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Province Releases Deployment Model for Proposed Alberta Provincial Police Service

The model provides information on how detachments would be staffed and structured under an Alberta Provincial Police Service. The RMA continues to have questions relating to costs, staffing challenges, and local input under the proposed model.

The Government of Alberta has released a [Community Policing Deployment Model Detachment Prototype Design document](#). The model, developed by PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) on behalf of the Government of Alberta, provides more information related to how officers would be deployed and detachments organized under the proposed Alberta Provincial Police Service (APPS) structure [released earlier this year](#).

Some of the notable aspects of the model include the following:

- ◆ A hub policing model featuring 65 - 85 community detachments supported by 20 - 30 service hubs, which are further supported by three regional hubs.
 - ◇ Community detachments would primarily provide “core” policing services, while service hubs would provide similar core services in addition to hosting certain specialized services available on a regional basis.
- ◆ Each community detachment and service hub would be supported by a minimum of 10 officers plus administrative staff.
- ◆ Policing resources in rural communities would increase from the status quo through a combination of reducing the number of sworn officers currently in administrative roles into active-duty positions as well as shifting some officers currently in urban or suburban detachments into rural areas.
- ◆ Decentralize specialist services such as tactical teams, critical incident response, mental health and addictions response, forensic identification, canine units, and air support from large urban centres to locations across the province so that they are more accessible province-wide.

As the document outlining the model is lengthy and complex, the RMA is still in the process of reviewing and analyzing. However, based on an initial review, the RMA continues to have concerns with how effectively the deployment model will address the RMA’s [main policing priorities](#) related to municipal costs, rural service levels, and local input into policing.

Specific initial questions and concerns with the model that the RMA will seek to clarify with Alberta Justice include:

- ◆ Is a province-wide minimum of 10 officers per detachment a realistic approach or is there a more strategic and efficient way to determine the “right” number of officers in a detachment?
- ◆ Aside from redistributing current officers into rural areas, how many new officers are required under the model and how will they be recruited?
- ◆ What upgrades are required to existing detachment infrastructure to accommodate this model, and who would be responsible for associated infrastructure costs?

- ◆ What mechanisms will be in place to ensure that community detachments and service hubs have some level of accountability and communication with municipalities?
- ◆ Does redistributing officers from urban and suburban communities into rural areas suggest that urban and suburban communities currently have more police officers than necessary? How will this impact public safety in urban and suburban areas?
- ◆ Will detachment infrastructure in rural areas be sufficient to host specialized services relocated from urban communities?
- ◆ The proposed APPS model relies on partnering with municipal police services (especially Edmonton and Calgary) for shared use of specialist units. How will this partnership approach align with dispersing specialized services to be based in locations far from Edmonton and Calgary?
- ◆ How will the APPS recruit and retain the much larger contingent of officers required to be based in rural communities under the proposed model?
- ◆ How will administrative positions no longer filled by officers be replaced? Who is responsible for those costs and are they considered in APPS cost projections?

The RMA has previously [taken a position in opposition](#) to the formation of a provincial police service due to concerns about impacts on municipal costs, rural service levels, and local input into policing. This position is also supported by the RMA resolution [4-22S: Continued Support for the Royal Canadian Mounted Police in Alberta](#).

The deployment model has not changed the RMA's positions. While it presents an intriguing option for improving rural service levels, many questions remain about whether it can realistically be implemented, as well as how it will impact costs and local input into policing.

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