

Policy Statement

Community Safety and Crime Prevention

Introduction

Safe and secure neighbourhoods are essential to the economic, social and cultural sustainability of Canadian communities, which are the foundation of Canada's prosperity and competitiveness. Canadians rely on the four orders of government to keep their neighbourhoods safe by maintaining public order, planning for and responding to emergencies and creating neighbourhoods that are more resistant to crime in the first place. Secure communities provide residents with a better quality of life and improve opportunities for economic development.

Key Principles

Building Communities for Prosperity

Safe, secure and vibrant communities are essential to national prosperity. Preventing violence and crime in our communities requires effective policing and crime prevention strategies, as well as policies to deal with the root causes of crime and providing needed social infrastructure, including affordable housing.

Intergovernmental Partnerships and Agreements

Effective intergovernmental cooperation is essential to creating safe and secure communities. Community-based approaches to combating crime and victimization are most successful when developed and implemented through intergovernmental and community-based partnerships. Municipal governments must be included as partners in planning for emergency management, disaster mitigation and pandemic planning.

FCM Policies

POLICING

All orders of government have a role in public safety yet municipalities pay almost 60 per cent of Canada's \$13.9-billion policing costs¹. From 2000 to 2015, per capita expenditures on police grew by 34% in real terms, while the number of police personnel per 100,000 people grew by just 22%. With more money spent on policing, fewer resources are available for public infrastructure, immigrant settlement, affordable housing, and other municipal services that contribute to building stronger communities. Canada needs a fair and equitable arrangement to share policing costs among all orders of government. This arrangement must include long-term funding and clearly defined roles and responsibilities, so that municipalities can continue to foster safe and secure neighbourhoods.

As a core responsibility of government in Canada, policing is essential to maintaining public order and keeping neighbourhoods safe. It is also the largest and fastest-growing cost for all municipalities. Over the past 30 years, federal governments have shifted national policing duties to provincial and municipal governments, and municipalities now pay more than 60 percent of all policing costs in Canada. This includes around \$700 million a year to enforce federal mandates concerning border security, international drug trafficking and cybercrime.

Municipal spending on policing has increased by \$2.5 billion in real terms between 2003 and 2013. Without recognition that policing roles and responsibilities have shifted, federal and provincial/territorial policing costs will continue to be downloaded onto municipalities, straining municipal property taxpayers and depriving other essential services of support.

All orders of government must work together to clarify policing roles and responsibilities and to provide long-term funding for municipal policing on a fair, predictable and sustainable basis. This will allow local governments to better coordinate scarce resources to meet local needs.

¹ Statistics Canada, *Police Resources in Canada 2015*.

RCMP

While local municipal police forces are currently responsible for policing 77 per cent of Canadians across Canada, the RCMP has direct contracts with some 150 municipalities and with eight provinces and three territories. Municipalities also have upwards of 1000 indirect contracts with the RCMP through the provinces. Policing services vary among provinces and territories, but local governments across the country share concerns about rising federal policing costs and declining service levels, as well as a limited ability to set local policing priorities. And while communities served by the RCMP have citizen advisory and consultative committees, they do not have police boards or commissions.

Strategies

- FCM will work to ensure that federal funding for municipal policing is provided on a fair, predictable and sustainable basis that allows local governments to plan and resource policing services to meet local needs.
- FCM recommends that the Government of Canada appoint a panel to review the existing distribution of policing functions. This panel should include municipal representation and be mandated to look at policing roles and responsibilities, resource allocation and capacity, and RCMP contract policing.
- Pending a comprehensive review of the existing policing regime, FCM will work to secure an allocation from the Government of Canada to (1) compensate municipal governments for providing police services to enforce federal mandates; and (2) provide sufficient funding for them to meet their growing responsibilities.
- FCM will work with its Provincial and Territorial counterparts to address municipal concerns arising from the 20 year RCMP/provincial-territorial contracts renewed in 2012.
- FCM recommends that the federal government work with provinces and territories to maintain the Auxiliary Constable Program, given the critical role that Auxiliary Constables play in maintaining safe and vibrant communities.
- As the labour relations regime proposed in Bill C-7 is implemented, FCM is urging the federal government to work with all orders of government to ensure that the ability for municipalities to pay for RCMP services is taken into consideration.
- FCM will continue to urge the federal government to work with the RCMP and provincial/territorial governments to develop a strategy to ensure RCMP staffing numbers are maintained year-round at the levels agreed upon in the Police Services Agreements.
- Where interests intersect, FCM will work with other stakeholders and professional organizations, including the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police, the Canadian Association of Police Boards and the Canadian Police Association, and the federal Shared Forward Agenda on the Economics of Policing, to deal with policing issues.
- FCM will monitor research on organized crime and gang violence, with an emphasis on research and practices that prevent young people from becoming involved in these criminal activities.

CRIME PREVENTION

Effective crime prevention takes place in the community, and strategies for preventing crime should be sensitive to local needs. Community-based, holistic approaches to combatting crime can be developed and delivered most effectively through intergovernmental and community-level partnerships.

FCM supports crime-prevention programs that aim to discourage young people from becoming involved with gangs, drugs, violence and other criminal activity and provide them with alternatives by developing parks and recreation facilities. FCM endorses the United Nations Economic and Social Council's Guidelines for the Prevention of Crime, which encourages crime prevention through social development.

FCM will work with the National Crime Prevention Centre (NCPC) and other stakeholders to provide municipal leaders with more tools to prevent crime in their communities. FCM supports the work of NCPC

in building comprehensive community initiatives and developing community-based approaches to combat crime and victimization.

Since most offenders return to their communities when released, municipal governments need to be engaged in discussions on correctional issues that affect community safety. With the support of municipal governments, local communities should be involved in developing strategies to understand federal corrections and parole practices and the transition of individuals from the federal-penitentiary system to provincial and territorial jurisdiction, and to collaborate on initiatives to help offenders reintegrate into the community.

Strategies

- FCM will encourage cooperation among all orders of government and the private sector to prevent crime through investments in social development, notably by pursuing a comprehensive approach to provide municipalities with the tools to invest in essential aspects of the community, including shelter and libraries, and facilities for health, recreational and cultural development.
- FCM will continue to urge the Government of Canada to provide sustainable funding for programs offered through the NCPC's renewed mandate. FCM will also encourage the federal government to revisit the current NCPC funding model to make grants longer-term, or at the very least renewable where programs are demonstrating results.
- FCM will continue to work with key partners and stakeholders to provide constructive and actionable recommendations on how to reduce crime and victimization and to share knowledge and experience that can help municipalities effectively prevent crime.
- Through the Joint Committee on Community Corrections, a partnership among FCM, the Parole Board of Canada, Correctional Service of Canada, and Public Safety Canada, FCM will encourage greater community understanding and improved consultation around corrections and parole and will promote concrete initiatives in community corrections.
- FCM continues to engage with the National Municipal Network for Crime Prevention to promote best practices and build municipal capacity in crime prevention.
- FCM will urge the federal government to work with municipalities, provinces and territories to design the new federal initiative to support guns and gangs police task forces.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

As first responders in 95 per cent of all emergencies, Canada's municipal governments play a critical role in public safety and emergency preparedness. They are also on the front lines of emerging health emergencies and the first to respond to dangerous goods incidents by rail or other modes of transportation. To ensure public safety, emergency management systems must be appropriately funded and coordinated across jurisdictions, as well as with industry. These systems must account for the unique hazards associated with critical infrastructure, such as airports, ports, borders and embassies. In the event of a health emergency, natural disaster or dangerous goods incident, other orders of government and the wider community depend on core municipal services. Municipalities must have the resources to deliver services needed by other orders of government.

Other orders of government must recognize that technological advances, global mobility and the new security environment poses distinct threats that burden municipal services, including police, fire, paramedics, and public health agencies.

Protecting critical infrastructure, including rail, pipelines, airports, ports, borders and embassies, consumes significant municipal resources. Emergency planning must account for hazards to this infrastructure.

With climate change widely expected to bring more frequent and more severe extreme weather events, such as floods, hail or wind storms, municipal governments must review their emergency response plans

and adapt local infrastructure to withstand severe weather. The proportion of total municipal operating budgets now devoted to protection is nearly 20 per cent, and that figure is expected to rise.

Public health is an area of shared and overlapping jurisdiction, and local governments should be fully engaged in pandemic planning. A seamless and coordinated response among all orders of government will reduce the cost of a pandemic and save lives. Municipal governments must play a central role in pandemic planning, because an effective pandemic response depends largely on core municipal services. Without these services, including water and transit, the entire response system is jeopardized.

Strategies

- FCM will continue to urge the federal government to recognize the critical role of municipal governments as first responders in emergencies and as partners in developing and implementing Canada's national security policy.
- FCM will work with Public Safety Canada to ensure that its National Emergency Management Plan considers the evolving role of municipal emergency services in protecting our communities.
- FCM will continue to advocate for the reinstatement of the Joint Emergency Preparedness Program (JEPP) and will work closely with the federal government to implement their commitment to reinstate funding for Heavy Urban Search and Rescue (HUSAR) teams and selected coast guard facilities. These initiatives will ensure that local governments have the tools to effectively prepare for and respond to emergencies.
- FCM will help to develop cooperation among all orders of government and will help coordinate security and emergency management systems, concentrating on agreements for co-location and administration, such as the Joint Emergency Operations Centre in Halifax. FCM will also help to develop improved disaster-mitigation strategies and resources available to municipal governments.
- FCM will also advocate for the federal government to engage local governments on expanding federal national disaster mitigation strategies to cover the full spectrum of predicted climate change impacts, going beyond flooding to include drought, forest fire, and other potential impacts.
- FCM will continue to urge the federal government to launch a review of changes to the Disaster Financial Assistance Arrangements to prevent an unfair burden being placed on municipal resources during the recovery from extreme weather events.
- Municipalities build, own and maintain a majority of Canada's publicly held infrastructure. FCM will engage the Government of Canada to ensure that municipalities are key partners in any national critical infrastructure strategy.
- FCM will work with Public Safety Canada to ensure municipalities have a strong voice in the design and governance of Canada's new Public Safety Broadband Network.
- FCM will work with the Public Health Agency of Canada to ensure that municipal governments have the expertise and resources required to fulfill pandemic response roles mandated by the federal and provincial/territorial governments.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE

FCM believes that the most effective strategies to combat substance abuse are community based. A lack of coordinated action on substance abuse across jurisdictions has increased demands on municipal police resources and led to the proliferation of illegal drug-production operations, including non-licensed marijuana grow ops and meth labs.

The production of illegal substances poses significant threats to communities. Unregulated marijuana cultivation and methamphetamine production present many risks to the public, emergency services and police. As a result of the lack of cooperation among jurisdictions, municipal police resources are ill-used in

the investigation of illegal production operations. The proliferation of these operations contributes substantially to the growth in police budgets.

With a legal and regulatory framework for marijuana use in Canada currently being developed by the federal government, the municipal sector will be on the front lines of this new policy landscape. With a broad range of expertise and experience acquired on the ground as the marijuana prohibition paradigm continues to shift, municipalities are well placed to make significant contributions to the legalization and regulation process. As with the matter of medical marijuana, FCM has consistently advanced a policy position that focuses on clear roles and responsibilities between orders of government with respect to enforcement and safety. These key elements form the main pillars of FCM's perspective on broader legalization and regulation.

In December 2016, the federal government announced a new Canadian Drugs and Substances Strategy (CDSS) led by Health Canada. The CDSS restores harm reduction as a pillar of Canada's drug strategy alongside the pillars of prevention, treatment and enforcement included in the 2006 National Anti-Drug Strategy. Engagement with local governments is critical to realizing the objectives of the CDSS.

Strategies

- FCM will engage the federal government in the development of a marijuana legalization and regulation framework. To inform the development of this framework in the context of its likely impact on municipalities, FCM will advance the following key principles:
 - Close communication and consultation with municipalities throughout the process;
 - Recognition and respect for municipal authority;
 - Coordinated implementation and enforcement plan across all orders of government;
 - Fair distribution of new revenue generation streams, including support for initial implementation costs incurred at the local level; and
 - Adequate timeline for implementation of federal legislation.
- FCM will urge the Government of Canada to emphasize community initiatives under the Canadian Drugs and Substances Strategy and to recognize the value of municipal participation in developing and implementing community-wide strategies to combat substance abuse.
- FCM will advocate for greater intergovernmental cooperation and information-sharing in the investigation of suspected illicit marijuana grow operations.

CONCLUSION

Nothing short of an intergovernmental partnership or agreement in the key areas outlined above will ensure that our cities and communities are safe, healthy, inclusive and prosperous places to live. FCM is prepared to do its part.

*Approved March 2017
Standing Committee on Community Safety and Crime Prevention*
