

Presentation to the Community Safety Committee  
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## Integrated Police Canine Unit not Meeting Needs of Richmond

Ken Frail

I want you to go back to your childhood and imagine playing hide and go seek in the dark. If you are "IT" you count to 20 and yell "ready or not here I come" and then go out and search for the other players. The other players are trying to get past you to home base where they are "safe". When playing this game participants agree to remain in a defined area. If you tag them they become "IT".

Hide and seek from a law enforcement point of view.

- This game starts without warning.
- Begins with a crime being reported, language issues, excitement, confusion,
- Delays with suspect identity, description, direction of travel, weapon,
- Full circumstances not immediately known, time delay benefits suspect.

SOP -Standard Operating Procedure response to Code 3 Crime.  
Response/Containment

Crimes against persons, Break and Enter found committing, evidence location major incidents, sexual assault, stolen vehicles dumped, vehicle pursuits, Impaired investigations, hit and run, home invasions, ERT.

Canine Unit Response – Equalizer - Hunters

- Time
- Distance
- Emergency Vehicle Operation
- Risk to Public
- Risk to Member
- Liability
- Span of Control – Area Knowledge?
- Character of Dog Masters

Factors – Wind,Vehicle Traffic, Vehicle Exhaust, Rain, Dew, Crowds, Fog, Time,  
Adequate Containment, Tunnel Traffic,

Span of control/response. Within 15 minutes in an urban setting, distance.

Current State: Richmond shares our Canine Unit as part of an Integrated Canine Unit. This amounts to the availability of a Police Canine Unit part time.

This arrangement creates significant delays getting the K9 unit to the scene of an incident. This also requires that the officers involved in the containment effort are delayed before returning to service.

Advantage goes to the suspect. We are on an island with traffic congestion, bridges.

There is no rationale for sharing an essential asset with another (distant) municipality when we require that it be on hand 24/7.

Example: High altitude fire rescue. Would we share a ladder truck with distant municipalities?

Examples – 1 Blockwatch. 13 breakins in 14 days. Community meeting City Hall.  
2 Break-In Anger's House – 40 minute delay

What a Dog Master does:

Monitors several radio channels, full on operational, hunting,  
Covers Patrol members, traffic stops, disturbances...  
Prowls hot spots, drug houses,  
In a pursuit become the "primary"  
Track subjects, have first contact with, arrest subjects,  
Provide expert evidence in court.  
Assist with Warrant execution, Searches, ERT, Major Incidents, Evidence.  
As senior members provide leadership and feedback to patrol members  
(often all of this while responding Code 3).

Richmond RCMP Officer Quotes:

"We only have a dog unit here for a couple of hours a day."  
"We don't have a dog unit when we need it".  
"If we miss a Break and Enter suspect by a minute we have lost".

Ask For: **Council to establish a Policing Standard for Richmond.**

*"Establish a Richmond Police Canine Unit for the City of Richmond to provide Canine response 24/7."*

Benefits

- Essential to Crime Reduction/Chronic Offenders/Early detection/Prevention
- Higher success rate in suspect apprehension
- K9 Evidence stands up in court
- Reduce risk to safety, officer, community, liability
- Deterrence to Crime

- Benefit of Dog Master (Operational Patrol Experience) “on scene” at major incidents
- Canine Units are on operational duty their entire shift. (Hunt).
- Canine Units monitor and cover other operational officers, vehicle stops, disturbances, warrant executions etc,
- Canine unit to assist in Emergency Operations/Disaster Incidents
- School liaison/Public Relations/Recruiting

**Effectiveness** - No substitute for a trained Police Dog and Dog Master. Essential asset for Operational Effectiveness. Apprehensions not misses. Closed files not open files.

**Efficiency** – Early identification of of Prolific Offenders, Subjects in Major Investigations, Prevention.

**Risk** – Risk to Police Officer, Risk to Public due to response...Risk increases with distance and speed travelled Code 3.

**Economy** – Costs yes. Cost of prevention? Many examples – early detection (recidivists), Cost (major cases) vs long elaborate investigations.

### Call to Action

**“That City Council withdraw from the Integrated Canine Unit and establish a full time Police Canine Unit specifically for the City of Richmond 24/7.**

**“That the Richmond Police Canine Unit be fully funded, not from the existing RCMP Contract, but in addition to the current cost of police service.**

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