



NATIONAL
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FEDERATION

FÉDÉRATION
DE LA POLICE
NATIONALETM

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RCMP FACING THE FUTURE: EVOLUTION, INTEGRATION, READINESS

**A VISION TO EVOLVE AND STRENGTHEN
A PROVEN POLICING MODEL**



PREAMBLE

The Royal Canadian Mounted Police is an internationally recognized Canadian institution. 15 years ago, six senators led by Senator Tommy Banks wrote *Toward A Red Serge Revival*, a position paper to help the RCMP to maintain and evolve its “vital role at the heart of Canadian policing.” They conducted their work to be transparent about the challenges facing the RCMP and keep the government and leadership accountable for the work required to achieve change.

Today, the RCMP is facing increasingly complex challenges, though this paper will show that the issues identified by the senators in 2010 have largely remained as constant barriers. When combined with the need to continuously address reconciliation with First Nations, meet increased demands for federal policing to fight global crime, and the changing nature of frontline policing the RCMP requires the government’s full support to maintain and evolve its position as the cornerstone Canadian institution for public safety.

On behalf of the membership of the RCMP, the National Police Federation would like to recognize the commitments made by governments, including recently by Prime Minister Carney, to support the RCMP at a critical point in Canada’s history when our public safety and national security are being threatened. The NPF proposes a vision in this paper to maximize those commitments and continue to work in partnership to make specific changes to meet today’s threats.



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Fifteen years after *Toward a Red Serge Revival* the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) continues to serve as Canada's national police service and provides essential policing services across federal, provincial, territorial, and municipal jurisdictions.

While the Red Serge Report examined four key areas, this paper focuses on three: funding model modernization, recruitment and training reform, and procurement changes. There are several areas from the Senators' report that are not examined in detail. The Senators looked at the lack of independent oversight, as well as the need for the RCMP to better reflect the face of Canada.

The NPF strongly agrees with the Senators' position that truly independent oversight is needed – beyond what was recently established through Bill C-20. The NPF also agrees that the RCMP should better reflect Canada and has worked with a particular focus on Indigenous policing to provide government insight around Indigenous recruitment, Indigenous RCMP Members, and policing Indigenous communities to improve representation, build trust, and advance reconciliation.

The RCMP plays a critical role in upholding public safety, enforcing laws, and protecting national interests in a world of constantly evolving threats. Despite these evolving threats, the RCMP faces regular and ongoing operational pressures due to chronic underfunding, bureaucratic bottlenecks, and a lack of consistent political will. This report presents focused, realistic recommendations to address these issues, recommendations that can be implemented efficiently

and cost-effectively, without requiring costly structural overhauls or a dismantling of the RCMP's integrated model.

The RCMP Model Is Not the Problem

For nearly two decades, multiple independent reports have offered the federal government clear, consistent guidance on how to improve RCMP operations, particularly in recruitment, training, equipment procurement, and resourcing. Yet time and again, these recommendations have been met with inaction or insufficient follow-through. As a result, longstanding issues persisted and were allowed to worsen. The lack of consistent, predictable investment and ongoing modernization has hindered the RCMP's growth, and reputation. Prime Minister Carney's new government has an opportunity to disrupt this historical pattern, and reinforce the RCMP to deliver, where past governments have failed.

Some continue to question whether the RCMP model itself should be altered and if a more fragmented United States (U.S.)-style system would offer better outcomes. This report provides strong evidence against that path. The RCMP's integrated pan-Canadian policing model remains one of its greatest strengths, due to its ability to leverage coordination, consistency, and efficiency across all jurisdictions. Fragmenting Canada's national policing capacity would create deep service gaps, duplication, and costly public safety and economic inefficiencies with no evidence of better results.

Key Findings and Recommendations

- **Fund Quality Policing:** Chronic underfunding could be alleviated by increased resources coupled with targeted reform such as flexible resource allocation within jurisdictions, improved cost recovery mechanisms, streamlined contract management and fenced funding for federal policing.
- **Recruitment & Training:** The RCMP's recruitment pipeline remains too slow and sequential, losing quality applicants to other police services and does not meet modern policing demands. It must modernize its process and adopt a more agile Canadian Armed Forces (CAF)-style approach, add differentiated training streams to meet modern policing demands and the cadet training allowance must be increased to remain competitive.
- **Equipment Procurement:** The federal procurement process is too slow and unresponsive to the urgent needs of modern policing and drains valuable government resources. Delays in rolling out life-saving equipment, including service pistols, body armour, and body-worn cameras threaten both officer safety and public trust.

A Call for Federal Commitment to the RCMP

It's time for the Government of Canada (GoC) to start investing in solutions and learn from the long history of deferred decisions, inaction, or insufficient follow through. The RCMP model is the most effective and efficient, but only if it's resourced, modernized, and supported. The federal government has a clear opportunity to commit to the RCMP and its future by:

- Confirming its commitment to contract policing beyond 2032;
- Deliver on their commitment to increase RCMP personnel;
- Increasing the cadet training allowance to improve recruitment;

- Bolstering federal policing resources and capabilities;
- Modernizing recruitment, training, and equipment delivery; and,
- Supporting a stronger, more efficient RCMP: one that is ready to meet the challenges of today and tomorrow.

Targeted reforms and smart investments can deliver the results Canadians need and deserve for public safety.



INTRODUCTION

The RCMP's Place at the Heart and Image of Canada

Few institutions are as deeply woven into the fabric of Canadian identity as the RCMP. As the foundation of public safety in Canada, the RCMP is the only police service in Canada capable of delivering fully integrated, coordinated policing across every level - federal, provincial, territorial, municipal, and even international. Its three operational arms, Contract Policing, Federal Policing, and Specialized Policing Services, work together to secure our borders, protect communities, and defend national security.

This integrated model of policing is distinctly Canadian - unified, flexible, cost-effective, and purpose-built for a country with vast geography and complex policing needs. The RCMP's contract policing services serves across 75% of Canada's geography, including remote and rural areas that might otherwise lack robust policing resources.

"The RCMP will not evolve into the national police service that Canadians want and deserve unless the Government of Canada decides to invest serious money in strengthening its capacity."

- Toward a Red Serge Revival, 2010

Despite its essential role, the RCMP has not received the consistent investment needed to keep pace with growing and evolving demands. Each new government brings shifting political priorities, which the RCMP is expected to absorb and accomplish. This often results in the reallocation of limited resources away from core

or long-term policing functions to meet short-term political imperatives. This is not how policing should work. Public safety is not a partisan issue, and it cannot be sustainably delivered when resourcing is reactive, inconsistent, or politicized.

Now is the time for real leadership from Prime Minister Carney and his Cabinet.

The new federal government must focus on smart investment, structural efficiencies, and modernization over simplistic solutions that ignore the realities of policing in our country.

The Strengths of the Current Made in Canada Model

➤ Seamless Information Sharing

The RCMP coordinates investigations across municipal, provincial, federal, and international lines, enabling rapid responses to threats like organized crime, terrorism, and human trafficking. For example, in 2024 the RCMP worked with Ontario police agencies to disrupt a planned terrorism attack involving a Toronto father-son duo.

➤ Efficient and Affordable

Through cost-sharing with the federal government, provinces and municipalities receive high-quality police services at a reduced cost. Many rural and remote communities rely on the RCMP, where independent police services would be financially unsustainable.

➤ National Surge Capacity

The RCMP's command structure allows for swift deployment during crises like natural disasters, protests, or major investigations, regardless of jurisdiction. During the 2022 convoy protest in Ottawa and recent wildfire seasons, the RCMP mobilized officers nationally to restore order and support local agencies.

➤ Specialized Capabilities

The RCMP maintains highly specialized policing units that many smaller services can't sustain alone. These teams serve across jurisdictions, ensuring all Canadians have equitable access to advanced public safety tools. The RCMP leads nearly all major integrated police units provincially and many which are national, including:

- **Combined Forces Special Enforcement Units** combating organized crime.
- **Emergency Response Teams** specializing in tactical response and hostage rescue.
- **Integrated Border Enforcement Teams** managing cross-border crime enforcement.
- **National Security Teams** focusing on counterterrorism and major crime disruption.
- **Integrated Child Exploitation and Human Trafficking Units** protecting vulnerable individuals.
- **Serious International Investigations and War Crimes Units** pursuing criminal accountability abroad.

These capabilities are not only essential to public safety, but they are also efficient. Shared infrastructure and cross-jurisdictional service delivery allow for broader coverage and smarter use of taxpayer dollars.

DECADES OF RECOMMENDATIONS, LIMITED GOVERNMENT ACTION

For almost two decades, expert panels, commissions, task forces, and audits have repeatedly recommended reforms to improve RCMP governance, training, recruitment, resources, and contract and federal policing. While many of these reports echo similar findings, successive governments have failed to act decisively or sustain investments over time – this

needs to change for the RCMP to fulfill its public safety mandate

Too often, issues are acknowledged briefly, then underfunded or neglected again, leaving the RCMP caught in a cycle of short-term fixes and long-term underperformance.

2010

Senate Report: Toward a Red Serge Revival ⁱ

- Add 5,000 RCMP officers to meet baseline demands.
- Expand recruitment; improve work-life balance.
- Reform leadership and management culture to drive effective policing.
- Independent oversight to bring the RCMP in line with its peer policing agencies.

2014

House of Commons Report: Economics of Policing ⁱⁱ

- Implement tiered policing, better use of special constables.
- Improve national data-sharing systems.
- Address rising mental health and addiction-related calls; officers to focus on core policing.

2015

Independent Review: Moncton Shooting ⁱⁱⁱ

- Modernize frontline equipment.
- Improve procurement and deployment processes.

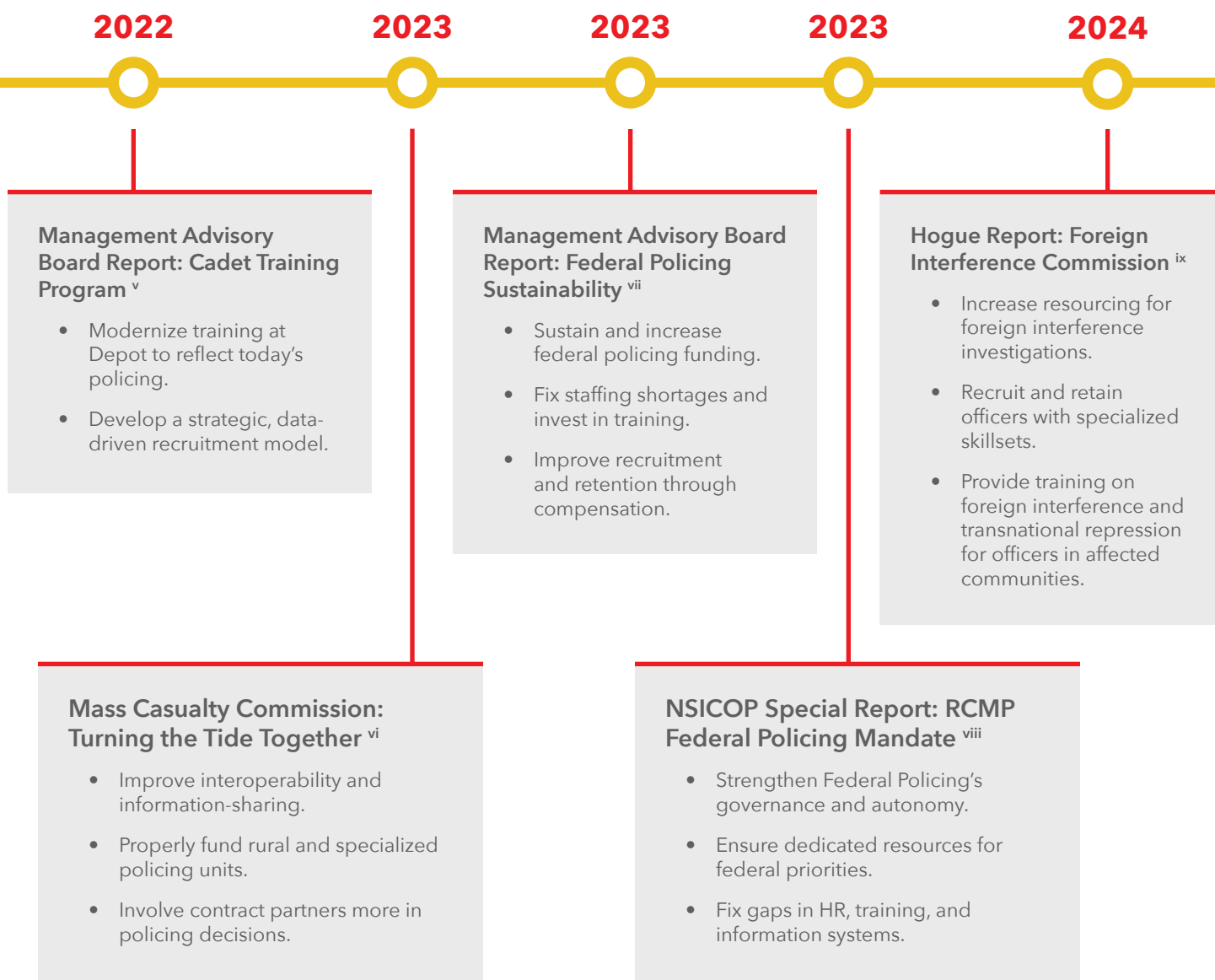
2019

Auditor General Report: Equipping RCMP Officers ^{iv}

- Ensure detachments have adequate gear and resources.
- Address equipment delays that affect officer safety.

From 2010's *Toward a Red Serge Revival* to 2023's Federal Policing Sustainability Report, the message has been clear: the RCMP model is worth strengthening but it needs stable funding, modern tools, and strategic reforms.

This timeline reveals two decades of missed opportunities. The problem isn't a lack of insight; it's a lack of political and financial will. As a result, the same recommendations continue to resurface, still unaddressed.



AREAS OF FOCUS

1. Funding Quality Policing

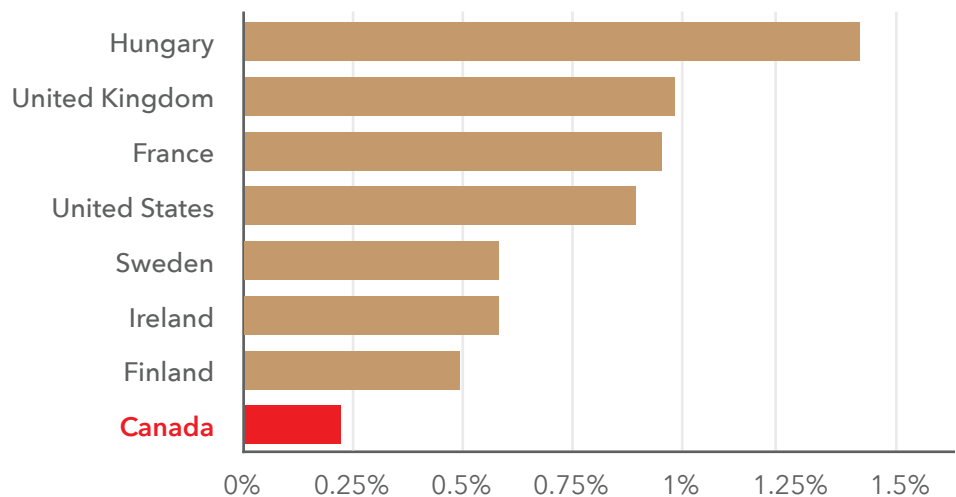
Despite effectively carrying the primary responsibility for public safety across Canada, the RCMP has been chronically underfunded for decades.

Today, Canada allocates just 0.2% of its Gross Domestic Product (GDP), approximately \$6 billion annually, to support the RCMP. This includes funding for all RCMP services under federal, provincial, municipal, and Indigenous policing agreements. After recovering cost-sharing payments from contracting jurisdictions (about \$1.8 billion in 2022-23), the federal government's net investment is approximately \$4.2 billion.


For context, in 2017, the United States spent nearly 1% of GDP on federal policing; Finland, one of the lowest in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), spent 0.5%. To simply match that lower threshold (Finland), Canada would need to increase its RCMP funding to \$14 billion annually, or \$372 per capita, compared to today's \$149.^x While we do not propose a sudden leap in spending, this gap underscores

the broader issue: Canada's policing system is under-supported and under-resourced relative to its complexity and risk.

Spending on police as a percentage of GDP, 2017



Moreover, the RCMP's complex mandate is frequently reshaped by shifting government priorities without corresponding increases in stable funding. As seen in the aftermath of the 2014 Parliament Hill attack, funding is often reactionary and reallocated from other critical but under-resourced programs. This



"robbing-Peter-to-pay-Paul" approach undermines long-term planning and creates avoidable vulnerabilities across policing operations.

Discussions surrounding the future of the RCMP often center on the idea to reduce or redefine its responsibilities. However, this perspective ignores the core issue. The RCMP does not require a narrower mandate, it requires enhanced human and financial resources to fulfill its existing responsibilities effectively and to take on critical national security tasks that are presently underserved.

"We would contend that it isn't fewer responsibilities that the RCMP requires to satisfy the needs of Canadians. It is more money to fulfill its current responsibilities properly. And it is more money to take on some jobs critical to Canada's national security fabric that are currently being neglected."

- Toward a Red Serge Revival, 2010

Targeted, sustained investment, backed by clear metrics and modern procurement, can transform the RCMP's capabilities and effectiveness. This is not about blindly pouring more money into the system, it is about making strategic investments that improve outcomes, protect national interests, and avoid the far higher cost of failure or structural overhaul. Done right, reforming how we fund the RCMP has multiple upsides: safe, resilient communities supported by stable

policing can improve outcomes for government efficiency and public safety.

2. Contract Policing

The RCMP's contract policing model is the foundation of public safety in Canada. It provides scalable policing to eight provinces, three territories, and under direct contract with 150 municipalities. The RCMP is also the police service for approximately 550 Indigenous communities: 450 First Nations, 40 Inuit and 58 Métis communities.^{xi} Backed by a cost-sharing model where provinces and municipalities cover 70-90% of costs, it remains the most affordable and operationally integrated option for most jurisdictions.

Contract policing offers three key benefits:

- 1 Affordability and Predictability:** The cost-sharing framework ensures professional policing at a fraction of the cost of building stand-alone services.
- 2 Consistency and Standards:** Communities receive service that adheres to nationally vetted, professional policing standards, regardless of size or location.
- 3 Integrated Public Safety:** The RCMP's structure allows rapid, coordinated responses to local and national threats, with seamless information flow across jurisdictions.

This model brings unparalleled strategic advantages that are currently hindered by fixable structural challenges identified by partners across the country for the federal government and RCMP leadership.^{xii}

In 2023, the federal government conducted national consultations with contract partners on the future of RCMP policing beyond 2032. The feedback was clear: the RCMP is a trusted and valued policing partner.

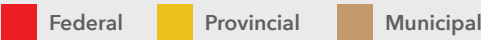
While contract partners have expressed confidence in the model, they have also raised valid concerns: a lack of cost-recovery when RCMP services are redirected, service impacts from regional redeployments, a need for more flexible resource models, and greater local influence and control over design and delivery of policing services. These are addressable opportunities. Many jurisdictions expressed a commitment to ongoing collaboration with both the federal

government and the RCMP to address emerging challenges and explore opportunities for continuous improvement.

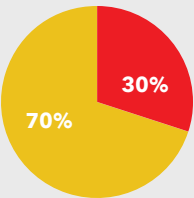
The existing RCMP contract policing model presents a more pragmatic and fiscally responsible foundation for achieving efficiencies in both cost and operational effectiveness, compared to the significant complexities and expenditures associated with departing from the model entirely. Retaining and reforming the current framework allows jurisdictions to leverage established infrastructure, standardized training, centralized administrative functions, and economies of scale. These advantages support governments in implementing targeted improvements without the disruption and substantial capital investment required to build a new system from the ground up.

Modernizing within the current framework provides a stable, efficient path forward for strengthening public safety. Many recommendations for improvement have been made over the years and largely ignored. By finally addressing these longstanding issues and continuing to identify and implement efficiencies, the RCMP model can be further strengthened to meet the evolving needs of communities across Canada.

Cost Sharing



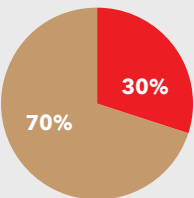
Provincial Police Service Agreements



Unincorporated Areas and Municipalities Under 5,000

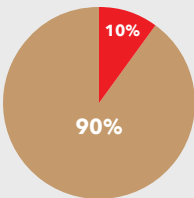
As per the PPSA the provincial government pays 70% of the cost-base and the federal government pays the remaining 30%.

Municipal Police Service Agreements



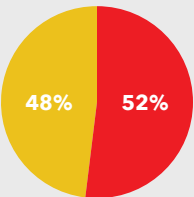
Municipalities Between 5,000-14,999

The terms of the MPSA require that municipalities between 5,000 and 14,999 population pay 70% of the RCMP cost-base, while municipalities with 15,000 population and over pay 90%. The remaining costs are subsidized by the federal government. Municipalities who have their own police service are responsible for 100% of policing costs.



Municipalities 15,000 and Over

First Nations and Indigenous Policing



Indigenous CTA Communities

Through the First Nations and Indigenous Policing Program (FNIPP), the federal government and the province provide funding to support policing services that are professional, dedicated and responsive to the Indigenous communities they serve. Under these Community Tripartite Agreements (CTA), signed by the Indigenous Chief/s and the provincial and federal government, the funding for the FNIPP is 52% federal and 48% provincial.



To address these concerns and past recommendations, the NPF recommends:

Recommendation 1: Implement flexible resource allocation strategies

Many jurisdictions are exploring a “right mix” of officers to manage rising costs. The RCMP Special Constable (S/Cst.) Program, which offers a cost-effective alternative to Regular Members (RMs), is an underutilized resource that can meet this demand. S/Csts are sworn RCMP Members with law enforcement authority, ideal for tasks such as managing persons in custody, enforcing municipal Bylaws, or supporting special events: freeing Regular Members for core policing. Expanding the S/Cst Program gives contract partners a scalable, cost-effective tool that improves outcomes without duplicating services.

The federal government should prioritize investment in the S/Cst Program as part of RCMP deployment modernization to meet evolving community needs and relieve frontline pressures.

Recommendation 2: Establish a cost-recovery mechanism for specialized services

While contract partners consistently express satisfaction with the RCMP’s community-based service delivery and operational effectiveness, they have also

identified persistent funding gaps caused by cross-jurisdictional deployments. Provinces have noted that specialized RCMP services, such as Provincial Policing teams, are often deployed to assist non-RCMP jurisdictions (municipal police agencies); yet there is no formal mechanism to recover these costs under existing Provincial Police Service Agreements (PPSAs). Similarly, municipalities under Municipal Police Service Agreements (MPSAs) have raised concerns that their officers are routinely redeployed to support neighbouring rural areas without compensation or mechanisms to backfill these service gaps.

This lack of cost-recovery undermines fiscal sustainability and places unintended financial and operational strain on contract jurisdictions. Addressing this issue requires updates to the PPSA and MPSA frameworks to include provisions that allow for equitable cost-recovery when RCMP services are extended beyond their contracted scope.

The GoC should work collaboratively with provinces, territories, and municipalities to develop and implement transparent, fair cost-recovery mechanisms. Doing so would reinforce accountability, ensure contract jurisdictions are not subsidizing services elsewhere, and support long-term viability of the RCMP’s contract policing model.

Recommendation 3: Modernizing deployment models

To improve service delivery and sustainability in northern and remote regions, Canada must modernize RCMP deployment models. While permanent RCMP detachments remain essential in many areas, they can add to recruitment and retention challenges and long-term strain on Members and their families, especially in isolated postings where extended hours and mandatory overtime are common.

Flexible deployment models, such as fly-in/fly-out or drive-in/drive-out rotations, offer a sustainable alternative in select communities. These models allow Members to serve the same community consistently while maintaining a stable home base in a larger urban center, where their spouses and children can pursue careers and education. This can reduce stress, improve work-life balance, and support longer-term community engagement.

Piloting and expanding these models, where appropriate, can improve Member well-being, support Member recruitment and retention, and deliver consistent, high-quality policing across remote regions.

Recommendation 4: Streamline contract management by directly engaging the RCMP

Currently, all contract policing agreements, over 150 Municipal, Provincial, and Indigenous contracts, are held between contracting partners and the GoC, rather than directly with the RCMP. This creates an unnecessary layer of bureaucracy, where concerns raised by the contracting partner must unnecessarily pass through federal bureaucrats before reaching the RCMP and then return through the same channel. This multi-step communication loop is time-consuming, inefficient, and costly.

Reforming this model so that contracts are held directly with the RCMP would streamline administration, improve responsiveness, and eliminate redundant layers of communication and oversight. It would also reduce costs by limiting duplication of effort between the RCMP and GoC officials, who are in many cases, both performing contract management duties. Allowing the RCMP to directly manage its contracts with partners would enhance accountability, strengthen relationships, and ensure local issues are addressed more quickly and effectively. This change supports more agile and efficient service delivery and is consistent with longstanding calls for modernization, including references made in previous Public Safety Minister mandate letters.





3. Federal Policing

Federal policing is the backbone of Canada's national security, but its funding is routinely diminished or shifted to new and emerging government priorities. The Federal Policing Program within the RCMP is uniquely strengthened by the integrated nature of its policing model, which combines federal responsibilities with contract policing at the municipal, provincial, and territorial levels. This structure facilitates seamless information sharing, coordinated operations, and consistent enforcement standards across jurisdictions. The ability to draw on local intelligence, frontline insights, and established community relationships enhances the RCMP's capacity to address complex federal priorities such as organized crime, terrorism, and cybercrime. This integrated approach is a key factor in the effectiveness and responsiveness of the RCMP's federal policing mandate. It is a model that works, and one that must be strengthened.

The RCMP model is efficient and effective, but the lack of consistent and fenced funding means federal policing dollars are not protected and subject to erosion during times of fiscal restraint, weakening Canada's federal capacity at a time when the stakes have never been

"When provincial detachments run short of people, the replacements are often officers who are stolen away from their responsibilities at the federal level."

- Toward a Red Serge Revival, 2010

higher. Chronic underfunding has turned what should be a strategic and proactive asset into a reactive one. Instead of stable funding, the government has relied on one-time announcements, like the 2024 \$1.3 billion border package which included \$667.5 million to the RCMP;^{xiii} that fails to address the RCMP's long-term infrastructure and personnel needs.

Without improvements, Canada risks weakening its most strategic law enforcement tool.

Canada currently spends about \$28 per capita on federal policing, compared to \$121 in the U.S., (comparable U.S. departments to RCMP federal policing mandate). To match either U.S. spending or OECD policing-to-GDP benchmarks, Canada would need to more than double its investment. Today roughly 17% of the RCMP budget is allocated to federal policing, if we increased spending from 0.2% of GDP to 0.5%, this would mean increasing the RCMP federal policing budget from \$1.1 billion to at least \$2.5 billion.

Adequate, predictable funding would not only eliminate the need for emergency infusions, but it would also allow for long-term planning, technological innovation, and the specialized training required to meet today's challenges. By fencing federal policing funds and revitalizing cost-effective tools like the Special Constable Program, the federal government can strengthen national security, protect taxpayer dollars, and improve long-term efficiency.

To address these concerns and past recommendations, the NPF recommends:

Recommendation 5: Establish dedicated, fenced funding for federal policing and end the backstopping of contract policing

A comprehensive overhaul of the RCMP's funding model across its core mandates, Federal Policing, Contract Policing, and Specialized Policing Services, is essential to address persistent funding gaps and to support a more sustainable, strategic approach to resource allocation. The current funding structure does not fully account for the distinct financial demands of each mandate, resulting in resource pressures and operational trade-offs.

Critically, federal policing Members must no longer be used to backstop contract policing vacancies. This practice undermines national capacity and places federal operations in a reactive posture. Federal assets should be used solely for federal mandates. If federal Members are redeployed for non-federal purposes, those services must be cost-recovered from contract partners.

Federal policing needs do not stop when economies are challenged. In fact, the demands on federal policing increase in times of economic crisis. The RCMP's federal policing budget must be protected or fenced, from unilateral whole-of-government spending restrictions or cutbacks. When governments apply spending freezes or efficiency measures across all government agencies, the RCMP's federal policing arm is directly impacted and strained by an inability to provide training, fill positions, investigate freely, and operate seamlessly.

Recommendation 6: Commit to adequately fund and expand the Special Constable Program to attract specialized federal policing talent

The RCMP has two peace officer categories: the Regular Member and the Special Constable. The RM category is typically a fully operational police officer occupying roles in uniform and plainclothes operations such as in contract policing or national security investigations. The S/Cst. category is typically a law enforcement support role, such as a pilot, prisoner transport, or exhibit custodian, as examples. S/Csts can be armed or unarmed, but all carry the same authorities as RMs.

Expanding and evolving the S/Cst. Program within the RCMP offers a dual benefit of enhancing operational capacity while serving as a cost-saving measure. By assigning appropriately trained S/Csts to roles that do not require the full scope of RCMP RM authorities or compensation levels, the organization can optimize workforce deployment and reduce overall personnel costs. As an example, the use of S/Csts instead of Civilian Criminal Investigators within Financial and Cybercrime units would be beneficial to the RCMP as it would provide expanded capacity within the unit, increased ability to attract talent, and hold the unit to a higher point of accountability.

Specialized positions require incredibly talented individuals that have obtained their skillset in the private sector. In specific cases, requiring prospective Members to go through regular training and spend two years in General Duty is unrealistic as the skills they have acquired in the private sector becomes obsolete. A reformed training model, to ensure individuals maintain their specialized skills, must accompany the expansion of S/Cst. Program to bolster federal policing needs

This strategic use of resources not only improves service delivery and response capacity but also minimizes reliance on higher cost staffing models, resulting in more efficient and fiscally responsible policing operations.



4. Recruitment and Training

Canada's growing population and increasingly complex public safety landscape demand a better-resourced and more adaptive RCMP. Yet, RCMP RM staffing has remained virtually stagnant over the past fifteen years, about 19,500 today compared to 18,989 in 2009. Meanwhile, the operational demands on the RCMP have increased exponentially.

This isn't a new problem, and the solutions are not new either. In 2010, the Red Serge Revival Report recommended the addition of 5,000 Regular Members to meet operational needs. This recommendation remains largely unaddressed fifteen years later. Prime Minister Carney has made an early commitment to add 1,000 new officers which is a welcome and necessary investment.

The impact of inaction is clear. Staffing shortages are leaving fewer officers to do more work, contributing to burnout, reduced time off, poor work-life balance, and increased rates of leave, and attrition. The result is a weakened ability to deliver effective public safety services in communities across Canada.

As the RCMP continues to adapt to complex public safety challenges, investing in a more flexible and cost-effective training model is both a strategic and fiscally responsible step forward. The good news is that many of these problems can be addressed through smart, simple changes that require minimal overhauls

but deliver maximum return. These efficiencies can be quickly implemented to address long-standing gaps, reduce costs, and increase operational capacity for the RCMP, the federal government, and the communities the RCMP serves.

To address these concerns and past recommendations, the NPF recommends:

Recommendation 7: Expanding Depot training capacity from 40 to at least 55 troops per year

Expanding Depot's annual training capacity, from 40 to 55 troops, would allow for the graduation of an additional 480 officers annually. Currently, other non-RCMP law enforcement organizations also train at Depot. By reducing or moving this training to another facility, the RCMP has the space to increase its own much-needed capacity to fulfill its mandates. This is a direct and cost-effective way to reduce any RCMP staffing strains.

With capacity of 40 troops, Depot can graduate 1,280 cadets annually, but annual attrition and vacancies create shortfalls each year. Since 2021, with competitive pay and other RCMP modernization, there has been no shortage of applicants to join the RCMP; over 20,500 in fiscal year 2024/25. This needs to be capitalized on by expanding capacity.

Recommendation 8: Streamline and modernize the RCMP application processing system

The RCMP has made progress in reducing the average application processing time to approximately nine months. However, the system remains outdated and overly bureaucratic. Many high-quality applicants apply to multiple police services at once and those with faster, more modern hiring processes are consistently securing top candidates before the RCMP can make an offer.

The current RCMP application model is linear and siloed: an application typically moves from one stage to the next, medical, security, psychological, etc., with each stage dependent on the completion of the previous. This approach is slow and inefficient, often creating bottlenecks and delaying viable applicants from entering training. In contrast, many modern police agencies and the CAF run parallel processing models, where multiple departments assess different components of an applicant simultaneously. This dramatically reduces wait times and improves candidate retention.

The RCMP must adopt a similarly streamlined approach. Moving toward a parallel processing model, supported by modern digital tools and centralized case management, would allow multiple components of a file to be assessed concurrently. This would significantly shorten timelines, reduce duplication of effort, and increase the likelihood that applicants will choose to serve with the RCMP rather than accept offers from other police services.

Recommendation 9: Align the RCMP's permanent residency requirements with those of the Canadian Armed Forces

Removing the RCMP's requirement that applicants must be a Canadian citizen or have permanent resident (PR) status (and must have lived in Canada for 3 of the past 5 years) would allow the RCMP to attract more recruits, including experienced officers from international agencies like the FBI, Australia, and the UK.

In 2022, the CAF adjusted its recruiting system rules, allowing it to be open to applicants from both Canadian citizens and PRs without any residency time requirements. Following this change, approximately 21,000 permanent residents applied to join the Canadian military.^{xiv} The RCMP would benefit greatly from a similar spike in candidates and should immediately adopt a similar policy change.

Recommendation 10: Increase the RCMP cadet training allowance to ~\$1,200/week

To attract and retain the best talent, the RCMP must ensure its compensation model is competitive from day one, especially during cadet training. Currently, RCMP cadets at Depot receive an allowance of just \$525 per week. This amount is well below minimum wage in most Canadian provinces and territories and falls far short of what many other police services offer to their recruits.

Most police services in Canada pay recruits a full salary from the first day of training. In contrast, RCMP cadets are not considered employees until they graduate, leaving them in a financially precarious position for the full 26 weeks of training. This creates a significant disincentive for many qualified applicants, particularly those who cannot afford to be without income for half a year, such as mid-career professionals, people with families, or those from under-represented communities.

Increasing the cadet training allowance to approximately \$1,200 per week would bring the RCMP closer in line with other police services and demonstrate a clear commitment to valuing recruits' time, efforts, and financial needs. It would remove a major barrier to entry, expand the applicant pool, and reduce attrition during training. This investment not only supports cadets but strengthens the long-term sustainability of the RCMP workforce by making the force more attractive to a broader, more diverse range of candidates.

Recommendation 11: Modernize the RCMP training curriculum and service delivery

The RCMP's training model has remained largely unchanged for decades, with all new recruits, regardless of background, required to complete 26-weeks of training at Depot. While this tradition has value, it no longer reflects the evolving needs of modern policing, the diverse types of policing roles within the RCMP, or the experience that many prospective applicants already bring from other law enforcement or public safety organizations.

Currently, only serving or recently inactive police officers can apply through the RCMP's 3-week Experienced Police Officer (EPO) Program, provided they meet strict criteria. However, this excludes a large pool of well-trained public safety personnel, including members of the CBSA, provincial sheriffs, conservation officers, and other law enforcement agencies, who may not meet the EPO threshold but nonetheless have relevant training and experience. Forcing these individuals to repeat a full 26-week Depot program creates a barrier to recruitment and results in missed opportunities to bring skilled, experienced candidates into the RCMP.

Modernizing the training model would allow the RCMP to introduce multiple tailored entry pathways. This includes:

- **Federal Policing Direct Entry Program:** This concept was brought forward recently, creating a program where cadets undertake a basic level of training and are then trained specifically for various federal policing positions, allowing them to enter federal policing faster. Many agencies utilize a basic training with career stream training, like the CAF. This also helps streamline officers who may have a niche educational background in specialized roles like cybercrime, financial crime, intelligence, and get them into those positions before their education becomes outdated.
- **Alternative Entry for Non-RCMP Officers:** Development of modified training curricula for law enforcement professionals (e.g., CBSA, sheriffs) that recognizes and builds on their existing experience and skills. These programs would bridge them to RCMP standards in a shorter, focused timeframe.

By embracing a modern, needs-based training framework, the RCMP could improve recruitment, fill vacancies faster, and make better use of the broad base of talent available across Canada and from the public safety landscape, without compromising the high standards of RCMP service delivery.



5. Equipment Procurement

Policing in Canada demands adaptability, speed, and access to modern equipment to meet the growing complexity of criminal activity and threats to public safety. Yet, the GoC's current equipment procurement process is slow, rigid, and hampered by excessive red tape. This has created a persistent lag between emerging operational needs and the delivery of critical tools such as drones, helicopters, surveillance technology, and basic frontline equipment. The inability to quickly equip officers, especially with life-saving gear, compromises both public and officer safety. These issues are not new and calls to modernize procurement systems date back many years. Efficiency gains can be achieved without overhauling the entire system, simply by making key process improvements that enable faster decision-making and eliminate bottlenecks.

The RCMP has a legal obligation to equip its Members with the tools necessary to perform their duties safely and effectively, as outlined in the Canada Labour Code and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Act. However, slow and inconsistent procurement processes continue to delay the delivery of critical equipment to frontline officers, undermining that obligation.

Recommendation 12: Streamline the procurement process of new technologies and equipment to ensure expedited availability

Recommendation 13: Include the RCMP within the procurement process exemption for equipment critical to its operational needs and the public's safety

In 2019, the Office of the Auditor General noted that the RCMP failed to properly manage acquisition projects, specifically pointing to delays in providing hard body armour and carbines due to poor life-cycle planning and inadequate oversight. This challenge persists. The RCMP has a legal obligation to provide proper equipment and adequate training to ensure the health and safety of its officers.

A stark example is the body-worn camera project. Announced in 2020, the rollout to over 13,000

frontline RCMP officers remains incomplete nearly five years later. Delays were caused by the chosen vendor's failure to meet expectations and resolve underperformance issues. Despite the urgency and national interest in transparency and accountability, the full rollout and implementation of the cameras is not complete.

Another case is the replacement of the RCMP's service pistols. The current sidearms have been in use for over 25 years, are increasingly unreliable, and have high maintenance costs. Although funding for a new pistol was approved in 2022, the procurement process remains stalled. A replacement firearm has yet to be selected, and no timeline has been communicated for rollout, putting both officers and the public at risk due to aging, malfunction-prone equipment.

The GoC has the ability to grant exemptions within the regular procurement process in cases such as national security. Understanding the critical mandate that the RCMP has, and the required equipment needed, the government ought to include the RCMP within its procurement exemptions for critical equipment to its operational needs, especially for items such as helicopters, drones, and other specialized equipment.

To avoid further delays and enhance public safety, a more agile procurement system must be adopted. This includes the ability to fast-track high-priority items, improve vendor accountability, and incorporate life-cycle planning and frontline consultation into the process. These targeted improvements can help deliver critical tools faster without requiring a wholesale overhaul of the federal procurement system.

THE NATIONAL POLICE FEDERATION'S IMPACT AND FUTURE ROLE IN THE RCMP

Over the past five years, the NPF has played a key role in modernizing the RCMP, improving its recruitment, modernizing its operation, and addressing staffing. As the certified bargaining agent since 2019 representing ~20,000 RCMP Members, the NPF has successfully tackled challenges such as the COVID-19 pandemic and enhanced the RCMP's appeal as an employer. Building on this momentum is essential to ensuring the long-term sustainability of the RCMP's model.

NPF Achievements

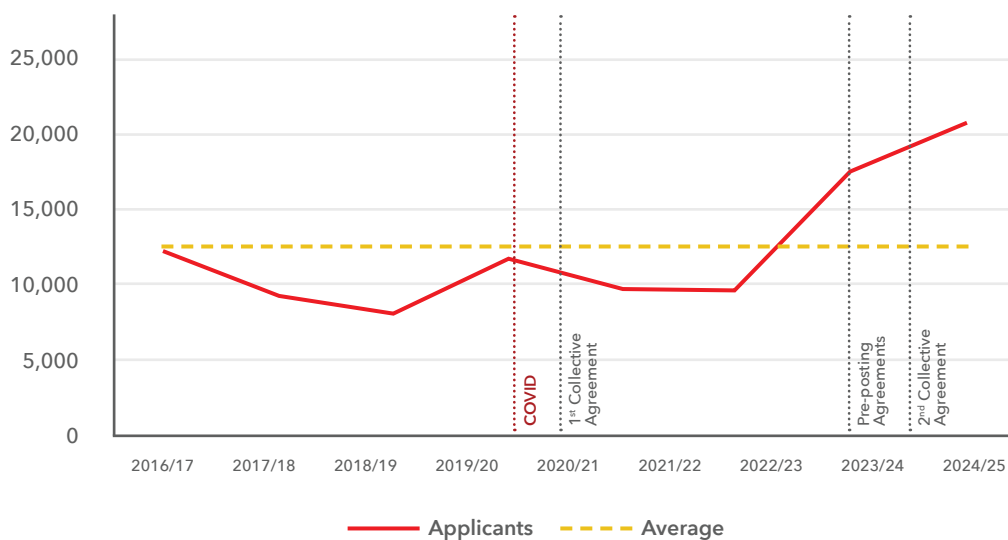
- **Negotiation of the Collective Agreement:**
In 2021, the NPF secured the RCMP's first-ever Collective Agreement, which included a 24% wage increase for Members. This boost made the RCMP a more competitive employer and revitalized recruitment, evidenced by the full enrollment of 32-person troops at Depot since August 2023- a first since the pandemic began.
- **Enhanced Experienced Police Officer Program:**
The NPF's collaboration with the RCMP and the Treasury Board of Canada led to a significant initiative in January 2022 to enhance the recruitment of experienced police officers from various sectors, including provincial, territorial, municipal, Indigenous, and military services. This initiative successfully added over 600 experienced officers to the RCMP in 2023 alone, filling critical staffing gaps, many directly into federal policing roles.



➤ **Pre-Posting Agreements:** Since February 2023, a pre-posting agreement allows recruits and cadets to request deployment to their preferred province after completing training. This initiative helps address regional staffing needs and improves local service delivery.

➤ **Increased Applications:** The RCMP received over 20,500 applications in the 2024/25 fiscal year, surpassing the average of the past decade. This increase is evidence of the NPF's efforts to promote the RCMP as a desirable employer.

RCMP Applicants



The NPF's achievements highlight its ability to drive meaningful change within the RCMP. As the RCMP faces new challenges, the NPF's ongoing efforts and capacity for positive change will be crucial for the RCMP's continued success and development.



APPENDIX 1: LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Contract Policing

- **Recommendation 1:** Implement flexible resource allocation strategies
- **Recommendation 2:** Establish a cost-recovery mechanism for specialized services
- **Recommendation 3:** Modernizing deployment models
- **Recommendation 4:** Streamline contract management by directly engaging the RCMP

Federal Policing

- **Recommendation 5:** Establish dedicated, fenced funding for federal policing and end the backstopping of contract policing
- **Recommendation 6:** Commit to adequately fund and expand the Special Constable Program to attract specialized federal policing talent

Recruitment and Training

- **Recommendation 7:** Expanding Depot training capacity from 40 to at least 55 troops per year
- **Recommendation 8:** Streamline and modernize the RCMP application processing system
- **Recommendation 9:** Align the RCMP's permanent residency requirements with those of the Canadian Armed Forces
- **Recommendation 10:** Increase the RCMP cadet training allowance to ~\$1,200/week
- **Recommendation 11:** Modernize the RCMP training curriculum and service delivery

Procurement

- **Recommendation 12:** Streamline the procurement process of new technologies and equipment to ensure expedited availability
- **Recommendation 13:** Include the RCMP within the procurement process exemption for equipment critical to its operational needs and the public's safety



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