



CITY OF RICHMOND

REPORT TO COMMITTEE

TO: General Purposes Committee
FROM: Lauren Melville
Manager, Policy & Research
RE: Auxiliary Policing

DATE: December 27, 2000
FILE: -

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

1. That staff be directed to work with the RCMP and the Attorney General's Office on developing an agreement which outlines the roles and the responsibilities including financial and legal of all the affected stakeholders in the Auxiliary Constable Program.
2. That the agreement be forwarded to Council through General Purposes Committee.
3. That the RCMP be directed to incrementally re-initiate the Auxiliary Constable Program as outlined in the report dated December 27, 2000 subject to an agreement being approved by Council.
4. That \$20,000.00 from Gaming Revenues be utilized to fund the "start-up" costs of the Auxiliary Program for 10 auxiliary constables.

Lauren Melville
Manager, Policy & Research

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STAFF REPORT

ORIGIN

In the early 1960's the auxiliaries were trained civilians waiting to be deployed if there was a mass disaster. As a result of limited interaction with the local detachments, the program lost momentum. In order to re-energize the program, the RCMP then allowed the members to take the auxiliaries on routine patrols. This shift in role led to a debate as to whether auxiliaries were complementing regular police or supplementing them in order to save costs.

Over the last year, the Auxiliary Policing Program has experienced significant changes. The catalyst of these changes was the Commanding Officer's of "E" Division's decision to disarm the auxiliaries constables throughout the province, and to shift their role from assisting police in their regular duties to a primary role of participating in community policing and crime prevention duties. As part of this shift, the Attorney General's Office in consultation with "E" Division redesigned the policy governing the auxiliary program late last year. The intent of the revised policy is to set out a clearer definition of the auxiliary constable's roles and responsibilities given the shift in their mandate.

The purpose of this report is to provide information on the revised policy and resulting program to help assist Council in making a decision as to whether or not the City of Richmond will continue to participate in the Auxiliary Constable Program.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Richmond currently has 5 auxiliary constables from the previous program who may wish to continue. The Auxiliary Co-ordinator for E-Division has advised that approval has been obtained through the Attorney General's Office to waive the challenge exam requirement for existing auxiliary constables. They will, however, be required to take incident management and intervention training (e.g. use of force training; baton and pepper spray use, and handcuffing techniques). They will need to complete this training prior to Sept. 2001 and every 2 years thereafter to retain current status.

The revised policy contains a Tier 1 program (without arms) and a Tier 2 program (with arms). The decision by "E" Division clearly states that the cities with contracted RCMP services will operate under the Tier 1 program.

ANALYSIS

The first section of this report provides background information on the policy and the revised program followed by a suggested approach for utilising the constables if Council chooses to participate in the program.

I. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. Permitted duties of the Auxiliary Constables

The purpose of the revised Auxiliary Program is to: "strengthen community and police partnerships by providing an opportunity for citizen volunteers to perform authorised activities in support of strategies to address the causes of or reduce the fear of crime and disorder".

In accordance with the policy, the auxiliary constables **can participate** in the following activities with limitations:

A. Education & Public Relations:

- ◆ community policing and crime prevention activities;
- ◆ non-enforcement education activities, and traffic management at road blocks so that police can focus on testing and enforcement duties;
- ◆ personal safety lectures & demonstrations;
- ◆ cadet/youth awareness programs;
- ◆ community special event involvement, and
- ◆ Assist police in training activities.
- ◆ deployment & operation of the Emergency Command Vehicle for community safety functions or as a command post during serious incidents.

Most of the above public relations and education activities can be undertaken by the auxiliaries under "general supervision" authorised by the Commanding Officer of the RCMP without being under the "direct supervision" of a police officer.

B. Preventive Activities including Patrols:

- ◆ assist in crime prevention through environmental design;
- ◆ home and business safety checks;
- ◆ Business Watch;
- ◆ Block Watch Parent Programs;
- ◆ post incident crime prevention information;
- ◆ fingerprint children as part of "child identification" programs;
- ◆ community presence on bikes, foot patrols or "ride alongs", and
- ◆ observe, record and report programs in non-operational activities.

With the exception of the patrol activities, all of the above activities can be conducted under "general supervision". The ride alongs must be conducted under "direct supervision" of a police officer. Although auxiliaries do not necessarily have to be accompanied by a police officer on foot and bike patrols, they still are under the direct supervision of a police officer. However, this supervision can be at arms length, if there is radio contact.

B. Traffic Management:

- ◆ traffic control – unpaid, non-enforcement oriented (e.g. fun runs, Remembrance Day, etc). Funding for traffic control from these special events can be used to help offset the costs of the auxiliary program.
- ◆ non-enforcement traffic related activities such as speed boards.

The auxiliary constables do not require "direct supervision" to conduct the above activities.

C. Administrative, Research & Problem Solving

- ◆ collecting, collating and analysing community information & statistics
- ◆ administrative document file activities and assistance

- ◆ Auxiliary program administration

The above administrative activities can also be conducted under general supervision.

D. Disaster Planning

- ◆ disaster planning and emergency preparedness assistance

E. Ground Searches

- ◆ all searches must be police-directed.

The OIC Contract Policing may authorize a variation to the above permitted duties based on the availability of local crime prevention and community policing programs. However, the policy does contain limitations.

That is, in accordance with the policy an auxiliary constable **cannot**:

- ◆ Initiate an enforcement activity or an investigation *unless directed to do so by a police officer that assumes direct supervision and liability*. For example, on a ride-along, a police officer may direct an auxiliary to handcuff a person while he/she pursues another person. Or an auxiliary may be on a foot patrol and call a police officer when he/she witnesses an incident such as a "purse snatching". Depending on the circumstances, the police officer may direct the auxiliary to arrest the offender, or to wait until the police officer can arrive at the scene.
- ◆ issue, serve or execute documents related to the Court (e.g. summons).
- ◆ operate technical devices for enforcement purposes (e.g. radar or breath testing devices)
- ◆ operate police vehicles in an operational capacity (They can, however, operate police radios, and computers to conduct checks on stolen cars. Recent amendments to the policy also enables the auxiliaries to operate fully marked police vehicles which include the Emergency Command Vehicle for non-operational uses such as special events).
- ◆ guard crime scenes or prisoners.
- ◆ engage in any duty of covert surveillance, agent, or decoy.

2. Utilization of auxiliaries in the Lower Mainland

To date, Burnaby, Surrey, North Vancouver, Chilliwack, Comox, Courtney, Kelowna and Kamloops are actively participating in the revised *Auxiliary Constable Program*. Each of these cities are either at the recruitment or training stage of the program. West Vancouver has decided not to participate in the program.

Staff also contacted the City of Vancouver and the City of New Westminster to find out the status of their *Auxiliary Reserve Program*. The City of Vancouver is currently in discussions with their union regarding the future of the program. As a result, they are not recruiting any reserves at this time. At this point, they are unsure as to whether or not they are going to continue with the program. The Vancouver Reserves are now unarmed and stationed at the community police stations. Although they accompany police officers on ride-alongs, they do not participate on foot or bike patrols due to union concerns.

Most of their efforts have been concentrated on educational activities and traffic management activities at special events such as the PNE.

The City of New Westminster utilizes both a Tier 1 and Tier 2 Auxiliary **Reserve** Program. All the volunteers must initially complete the training and operate in the Tier 1 program in the first year. In the Tier 1 program, they are unarmed, and wear police t-shirts rather than uniforms. They are stationed at Community Services Offices and assist at special events, and crime prevention educational sessions. At the end of the first year their performance is evaluated to determine if they should be considered for the Tier 2 Program. In the Tier 2 program, they wear uniforms and are armed. While in the Tier 2 program, the reserves still must devote approximately 50% of their time to community service programs. They are always under direct supervision of a police officer. Although they participate in ride alongs, they are not allowed to undertake foot or bike patrols unless it is part of a special event or parade.

3. Complement Available to Richmond

In accordance with the policy, the RCMP in consultation with the City are to determine the appropriate complement of auxiliary constables based on an allocation ratio of 1:2 for the first ten members and 1:6 thereafter. Based on this ratio, the City is entitled to receive 35 auxiliary constables. The volunteers are required to complete 160 hours of volunteer service per year in order to remain in the program.

4. Training

The training program (96 hours) for the auxiliaries has been revised to reflect the shift to a community policing focus for the auxiliary constables. They are also required to complete additional training (20-30 hours) on incident management/intervention techniques (eg. pepper spray, use of force, baton training and handcuffing techniques). Resources at the local detachments are responsible for conducting the training.

5. Financial and Liability Implications

In accordance with the policy, the City will be responsible for funding the program. The capital start-up costs (uniforms, training material etc.) per auxiliary constable is approximately \$2,000.00, and then \$150.00 per year thereafter. The Province will provide an annual grant to municipalities, which have approved and established programs. The amount of this grant still needs to be determined by the Province. Additional funding for the program can also be obtained from community and special event's sponsors.

It is a requirement of the program, that the City indemnify the Minister against liability for the Auxiliary constables. In smaller communities, both the city and the Province are jointly liable. All Auxiliary constables will be subject to WCB regulations. However, the Auxiliary constables will likely not be covered under the City's current volunteer insurance policy because they report directly to the RCMP and wear uniforms. Unlike Surrey and Burnaby who are self-insured, Richmond uses the Municipal Insurance Association. Staff are expecting a final legal opinion on the liability issue from the Municipal Insurance Association in the next couple of weeks. Staff have also discussed the liability concerns with representatives at the Province who are currently trying to resolve this issue.

II. SUGGESTED APPROACH

Given the directions contained in the new policy, staff have analysed the possible deployment opportunities for the auxiliary constables that could help contribute to a community policing service delivery model in Richmond. They include:

- a) Assist police officers in the delivery of the **School Liaison Program**. Currently, the officers involved in this valuable program need additional support.
- b) Provide **traffic management** services at special events such as Remembrance Day and also as part of the counter attack road blocks.
- c) Assist with the **Block Watch** program.
- d) Act as a **communications liaison** between the police and the neighbourhoods that have or could be potentially affected by crime. For example, if a particular area is being targeted by prowlers, the auxiliary constables could alert the residents in the area and advise them on crime prevention tactics.
- e) Participate on **community problem solving teams** with the police. The auxiliary constables could be utilised to solve problems that are occurring in specific areas in the community. Their role would be to undertake the research, analyse the information, act as a liaison with the community involved, and participate on foot, or bike patrols to help create a presence in a particular problem area. Such an approach would be particularly useful in areas where there is not a community policing station. Auxiliary Constables could be assigned to solve problems that are occurring in a particular park or industrial area.
- f) Assist the police by providing an additional presence at **Rave Parties** and other large special events. The auxiliary constables would NOT supplement the required police complement at rave parties as outlined in the Late Night Events (Rave Bylaw), but would rather provide a stronger police presence at these events.
- g) Operation of the **Emergency Command Vehicle** at community public relations functions as needed.

Staff believe that the above activities could provide valuable support to strengthening community based policing in Richmond. In selecting the possible deployment options, consideration has also been given to creating opportunities such as project-related work that is more rewarding for volunteers.

If Council chooses to participate in the revised program, staff believe that an incremental approach should be taken by limiting the recruitment in the first 2 years to 10 auxiliary constables. Such an approach would enable Council to evaluate the success of the program without committing to 35 auxiliary constables. In addition to an evaluation at the end of 2 years, quarterly reports on the auxiliary constable's achievements should be provided through the future Community Safety Division. Staff further believe that it is prudent to start slow, with a limited number of volunteers until such time that Richmond's new police cadets become more experienced.

It is also recommended that if Council chooses to participate, that an agreement be sought similar to the Victim/Witness Services Program which outlines the responsibilities of all parties prior to re-initiating the program.

The agreement should clearly specify what specific services the City receives from the program, and what the various responsibilities are including liability and financial obligations of all the parties including the City, the RCMP, the Attorney General's Office and the volunteer constables. Such an agreement would also provide greater equity for all parties involved if changes were sought. At the last Consultative Forum, the RCMP Liaison with the Attorney General's Office indicated that an agreement is currently being drafted and will be presented to the next meeting of the Consultative Forum in February 2001.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The capital start-up costs of the program for 10 auxiliary constables is approximately \$20,000.00. The annual operating cost is approximately \$1,500.00. It is suggested that gaming revenue may be an appropriate funding source to cover the start-up costs of the program.

CONCLUSION

Over the last year there have been significant changes to the Auxiliary Constable Program. Staff believe if Council chooses to participate in the revised program, that an agreement which specifically outlines the responsibilities and roles of all stakeholders should be created, and that only 10 auxiliary constables should be recruited during the first 2 years.



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