

**Submission to the Mass Casualty Commission**  
**From the Nova Scotia Chiefs of Police Association**  
*September 28<sup>th</sup>, 2022*

Dear Chief Commissioner MacDonald and Commissioners Fitch and Stanton:

Thank you for the opportunity for Nova Scotia Chiefs of Police to present evidence before the Commission. We truly appreciate having our position on the record through interviews, testimony, panel discussions and roundtables.

We have followed the proceedings with great interest and noted several issues that impact community safety and well-being in our communities and province. As you have suggested, we are taking one last opportunity to convey our collective position to you on issues related to your mandate. We respectfully offer this written submission for your review and consideration:

**RCMP/Municipal Police Relations and Interoperability**

We recognize that there is a perception before the Commission and within the public that the relationship between municipal police and RCMP is highly fractured. Fortunately, this is not our experience and our relationship is much stronger in reality than has been painted publicly.

We assure the people of Nova Scotia that when there's an issue, we are there for each other in the interest of public safety as has always been the case. As has been stated before the Commission and the public we serve, we are stronger together and NSCPA remains committed to that philosophy.

In that vein, we can assure you and the public that municipal agencies provide resources and support to the RCMP whenever possible, just as they do for us – this is very much a two-way street. There are many occasions when municipal agencies are called upon to assist the RCMP in their detachment areas and we do so whenever resourcing allows in the interest of public safety.

Additionally, we look forward to enhancing our relationship with the RCMP, particularly with the new management team for 'H' Division. We are committed to working with incoming Assistant Commissioner Dennis Daley and his team to strengthen relations and determine ways we can enhance collaboration and interoperability.

In fact, we recognize that interoperability could continuously be improved through interagency collaboration in such areas as joint exercises, training and the sharing of resources. We will seek opportunities with the RCMP in this regard so that we can draw on each other without hesitation on a regular basis and particularly during crises.

We are also in the process of clarifying with the RCMP that they continue to have a voice within the Nova Scotia Chiefs of Police Association as an associate member while ensuring the

Association continuously puts the interests of Nova Scotia, our municipalities and our citizens first.

### **Municipal Police Resources, Training & Equipment**

We assure you and the people of Nova Scotia that municipal police are adequately resourced, highly trained and well-equipped. Additionally, officers in specialized roles are trained to national standards at the Canadian Police College and do so alongside municipal, provincial and federal counterparts. Further, our members know their communities and citizens, are community-engaged and highly dedicated to the communities they serve, often for decades at a time.

### **Future Models of Policing**

As police leaders who continuously look to the future, we recognize that the current policing model in Nova Scotia is not sustainable, particularly given the current structure of policing agencies, funding models through the Province and ongoing discussions regarding service exchange. We are open to exploring alternate policing models for Nova Scotia with the aim of enhancing public safety and better serving all Nova Scotians.

As noted in various reports about policing in Nova Scotia, we support the exploration of more regional municipal police services in Nova Scotia, which would allow our current community-engaged policing approach to be expanded to more rural communities. This could mean the consolidation of current agencies and/or the expansion of single agencies. In this agile and adaptive approach, there would be a sharing of resources in communities of interest based on local needs without sacrificing local accountability. Further, it aligns with the current municipal policing approach and would not require dramatic transformational change.

This approach is also supported by the Mass Casualty Commission's interview of former Justice Minister Fury, in which he highlighted a number of areas of concern, namely:

- RCMP unionization costs,
- Appropriation of additional funds through the Provincial Police Service agreement (PPSA),
- Complaints from municipalities regarding the RCMP service delivery model and costs,
- Discussions on the PPSA,
- Requests for service delivery reviews from municipalities with RCMP contracts,
- Integrated policing models,
- Noncompliance with the Additional Officer Program (AOP), and the
- Ability of the RCMP rural policing model to meet expectations of various stakeholders.

The expansion of the regional municipal police model is also consistent with a June 2021 report of the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security on Systemic Racism in Policing in Canada, which recommended that the Government of Canada explore the possibility of ending contract policing with the RCMP, and that the Government work with provinces,

territories and municipalities to help those interested establish their own provincial and territorial police services.

This model is also consistent with the 2019 Briefing Book of the Minister of Public Safety Canada identifying systemic sustainability challenges impacting the whole of the RCMP, which relate to contract policing. It notes the growing dissatisfaction from contract jurisdictions with respect to costs, officer vacancies and the resulting impact on community safety.

Likewise, the British Columbia experience, as outlined in the 2022 report on the Special Committee on Reforming the Police Act, recommended a transition away from RCMP contract policing in B.C. to address inconsistencies with respect to service delivery and improved local accountability responsiveness and decision-making.

In the interim, we would support an assessment of specialized services in the Province and a correlating funding stream to ensure the allocation and accessibility to specialized services on a geographic basis. The Province, through discussions on specialized services and service exchange, would invest in municipal agencies to develop an increased ability to obtain and share specialized resources based on a decentralized model. This model would provide regional capacity within existing municipal police agencies and the specialized services can be shared among municipal police as well as RCMP detachments based on geographic hubs.

Additionally, we recognize that provincial policing will exist in some form, whether on its own or via a contract, and remain committed to working in partnership with our provincial counterparts and ensuring strong and sustainable interoperability.

### **Future Policing Roles & Responsibilities**

Similarly, we are open to discussions about the future roles and responsibilities of police as we recognize there is a will and need to change. We will be reaching out to Dr. Amy Siciliano and Mr. Bill Moore about their ongoing work in Halifax Regional Municipality as we believe it will inform and influence future roles and responsibilities of police and public safety across the province.

### **Policing Standards**

In relation to the concerns raised about inadequate and outdated policing standards in the province of Nova Scotia, we remain committed to working with the Nova Scotia Department of Justice and other partners in ensuring policing standards meet the public safety needs of all Nova Scotians.

Thank you for considering many perspectives to inform your recommendations. We look forward to your final report which will undoubtedly improve community safety across our country.

Sincerely,  
Nova Scotia Chiefs of Police Association

Chief Robert Walsh, President  
Chief Dan Kinsella, Vice-President  
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