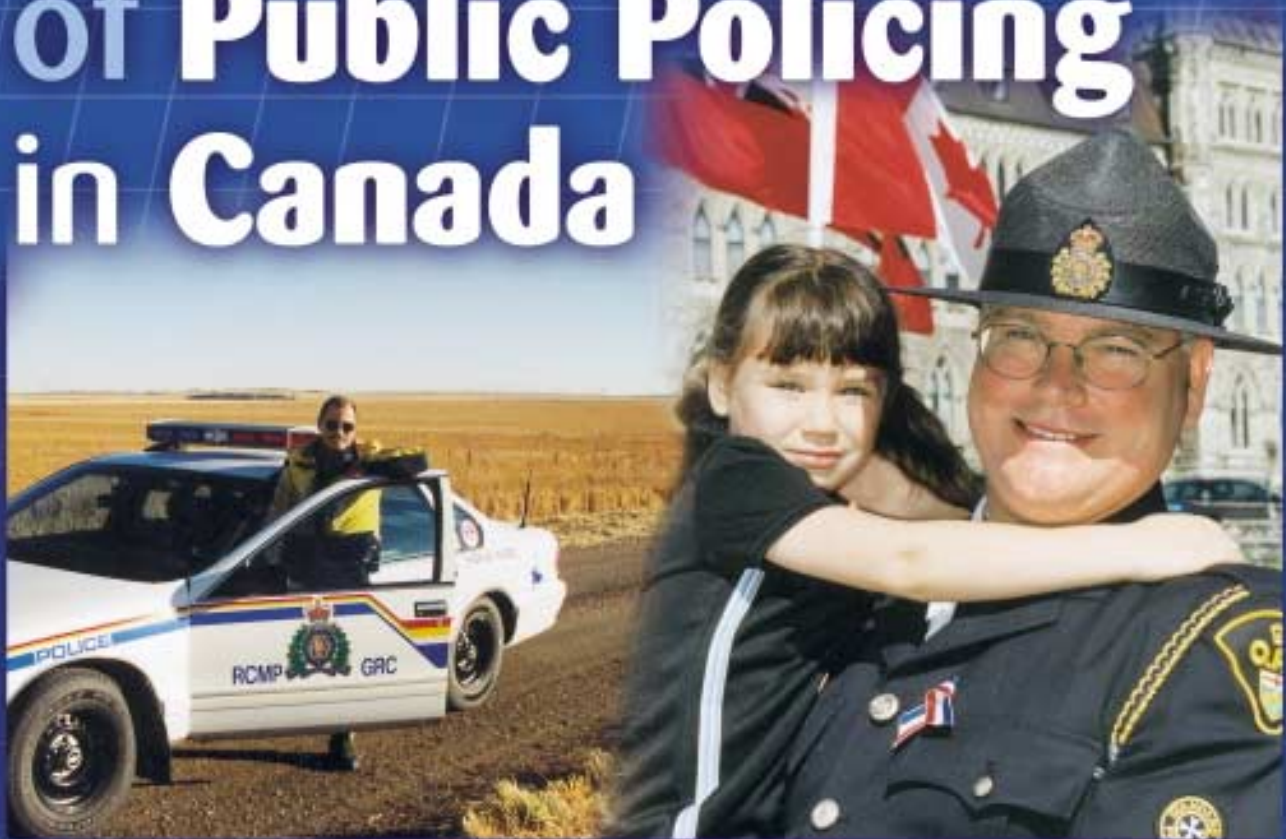


# Strategic Human Resources Analysis of **Public Policing** in **Canada**



# Executive Summary



## The Legal Context for Policing in Canada

Policing in Canada is governed by two separate levels of government – the federal and the provincial. Each level of government is granted authority over policing by the *Constitution Act* of 1867. Section 91(27) of the Act confers authority on the federal Parliament to legislate in relation to criminal law (English common law) and procedure. The power to legislate in respect to “peace, order and good government”, bestowed at s. 91 also grants additional federal power that influences our policing structure. The federal government used this authority to enact legislation and create the country’s national police services – the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP).

Most policing responsibility is under provincial jurisdiction. Provincial legislatures are empowered by virtue of s. 92(14) of the *Constitution Act* to make laws in relation to the “administration of justice”. The Supreme Court of Canada ruled that the “administering of justice” provides jurisdiction over civil and criminal justice and that policing is a part of the criminal justice responsibility. The various provincial governments have passed legislation defining the way in which they can provide policing in their province. In general, provinces provide policing in one or more of following ways:

- Provinces can create a provincial police force through legislation. At one time or another all provinces have had a provincial police service, however, only Ontario, Quebec and Newfoundland retain provincial police services at the present time.
- Provinces can impose a requirement on municipalities to provide adequate and effective police services within the municipality, and grant them the corresponding authority to establish municipal police services. Newfoundland is the only province that has not provided the authority to create municipal police services.
- Provinces can negotiate an agreement with the government of Canada for the RCMP to provide police services under contract. There are two such types of contracts. The first being when a province contracts with the RCMP to provide provincial policing services and the second being when the individual municipalities contract with the RCMP to provide municipal policing services.

Although municipal policing accounts for most of the police officers in the country, the federal government plays a larger role than might be expected. Regulatory statutes dealing with revenue, alcohol, immigration and customs and excise to name but a few, are federal responsibilities. The federal government has deployed a police presence to deal with some of these responsibilities that pre-dates the RCMP.

In most jurisdictions in Canada, responsibility for policing usually falls under the Solicitor General or the Attorney General (or Minister of Justice). There are a few exceptions however. In Quebec, the Director of Public Security is responsible for policing and in Ontario, responsibility is shared by the Attorney General and the Solicitor General. Provinces also generally provide, in their legislation, for the governance of municipal forces by a local authority, such as a municipal board of commissioners of police and municipal councils and also, in certain cases, by a provincial police commission.<sup>1</sup>

## Policing in Canada – a Focus on the Future of Human Resources

To serve and protect. It’s a governing principle for police work everywhere in Canada, whether patrolling the waterfront of St. John’s or walking the beat on the streets of Vancouver. The principle itself has never wavered. How police can continue to achieve these results – that is becoming more and more complex. It costs more to police effectively. It takes increased time and requires new skills. Frequently, it demands a new approach, a new attitude and different preparation. How police in Canada can better serve and protect has been the focus of this study.

Citizens have demanding expectations – they often want a return of police on the beat, have strong views on alternative justice/sentencing approaches, and are requesting that police services across the country re-examine how they deal with ethnic minorities, young offenders, and domestic violence offenders. These pressures, and others, are causing police services to fundamentally re-assess the way they operate. This has a particular impact on how they manage human resource policies, procedures and practices. Staffing decisions, leadership approaches and management frameworks in the policing community require new attention and consideration if police organizations intend to remain relevant and effective over the next decade and more.

Recognizing that the skills, quality and management of its human resources are vital to its continued success, representatives of the Canadian public policing sector undertook a major study to identify the sector's human resources challenges and priorities, and to craft strategies to address them. This study was directed by a Steering Committee comprised of members from across the policing sector in Canada. Members represented a variety of organizations such as training institutions, police services, municipalities, police boards, police associations, unions and government departments. The study, prepared by PricewaterhouseCoopers, was funded through a cost shared contribution agreement between the police sector and Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC). Over 700 individuals from across Canadian police services were consulted in order to identify the key human resource challenges faced by police services across the country. These challenges formed the basis of discussions with the Steering Committee in order to develop recommendations for action by the sector to address the human resource issues.

## New Demands are Being Made of Police

The changing face of the Canadian population, emerging and changing forms of crime as well as economic pressures have had a significant impact on the public policing sector in Canada. Some key pressures faced by police services across the country are:

**Changes within the legal environment:** Changes in the administration of the justice system as well as other legislative changes, new case law and jurisprudence have implications for both the development of new skills and knowledge and enhancing existing skills and knowledge for police services. For example, alternative justice / sentencing measures will require a number of new skills (e.g., mediation and negotiation) and the need for strategies to guide interaction with other professional groups playing greater roles within the justice system.

**Increasing fiscal pressures:** While not restricted only to police services, economic and fiscal constraint is making the delivery of police services more challenging. The increase of national enforcement issues has placed additional pressure on the delivery of police services. This is particularly true of, although not limited to, the municipal

level where one source of revenue (through property taxes) cannot sustain increased policing costs required to combat local in addition to national and international criminal activities.

**Immigration patterns and changing demographics:** Because the demographic face of Canada is changing dramatically, police recruitment processes must be revised to attract members from representative cultural communities. Operational policies which may be at odds with these candidates' cultural or religious beliefs must be re-examined. In addition, changing demographics of the Canadian population are resulting in changing public expectations of police services. Community policing has been used as one strategy for responding to public expectations. This approach can be more expensive (e.g., requiring more office locations) and requires a true mindset/culture shift that can only occur with the support of effective staff training and demonstrated senior leadership.

**Increased desire to meet the unique client needs of equity groups** (e.g., Aboriginal Peoples, People with Disabilities, Visible Minorities and Women): Whether this involves a greater dependence on volunteers, or the adaptation of new policing methods, a more sensitive client management style will have ramifications for police recruitment and training approaches.

**Increased geographic reach of Organized Crime:** Longer and more complex investigations demand a wider range of skills and collaboration among multiple police forces, including the ability to lead and participate in more varied teams.

**Technological advances:** Although technology can increase the ability of police forces to be innovative, it also creates a need to recruit skilled IT staff and to train both uniformed and civilian staff to use technology more effectively.

**White-collar crime:** Criminals are increasingly using cutting-edge computer and telecommunications equipment and software. Policing organizations have found it difficult to keep pace, largely because of budget reductions, a lack of recruitment focus on candidates with these specific skills, and gaps in training availability. Policing organizations often find it hard to retain computer proficient professionals because of more attractive compensation packages available in the marketplace.

## The Operating Environment for Policing is Changing

The impact of the ageing police workforce, the need for a representative workforce, new policing skills required to respond to the changing environment and the increased competition for some specialist skills will require police services to rethink and adapt their operations. Finding common operation efficiencies is made more difficult by the jurisdictional framework for public policing in Canada. Although there are similarities in police services across the country, there are distinct differences in how police services are organized and how they operate. Among the emerging issues:

**Training facilities:** In struggling to meet the needs of the policing communities, some training facilities are dramatically under-utilized, while others cannot handle the demand. Although it is slowly starting to change, traditional teaching techniques remain the norm in the policing environment. There has been only limited use of newer approaches such as computer-based training, distance learning programs and self-directed development.

**High levels of recruitment expected:** Demographics within police services point to an ageing police force, which means that the decade ahead will require intensive recruitment activities to replace a retiring workforce. In addition, changing skill sets due to technology, new approaches to police service delivery and emerging types of crime are resulting in new skills and knowledge being sought by police forces. In order to meet these high levels of recruitment, police forces must consider changing traditional means of recruiting and reducing economic barriers (i.e., high pre-hiring training costs) in order to attract candidates from non-traditional recruitment pools.

**Movement of personnel between police organizations:** While this can be viewed as a positive development (e.g., sharing of best practices and a better understanding of others' procedures), for some "feeder" police forces the impact can be dramatic as they invest significant funds in training staff only to lose them to forces offering slightly better compensation packages. This situation is further exacerbated by the recruitment of highly qualified personnel by private sector security and investigative organizations.

**Compensation:** There are several competing factors that affect the ability of police services to provide attractive compensation packages. The higher cost of living can be a

deterrent in larger urban centres (despite the resulting richer compensation packages), whereas smaller services, often in more remote locations, present their own difficulties in attracting recruits. Traditional compensation models do not always resolve these issues or support the needs of modern police organizations seeking a myriad of new skill sets.

**The management of overtime:** Budget reductions, unplanned events, leaves and unfilled vacancies all contribute to significant staff overtime. In addition, pressures on overtime budgets can limit the length and scope of investigations. These competing elements can negatively impact staff morale, resulting in increased burnout and greater use of sick leave, thus compounding the problem.

## How the Public Policing Sector Intends to Meet these Challenges

This study includes a diagnosis of the human resource challenges facing the Public Policing Sector, both now and in the foreseeable future, and is intended to serve as the basis for generating discussion and development of concrete recommendations for action. The main objective of this study is to provide a vehicle for positive change. The recommendations put forth by the Committee will provide direction for the development of a human resource strategy for the Canadian Public Policing Sector. It should be noted that the recommendations in this report are intended to be useful and relevant to the various police jurisdictions in Canada and to be adapted by them for their use where relevant. They are not, however, intended to be prescriptive or obligatory with respect to any particular jurisdiction.



## Highlights of the Recommendations

### **PRIORITY:** Attracting the next generation of talent for policing organizations

Effectiveness of the attraction of talent to the police sector is a critical factor in ensuring the on-going effectiveness of police services. The impact of the ageing police workforce, the need for a representative workforce, new policing skills required to respond to the changing environment and the increased competition for some specialist skills will require police services to rethink and adapt their recruitment activities.

In the past, police services easily attracted large numbers of candidates due to the high profile of the Sector and the appeal of policing as a career choice. In order to screen the large numbers of applications and to ensure that they were selecting candidates who would be suited to a policing career, multiple selection mechanisms had been developed and tested to ensure their validity and reliability. Traditionally, the focus for recruitment in the Policing



Sector was one of selection – selecting qualified individuals from among many applicants. This meant that police services invested large amounts of time and money to sort through applications in order to identify qualified candidates. This focus on selection assumes there will continue to be enough applicants to satisfy demand and that these applicants possess the skills required. It is also based on the assumption that police constables, once hired, can be trained to acquire specialist skills as the source for specialized expertise within the police service.

Given the anticipated retirements over the next five years and the fact that, as with other Sectors, police services will increasingly be competing with the broader labour market, there is a concern that the Police Sector will no longer be able to rely on recruitment methods that assume an adequate applicant pool. Competing in a dynamic labour market to attract specialist skills, visible minorities and women requires employing a proactive approach to recruitment that actively seeks out potential candidates, and requires an open and flexible work culture to attract a diverse range of candidates. The increasing need for specialized skills will also require a more flexible and creative approach to how police services obtain them. The shift in focus will need to include employment of civilian specialists as well as police officers, in a variety of employment arrangements – full time, temporary, part time, or fee for service contracts.

Proactive recruitment focuses on screening potential candidates into the applicant pool through increasing efforts to attract the new skills that are needed. This represents a shift from the current method of screening candidates out of the applicant pool. Continuing to rely on passive attraction activities will leave the sector at risk of not creating the workforce it requires.

The anticipated retirements over the next few years and the resulting increase in the number of new recruits to be hired to fill vacant positions, will also have an impact on the training facilities across the country. Training facilities will have to re-examine their enrolment capacities to ensure that they are able to train the number of new recruits that police services will require in the near future.

As such the Steering Committee recommends that the police sector:

- Develop a sector-wide strategy to attract public police and support personnel.
- Develop new mechanisms to attract candidates to meet requirements for diversity and to retain these candidates once hired.
- Develop new strategies to retain talent in the policing sector.
- Develop new methods of acquiring specialist skills, to include civilians as well as police officers, through a variety of employment arrangements – full time, part time, temporary, or fee for service contracts.
- Remove barriers to entering public policing, including the financing of initial training.
- Develop national standards for physical and other entry requirements.
- Increase recruit mobility through initiatives such as mutual recognition of the equivalency of qualifications from various jurisdictions.
- Develop a national media strategy to highlight the positive aspects of policing to attract qualified recruits.

### **PRIORITY: Increasing Sector-wide efficiencies**

The jurisdictional framework for public policing in Canada means that, although there are similarities in Police Services across the country, there are distinct differences in how police services are organized and how they operate. While recognizing and respecting jurisdictional differences is essential, the Steering Committee has identified that the sector has created barriers along these jurisdictional lines that have resulted in duplication of efforts and created some inefficiencies among the jurisdictions.

For example, requirements for police education have evolved differently in each jurisdiction. Each jurisdiction has developed its own approach to police education, including the creation of separate police academies, and the responsibility for design, development and delivery of police curriculum within each of the jurisdictions. Given

that the criminal code forms a common base for policing, there is significant similarity in core skill and knowledge requirements for police across the country. However, each jurisdiction spends a great deal of time and money on the development and maintenance of police training and education that could otherwise be shared among jurisdictions.

Other public sectors, such as the Health Care Sector, have faced similar challenges in working in a jurisdictional framework. For instance, nursing is governed by a variety of legislation requirements across jurisdictions in Canada, however the various provincial governing bodies have worked together to create a system that helps to maximize efficiencies and reduce duplication of effort through the development of national competency standards.

Police academies and police services have been collaborating on an informal basis. For example, under the auspices of the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police, a project was coordinated by the Ontario Police College, the Canadian Police College and the Learning and Development Unit of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), which brought together federal, provincial and municipal police representatives. These representatives developed a national framework for the use of force. The work was supported by chiefs of police from across the country. To date, this type of collaboration has been the exception rather than the rule.

The absence of harmonized training and educational standards limit the extent and actual economic benefits of collaboration. While standards themselves will not eliminate duplication, they provide police services and the various jurisdictions with the foundation for sharing resources particularly in, but not limited to, the design, development and even the delivery of education and training.

Increased collaboration across police services can support more than training and development. In order to better recruit, police services can jointly develop attraction strategies, products and tools among jurisdictions and among police services within a jurisdiction which will help to defray the costs of such new activities. In addition, collabo-

ration across jurisdictions can also support the development of strategies to address new and evolving types of crime, particularly national and international criminal activities.

The Steering Committee has identified a number of recommendations that are aimed at improving the sharing of information, practices and methodologies across jurisdictions and police services. In particular the Steering Committee recommends that the police sector:

- Explore co-operative ventures between publicly funded training and education institutions.
- Develop a Sector toolbox or repository of best practices in human resource management, which could be drawn on by police services across Canada.
- Create a national human resource group under the auspices of the national police service to do future work on the Sector toolbox and other Sector-wide human resource initiatives.
- Develop competency profiles and training standards for all jobs in policing, including specialist and management functions, executives, recruits, auxiliaries and volunteers.
- Increase collaboration across police services for the design and delivery of training for skills and knowledge that are common to policing across jurisdictions
- Develop protocols governing the human resource aspects of police service takeovers in order to minimize uncertainty and facilitate transitions.
- Develop an internet-based learning resource accessible to police across Canada that would enable just-in-time learning. This learning resource should be appropriately funded so that financial barriers do not limit access to content.
- Continue to provide assistance and support for the delivery of training for police governance bodies and police personnel so they can understand and carry out their respective legislated roles effectively.

### **PRIORITY: Improving the police Sector's human resource planning capacity**

It was widely recognized throughout this study that public police services in Canada would continue to face a changing environment. Changes in the demographic profile of the population, new and emerging types of crime and the impact of technology, for example, are, and will continue affecting public policing in Canada. Many in the Sector have expressed concern over the accelerating pace of change and the ability of public police services to respond adequately and effectively. Changes to the environment in which police must operate will likely impact the type of services, the mode of delivery and human resources required in the Policing Sector.

The Steering Committee recognized the need and importance of improving the ability of police services to respond and adapt to new and emerging service delivery models. The cost and time required for identifying new service delivery models and measuring their impact on HR requirements can be overwhelming for individual police services. In addition, the primary focus for police services must be on front line service delivery, which limits the extent of resources that can be allocated to adapting to change.

The challenge is in balancing the resources between service delivery for current needs and identifying and readying resources in order to respond to future needs. While this is a critical dilemma shared with other sectors within Canada, it remains critical for police services to be prepared to respond to new and evolving environmental changes.

Developing and improving the capacity of police services to plan their human resources strategically is a key element in ensuring that the Sector as a whole is ready and able to respond to a changing operating and external environment. However, this requires more than just committing to better HR planning. There must be renewed importance given to the role of strategic HR planning, establishing vehicles for strategy development and developing tools to support HR planning, such as planning models, and information systems.

HR planning, at both local and national levels, requires an understanding of the current human resource configurations in the police service, including the ages, years of service, mode of employment, skills and experience, retirement entitlements, and employment equity characteristics of the human resource base. While few would question the necessity of HR strategy and planning, many police services are not well equipped with human resource databases that will provide the type of information necessary for effective HR planning.

Another key element of HR planning for police services is ensuring the adequacy of deployable resources. Like many other Sectors in which emergency response is a key component of the work, police services are continually being challenged with what is the appropriate level of resourcing. While there has been some progress on the development of personnel strength assessment tools in some regions, the Sector is not yet equipped with any formal personnel strength assessment guidelines and methodologies to assist in HR planning.

The Steering Committee has identified a number of recommendations that are aimed at improving planning within police services. In particular, the Steering Committee recommends that the police sector:

- Develop strategies for succession planning and executive development that can be drawn on by police services across the country.
- Develop a computer model to project attrition / retirement that can be used by police agencies to project hiring needs.
- Conduct an overall review of the ability of police training institutions to accommodate projected training demands including supply / demand forecast.
- Develop models for determining police staffing requirements.
- Ensure that changes to cost-shared policing agreements (for example RCMP 90/10 or 70/30) are negotiated in a timely manner to ensure that the human resource impacts are addressed.
- Resolve issues of quality and consistency in statistics about policing, including human resource information and other data relevant to planning and performance evaluation.

## **PRIORITY: Improving labour-management relations**

Although the labour-relations climate in most police services has changed very little in the past few years, there have been some significant improvements in some organizations. These improvements can generally be attributed to increased communication between management and labour and to proven approaches to contract negotiation such as interest-based bargaining and other similar techniques. Many police services have established a joint-labour management committee to try to improve communications between management, the rank-and-file officers and in some cases, civilian employees. These committees help to create a more collaborative approach to solving problems. New bargaining approaches such as interest-based bargaining have also proven helpful in improving understanding and cooperation between labour and management. Some police services have used this approach in the latest round of contract negotiations with some success.

While labour-management relations have improved in some police services, there is evidence that in others, relations between management and labour have become increasingly strained and adversarial. These strained relations are due to a number of factors that vary from one police service to the next, but in general, they can be attributed to contract disputes, externally imposed budget restraints and disagreements over management appointments and adequate staffing.

The Steering Committee recognizes that while some progress has been made in improving labour-management relations, there still remains some work to be done to create a less adversarial climate in contract negotiations. The Steering Committee members therefore recommend the following:

- Develop mechanisms to aid police, management and associations in moving their labour relations from a more adversarial to cooperative relationship.

## **PRIORITY: Increasing funding and resources**

The Canadian public policing sector, like many other sectors, has experienced a considerable number of inter-related economic and fiscal pressures over the past few years. These pressures have culminated in resource constraints for police services across Canada. At the same time, both the amount and the complexity of police work have increased due to a combination of influences such as new technology pressures, increasing administrative work, changing roles demanded by community policing and other trends. When these influences are combined with the budget freezes and/or cutbacks that have affected the sector over time, this increased scope of policing means that “everyone is doing more with less”. The Federation of Canadian Municipalities has raised the concern that with one source of revenue (property tax), Canadian municipalities cannot sustain increased policing costs of addressing national and international crime, as well as providing policing service at the local level.

The Steering Committee members therefore recommend that the policing sector:

- Conduct a review of mechanisms for financing public policing across Canada, including the roles of the various levels of government in providing funds.

In addition to the other recommendations in this report, the Steering Committee recognizes that implementing any recommendations stemming from this Human Resource Strategic Analysis will require dedicated and specialized resources. As such, the Steering Committee recommends that:

- A working group be established in order to promote the implementation of these recommendations on behalf of the sector;
- Funding be provided for the working group in order to help them implement the recommendations proposed in this report.

