

Chapter 45

Justice – Monitoring Municipal Policing

1.0 MAIN POINTS

In 2011, we assessed the effectiveness of the processes used by the Ministry of Justice (formerly Ministry of Corrections and Policing) and the Saskatchewan Police Commission (Commission) to monitor municipal policing excluding the policing services provided by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP). We concluded that both the Commission and the Ministry of Justice (Ministry) needed to do more, and made six recommendations to help them better monitor municipal policing.

In 2013, we followed up on our recommendations. We found that the Commission has implemented two of the recommendations but the Commission and the Ministry need to do more work to address the remaining four.

The Ministry needs to ensure that the Commission has adequate resources to fulfill its mandate. Also, the Commission and the Ministry need to clearly set out their respective roles and responsibilities, develop a strategic plan, and implement a process to monitor compliance with municipal policing standards.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

Policing in the province is provided through municipal police services and agreements with the RCMP. Municipal police services, excluding policing services provided by the RCMP, are responsible for providing police services in 13 municipalities. *The Police Act, 1990* (Act) assigns responsibility to both the Commission and the Minister Responsible for Corrections and Policing¹ to promote adequate and effective policing throughout Saskatchewan.

In our *2011 Report – Volume 2*, Chapter 4, we concluded that the Ministry and the Commission should have had more effective processes to monitor municipal policing to ensure that municipal police services uniformly safeguard the communities they serve. We made six recommendations.

This chapter describes our follow up of management's actions on those recommendations. We found that the Ministry and the Commission have implemented two of our recommendations, but have more work to do to address the remaining four.

To conduct this review, we followed the standards for assurance engagements published in the *CPA Canada Handbook - Assurance*. To evaluate the Commission's and the Ministry's progress towards meeting our recommendations, we used the relevant criteria from the original audit. The Commission's management agreed in principle with the criteria in the original audit.

¹ Effective May 25, 2012, the responsibilities of corrections and policing became part of the Ministry of Justice.



3.0 STATUS OF RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 Compliance with Policy Manual

We recommended that the Saskatchewan Police Commission ensure policies and procedures of municipal police services comply with the Saskatchewan Police Commission's policy manual. (2011 Report – Volume 2; Public Accounts Committee has not yet considered this recommendation)

Status – Implemented

On January 30, 2013, the Commission set up a process to ensure that municipal police policies and procedures comply with the Commission's policy manual. As of August 2013, the Commission's Policy, Standards and Compliance Officer completed 64 policy compliance audits and gave the results to the municipal police services. The Commission plans to follow up those results and carry out further audits to ensure that the policies and procedures of the municipal police services align with the standards set by the Commission's policy manual.

3.2 Regular Meetings Held

We recommended that the Saskatchewan Police Commission meet regularly as planned to carry out its roles and responsibilities. (2011 Report – Volume 2; Public Accounts Committee has not yet considered this recommendation)

Status – Implemented

During 2012-13, the Commission met regularly to carry out its roles and responsibilities.

3.3 Memorandum of Understanding Signed

We recommended that the Ministry of Justice (formerly Ministry of Corrections, Public Safety and Policing) and the Saskatchewan Police Commission have a written agreement that sets out their respective roles and responsibilities for promoting adequate and effective policing throughout Saskatchewan. (2011 Report – Volume 2; Public Accounts Committee has not yet considered this recommendation)

Status – Partially Implemented

We recommended that the Ministry of Justice (formerly Ministry of Corrections, Public Safety and Policing) ensure that the Saskatchewan Police Commission has adequate resources to fulfill its mandate under *The Police Act, 1990*. (2011 Report – Volume 2; Public Accounts Committee has not yet considered this recommendation)

Status – Partially Implemented

On June 25, 2012, the Commission and the Ministry signed a written Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that commits the Ministry to undertake joint planning for the allocation of responsibilities and resources and to provide the necessary resources the Commission needs to carry out its planned activities.

The MOU sets out a process through which the Ministry and the Commission may cooperate. However, a written agreement that clearly sets out their respective roles and responsibilities for promoting adequate and effective policing has not been prepared.

3.4 Strategic Plan Needed

We recommended that the Saskatchewan Police Commission in partnership with the Ministry of Justice (formerly Ministry of Corrections, Public Safety, and Policing) develop strategic and operational plans for effective monitoring of municipal policing. (2011 Report – Volume 2; Public Accounts Committee has not yet considered this recommendation)

Status – Partially Implemented

The Commission indicated that it is committed to developing long-term strategic and operational plans for effective monitoring of municipal policing. However, formal strategic and operational plans are not fully documented.

3.5 Monitoring Process Needed

We recommended that the Saskatchewan Police Commission and Ministry of Justice (formerly Ministry of Corrections, Public Safety, and Policing) implement a process for monitoring compliance with municipal policing standards and ensure action is taken to address non-compliance. (2011 Report – Volume 2; Public Accounts Committee has not yet considered this recommendation)

Status – Partially Implemented

The Commission and the Ministry use a variety of processes to monitor compliance with municipal policing standards. These include, although are not limited to, monitoring the



complaints filed to the Public Complaints Commission (PCC),² requiring municipal police agencies to report on certain higher risk activities, monitoring progress of ongoing discipline investigations, as well as reviewing cases where serious incidents occur.

These reporting processes enable the Commission and the Ministry to monitor police service operations for the emergence of trends or patterns which might suggest a systemic or organizational failure to comply with policing standards or to address individual incidents of non-compliance.

The Commission, under the Act, has the option to conduct audits and reviews of municipal police services. As noted in **Section 3.1**, on January 30, 2013, the Commission implemented a process to review municipal police services' policies and procedures for compliance with the Commission's policy manual. Officials of the Commission and the Ministry indicated that concerns are responded to on a case by case basis. However, neither the Commission nor the Ministry has documented a consistent process for addressing incidents of non-compliance with municipal policing standards.

² The Public Complaints Commission is an independent body created under *The Police Act, 1990*.