

Chapter 27

Justice—Monitoring Municipal Policing

1.0 MAIN POINTS

The Police Act, 1990 assigns responsibility for promoting adequate and effective policing throughout Saskatchewan to both the Saskatchewan Police Commission (Commission) and the Minister Responsible for Corrections and Policing.¹ Municipal police services and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) provide policing services in Saskatchewan. Municipal police services, excluding policing services provided by the RCMP, are responsible for providing police services in 13 municipalities.

By February 29, 2016, the Commission and the Ministry of Justice (Justice) had implemented all recommendations resulting from our 2011 audit of the Commission's and Justice's processes to monitor municipal policing (other than services provided by the RCMP).

2.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes our second follow-up of management's actions on the recommendations we first made in our *2011 Report – Volume 2*, Chapter 4 in our audit of the Commission's, and Justice's where applicable, processes to monitor municipal policing. We reported the results of our first follow-up in our *2013 Report – Volume 2*, Chapter 45, which found the Commission and Justice had implemented two of the six recommendations.

To conduct this review engagement, we followed the standards for assurance engagements published in the *CPA Canada Handbook – Assurance*. To evaluate the Commission's and Justice's progress towards meeting our recommendations, we used the relevant criteria from the 2011 audit. The Commission and Justice agreed with the criteria in the 2011 audit.

We reviewed and assessed the information provided by management. We interviewed Commission and Justice staff with key responsibilities for monitoring municipal policing. We examined agreements between the Commission and Justice, budget submissions, and financial information. We examined reports received from municipal police forces and supporting audits/reviews completed by staff of the Commission.

3.0 STATUS OF RECOMMENDATIONS

This section sets out each recommendation including the date on which the Standing Committee on Public Accounts agreed to the recommendation, the status of the recommendation at February 29, 2016, and the Commission's and Justice's actions up to that date. We found that the Commission and Justice had implemented all of the recommendations.

¹ This responsibility is carried out through the Ministry of Justice.



3.1 Operational Agreement Signed

We recommended that the Ministry of Justice 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 agreement September 23, 2014)

Status – Implemented

We recommended that the Saskatchewan Police Commission in partnership with the Ministry of Justice develop strategic and operational plans for effective monitoring of municipal policing. (2011 Report – Volume 2; Public Accounts Committee agreement September 23, 2014)

Status – Implemented

On November 5, 2014, the Commission and Justice signed an operational memorandum of understanding (MOU) that outlines the respective roles and responsibilities of each party for promoting adequate and effective policing throughout Saskatchewan. The MOU is in effect until March 31, 2022.

The MOU described the strategic direction for monitoring municipal policing and key activities to support that direction. For example, the Commission expects to use reports about key policing activities (e.g., firearms discharges, incidents involving use of force) to identify areas for audits or other investigations. The MOU reflected the Commission's and Justice's key strategies to help them carry out their legislative mandate.

3.2 Resources Provided

We recommended that the Ministry of Justice 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 agreement September 23, 2014)

Status – Implemented

The Commission is funded through the Ministry of Justice. It receives about \$203 thousand each year. Justice also continues to provide it with support services (e.g., human resources, financial, communications).

Each year as part of developing Justice's budget submission, the Commission and Justice work together to forecast the Commission's expenses for the upcoming

year and future three years. Where requested funding differs from approved, the Commission reprioritizes its activities and initiatives.

3.3 Monitoring Process Implemented

We recommended that the Saskatchewan Police Commission and the Ministry of Justice 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 agreement September 23, 2014)

Status – Implemented

On April 1, 2014, the Commission hired a Policy, Standards, and Compliance Officer (Compliance Officer). Duties of the Compliance Officer included:

- › Evaluating individual police services to assess their compliance with established policies, standards, and legislation, and alignment with best practice (i.e., conducting operational audits)
- › Evaluating Commission programs and services and recommending changes

During 2015-16, the Compliance Officer completed four operational audits on the following three topics: defensive tactics training, the use of the detention restraint chairs, and energy weapon deployments (e.g., tasers).

The Commission and Justice also continued to monitor the emergence of trends or patterns in police service operations. They looked for trends which may suggest failure to comply with policing standards, or to address individual incidents of non-compliance. For example, they reviewed reports about complaints filed with the Public Complaints Commission,² certain higher risk activities, progress of ongoing discipline investigations, and cases where serious incidents occurred.

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

