

# **Caucus Committee on Crime Report Recommendations and Government of Saskatchewan's Response – August 22, 2017**

## **Recommendation 1**

We recommend that the Government of Saskatchewan communicate with the RCMP ('F Division') to ensure that the province has a full complement of police officers, as well as ensuring the best use of resources and increased visibility in rural areas. The Committee would like to further recommend that the Government explore options to reduce officers being taken off regular duties to transport prisoners and allow for greater access to video court appearances to reduce officer travel and court time.

## **Response**

The Ministry has begun working with the RCMP to:

- establish joint priorities to which the RCMP will regularly report as part of their accountability framework to the Ministry with a particular focus on addressing rural property crime in Saskatchewan, and
- repurposed resources to front-line operation.

Create a Provincial Enforcement Team comprised of 258 armed enforcement officers consisting of:

- 120 police officers from RCMP and municipal police services:
  - 60 police positions currently deployed to the Combined Traffic Services Saskatchewan (CTSS) Initiative;
  - 30 new police positions to be funded through SGI's \$4.9 million investment; and
  - 30 re-purposed police positions currently funded by the Ministry, will be integrated with,
- 40 Ministry of Highways Commercial Vehicle Enforcement Officers (CVEO) with expanded powers; and
- 98 Ministry of Environment Conservation Officers (CO).

## **Recommendation 2**

We recommend that the Government of Saskatchewan review the legislation to allow two or more rural municipalities to jointly administer alternative policing programs. The Committee further recommends that the Government explore further options for regional policing models in the future.

## **Response**

One FTE dedicated to work with communities and stakeholders to grow the Community Safety Officer Program and promote/enable regionalized police services in the province.

## **Recommendation 3**

We recommend that the Government of Saskatchewan lobby the Federal Government to strengthen the *Youth Criminal Justice Act* to ensure increased consequences for crimes committed by young offenders, increased consequences for adults enabling youth to commit crimes, and for greater rehabilitation supports for those offenders.

## **Response**

Commitment to write to the Federal Minister of Justice, requesting a review of the *Youth Criminal Justice Act*. The purpose of this review will be to ensure that the Act continues to meet the needs of youth and strikes a balance between accountability and rehabilitation.

## **Recommendation 4**

We recommend that the Government of Saskatchewan work with municipal partners, such as SARM and SUMA to develop a funding strategy to make automatic license plate recognition (ALPR) systems available in all police vehicles. The Committee further recommends that the Government look at making vehicle identification easier by adding front license plates to vehicles and encourage the development of a provincial interagency database for ALPRs to effectively identify suspect vehicles and drivers.

## **Response**

Work with SGI to ensure all units within the Provincial Enforcement Team are equipped with Automatic License Plate Readers (ALPRs).

## **Recommendation 5**

We recommend that the Government of Saskatchewan lobby the Federal Government to obtain the funding necessary for programming and services on reserve as it is off reserve. The committee would also like the Government to consider working with First Nations communities in implementing a Hub model on reserve to provide more collaborative care.

## **Response**

The Ministry of Justice will:

- Work with First Nation leaders to develop Hubs, including those that are tech-enabled. Two additional First Nations Hubs have launched within the past couple months.
- Undertake a project and partnership with Defense Research and Development Canada to establish tech-enabled Hubs to facilitate multi-sector collaboration in remote and rural communities

## **Recommendation 6**

We recommend that the Government of Saskatchewan encourage police forces to appoint school liaison officers to do regular school visits in their respective policing regions. The Committee would like to emphasize that there is significant importance to relationships and continuance in building a trust relationship between police forces and youth. This would provide an effective avenue for police to be engaged in the process of educating children about the hazards of drugs, gangs and crimes.

## **Response**

The Ministry will work with the RCMP to:

- Staff School Liaison Officers (SLOs) in rural regions where schools request these services.
- Work with communities to rebuild rural crime watch in those communities requesting it.
- Assist citizens "crime-proof" their properties.
  - The Government of Saskatchewan will partner with Innovation Saskatchewan who will lead a pilot program to harness the ideas and expertise of startup technology companies, targeted at creating solutions to rural crime and how technology can be used as a solution to improve the safety and security of rural citizens and rural

property, enhancing non-confrontational tools for citizens to crime-proof their homes and property.

- Determine the best mechanism to address cattle rustling in rural Saskatchewan.

### **Recommendation 7**

We recommend that the Government of Saskatchewan work with the Federal Government to restore federal funding for a gang exit strategy and make it available across the province.

### **Response**

- Work with First Nations leaders to build an Aboriginal Gang Strategy that will be led by First Nations.
- In September, Ministers Responsible for Justice and Public Safety will meet nationally and my Deputy Ministers will be presenting and requesting federal funding to pursue building a Western Canada Aboriginal Gang Strategy.

### **Recommendation 8**

We recommend that the Government of Saskatchewan explore expanding mental health and addictions treatment centres across the province. The Committee would also like to emphasize the importance of more timely access to these services to ensure a greater level of success.

### **Response**

- Fund new positions to:
  - the Combined Forces Special Enforcement Unit (CFSEU) to target illicit drugs that are disproportionately driving property crime, e.g., crystal meth and fentanyl.
  - expand the Police and Crisis Team (PACT) pilot project. The investment would be to fund one Mental Health Worker in each of the expanded locations.
- Expand Safer Communities and Neighborhoods resources to Prince Albert and region to enhance investigative capacity in the north.
- The Saskatchewan Hospital North Battleford facilities will be open in the fall of 2018, providing services.