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Future Of Alberta Policing Fact Sheet



RCMP MEMBERS
ALBERTAN
at Heart



Keep Alberta RCMP



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01

Does the Alberta RCMP take their orders from the federal government in Ottawa?

No. The Government of Alberta sets the objectives, priorities, and goals of the Alberta RCMP through the Provincial Minister of Justice and Solicitor General¹. The Government of Alberta sets both the overall budget and objectives of the Alberta RCMP. The Province also works directly with the Alberta RCMP on a jointly developed three-year business plan to meet the Province's objectives within the allocated budget². Each fiscal year, the Government of Alberta provides the projected annual budget to the Alberta RCMP for the following fiscal year, as well as any projected budgets for the remainder of the three-year plan. Additionally, municipal governments who contract directly with the RCMP set local policing priorities and work with the local detachments on details of service that are relevant and important to their community through their municipal police service agreement.

Municipalities can establish their own policing committees to oversee and govern local policing services in their jurisdiction, as outlined in the *Provincial Police Service Agreement (PPSA)*. If the Province wanted to improve local oversight, they could provide the resources necessary to ensure that every community can establish such policing committees.

02

Will a new provincial police service cost Albertans less than the Alberta RCMP?

No. Though the Province tries to claim otherwise, their own numbers in the APPS Transition Study show that the Alberta RCMP will cost Albertans at least \$164m less per year, even before considering the stated transition costs of \$371.5m.

The current total annual costs for the Alberta RCMP and the Alberta Sheriffs in their current form are \$595m per year, while the Government's proposed provincial policing model would cost Albertans \$759m per year. The math is irrefutable; an APPS will cost Albertans more. If this \$164m difference was instead invested in the RCMP, the Province could add over 600 additional officers for a total of over 3,700 RCMP officers across Alberta, greatly bolstering policing services for all Albertans. With the APPS, Albertans would be paying \$164m a year for only 56 additional officers.

More concerning still is that if the Government of Alberta decides to pursue this transition it is likely that these costs would balloon. In Surrey, B.C., transition costs have already quadrupled from \$19m to potentially \$81m for a city with a population of just over half-a-million people.

03

With the new collective agreement for the RCMP and the associated competitive RCMP wages, will this mean a new provincial police service is more affordable?

¹ <https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/65be10e5-1d1a-4fa8-a807-d68af51965a3/resource/ff2d8b88-7f29-4b03-b258-97c7bed23bdf/download/ppsa-appendix.pdf> pg. 18

² <https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/65be10e5-1d1a-4fa8-a807-d68af51965a3/resource/ff2d8b88-7f29-4b03-b258-97c7bed23bdf/download/ppsa-appendix.pdf> pg.54



No. Through their study into the potential police transition, the Province's report included an adjustment for the increase in RCMP wages (totaling \$70m per year) and still found in their own analysis that the current RCMP model will cost Albertan taxpayers less.

There are two important reasons for this. First, the recent salary increases for RCMP officers bring them in line with salaries with municipal and other police services in Alberta and across the country. For example, the average salary for a first-class constable in the RCMP in 2022 is \$106,576 per year, compared to \$106,252 per year in Edmonton (2020), and \$104,439 per year in Calgary (2021). Once collective agreements for the Edmonton and Calgary police services are renegotiated, we expect a salary of over \$111,000 per year based on updated wages for similar police services across Canada. The Government of Alberta's Future State report notes that an APPS officer's pay would be comparable to what officers are compensated at the Edmonton and Calgary Police Services³.

Second, since the federal government pays a 30% share of the wages for RCMP officers as part of the PPSA, the real wage cost to Albertans for a first-class constable in 2022 is actually \$74,603 per year.

04

Will there be more police officers under a new provincial police service?

No. Under a new Provincial Police Service, Albertans would have **fewer boots on the ground** at a higher cost to taxpayers. Under the Province's proposed APPS model, up to 269 Alberta Sheriffs⁴ would be merged into the new provincial police to create a service of approximately 3,153 police officers. These officers, combined with the remainder of the Alberta Sheriffs, would represent a total of 3,815 public safety officers (3,153 APPS officers and 662 Sheriffs⁵). Under the current model and according to the provincial report's numbers, the Alberta RCMP and the Alberta Sheriffs currently have a total of 4,028 public safety officers (3,097 RCMP and 931 Sheriffs).

05

Will a new provincial police service be more accountable to the public than the Alberta RCMP?

A new provincial police service does not guarantee greater civilian oversight or accountability of policing in Alberta. Currently, the Commanding Officer of K Division is obligated to provide regular updates to the Government of Alberta on the operational and administrative status of the police service, including monthly updates regarding new or outstanding complaints regarding the RCMP⁶. Oversight of officer conduct is currently provided by the Alberta Serious Incident Response Team (ASIRT), established under the *Police Act* as an independent agency that remains separate from police agencies and government through its civilian leadership⁷. The Justice Minister also holds the

³ <https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/c5e0a303-eb34-45cf-9ba7-805e69c9dbfc/resource/3fa5f190-fb96-446b-a84d-62b6381ff206/download/jsq-apps-transition-study-future-state-report.pdf> pg.104

⁴ <https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/a1bfad66-d301-4a8f-9865-ae6e7d25a31a/resource/5afc1580-f9c6-425e-b358-14dff660da9/download/jsq-apps-transition-study-final-report-2021.pdf> pg.71

⁵ <https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/a1bfad66-d301-4a8f-9865-ae6e7d25a31a/resource/5afc1580-f9c6-425e-b358-14dff660da9/download/jsq-apps-transition-study-final-report-2021.pdf> pg.77

⁶ <https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/65be10e5-1d1a-4fa8-a807-d68af51965a3/resource/ff2d8b88-7f29-4b03-b258-97c7bed23bdf/download/ppsa-appendix.pdf> pg. 20

⁷ <https://www.alberta.ca/about-asirt.aspx>



authority to facilitate the appointment and request the dismissal of a detachment commander, in addition to holding authority in the appointment and dismissal of the Commanding Officer⁸.

Many of the accountability functions mentioned in APPS discussions are already present within the existing PPSA.

06

Who will be responsible for paying for the additional costs of the proposed APPS model should the Government of Alberta decide to move ahead with the transition?

This is something that has not been made clear by the provincial government, who have stated that they do not plan for the additional costs to be charged to municipalities. However, they did not indicate who would be responsible for the additional costs.

The Province's APPS Transition Study Future State Report notes that, "Sources of funding, including the potential loss of federal subsidies and the split of future costs between the province and municipalities is not part of this report and should be studied further by the Government of Alberta."⁹ To date, this additional feasibility study has not been done and the true costs remain unknown. Additional releases by the Government of Alberta do not provide any further details or specific accounts for these costs.

One thing we know for sure is that Alberta taxpayers will pay all the costs, and the question of where the additional funding will be sourced from remains unanswered. Other public services funding might be impacted to provide for the costs of the APPS transition. Promises that transition costs will be covered by the Province do not guarantee that all current critical supports and programs will remain funded to the amount they are today. According to recent polling data, 58% Albertans are most concerned with affordability and cost-of-living issues, compared to the 8% of Albertans most concerned about policing¹⁰. Maintaining and investing in these crucial programs in education, healthcare, housing, and infrastructure is far more important to Albertans than siphoning from the same funding pool for these exorbitant transition costs.

07

What are the key differences between the proposed APPS model and the service currently provided by the Alberta RCMP?

- 3,153 APPS police officers +
 - 1,792, comprised of 1,036 Public Service Employees, 662 Alberta Sheriffs, and 94 Alberta Sheriff support staff
- 4,945 total staff = \$759m per year**

Versus:

- 3,097 RCMP officers +
 - 1,958, comprised of 190 RCMP (civilian), 743 Public Service Employees, 931 Alberta Sheriffs and 94 Alberta Sheriff support staff
- 5,055 total staff = \$595m per year**

⁸ <https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/65be10e5-1d1a-4fa8-a807-d68af51965a3/resource/ff2d8b88-7f29-4b03-b258-97c7bed23bdf/download/ppsa-appendix.pdf> pg.20

⁹ <https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/c5e0a303-eb34-45cf-9ba7-805e69c9dbfc/resource/3fa5f190-fb96-446b-a84d-62b6381ff206/download/jsq-apps-transition-study-future-state-report.pdf> pg. 7

¹⁰ <https://nfp-fpn.com/app/uploads/securepdfs/2022/08/NPF-Alberta-W4-July-2022-Final.Aug8-22.pdf> pg.5



The key differences are 1) the cost, and 2) that the number of officers proposed by the APPS model is achieved by removing 269 existing Alberta Sherriff and related administrative support positions and moving them into APPS officer positions¹¹.

Additionally, the Government of Alberta's proposed provincial police deployment model relies on removing personnel and services from urban and metropolitan areas into rural areas, to increase police resources there rather than investing in new resources or positions that could support rural areas¹².

If this cost difference went to fund the existing RCMP, **over 600 additional officer positions** could be added to the existing complement of 3,097 RCMP officers, without needing to reallocate personnel resources between services or areas of Alberta.

With a new APPS, and without considering transition costs, Albertans would be paying an additional \$164m per year for only 56 additional officers; working out to a conservatively estimated cost for 2.9 million per officer gained through the proposed model.

If the Province chose to address resourcing shortfalls within the Justice System with this funding instead, as 77% of Albertans have asked for¹³, funds could be directed toward the hiring of more Crown Prosecutors to address the current prosecutor shortage and bolster other enforcement resources.

08

Since the APPS won't result in more officers without redeploying existing resources, how could we get more boots on the ground in Alberta?

The Government of Alberta has the authority to fund additional officer positions through the existing agreement, at a cost-share of 70% funded by the Province and 30% funded by the Federal Government. If it is a critical priority for the Government of Alberta to provide more police officers to RCMP policed communities, the Government of Alberta can increase the number of Members through Article 5.0 of the PPSA. This article provides a mechanism for the Minister to fund more RCMP Members at any time through submitting written notice to the Government of Canada¹⁴. A letter to request that more officers be assigned to police in Alberta has already been written and is included in the existing agreement¹⁵; if the Government of Alberta would like to fund more officers, all they have to do is sign and send.

09

Is the Federal Government planning to end contract policing in Canada?

¹¹ <https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/a1bfad66-d301-4a8f-9865-ae6e7d25a31a/resource/5afc1580-f9c6-425e-b358-14dff660da9/download/jsq-apps-transition-study-final-report-2021.pdf> pg. 71

¹² <https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/c388d42d-a2fa-4fc4-9a0c-414ca5b5da7b/resource/5a12d074-5019-4fe4-9bf2-794bb25633a5/download/jsq-aberta-provincial-police-deployment-model-2022-08.pdf> pg.26

¹³ <https://npf-fpn.com/app/uploads/securepdfs/2022/08/NPF-Alberta-W4-July-2022-Final.Aug8-22.pdf> pg.14

¹⁴ <https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/65be10e5-1d1a-4fa8-a807-d68af51965a3/resource/ff2d8b88-7f29-4b03-b258-97c7bed23bdf/download/ppsa-appendix.pdf> pg. 17

¹⁵ <https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/65be10e5-1d1a-4fa8-a807-d68af51965a3/resource/ff2d8b88-7f29-4b03-b258-97c7bed23bdf/download/ppsa-appendix.pdf> pg. 74



No. There are no plans and no decision from the Government of Canada to end contract policing agreements. Ongoing reviews of policing services are welcomed to ensure all provinces and communities benefit from the best possible policing services, but reviews do not equate to ending RCMP policing agreements and often highlight their effectiveness.

The Government of Canada manages about 166 contracts with provinces and municipalities, which require extensive administrative and financial costs to maintain. The federal public safety minister has said that the government is looking at ways to change the contract model to reduce administrative costs, which include looking at the B.C. RCMP model. In B.C., the federal government has one provincial contract with B.C., and the Province manages all municipal RCMP contracts with the B.C. RCMP, rather than multiple municipal contracts, which reduce administrative burden related to multiple contract management.

10

Why do other provinces have provincial police services when Alberta does not? Are more provinces moving to a provincial police service model?

Ontario and Quebec have the largest provincial police services, and are the two most populated provinces in Canada. Both have been operating their own provincial police services for over a century, with the Ontario Provincial Police Service being founded in 1909 and the Sûreté du Québec in 1870. Notably, they have very different needs and context than policing in Alberta. Their long histories have allowed them to build up the personnel and assets needed to engage in effective policing alongside their vast population growth over the past 100 years. There are also significant fiscal differences between provincial policing in Quebec and Ontario when compared to Alberta, due primarily to their larger populations. The Ontario Provincial Police Service had an estimated operating budget of \$1.2 billion¹⁶, as reported for the 2020-2021 fiscal year, while the Sûreté du Québec had an estimated operating budget of \$1.1 billion for the same fiscal period¹⁷.

From 1917-1932, Alberta did have its own police service, the Alberta Provincial Police (APP), but this was disbanded in 1932 because of growing concerns over the cost of operations¹⁸. After contract policing services in Alberta were provided by the RCMP, Alberta realized a nearly 50% cost-savings in comparison to the operation of the previous APP¹⁹.

Other provinces have undertaken reviews of their RCMP policing services in recent years. This is not an irregular occurrence or one that firmly indicates that they are moving towards ending contract policing agreements that are currently in place. Regular reviews are welcomed to provide the best policing services possible.

11

Are RCMP officers required to split their time between provincial and federal duties?

No. Regular RCMP Members providing provincial policing services are responsible for provincial policing work. RCMP Members providing municipal service remain focused on their communities and do not split time between providing provincial policing services and delivering on federal duties. There are also approximately 300 Regular Members who

¹⁶ <https://opp.ca/index.php?id=115&entryid=619547b8522f655e245bba83> pg. 15

¹⁷ <https://www.sg.gouv.qc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/rapport-annuel-de-gestion-2020-2021.pdf> pg. 37

¹⁸ https://archive.org/details/albertapioneerye0000frye/pg_77

¹⁹ https://era.library.ualberta.ca/items/2eab0ac2-0a5b-4bab-b888-80562c63918c/pg_230



are responsible for the RCMP's federal mandate in Alberta, which are not funded by Albertans²⁰. Members providing provincial, municipal, and federal policing duties are separate from one another.

12

Would all RCMP officers become APPS officers? Would current RCMP equipment become APPS equipment?

There is no reason to assume that RCMP Members would choose to leave the RCMP to join a smaller, new, and unproven police service such as the potential APPS. Such transitions are rare, but experience in Surrey, B.C., for example, has shown that fewer than 10% of Surrey RCMP have patched over to the Surrey Police Service. In addition to the RCMP, police services from across Canada have been experiencing difficulties with recruitment and retention over the past decade; including Edmonton and Calgary municipal police services. The Transition Study does not factor in the complexities of these recruiting challenges, nor does it propose solutions on how an APPS would recruit.

According to the Government's own report, costs for capital purchases, fleet costs, equipment such as lab supplies and informatics equipment, and real estate costs would need to be considered as part of the transition plan²¹. The total cost for assets and equipment does not include the costs of inflation and purchase of assets from the existing police service or a third party supplier. Any equipment or assets that are currently utilized by the Alberta RCMP would further not automatically or immediately transfer to the APPS without cost incurred.

13

Where would APPS officers be trained? How would training for APPS members be conducted?

There is no clear plan on delivering training to potential future APPS recruits. The Government of Alberta alludes to the utilization of existing training resources to train an APPS²², such as existing municipal police training facilities. However, these facilities cannot accommodate an additional 3,000 officers for training in their current state because they were designed to train recruits for their respective services only. Where, how, and with what equipment these officers will be trained remains a significant question that the Province has not yet answered.

While the potential principles and concepts informing an APPS training curriculum have been discussed, a detailed account of training resources required and a plan to address training needs has not yet been released.

14

Was the APPS model developed in response to the needs of communities in Alberta?

No. The Government of Alberta has not meaningfully engaged with municipalities to assess and understand their unique needs. The Province's Community Policing Deployment Model Detachment Prototype Design and the APPS

²⁰ <https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/ab/about-apropos-eng.htm>

²¹ <https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/a1bfad66-d301-4a8f-9865-ae6e7d25a31a/resource/5afc1580-f9c6-425e-b358-14dff660da9/download/jsq-apps-transition-study-final-report-2021.pdf> pg. 38

²² <https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/a1bfad66-d301-4a8f-9865-ae6e7d25a31a/resource/5afc1580-f9c6-425e-b358-14dff660da9/download/jsq-apps-transition-study-final-report-2021.pdf> pg. 76



Transition Study Final Report documents were informed by research conducted in March 2022²³ and April 2021²⁴, respectively. These documents were not informed by the perspectives of municipal communities or developed in consultation with such communities. They were based on a recommendation of Alberta's Fair Deal Panel, which found through its own surveys that only 35% of Albertans supported the idea of creating a new provincial police service. For those who responded, they ranked it 14th out of 15 priorities (just above separating from the rest of Canada). According to a recent wave of polling completed by Pollara over July 2022, 84% of Albertans instead support retaining the Alberta RCMP outright or with improvements, rather than replacing the Alberta RCMP with an APPS²⁵.

15

What is the Alberta RCMP doing to address rural crime?

The Alberta RCMP has been actively addressing the problem of rural crime through their Crime Reduction Strategy, implemented in 2018, by targeting several key crime indicators. Through this strategy, the Province has seen a significant drop in rural crime rates.

In 2021, the Alberta RCMP saw:

- **21% reduction in Possession of Stolen Goods offences**
- **15% decrease in Break and Enters**
- **8% drop in Thefts of Motor Vehicles**
- **10% decrease in Theft Over and Under \$5000**

This is thanks to initiatives such as Project Lock Up, an intelligence-led program that allows the RCMP and citizens to respond to repeat victims of property crime. From March 2019 to April 2020, the number of top-targeted properties – properties that previously experienced the highest rates of repeat crime – **dropped by 55.4%**.

16

Are there other ways that the Government of Alberta could reduce rural crime?

If the Government of Alberta truly wanted to tackle the issue of rural crime, then they would work to resolve the issue of the “revolving door” of the Criminal Justice system.

Over the past five years, the Alberta Justice system has been struggling due to their immense shortage of Crown Prosecutors. According to the Alberta Crown Attorney's Association, as of the end of October 2021, approximately 47 of 380 (roughly 12%) of Crown positions were vacant. While understaffing has been an ongoing issue, it has become significantly worse in the past year and has now reached a crisis point. There are now approximately 3000 cases at high risk of not going to court due to these delays, with 2000 of the cases being serious or violent offences²⁶. This is creating a threat to public safety, as many legal cases that do not receive a court date allow repeat offenders to walk freely due to time expirations.

²³ <https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/c388d42d-a2fa-4fc4-9a0c-414ca5b5da7b/resource/5a12d074-5019-4fe4-9bf2-794bb25633a5/download/jsq-aberta-provincial-police-deployment-model-2022-08.pdf> pg. 7

²⁴ <https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/a1bfad66-d301-4a8f-9865-ae6e7d25a31a/resource/5afc1580-f9c6-425e-b358-14dffb660da9/download/jsq-apps-transition-study-final-report-2021.pdf> pg. 2

²⁵ <https://nfp-fpn.com/app/uploads/securepdfs/2022/08/NPF-Alberta-W4-July-2022-Final.Aug8-22.pdf> pg.25

²⁶ <https://www.cochranetoday.ca/beyond-local/albertas-crown-prosecutors-nearing-strike-action-5263130>



17

What is the RCMP doing to improve response times to rural and remote communities?

Along with the increased resources provided through the Crime Reduction Strategy, the Alberta RCMP has implemented new and innovative ways to dispatch, investigate, and document calls for service through the Call Back Unit. This unit triages emergency calls to RCMP officers and manages non-urgent calls separately. In 2018, this program diverted **3,853 calls** and redeployed **9,390 hours of work**, representing nine General Duty Constables in one year. This means there were more RCMP officers available to respond to rural and remote communities.



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