires provided a professional service and additional patrol presence to the community, a number of operational issues and risks have been identified.

With the recent approval of a significant increase to the Surrey RCMP establishment providing enhanced capacity with respect to resource levels and deployment, coupled with recent safety and liability concerns, it is recommended that the reassurance policing function (Community Safety Patrol ) be discontinued and that responsibility fall to members of the RCMP.

Should the City choose to continue or expand the contract with BC Commissionaires, the RCMP recommends amending the contract accordingly to reflect direct oversight and direction (full care and control) by the City Manager's Office, By-Law Enforcement, or the Crime Reduction Strategy Managers office.

Policing is changing, and as the environment continues to become more complex, the RCMP and its community clients must respond with new, effective policing and enforcement options. The detachment remains committed to operational efficiencies and effectiveness, and will continue to work with the City to explore opportunities to enhance police service delivery and collaborative crime reduction efforts.



W.C. (Bill) Fordy, Chief Superintendent  
Officer in Charge, Surrey Detachment

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Attachments: Appendix I – Community Safety Patrol Assessment Report

# Analytical Report - Community Safety Patrol

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## Follow Up Report

This report is a follow up to the initial analytical report submitted in October 2014. That report covered the time period from the start of the Community Safety Patrol Initiative (CSP) in April 2014 to the end of October 2014. This follow up report covers the time period from November 2014 to early January 2015.

## Analysis

The analysis used in this follow up report follows the same guidelines as the initial report and the parameters used are detailed below.

The following information is an analysis of the Community Safety Patrol (BC Commissioners) using data and information from PRIME and the daily log reports submitted by the Community Safety Patrol (CSP). Specifically this report was generated in response to 3 specific requests for information:

1. Weekly stats noting: contacts, street interaction and business contacts (2014-11-03 to present)
2. Description and overview of files generated by CSP
3. Overview of comments/feedback about the CSP from community

### 1. **Weekly Stats – Contacts Generated by CSP**

The following summary has been generated from reading the daily logs of the CSP. The CSP operates 7 days a week with a 10 hour shift each day (1400hrs to 2400hrs).

#### Definitions

Contacts:	CSP approached by public with questions/requests
Street Interaction:	CSP observe and interact with persons involved with disorder issues
Business Contacts:	Proactive contact by CSP or a call from businesses directly to CSP

As directed by the Newton District RCMP, the CSP was required to provide weekly summaries based on the above definitions of contacts, street interactions and business contacts. Those weekly summaries are tabulated in the following chart for reference.

## Weekly Contacts - CSP

Week Ending	Contacts	Street Interaction	Business Contacts	Weekly Totals	
14-11-09	12	1	33		46
14-11-16	36	8	24		68
14-11-23	10	1	11		22
14-11-30	21	5	25		51
14-12-07	6	1	37		44
14-12-14	24	7	45		76
14-12-21	81	18	79		178
14-12-28	69	11	81		161
15-01-04	104	7	96		207
15-01-11	69	20	128		217
<b>Totals</b>	<b>432</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>559</b>	<b>Overall Total</b>	<b>1070</b>

## 2. Description and Overview of PRIME Files Generated by CSP

- A total of 9 PRIME files were generated by CSP as the COM/WIT (2014-11-01 to 2015-01-15)
- Of those 10 total files 3 were for Intoxicated persons in public (SIP)

The File Breakdown was as follows:

District 2	2014.12.05	14-176011	MVI (drivers arguing)
District 3	2014.11.01	14-159327	Intox Person
	2014.11.26	14-171773	Youth Disturbance
	2014.12.19	14-183383	Disturbance
	2015.01.02	15-938	Intox Person
	2015.01.03	15-1329	Disturbance
	2015.01.11	15-5253	Disturbance
	2015.01.11	15-5217	Found Wallet
District 4	2014.11.01	14-159489	Intox Person

### **3. Overview of Comments/Feedback from the Community**

The overall feedback received at the Surrey RCMP Newton District Office regarding the CSP has been through community meetings, NIST meetings and interaction with area businesses. The standard of feedback remains the same as detailed in the initial analytical report submitted in October 2014.

General Summary of ongoing feedback:

- public welcome high visibility presence
- Businesses report positive interactions with CSP
- Civic facilities staff appreciates presence of CSP

There have also been no allegations of aggressive or improper conduct by CSP.

### **4. Overall Effectiveness**

The CSP has fully met the base requirements of a consistent visual presence and has been following the "Observe and Report" guidelines of the initiative. While this effort has been viewed as a positive improvement by local businesses and the public, there remains a high incidence of crime in the area. There also remains occasional confusion by the public as to the ability of CSP to intervene in any incidents. Businesses also have taken to calling CSP from police matters without call the RCMP non-emergency line.

#### **Observe & Report vs Observe & React**

The Newton Town Centre remains a crime hot spot for several crime types in a concentrated area. The street disorder issues are not being significantly displaced by the CSP and the Observe & Report capacity they provide. Given the financial expenditure for the CSP program this type of measure to address issue in the town center may not be cost effective.

The ability to react in a timely manner is required to deter the chronic offenders and issues in the Newton Town Centre. This reaction must include the powers and training afforded regular members of the RCMP. Further crime analysis may be required to determine the best course of action however the assertion that a greater presence of regular members is a baseline recommendation to address the current conditions in the Newton Town Centre.