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Witness Protection Program Act - Annual report: 2007-2008

Background

This is the twelfth Annual Report on the *Witness Protection Program Act* as required by section 16 of the *Act*.

The Witness Protection Program (WPP) continues to be an effective tool for law enforcement to combat terrorism and organized crime. We continue to see the benefit of the WPP as an important program in support of national priorities, including the dismantling of organized crime groups in Canada. Furthermore, the program is available to not only the RCMP but to all law enforcement agencies in Canada and to foreign agencies.

The statistics included in this report are based on the services provided by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) between April 1, 2007 and March 31, 2008. Protectees include individuals from RCMP cases, protectees referred by other Canadian police services and foreign protectees under subsection 14(2) of the *Act*. Protection given under subsection 14(2) is on a cost-recovery basis including the related expenses of RCMP personnel.

In order to not jeopardize the integrity of the Program, or the safety of any individual within the Program, statistics have been provided on the most relevant areas of the program, without details concerning individual cases.

Services provided:

During the course of the reported year, the following is a breakdown of services provided to the law enforcement community:

Admission :

During this period, the RCMP considered a total number of ninety-six (96) cases for admission purposes. Thirty-four (34) protectees were admitted in the program of which twenty-five (25) were granted a secure name change.

A total of nineteen (19) protectees were accepted in the program resulting from RCMP cases.

The RCMP has provided assistance to other Canadian law enforcement agencies during the last year, as provided for under subsection 6 (1)(a) of the *Act*. We have admitted fifteen (15) protectees on behalf of other Canadian law enforcement agencies into the program. The assistance provided by the RCMP in these instances is mostly related to the provision of secure federal documentation. The responsibility for protective measures for these protectees rests with the requesting agencies.

Twenty-seven (27) cases were provided with alternate methods of protection. Of these, seven (7) were cases whereby the individual refused to be admitted into the Witness Protection Program. The reasons stated for the refusals were, the numerous conditions imposed, and an unwillingness to relocate. The remaining cases did not proceed for various reasons.

Fluctuations related to admissions from year to year are largely affected by law enforcement activities during the fiscal year and may also be affected by variables outside the administration of the program.

Termination:

There were twelve (12) cases of voluntary termination from the program this year.

There were six (6) cases of involuntary termination that were reported as per section 9 of the *Act*. These cases all involved breaches of the Protection Agreement by the witnesses and their participation in the program was terminated following written notice.

No witness was refused admission to the program by the RCMP pursuant to section 10 of the *Act*.

General:

There was one (1) civil litigation filed during this period and one (1) complaint was filed with the Commission for Public Complaints, against the RCMP in relation to the program during the last fiscal year.

Furthermore, during this reporting period, the RCMP provided presentations to visiting foreign officials on the WPP and attended several conferences as invited guests in countries with similar law enforcement concerns.

Cost of the Program:

As noted in last year's annual report, the RCMP is now providing Parliament with a more detailed list of the costing to administer the WPP, which is reflected in the attached appendix on page 5. Amounts provided are for those incurred by the RCMP only. These do not take into consideration expenses incurred by other law enforcement agencies.

The total cost of the administration of the program for the reporting year was \$6.57M. As detailed, this amount includes wages for personnel, expenses, travel costs, administrative and protectee relocation expenses, as reflected in the appendix. It should be noted that award payments are accounted for in a separate budget, thus these expenditures are not reflected in the overall annual cost of the Witness Protection Program.

Report of the number of cases for the program		
Number of	2007-2008	2006-2007
Total Number of RCMP Cases assessed for the program	96	98
Total number of Protectees accepted in the WPP - By other law enforcement agencies (15) - By RCMP (19)	34	54
Total secure identity change	25	48
Voluntary Terminations	12	17
Involuntary Terminations	6	4
Refusal of protection by witnesses	7	6
Lawsuits filed in court and complaints with the Commission for Public Complaints against the RCMP in relation to the program	2	4
Alternate methods of protection	27	9

Appendix

Break down of RCMP Expenses	
1) RCMP Compensation:	\$3,105,928
2) Public Servant Compensation:	\$494,767
3) Other Police Department Secondment:	\$291,480
4) Travel:	\$344,347
5) Administration:	\$473,089
6) Witness Protection Expenses:	\$1,597,529
7) Miscellaneous:	\$263,178
8) Civil Litigation Costs:	\$0
Total:	\$6,570,318

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