

Alberta Municipalities held a virtual policing summit on January 19, 2022, to discuss the Government of Alberta's proposal to establish an independent Alberta Provincial Police Service (APPS). Justice and Solicitor General is holding engagement sessions across Alberta on this topic in early 2022, and this summit was intended to help prepare members for engagement by:

- Providing an overview and analysis of the PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) feasibility study and proposed APPS service delivery model; and
- Gathering feedback from members on outstanding questions and concerns arising from the PwC study.

### Learn more:

Please visit our [APPS webpage](#) to find links to the webinar recording, PwC feasibility study, Alberta Municipalities summary and analysis, and other resources, as well as information on how to register for a provincial engagement session.

Prior to the webinar, Alberta Municipalities shared a summary and analysis of the PwC study that highlighted key questions for municipalities to raise during engagement. The questions in this document have been updated below to reflect what we heard at our online event, and they are organized to align with the discussion topics that will be presented at provincial engagement sessions.

The provincial engagement sessions are narrowly focused on the service delivery model proposed in the PwC feasibility study. However, due to a lack of detail in the study, participants may find it difficult to give meaningful feedback. Additionally, the study is silent with respect to many key municipal considerations for an APPS, such as the impact on policing costs and what a new police funding model would look like. We very much encourage members to attend the sessions and share any feedback and concerns they have, even if this feedback is considered to be "out of scope" by Justice and Solicitor General.

### Governance and Oversight

- How will APPS performance be measured and reported on?
- How will municipalities have a say in setting APPS priorities and direction, at both the provincial and local levels?
- The PwC study recommends that an APPS work with municipalities to develop community safety strategies. How will the APPS address any cost and capacity barriers to developing these strategies?
- How would existing local police commissions interact with the newly established Provincial Police Commission?
- How will provincial police commission members be selected? Will this be a political process or a competency-based process? Who would be responsible for recruitment and selection? How will the provincial commission be funded and administratively supported?
- How will local police committees be structured? What level of flexibility will be available for communities to populate and operate police committees as they see fit?
- What accountability mechanisms will be developed to ensure detachment leaders consider and report on the direction provided by local policing committees?
- How will detachments serving multiple communities balance the input received from various local policing committees?
- How will local policing committees provide input on provincial policing priorities to the provincial commission? How will the commission be accountable to local committees?



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### Service Levels and Funding

- The PwC study proposes a hub model for APPS detachments in which select detachments will serve as regional hubs and host specialized services available to the entire region. How will locations for hub detachments be identified? Are existing detachments capable of serving as hubs? If not, will the costs of upgrading existing infrastructure be used as a consideration in the selection of hubs?
- How will staffing requirements for detachments be determined? Will municipalities be expected to provide civilian staff supports to their local detachments?
- The PwC study proposes two levels of police officers. Level 1 Officers would be trained to respond to all calls, while Level 2 Officers would be trained to respond to non-violent or non-urgent calls. What specific roles, responsibilities, and powers will Level 1 and Level 2 Officers have? How will this be determined?
- According to the PwC, the current system duplicates specialist services across the RCMP and Edmonton and Calgary Police Services, such as tactical teams and explosive device response. Under the proposed model, the APPS would contract with these police services to use many of their existing specialized services on a regional basis. Are Edmonton and Calgary willing to enter into this type of agreement with the APPS? What would be the costs of delivering specialized services to rural areas under a standalone APPS model?
- How will conflicts of interest and personal relationships be addressed in a model that emphasizes policing by residents in small and rural communities?
- Many support services for the RCMP, such as human resource management, corporate management, and communications, are paid through a divisional administration charge, which allows these costs to be consolidated and shared by all contract partners. The PwC study does not include an estimate of the cost to replace these services; in fact, the study states that “while further work is required to quantify the costs and time required, replacing the breadth of shared services at the termination of Contract Policing Agreements would be a very significant undertaking in terms of the complexity, cost, and duration of such a project.” How does the government plan to fund and provide these essential services for an APPS?
- Has the province considered insurance and liability costs for potential class-action lawsuits?
- When considering economies of scale, will the APPS be able to purchase goods and services at the same or better cost than the RCMP?
- The PwC study is silent on how municipalities would contribute to funding an APPS. Would the same population-based tiers remain or would costs be linked to service levels? What would the funding model look like for an APPS?
- How will the province offset the \$188 million loss in federal subsidies?
- The PwC study emphasizes the importance of providing a consistent level of service in rural and urban areas. How will levels of service will be determined? How will they differ from levels of service under the current model? How will a higher level of service in rural areas will be accomplished for the same or less cost than the current RCMP model?



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### Integration

- Have the stakeholders identified to work in an integrated manner indicated their support for this model?
- Under the proposed APPS information-sharing model, would community peace officers have full access to information needed to perform their duties safely and effectively?
- The PwC study recommends co-locating policing services with other provincial and community services by basing the services in the same building and a shared work environment. Are there risks in closely linking social services with police that may result in vulnerable individuals being less likely to access social service agencies?
- How would co-location implemented when the current location of police service and other provincial and community services vary greatly across the province? Is the cost of physically re-locating services (presumably into detachments) included in the transition cost estimates? If so, how accurate is the cost projection?
- Will municipalities and service providers have an option as to whether they want to co-locate services?
- How would this approach impact existing municipal and non-profit property-related costs such as leases, building maintenance, etc.?

### How you can help:

- Attending a provincial engagement session and sharing your thoughts.
- Using Alberta Municipalities key questions when speaking to local media.
- Sharing Alberta Municipalities social media posts.
- Watching for media reports and further updates from Alberta Municipalities.

### Transition

- How will cost over-runs during the transition process be managed and communicated?
- Have training costs been included in the forecasting, especially since many RCMP officers do not transition over to provincial police services and there is extensive training that needs to be completed?
- How will the new APPS work with the RCMP on cross-jurisdictional issues and current joint ventures?
- Considering that many police services are experiencing difficulty with recruitment, are you confident that you can recruit enough members for the transition and why? Do you have a backup plan?
- What conversations have been had with stand-alone police services regarding shared training facilities and other services? Are those services amicable to the idea and do they have capacity to accommodate training significantly larger numbers of cadets?
- How is the provincial government going to fund the \$366 million of APPS one-time transition costs?
- How accurate will the cost comparisons found in the report between the current RCMP model and the proposed APPS models be if an actual transition does not occur until 2025? How might RCMP cost drivers and projected APPS cost drivers change in the time until transition occurs?



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### Questions for MPSA Municipalities

- Will municipalities with populations over 5,000 still have the option to contract the RCMP?
- Will the creation of an APPS create barriers for municipalities that may consider a transition to their own municipal or regional police force? Do the cost/benefit projections account for the possibility of some municipalities exploring local police forces in place of APPS?
- How will governance and accountability arrangements change for municipalities with MPSAs under an APPS model? Will these communities still be eligible for provincial grants to offset the costs of policing?

### Other Issues

- Changing the provincial police service provider will not have an impact on Alberta's overburdened justice system. How will the government ensure that the justice system is adequately resourced so that all Albertans have timely access to justice?
- Why hasn't the provincial government already implemented many of the PwC report's suggested policing improvements (integration of health and family services, effective performance metrics, improved governance and independent commission) under its current policing arrangements with the RCMP? What work has been done to evaluate the ability of the RCMP to adjust to meet the core values, innovations, and outcomes the government is seeking? What is the problem that the government is trying to solve?
- In the past, programming and services provided by the province that started out as a minimal cost to municipalities became an increasing burden to many municipalities as funding never increased and further costing and service expectations were downloaded with no recourse or input. Given this history, how can municipalities be confident that they will not incur increased policing costs from implementing an APPS?
- What is the government's engagement plan for First Nations, Metis and Indigenous peoples?
- Will the province government hold a referendum before a final decision is made, and what is the timeline for that?

### MPSA or PPSA?

Urban municipalities with populations over 5,000 have three options for providing police services in their communities:

- Contract with the federal or provincial government or another municipality for the provision of policing services;
- Establish a stand-alone municipal police service; or
- Establish a regional police service with other municipalities, which may include the province.

The most common municipal policing arrangement in Alberta is the use of contract policing. Under this arrangement, the RCMP provides policing services to a municipality under the Municipal Police Service Agreement (MPSA). The MPSA is a bilateral memorandum of agreement signed between the federal government and a municipal government for the use of the RCMP as the Municipal Police Service.

Under the Police Act, the Alberta government is responsible for providing police services for those municipalities with populations of 5,000 or less, and to all municipal districts and counties. The province meets this obligation by contracting for the services of the RCMP to deliver police services to these municipalities, through the Provincial Police Service Agreement (PPSA), signed between the Alberta and federal governments.

For more information about policing in Alberta, visit our [policing hub](#).



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