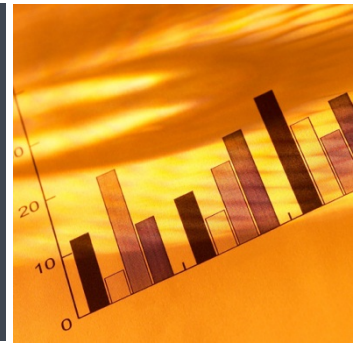


Illustrative Case Studies of First Nations Policing Program Models



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BUILDING A SAFE AND RESILIENT CANADA

The First Nations Policing Program needs modernization to better serve the public safety needs of Indigenous communities across Canada

BACKGROUND

The First Nations Policing Program (FNPP) funds primarily two policing service models: 1) Self-Administered (SA) Agreements; and 2) Community Tripartite Agreements (CTAs). Under the SA model, a First Nation or Inuit community, or group of communities, negotiates a tripartite agreement with the federal government and a provincial/territorial government to administer its own police service. Under the CTA model, a First Nation or Inuit community, or group of communities, negotiates with the federal and provincial or territorial government to be policed by its own dedicated contingent of police officers from an existing police service (e.g., the Royal Canadian Mounted Police [RCMP]).

The primary purpose of this study was to provide an in-depth exploration of these two policing models and to discuss their respective successes and challenges. This report was not intended to be a comparative evaluation, but rather, an historical overview of the development and implementation of each FNPP model, challenges related to funding, the role of CTA and SA officers, and their respective resourcing needs.

METHOD

Quantitative and qualitative data were collected from a purposive sample of 10 CTA and 10 SA police services across all national regions.

In addition to requesting crime statistics, costing information, and number of police personnel, questionnaires were distributed to all agencies sampled to examine their respective experiences and needs. Finally, follow-up interviews were conducted with selected police service providers and government officials.

FINDINGS

Available crime statistics show that, for most communities with SA services, crime rates and the Crime Severity Index (CSI) have declined. While there is a decline in the number of criminal code incidents, this may not necessarily reflect overall workload, but rather changes in deployment as in the case of police officers spending more time on mental health or substance abuse, or public order maintenance activities that are not readily measured. The rate of police officers per 1,000 residents is 4.95 for SAs and 1.80 for CTAs (the rate for CTAs includes the Aboriginal Community Constable Program). Nationally, the rate of police officers per 1,000 off-reserve residents is 1.92 officers.

The SA and CTA respondents identified their successes in establishing relationships with the communities they serve. However, while the CTAs sampled in this study can draw upon resources from RCMP headquarters to provide detachments with technical support or information on specific programs, SA police services are basically left on their own to develop programs.

This study also revealed substantial variation in funding across services; however, it does not appear that some key indicators of police budgets (e.g., degree of geographic isolation) account for this variation. The differences in the budgets of SA police services may be attributed largely to the tripartite agreement process where each agreement is independently negotiated rather than being based on any set police performance standards. While their policing budgets are, to some extent, based on negotiations, they are also likely influenced by the availability of FNPP monies for policing services at a given point in time. In some

instances, limits on eligible expenses were exceeded for a variety of legitimate policing-related reasons.

Information on the CTAs reveals a similar and on-going funding problem. A review of the funds allocated to the RCMP for CTAs revealed expenditures that are ineligible for reimbursement, but necessary to provide policing services to First Nation and Inuit communities. These ineligible expenses include overtime costs for policing such as criminal investigation activities, court attendance, or the transportation of prisoners. In the 2015-16 fiscal year, there were ineligible expenses of around \$7.4 million.

The SAs and CTAs sampled were given an opportunity to provide personal accounts concerning resources and funding. Many told similar stories of the difficulties policing often large and rural areas (e.g., the amount of time allocated to transporting prisoners); limited resources; police stations in need of repair; a lack of adequate prisoner lockup areas; and inadequate housing for police officers. Concerns over police stations in need of repair, financial hardships, and staff shortages were expressed more frequently by SA police services. There was a general belief by both SA and CTA respondents that the FNPP should be making a significant contribution to the costs of police detachments and related facilities. This is a major gap in the current FNPP funding model.

IMPLICATIONS

Based on the literature review, a review of previous reports and audits, questionnaire responses received from SA and CTA police services, and interviews, the following considerations for future policy development have been identified:

- 1) Establish a new funding model that provides more long-term, stable funding to police services;
- 2) Incorporate funding for infrastructure into a renewed funding approach;
- 3) Examine the feasibility of establishing multi-functional single space facilities that may combine police, fire, healthcare, and social services into a single building or a common physical space to promote collaboration between government agencies within Indigenous communities;
- 4) Review the impact of prisoner transportation policies and procedures on SA and CTA police service providers;
- 5) Establish a partnership with other organizations to provide additional support for mental health crisis training for FNPP police service providers;
- 6) Change the name of the program from First Nations Policing Program (FNPP) to Indigenous Policing Strategy (IPS) to better reflect the diverse nature of the communities served, which may include Inuit and Métis peoples, as well as, First Nations; and
- 7) Assess the impact of modern Indigenous treaties (i.e., comprehensive land claims and self-government agreements) on the FNPP.

SOURCE

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