

**NATIONAL
POLICE
FEDERATION**



**FÉDÉRATION
DE LA POLICE
NATIONALE**

Cumberland County Council Police Service Review

TO: Murray Scott, Mayor of Cumberland County
FROM: Brian Sauvé, President, National Police Federation
DATE: September 27, 2022

Introduction and Context

The National Police Federation (NPF) welcomes the opportunity to share our expertise regarding the ongoing police service review in Cumberland County. The NPF is the sole certified bargaining agent representing about 20,000 Members of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) across Canada, including about 990 RCMP Members in Nova Scotia and 33 in Cumberland County. The NPF provides strong, fair, and progressive representation to promote and enhance the rights of RCMP Members.

The NPF strongly supports the periodic review of policing services in the communities that our Members serve. We believe that reviews such as this one provides us an opportunity to both highlight the outstanding work that our Members do and to discuss continuous ways to improve public safety.

RCMP Policing in Nova Scotia

The RCMP has served as Nova Scotia's provincial police service since 1932 under the *Provincial Police Service Agreement* (PPSA).ⁱ The Nova Scotia (NS) RCMP currently has about 990 officers working across 55 detachments throughout the province, serving 40 municipalities and 13 First Nations, at all levels of government through over 145,000 calls for service annually.ⁱⁱ

The NS RCMP also receive a strong level of support from the communities they serve. Strong support was reflected in a survey conducted by Pollara Strategic Insights from July 13 –25, 2022, that found 68% of Nova Scotians served by the RCMP are satisfied by the police service they receive.ⁱⁱⁱ The NS RCMP has been able to maintain a high-level of service and build strong local community relationships that have kept residents feeling safe and secure in the policing they provide.

RCMP Policing in Cumberland County

The Cumberland RCMP is comprised of 40 full-time equivalent employees made up of 33 Regular Members and 7 Public Service Employees. RCMP Members are incredibly committed to serving Cumberland County and have deep personal, family, and social connections within the community. Our Members take part in many community programs including RCMP Talks Sessions, career presentations, bike rodeos, Seniors Safety Program, and volunteering in a diverse range of programs that they and their families are woven into.

Cumberland County receives police services through the RCMP policing model under the PPSA. Under the RCMP, Cumberland County benefits from high-quality cost-effective policing. Part of the cost savings

comes from the 30% contribution the federal government pays towards Cumberland County's RCMP police services. Along with the federal contribution, the Nova Scotia RCMP also provides several specialized and support services at little to no cost to the County. These costs are instead covered by the Nova Scotia provincial government, or the federal government through cost-share agreements. This means that, by having the RCMP, Cumberland County can access a fully equipped policing service without necessarily assuming the complete cost. A list of some of these RCMP specialized and support services Cumberland County can access, if needed, are highlighted below in the Chart B.

In addition to providing efficient use of tax-payer dollars, the RCMP also provides a standard of service and training that is not necessarily provided by other municipal police services. Nova Scotia currently has policing standards, but they are presently being updated and enhanced to mirror best practices and advances in training, equipment, and technologies. However, through the RCMP, Cumberland County already has access to some of the highest levels of training and service delivery standards. This ensures that residents of the County are receiving the best service available in the country.

Another important component of the excellent service provided by the RCMP is the District Policing Model. With this model, detachments in the County can be centralized, allowing the Cumberland RCMP to be highly responsive and coordinated. By being able to pool resources, it allows for a higher level of visibility of officers, increased safety, flexibility to deploy officers to the most urgent calls, and to send back up when required. The ability for the District Commander to strategically deploy resources based on municipal policing priorities and an analysis of crime trends means that coverage can be provided throughout the County without gaps in service. This represents the best practices of modern policing and improves the safety of both the public and RCMP officers.

Finally, it is worth mentioning that even though Members of the RCMP serving in Cumberland County might come from locations across Nova Scotia or the Country, they remain incredibly committed to their community. In addition to providing unique and quality policing services, our Members have deep personal, family, and social connections to Cumberland County residents. In fact, from taking part in RCMP Talks Sessions, career presentations, bike rodeos, Seniors Safety Program, and volunteering in a diverse range of programs, they and their families are woven into the community fabric.

RCMP Police Services Versus Municipal Police Services

The benefits of the Cumberland RCMP can be clearly seen when comparing to other similar municipal police services, such as Amherst. With its own police service, the Town of Amherst has a police budget very much comparable to Cumberland County, despite the large difference between the populations of the two municipalities. This ultimately means that the per capita police costs in Amherst are almost twice as high as Cumberland County, and despite these additional costs Amherst still relies on a number of critical Support Services from the RCMP. However, simply examining police budgets does not tell the full story.

In addition to a lower per capita cost, the RCMP has allowed for Cumberland County to have more police officers. The average Crime Severity Index (2010-2020) for Cumberland County is also significantly lower than both Amherst (113.16) and the provincial average of 70.26. This means that the Cumberland RCMP offers both significantly more cost-effective services and greater public safety than the municipal police service of the Town of Amherst.



Chart A: Comparison of Police Services in Amherst and Cumberland County

	Amherst	Cumberland County
Police Budget (2021-2022)	\$4,554,907.00 ^{iv}	\$4,701,412.00 ^v
Population (2021) ^{vi}	9,404	19,964.00
Cost per capita	\$484.36	\$235.49
Officers	16 ^{vii}	33
Crime Severity Index (2010-2020 Average) ^{viii}	113.16	63.72

Specialized Policing Services

The RCMP provides specialized police services through a national program that comes with low or no additional associated costs to its contract partners. Municipal police services, such as Amherst, often rely on the RCMP to provide these additional services, as the cost of building and maintaining them within a police service is high. In any review, the full cost of these wrap around services offered by the RCMP at a low cost must be factored to understand the costs of a fully operational police service.

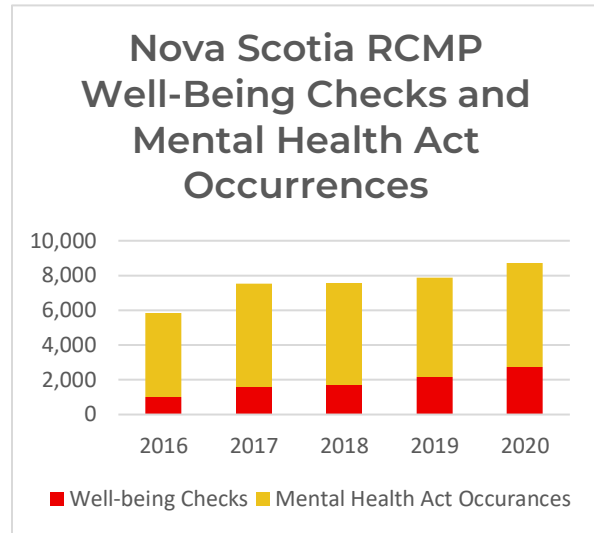
Chart B: NS RCMP Specialized and Support Services

Tactical and Specialized Operations	Investigative Services	Operational Communications and Emergency Operational Coordination
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional Officer Program • Critical Incident Program • Crisis Negotiation Team • Emergency Response Team • Emergency Medical Response Team • Explosive Disposal Unit • Police Dog Service • Provincial Ground Search and Rescue Program • Underwater Recovery Team • Special Tactical Operation • Tactical Support Group • Traffic Services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collision Analysis and Reconstruction Services • Commercial Crime Unit • Cyber Crime Coordinator • Division Criminal Analysis Section • Digital Forensic Services • Forensic Identification Services • Human Trafficking Unit • Internet Child Exploitation Unit • Interview Assistance • Major Crimes Unit • Proceeds of Crime Unit • Synthetic Drugs Unit • Truth Verification • Violent Crime Linkage Analysis Unit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Division Emergency Operations Centre • Provincial Operational Communications Centre • Risk Manager Program • Division Liaison Team • Operational Communications Centre • Employee Management Relations Office

Mental Health Related Calls

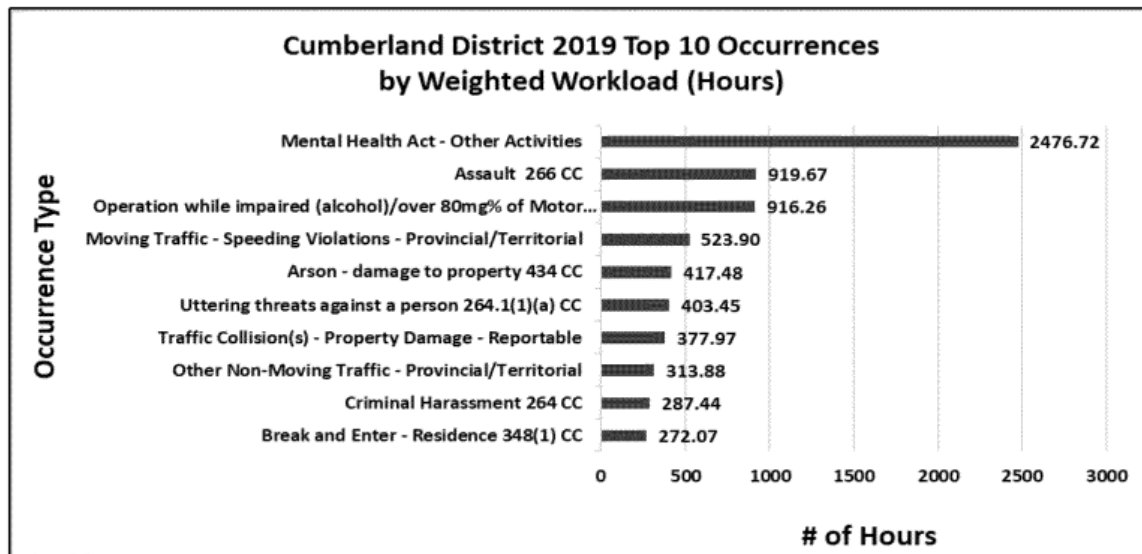
In Cumberland County and across most of Canada, police are seeing an increasing demand for services related to mental health related calls. These can be either wellness check requests or calls directly related to the *Mental Health Act*. The rise in both can be seen in the number of occurrences of calls recorded by the NS RCMP between 2016 and 2020 (see graph).

Police officers are often the first responders to arrive when someone is experiencing a mental health crisis. These calls are not always routine and can vary in complexity. These types of calls can demand a lot of time from officers and further constrains policing resources.



According to the General Duty Police Resourcing Model Review for Cumberland District completed by the RCMP in 2020, *Mental Health Act* related calls were the highest workload drivers for RCMP officers in Cumberland accounting for at least twice as many work hours as any other factor.^{ix}

Chart C: Cumberland District Top 10 Occurrences by Weighted Workload Hours^x



These calls often require specialized responses and services. Many communities across Canada have begun to adopt different forms of Mental Health Mobile Crisis Response Teams in which police officers collaborate with community partners and mental health providers. These teams have proven to be an effective tool for de-escalation and safely intervening in these crisis situations. However, there also needs to be broader social support services. This would allow police officers to be more focused on criminal activity and would ultimately create a safer community for all.

Police Service Review Considerations

The NPF and our Members support police service reviews, such as this one. We believe that it is an important part of any government's duty to ensure that key services match the needs of the community. In any review, the full understanding and accounting of services must be accounted for to provide the full context and landscape of the services provided. That is why the NPF strongly recommends that the following key considerations are included in the police services review:

1. A complete financial overview of services provided by the RCMP, including:
 - A breakdown of costs paid by each level of government
 - Direct billable PPSA costs
 - Members pay; equipment purchases; rentals and maintenance costs (criminal operations, fleet, informatics); professional service contracts; supplies and office equipment; kits and clothing.
 - Indirect billable PPSA costs
 - Pensions and EI Premiums, Divisional Administrative Costs including core administration costs, earned retirement benefit, pay in lieu of leave, parental & special leave, and health services costs.
 - National Program costs such as the Cadet Training Program, Police Dog Training Centre, Police Record and Occurrence System, National Recruiting Program, Public Complaints Commission, and Enhanced Reporting & Accountability.
 - Non-billable costs
 - Legal services; External Review Committee costs; civil litigation; official languages training; claims and compensation settlements; relocation; contaminated sites assessments; work force adjustment lump sum payments to RRSP.
 - Specialized services paid for by the province via the PPSA and not charged back to the municipality:
 - Emergency Response Team; Operational Communication Center; Major Crimes Unit; Police Dog service; Forensic Identification services; Crime Scene Investigator services; Crowd Control / Public Order Unit services; Explosive Disposal services; Incident Commander services; Hostage Negotiator services; Marine Operations services; Underwater Recovery Team services.
 - Capital Costs such as equipment and real estate/infrastructure and facilities management.
2. The policing services provided:
 - Compare policing statistics for Crime Severity Index, number of officers per resident, weighted clearance rate, violent crime weighted clearance rate, and authorized strengths. These should be compared over a 5–10-year period to capture trends.
 - Training and deployment requirements of police officers.
3. A complete service review identifying opportunities to improve service value for the Cumberland's Policing Services, looking at:
 - Staffing levels and resourcing allocation – policing levels considering population/officers levels and variations over the last 5-10 years.
 - Economy – policing service input costs grown with inflation and the population growth and are comparable with those of other municipalities.
 - Efficiency – the policing service model promotes an efficient use of resources to deliver services as compared to policing services in other municipalities.
 - Effectiveness – policing services result in safer community over time and when compared to other municipalities.



4. Police service review should consider previous reviews and recommendations, not just in Cumberland, but other municipalities across Nova Scotia.
5. Policing Governance and oversight:
 - Provide an overview of how the municipality has set up its governance structure to review, fund, and set priorities of the RCMP servicing the community.
 - Usage and role of Police Committees.
 - Overview and outline of responsibilities for implementation and operation of the yearly plan and budgets.

ⁱ Nova Scotia, *The Provincial Police Service Agreement* [Online] Available at:

https://novascotia.ca/just/global_docs/NSRCMP_Fact_Sheet.pdf

ⁱⁱ RCMP. Occurrence Report. 2019. <https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/transparenc/police-info-policieres/calls-appels/occurrence-incident-eng.htm#text-1>

ⁱⁱⁱ 2022. Pollara Strategic Insights - National Police Federation: Nova Scotia Wave 3.

^{iv} Town of Amherst. *Municipal Operating Budget 2021-2022*. <https://www.amherst.ca/budgets.html>

^v Cumberland County. *Municipal Operating Budget 2021-2022*. <https://cumberlandcounty.ns.ca/finance.html>

^{vi} Statistics Canada. 2021 Population Census Data. <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2021/dp-pd/prof/index.cfm?Lang=E>

^{vii} Town of Amherst. *Amherst Police Sustainability Report*. <https://www.amherst.ca/police-department.html>

^{viii} Statistics Canada. *Crime severity index and weighted clearance rates, police services in the Atlantic provinces*. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=3510018601>

^{ix} RCMP. December 2020. General Duty Police Resourcing Model Review Cumberland District. <https://masscasualtycommission.ca/files/documents/roundtables/COMM0043275.pdf?t=1660448302>

^x RCMP. December 2020. General Duty Police Resourcing Model Review Cumberland District. <https://masscasualtycommission.ca/files/documents/roundtables/COMM0043275.pdf?t=1660448302>

