



City of Richmond

Report to Committee

To: Community Safety Committee
From: Rendall Nasset
Officer In Charge
Richmond Detachment

Date: February 23, 2009
File: 09-5350-00/Vol 01

Re: The Province of British Columbia's Gang Violence Initiative

Staff Recommendation

That the report on the Provincial Government's Gang Violence Initiative be received for information.

Rendall Nasset, Superintendent
Officer In Charge
Richmond RCMP
(604-278-1212)

FOR ORIGINATING DEPARTMENT USE ONLY		
CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER 		
REVIEWED BY TAG	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
REVIEWED BY CAO	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>

Staff Report

Origin

At the February 17, 2009 General Purposes Committee meeting the following referral was directed to staff:

"That the announcement by the Premier on February 13, 2009 of 168 new police officers and ten new Crown Prosecutors be referred to staff to report back to the Community Safety Committee."

Analysis

One hundred and sixty-eight new police officers will focus on gangs over the next three years. Of those, 131 will be put in place immediately. That nearly doubles the number of dedicated officers working on organized crime to 368. Funding for these new officers will total \$69 million over three years, with \$53 million coming from federal funding and \$16 million through the provincial RCMP contract. The new officers include two 16-member "satellite" gang units in Prince George and Kelowna, and a 10-member "weapons enforcement unit" dedicated to seizing illegal firearms.

The Provincial Government commits to:

1. 10 additional Crown prosecutors to work with the police and prosecute gangs;
2. Working with the courts to fully utilize three secure, specialized courtrooms in Vancouver, New Westminster and Surrey to prosecute gang offenders.
3. Investing \$185 million to build 304 additional jail cells that will be able to hold more than 600 offenders;
4. Vigorously pursue changes to the Criminal Code and Controlled Drug and Substances Act to give prosecutors more powers and keep criminals off the streets;
 - Make it much harder for those accused of gun offences to get bail
 - Eliminate the "2 for 1" credits for time served while awaiting trial, particularly for bail breaches, weapons or violent crime
 - Expand the abilities to obtain and utilize wiretap evidence, especially for new technologies
 - Simplify evidence disclosure requirements to expedite prosecution
 - More protection against intimidation for justice officials
 - Stronger powers to fingerprint suspects on-site
 - Pursue the introduction of federal Bills C-25 and C-26 that provide more power to detain youth and bring in mandatory minimum sentences for serious drug convictions
5. Outlawing modified, armoured vehicles under the Motor Vehicle Act and provide more powers to confiscate and destroy them;
6. Working with ICBC to ban registration and insurance of modified armoured vehicles;
7. Implementing a new licensing regime for the sale and purchase of body armour;
8. Providing additional powers for the chief firearms officer and take over responsibility for the federal firearms program in B.C.
9. Undertaking more rigorous inspections and security standards for gun dealers and their stores
10. Increasing licencing security rules for "prop masers" including reducing and limiting the number of authorized suppliers.
11. Requiring all health facilities to report treatment of any patients with gunshot wounds

12. Enlisting a team of provincial tax auditors to provide forensic accounting support to prosecutors and the police;
13. Adding \$1 million towards youth education programs to deter youth from joining gangs for a total of \$3 million since 2006.
14. Offering a new escalating rewards program for anonymous tips and for information leading to the arrest and conviction of gang members and;
15. The implementation of a gang hotline to help collect tips and catch criminals.

The Federal Government announced that under proposed legislation:

1. Drive-by shooting attacks would be punished with prison sentences of between four and 14 years. If such an attack is committed on behalf of a criminal organization, or with a restricted or prohibited firearm, the minimum sentence would increase to five years.
2. Would create new offences for both aggravated assault against a police officer and assault with a weapon against a police officer. These crimes would each carry a 14 year sentence.

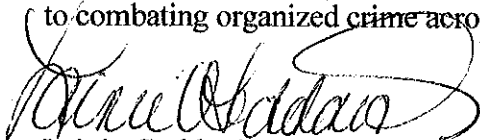
At the time of writing, the originating location of the RCMP members has not been determined by either the provincial government nor the RCMP "E" Division.

Financial Impact

None.

Conclusion

The Provincial Government believes that a focus on gangs should be a priority for the next three years. The Province's \$69 million dollar Public Safety Initiative to target gangs and guns will be implemented immediately, with two satellite gang units and a weapons enforcement unit dedicated to combating organized crime across the province.



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