

**MINISTRY OF PUBLIC SAFETY AND SOLICITOR GENERAL
POLICING AND SECURITY BRANCH
INFORMATION BRIEFING NOTE**

PURPOSE: For **INFORMATION** for Mike Farnworth,
Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General.

ISSUE:

Meeting with South Island Mayors regarding funding model transition for call-taking and dispatch service on May 10, 2021.

SUMMARY:

- On March 25, 2021, South Island Mayors requested a meeting to express concerns and further discuss the decision communicated in December 2020 regarding the funding model transition for police call-taking and dispatch services provided by E-Comm to their respective jurisdictions through the South Island Police Dispatch Centre.
- On March 31, 2021, Policing and Security Branch (PSB) staff sent E-Comm's cost estimates to the Chief Administrative Officers (CAOs) of the eight affected municipalities (see Appendix 1, page 2). PSB staff have been working with E-Comm to finalize cost estimates and the Ministry has been taking steps internally to confirm transitional funding prior to communicating additional information.

BACKGROUND:

- On December 18, 2020, the former Director of Police Services sent a letter to the South Island Mayors summarizing key points from the December 10, 2020 meeting on the funding model transition, which indicated that the Province will continue to pay costs for police call-taking/dispatching in 2021/22 to allow municipalities to plan accordingly.
- The letter also clarified there would be no retroactive costs and outlined a two-year transition plan to provide a phased contribution to service costs. It proposed that the Province would pay 100%, 70%, and 35% of police call taking/dispatching costs into 2023/24 for South Island municipalities. Detailed financial estimates were not provided as further work was required.
- Following consultations with E-Comm on cost estimates, PSB established a transition plan that includes the Province contributing 70% (\$2.314M) in 2022/23, 35% (\$1.206M) in 2023/24, with municipalities being responsible for 100% of municipal costs in 2024/25. PSSG cannot manage these costs within existing budgets and is preparing a Treasury Board submission for transitional funding of three years to support the affected municipalities.

- In the planned transition, municipal contributions will increase to 30% (\$0.992M) in 2022/23; 65% (\$2.239M) in 2023/24; and 100% (\$3.591M) as the transition completes in 2024/25 (see Appendix 1 for further details). The estimates are allocated to reflect RCMP resources established in each municipality. Rural and unincorporated areas will continue to fall under the provincial police service and therefore are not charged for police dispatch services.
- At the end of the transition period, the RCMP-policed municipalities on the South Island will be in line with independent municipal police departments which currently pay for these services at 100%.
- The March 25th letter from the South Island Mayors recommends that this transition be postponed by one year and takes place beginning in 2023, as they had not yet received any cost breakdowns on the impacts to their communities and explain that the “downloading of costs” should have been raised through the Local Government Contract Management Committee (LGCMC).
- It is unfortunate there was an inadvertent oversight regarding the awareness of the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) and LGCMC on this matter. PSB will ensure future matters that have a significant impact to municipalities, financial or otherwise, will be brought forward through the appropriate channels.
- On February 16, 2021, LGCMC met and discussed SIPDC, including local government concerns pertaining to communication and cost impacts. Members were concerned about the lack of early warning; that cost impacts still had not yet been conveyed; and, that there would be a noticeable impact on local government budgets despite the phase-in of costs. ADM Rideout acknowledged the Province’s role, also noting the unexpected position taken by Public Safety Canada. This issue was also discussed in the context of how to improve communication at the LGCMC table.
- During the May 10, 2021 meeting with the South Island Mayors, PSSG will be able to:
 - Acknowledge local government concerns and the impacts of other public safety related initiatives that have cost implications for municipalities, such as response to homelessness;
 - Reiterate that telecommunications are a responsibility of municipalities under the Municipal Police Unit Agreements (MPUA);
 - Discuss Mayors feedback on timing of the transition, the amounts of the provincial contributions on the South Island, and details regarding the contributions from municipalities as described in the transition plan above.
- Delaying the South Island E-Comm funding model transition by one year will result in a cumulative \$6.825M pressure for the Ministry into 2024, and continue to result in inequities as the Provinces subsidizes policing costs which are statutorily and contractually the responsibility of municipalities with populations over 5,000.

- The South Island funding transition is the first step in a larger transition of service provision and responsibility under the terms of the MPUA in the province and will form part of future government decision-making and discussions with stakeholders going forward.
- PSB also advised that the federal government has indicated that they will continue to contribute to the cost-share for RCMP OCC police dispatch services elsewhere in BC. UBCM is of the understanding that the RCMP has not indicated that they will consolidate the remaining RCMP OCCs, meaning that existing RCMP OCCs will remain in operation and be funded by the Province and Federal government.

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES CONSIDERATIONS:

- The following FN communities are located in the identified municipalities: Songhees FN and Esquimalt FN (Westshore detachment); Cowichan FN (North Cowichan); Chemainus FN (Ladysmith); Pauquachin FN, Tsartlip FN, Tsawout FN and Tseycum FN (North Saanich); T'Souke FN (Sooke).
- Rural areas with populations under 5,000 will continue to fall under the Provincial Police Service.

OTHER MINISTRIES IMPACTED/CONSULTED:

- Municipal Affairs

PREPARED BY:

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Wayne Rideout
Assistant Deputy Minister
And Director of Police Services
Policing and Security Branch
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APPROVED MAY 4, 2021 BY:

Mark Sieben
Deputy Solicitor General

ATTACHMENT:

Appendix 1: Impacts to Municipalities and Preliminary Funding Allocation - SIPDC

Estimated Contributions - Proposed Transition Plan					
Fiscal Year	Forecast by E-Comm (in millions)	Municipal Contribution		Provincial Contribution ¹	
2022/23	\$4.754	30%	\$0.992	70%	\$3.611
2023/24	\$4.954	65%	\$2.239	35%	\$2.557
2024/25	\$5.165	100%	\$3.591	0%	\$1.574 ²

Summary of Individual Municipal Costs to Make Up Municipal Contribution		
Municipality	Number of FTEs	% Share
Colwood	s.16; s.17	
North Cowichan		
Ladysmith		
Langford		
North Saanich		
Sidney		
Sook		
View Royal		
Provincial RCMP		
Total Allocation		

¹ Provincial contributions reflect a percentage of the amount PSSG is currently subsidizing (i.e., will not add up to 100%).

² Municipalities under 5,000 are subject to the 30% cost-share by the Province.

³ Provincial RCMP refers to the municipalities under 5,000 who will continue to receive services under the provincial cost-sharing.

Appendix 1: South Island Police Dispatch Centre - Impact to Municipalities

E-Comm 9-1-1

\$'s in 000's

\$'s in 000's			Preliminary Funding Allocation by Provincial Fiscal Year								
South Island Police ¹	Establishment ²	% Share	FY 22/23 Forecast	Municipal RCMP	Province	FY 23/24 Forecast	Municipal RCMP	Province	FY 24/25 Forecast	Municipal RCMP	Province
Muni % alloc FY			100%	30%	70%	100%	65%	35%	100%	100%	0%
Colwood	s.16; s.17	s.16; s.17	s.16; s.17								
North Cowichan											
Ladysmith											
Langford											
North Saanich											
Sidney											
Sooke											
View Royal											
Provincial											
Total		100%	4,754	992	3,762	4,954	2,239	2,715	5,165	3,591	1,574
Summary											
Municipal RCMP		70%	3,305	992	2,314	3,445	2,239	1,206	3,591	3,591	-
Province		30%	1,449	-	1,449	1,510	-	1,510	1,574	-	1,574
Total		100%	4,754	992	3,762	4,954	2,239	2,715	5,165	3,591	1,574

¹ South Island RCMP-policed municipalities over 5,000 (West Shore RCMP)

² Establishment is based on a cut-off date of Dec 31, 2020, which accounts for adjustments from the "Police Resources in British Columbia, 2019" publication

- Based on E-Comm 2021 Approved Budgets and preliminary future year forecasts, adjusted for known metrics changes and staffing updates
- Forecasts assume status quo staffing levels and no material increase in call volumes or other relevant metrics.
- Includes an increase to dispatch seat capacity in the 2022+ forecast compared to original seat number at site opening as a result of operational requirements assessment in 2020 and 2021.
- E-Comm allocation metrics will continue to be updated on an annual basis which may change the South Island Police RCMP share accordingly.
- Establishment figures will be updated on an annual basis to capture updated staffing information.
- Forecasts EXCLUDE Next Generation 9-1-1 (NG9-1-1) costs as these are not yet known

March 25, 2021

The Honourable Mike Farnworth, M.L.A
Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General
PO Box 9010 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria BC V8W 9E2

Email: PSSG.Minister@gov.bc.ca

Dear Minister

Re: Funding Model Transition for Call-taking and Dispatch Services

We are writing to you today concerning the decision communicated to us in a teleconference on December 10th of last year and re-affirmed in a letter from your former Deputy Minister, Brenda Butterworth-Carr, received on December 18th. The letter was regarding the funding model transition for police call-taking and dispatch services provided by E-Comm to our respective jurisdictions through the South Island Police Dispatch Centre.

We are collectively requesting a meeting with you to discuss this file because it continues to be of major concern for us from several perspectives.

We have had repeated assurances that the cost breakdowns on this would be forthcoming; however, to date, we have received no details of these cost breakdowns for our communities. As you are no doubt aware, all communities are in the final stages of adopting our respective municipal budgets. To that end, we would respectfully request that your staff be instructed to expedite the provision of the cost estimates for each of us so that we can all include them in our five-year financial plans. Or if these costs are still being projected and are unable to be provided by April 15th, we would respectfully request that this entire issue be "postponed" by a year, wherein the phase-in of the costs - whatever they are - would be envisioned to take place beginning in 2023. This is part of what we would like to discuss with you.

We are very concerned that there appears to be an understanding by the Province that this issue is well known to South Island municipalities and that it should not come as a surprise to us. While we agree there is likely a lack of awareness on this issue on the part of UBCM, this issue has also never been discussed at the Local Government Contract Management Committee (LGCMC). Therefore, no municipality has benefited from a complete understanding of the downloading of these costs until Ms. Butterworth-Carr relayed the changes to us at the December 10th meeting she held with South Island municipalities. This issue should have been brought up through the proper channels of LGCMC because of the significant impact to municipalities, financial or otherwise.

Given the pending budget deadlines and the COVID financial challenges we are all facing, we

respectfully request a meeting ASAP to further discuss the financial implications of this download on our respective communities.

Sincerely,



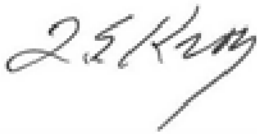
Mayor Martin
City of Colwood



Mayor Stone
Town of Ladysmith



Mayor Young
City of Langford



Mayor Krog
City of Nanaimo



Mayor Siebring
District of North Cowichan



Mayor Geoff Orr
District of North Saanich



Mayor McNeil-Smith
Town of Sidney



Mayor Tait
District of Sooke



Mayor Screech
Town of View Royal



December 18, 2020
Ref: 613510

His Worship Rob Martin, Mayor of the City of Colwood
His Worship Aaron Stone, Mayor of the Town of Ladysmith
His Worship Stewart Young, Mayor of the City of Langford
His Worship Al Siebring, Mayor of the District of North Cowichan
His Worship Geoff Orr, Mayor of the District of North Saanich
His Worship Cliff McNeil-Smith, Mayor of the Town of Sidney
Her Worship Maja Tait, Mayor of the District of Sooke
His Worship David Screech, Mayor of the Town of View Royal

Dear South Island Mayors:

Thank you for your participation in our meeting on December 10, 2020 to discuss the funding model transition for police call-taking and dispatch services provided by E-Comm through the South Island Police Dispatch Centre.

As discussed, when the transition from the RCMP to E-Comm occurred it was the Province's understanding that this was a change in service provider, not the service itself, and that it would continue as a Provincial Service as per the Provincial Police Service Agreement (PPSA). However, the RCMP subsequently raised the issue with Public Safety Canada and it was confirmed by all parties that under section 3.6 of the Municipal Police Unit Agreements (MPUAs), telecommunications are identified as the responsibility of the municipality, without any cost to Canada or the Province. While the Province has been able to fund police call-taking and dispatch as part of the services provided by the Provincial RCMP OCCs, the change in service provider led to the result that responsibility for these services must now be aligned to be consistent with the terms of the MPUA (the template that applies to all municipalities is attached for ease of reference).

As discussed at the meeting, to ensure these services are effectively maintained, we are committed to collaborating with E-Comm and your municipalities to ensure agreements and funding arrangements are in place for April 1, 2022. The Province will continue to pay costs in 2021/22 and has established a two-year transition plan to provide a phased contribution to service costs to allow municipalities to plan accordingly:

- Year 1 (2022/23): The Province will contribute 70% of the total cost of services for affected municipalities in the South Island, with municipalities responsible for the remaining 30%.

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- Year 2 (2023/24): The Province will contribute 35% of the total cost of services for affected municipalities in the South Island, with municipalities responsible for the remaining 65%.
- Year 3 (2024/25): Municipalities in the South Island will be 100% responsible for all police call-taking and dispatch services, as invoiced through E-Comm.

Also as discussed at the meeting:

- Transition of costs will occur on April 1, 2022 and there will be no retroactive costs;
- The costs are for South Island municipalities over 5,000 population and will not include rural areas that fall under the Provincial Service.
- E-Comm currently has cost estimates per municipality and will work over the coming months to refine and provide to your respective municipalities, as well as the structure of service level agreements.
- This is consistent with Lower Mainland RCMP-policed municipalities that have contracts with E-Comm.
- E-Comm is the only emergency communications centre available for the South Island.
- The Province will also work with E-Comm and municipal partners to address governance future state.
- There will be opportunities to discuss and provide feedback on any future changes to police related costs at Local Government Contract Management Committee (LGCMC). My apologies for the error during our meeting, this matter was not discussed at LGCMC and was raised with my ADM colleagues at a Contract Management Committee (CMC) forum.

Thank you again for joining us on our call and providing us with your input and concerns. If you have any additional questions or considerations, please contact Sandra Sajko, Executive Director, Police Services, at Sandra.Sajko@gov.bc.ca. Additionally, you may reach out to Oliver Gruter-Andrew, President and CEO, E-Comm 9-1-1, at Oliver.Gruter-Andrew@ecomm911.ca with questions as we move forward.

Take Care,



Brenda Butterworth-Carr; Tr'injā shār njit dintlāt
Assistant Deputy Minister
And Director of Police Services
Policing and Security Branch

Attachment: Municipal Police Unit Agreement, April 1, 2012

.../3

pc: Robert Earl, Chief Administrative Officer, City of Colwood
Allison McCarrick, Chief Administrative Officer, Town of Ladysmith
Darren Kiedyk, Chief Administrative Officer, City of Langford
Ted Swabey, Chief Administrative Officer, District of North Cowichan
Tanton Tim, Chief Administrative Officer, District of North Saanich
Randy Humble, Chief Administrative Officer, Town of Sidney
Norm McInnis, Chief Administrative Officer, District of Sooke
Kim Anema, Chief Administrative Officer, Town of View Royal
Oliver Gruter-Andrew, President and CEO, E-Comm 9-1-1
Bhar Sihota, Senior Policy Analyst, UBCM
Robert Lapham, Chief Administrative Officer, CRD
Kevin Lorette, General Manager, Planning and Protective Services, CRD