



Justice and  
Solicitor General

# **Safe and Strong Communities**

## **Law Enforcement in Alberta**

**2013**

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## 1. Overview

Alberta's overall policing strategy centres around three principles: equitable policing, provincial leadership, and appropriate civilian oversight of policing. One of the goals of Alberta Justice and Solicitor General is to ensure Albertans have safe and secure communities in which to live, work and raise their families. The Department achieves that goal by working in partnership with Albertans to promote safe, secure communities through effective law enforcement, crime prevention, corrections and victim services.

### **Equitable Policing**

Policing is becoming increasingly complex, requiring specialized functions and expensive technology. All Albertans are entitled to high quality police services which have adequate training, technology, and standardized services. The province is committed to ensuring all communities in Alberta have access to the policing services they need to ensure their safety and security.

### **Provincial Leadership**

The province establishes standards for police services and commissions and ensures those standards are met. This includes monitoring and auditing by the province as well as providing police services, commissions, committees and councils with assistance and advice in developing training, and conducting targeted research.

The Department funds community crime prevention and restorative justice projects, and supports and promotes programs that help address the root causes of crime. The Department and community partners continue to work toward increasing public awareness of victims' programs and services, to ensure victims have a meaningful role in the criminal justice system. The Department's correctional services division operates correctional facilities to house convicted offenders, and provides programming to help offenders transition successfully back into the community when they have served their time.

### **Civilian Oversight**

The delicate balance between the independence and authority of law enforcement on one hand, and their accountability to the public and the civilian authority, on the other, is a vital part of our democratic society. Oversight and governing bodies need to strike this balance between police independence to conduct investigations and maintain order without undue political or other influence, with the need for accountability to the public.

## 2. Legislative Framework

The *Constitution of Canada* establishes the various powers of government and divides them between the federal and provincial governments. Under the Constitution, the federal government is responsible for criminal law while the provinces are responsible for the administration of justice. In Alberta, the department of Justice and Solicitor General administers the criminal justice system and oversees policing.

The Alberta *Police Act*, the Alberta *Municipal Government Act*, the Alberta *Police Officers Collective Bargaining Act*, as well as the federal *RCMP Act* provide the legislative framework for policing in the Province of Alberta. Copies of the provincial statutes can be obtained from the Alberta Queen's Printer.

### **The *Police Act* (Alberta)**

The *Police Act* defines how policing, and the administration of policing, operates in Alberta. The *Act* identifies the responsibility of ministers, government and municipalities for policing. It also sets the population threshold whereby a municipality must take responsibility to provide its own municipal policing, and the various options for that service. The legislation includes sections relating to the Law Enforcement Review Board (part 2), police services and commissions (part 3), police officers (part 4) and complaints and discipline, including the Alberta Serious Incident Response Team (ASIRT) (part 5). A general section covers lock-up facilities, impersonating a police officer, and other miscellaneous matters.

Police services and police officers act under the direction of the Minister of Justice and Solicitor General in respect of matters concerning the administration of justice and administration of the *Police Act*.

The *Police Act* outlines that cities, towns and villages with a population over 5,000 must provide their own police service. The Province provides policing to all other municipalities at no direct cost to them.

Municipalities with populations **over** 5,000 have the following options for policing: a stand alone police service, a regional police service, or contracting for the services of an existing police service.

Policing for municipalities with urban populations of 5,000 or less, as well as all rural municipalities (i.e. municipal districts/counties regardless of population), is provided by the RCMP as Alberta's provincial police service. The RCMP provides this service through the Provincial Police Service Agreement between Alberta and Canada. Although rural areas are not required to be policed by the provincial police service, if they choose other forms of policing they must then pay for all costs.

The *Police Act* includes a number of regulations; principal among them is the *Police Service Regulation*.

The *Police Service Regulation* is made pursuant to the *Police Act*, and governs the discipline and performance of duty of police officers (Part 5 of the *Act*). The regulation addresses:

- Competency of police officers
- Probationary periods for working as a police officers
- Misconduct of a police officer
- Relief from duty of a police officer
- Counseling, time limits, statements and evidence
- Hearings
- Punishment of officers

### ***Municipal Government Act (Alberta)***

Municipalities are governed by the *Municipal Government Act (MGA)*. Under the *MGA*, municipal councils are required to provide policing for the communities they serve. The options for providing this service are described in the section on types of policing.

### ***Royal Canadian Mounted Police Act (Canada)***

The *RCMP Act* is federal legislation that provides the authority and mandate for the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP).

The *Act* provides that Public Safety Canada may enter into agreements with provinces to provide RCMP policing as a provincial police service. It also provides for municipalities to enter into agreements with the RCMP to provide policing services to a municipality. These agreements outline most aspects of such an arrangement, including accommodation, basis of payment, and equipment.

### ***Peace Officer Act (Alberta)***

Under the Alberta *Peace Officer Act*, limited powers and authority are given to peace officers. All levels of government, as well as organizations such as public health authorities and post-secondary institutions, may employ peace officers. Alberta Solicitor General and Public Security has overall authority for the Public Security Peace Officer Program, as provided in the *Peace Officer Act*.

## ***Security Services and Investigators Act (Alberta)***

Security personnel (loss prevention, guard dog handlers, security guards, investigators, locksmiths, automotive lock bypass people) and private investigators are required to be licensed by Alberta Solicitor General and Public Security by virtue of the *Security Services and Investigators Act*.

## ***Police Officers Collective Bargaining Act (Alberta)***

The *Police Officers Collective Bargaining Act* governs labour relations for all municipal police services in Alberta. It creates two bargaining units for police officers, makes only single-municipality police associations eligible to act as bargaining agents. It excludes from collective bargaining such issues as the statutory responsibilities of a chief of police, and discipline and discharge, which are dealt with by regulations under the *Police Act*. The *Police Officers Collective Bargaining Act* prohibits strikes and lockouts and substitutes compulsory binding arbitration. The *Act* is administered by Alberta Employment and Immigration, which also has jurisdiction over strikes and lockouts under this act.

## **3. Roles and responsibilities**

Under the Canadian constitution, the ***Government of Canada*** is responsible for enacting criminal and federal law while the provinces are responsible for the administration of justice. This includes enforcing federal, criminal, provincial and in some cases municipal laws and maintaining public security.

In Alberta, the Government of Alberta through ***Alberta Justice and Solicitor General*** administers the criminal justice system and is responsible for ensuring adequate and effective policing throughout the province.

***Municipalities*** are responsible under the *Police Act* for providing policing in their community.

A ***municipal council*** that has assumed responsibility for creating a municipal police service under the *Police Act* must establish and maintain an adequate and effective police service, including oversight of the police commission where a stand alone police service is established, or the policing committee where an RCMP Municipal Police Agreement is in place (note: establishment of a policing committee is not mandatory). As such, the council should create rules for the operation of the police commission/committee (policing oversight entity) and institute an accountability framework for the policing oversight entity to report to council all relevant activities.

Specific responsibilities of a municipal council with respect to policing are:

- Establish a policing oversight entity through bylaw;
- Prescribe the rules governing the operation of the policing oversight entity; and

- Appoint the members.

The council should also determine how the policing oversight entity members will be recruited, what security screening is required, and criteria for appointment and re-appointment.

As Alberta's Provincial Police Service, the RCMP is responsible for implementing the objectives, priorities and goals established in conjunction with Alberta Justice and Solicitor General.

Through an agreement between the federal government and the province, the Provincial Police Service Agreement (PPSA), the RCMP act as Alberta's Provincial Police Service, and are responsible for primary provincial policing. In Alberta, RCMP are referred to as "K" Division (each province and territory has its own Division). The RCMP provides policing services in over 100 detachments across the province.

**Police officers** are responsible for enforcing federal, provincial, and municipal laws, protecting life and property, preventing crime, and keeping the peace. They have a broad range of duties and roles of which law enforcement is a major role. Police officers investigate occurrences, arrest offenders and bring them before the criminal justice system. They also provide a variety of community services including: crime prevention, educational programs, assisting in locating missing persons, dealing with lost property, traffic control, victim assistance and accident investigation.

**Police commissions** provide oversight of policing to stand alone police services, and govern the municipal police services. Specific responsibilities are detailed in part 3 of the *Police Act*.

**Policing committees** provide oversight of policing for the municipalities which contract for RCMP municipal policing. Committees are not mandatory and specific responsibilities are detailed in part 3 of the *Police Act*.

**Alberta Serious Incident Response Team (ASIRT)** has jurisdiction over all sworn police officers in the Province of Alberta. Their mandate is to investigate incidents or complaints involving serious injury or death of any person, and matters of a serious or sensitive nature, that may have resulted from the actions of a police officer. They are governed by Section 46.1 of the *Police Act*.

The **Chief of Police** is responsible for the day to day operations of the police service, and accountable to the commission for the operation of the police service. Specific duties are outlined in the *Police Act*.

**Peace officers** perform a number of roles to maintain the peace. They may be mayors, wardens, reeves, sheriffs, justices of the peace, correctional officers (authorized as peace officers under the *Corrections Act* not the *Peace Officer*

Act), police officers, bailiffs customs or excise officers, fishery guardians, the pilot in command of an aircraft, or officers and non-commissioned members of the Canadian Forces. Peace officers can be granted various powers of arrest and may be armed.

**Security guards and private investigators** have no special status in law, and no privileges or powers other than those of an ordinary citizen. The *Security Guards and Private Investigators Act* prohibits peace officers from becoming licensed private investigators or security guards. Private investigators and security guards are not permitted to carry weapons, except when authorized by the Chief Firearms Officer.

Private security personnel act as agents to protect private property as permitted under the *Petty Trespass Act* and the *Trespass to Premises Act*. The owner of a property, or his/her authorized representatives (such as a security guard) has the right to limit access to the property, and to arrest trespassers or individuals found committing a criminal offence on the owner's property.

The **Director of Law Enforcement** is usually the Assistant Deputy Minister of the Public Security Division of the department of Justice and Solicitor General. The Director is responsible for specific activities related to the monitoring of police services and commissions. The duties of the Director are outlined in section 8 of the *Police Act*.

## 4.Roles and Responsibilities – Boards and Associations

### **Law Enforcement Review Board**

The Law Enforcement Review Board is a quasi-judicial body established under the *Police Act*. It reviews decisions of police commissions and police chiefs related to complaints made against police officers, the police service or chief of police. The Board can hear appeals filed by the chief of police, a police officer or the public who are not satisfied with the outcome of a complaint investigation directly affecting them. Appeals must be made in writing and filed within 30 days from the date a complainant is advised of the determination of their complaint. The Board can also conduct inquiries respecting complaints.

At the request of the Minister of Justice and Solicitor General, the Board conducts inquiries in respect to any matter relating to policing, and has the power of a Commissioner under the *Public Inquiries Act*.

### **Alberta Association of Police Governance**

The Alberta Association of Police Governance (AAPG) is an umbrella organization where members of police commissions and policing committees can discuss issues of common interest and concern. Generally, AAPG meetings are held twice a year. Membership is optional.

## **Alberta Association of Chiefs of Police**

The Alberta Association of Chiefs of Police (AACP) was formed in 1985 to give Alberta police chiefs an opportunity to share information and concerns of mutual interest relating to law enforcement.

The membership of the AACP is limited to chiefs of municipal police services, the Commanding Officer of RCMP "K" Division, chiefs of autonomous First Nation police, and commanders of municipal RCMP detachments.

## **Alberta Federation of Police Associations**

The Alberta Federation of Police Associations (AFPA) is a professional police association dedicated to addressing local, provincial and national police association issues. The AFPA is a collection of police associations formed under the Police Officers Collective Bargaining Act (POCBA) with a primary purpose of collective bargaining.

All Alberta police associations except the Calgary Police Association belong to the Alberta Federation of Police Associations. RCMP and First Nations police services are not included as they are not subject to POCBA.

## **5. Types of Policing**

There are three main types of policing in Alberta - provincial policing, municipal policing, and First Nations policing.

### **Provincial Policing**

The Minister of Justice and Solicitor General is responsible for providing provincial policing services. This is done through a Provincial Police Service Agreement (PPSA), between the province and Public Safety Canada, establishing the RCMP as the provincial police. The Alberta division of the RCMP is designated as "K" Division.

Under the PPSA, policing is provided at no direct cost to all municipal districts and Métis settlements regardless of population, to towns, villages and summer villages with populations of 5,000 or less, and to First Nations communities where other policing arrangements have not been made.

The province pays 70% of the cost of the provincial police service and Canada pays 30%. The provincial portion for the cost of policing is just over \$139,000 per RCMP officer (Fiscal year 2012/13).

The PPSA requires the Minister of Justice and Solicitor General to set the objectives, priorities and goals of the provincial police service, which are then

implemented by the Commanding Officer of “K” Division. The province, in consultation with the Commanding Officer, establishes provincial policing priorities on an annual basis in the form of a three-year business plan. The Commanding Officer must provide an annual report to the Minister describing the status of the provincial policing priorities. The Department’s Public Security Division administers the PPSA, monitors the business plan, and works closely with “K” Division to ensure policing levels are adequate and effective.

In addition to policing rural municipalities, the RCMP in Alberta is also responsible for a variety of provincial services. Dedicated highway traffic safety services are provided by highway patrol units that are strategically located throughout the province, working closely with the department’s Sheriff Traffic Services. Other services include: the Major Crime Unit, Behavioural Sciences Group, Forensic Identification Unit, Canine Unit, Commercial Crime, Emergency Response Team, and Air Services.

The RCMP also work closely with municipal and First Nations police services in Alberta.

### *Enhanced Policing*

Any municipality provided with provincial policing at no direct cost to it may wish to purchase an enhanced level of policing. This would be to augment the basic level of policing provided by the Province via the RCMP as the provincial police service.

The enhancement is basically the purchase of additional RCMP members to serve within the target community, usually for a specified purpose.

There are three types of enhanced agreements:

- One municipality subcontracting with the province for a long-term full-time RCMP member;
- More than one municipality subcontracting with the province, sharing a long-term full-time RCMP member; or
- A municipality contracting with the Province for an RCMP member to enhance the level of service for a specific event or limited period of time (i.e. hours, days or months).

Costs for the long term enhanced policing options are billed to the municipalities for the Provincial share (70%) of each RCMP Provincial Police Service Member. The costs for the specific event or limited period enhanced policing are at the RCMP overtime rate of pay and are recovered by the Province invoicing the municipality directly.

Eligible are:

- Towns, villages and summer villages with a population of 5,000 or less;
- Municipal districts, counties and improvement districts regardless of population;
- Métis settlements; and
- First Nations.

The complete enhanced policing guideline package and detailed costs can be requested by contacting: Law Enforcement and Oversight Branch, Public Security Division, Justice and Solicitor General 10<sup>th</sup> Floor, 10365 – 97 Street, Edmonton, Alberta T5J 3W7. Phone: (780) 427-3457 or Fax: (780) 427-5916.

## **Municipal policing**

Municipalities have a number of options with respect to policing their communities.

### *Contract policing*

The most common form of contract policing is the provision of police services to municipalities by the RCMP through a Municipal Policing Agreement (MPA). As of April 1, 2012, forty-three (43) municipalities in Alberta have MPAs.

Under an MPA, a municipality with a population under 15,000 pays 70% of the cost of the policing and Canada pays 30%. For municipalities with populations greater than 15,000, the municipality pays 90% of the costs and Canada pays 10%,

The MPA states that the Municipal Chief Elected Official (i.e. the Mayor or Reeve) may set objectives, priorities and goals for the municipal police service consistent with those of the province. The municipal policing objectives, priorities and goals should be set on an annual basis with the Detachment Commander so the municipality is able to establish performance measures and make more informed decisions about whether or not the policing meets the community's needs.

There are several benefits to municipalities entering into an MPA, the most obvious being the shared cost. Instead of paying the full cost for policing services, contracting with the RCMP means that municipalities only pay for a percentage of the costs with the federal government assuming its cost-share, be it 30% or 10% depending on population. Other benefits include ease of integration of municipal and provincial RCMP resources, a high quality of standardized service, assured uniform standards, provision of standardized recruitment and training, cost efficiencies with sharing of lease space, and additional specialized services traditionally limited to a large police service.

One of the disadvantages of contracting is that the municipality's governance role is somewhat reduced. The municipality, however, has the option under the *Police Act* to form a policing committee to oversee the agreement and to work with the detachment commander to determine priorities. Much of the municipality's role overseeing contract policing is informal, as opposed to mandated Police Commissions for stand-alone or independent police services.

Policing committees are very similar to police commissions; however, their authority is limited to that allowed by the municipality's agreement with the RCMP. Specific responsibilities of a policing committee are detailed in section 23 of the *Police Act*.

### *Stand alone policing*

A municipality may assume responsibility for establishing and maintaining its own independent police service. This is called a stand-alone, or independent municipal police service. In Alberta, there are six such municipal police services in Calgary, Camrose, Edmonton, Medicine Hat, Lacombe and Taber. This form of policing provides the municipality with the greatest amount of influence over the police, which comes at a higher cost and increased oversight responsibility.

One of the most important aspects of stand-alone policing is the manner in which it is governed. In Alberta, all such municipal police services must have a police commission as a civilian body that oversees the police service on behalf of the community and the municipal council. See the section on governance.

### **Regional policing**

Regional policing is an integrated approach whereby the councils of two or more municipalities enter into an agreement to be policed by one regional police service. The Minister of Justice and Solicitor General must give approval prior to a regional policing agreement being undertaken, as well as approval for the withdrawal from such an agreement.

At present there is only one formalized municipal regional policing arrangement in Alberta—Lethbridge Regional Police Service, which provides policing to the municipalities of Lethbridge and Coaldale.

The RCMP provides a form of regional policing through administrative amalgamation of neighboring detachments for the rural area, as is the case at Spruce Grove and Stony Plain. The Spruce Grove Detachment provides policing for Spruce Grove, however the Stony Plain Detachment provides policing for Stony Plain and the rural areas surrounding Spruce Grove.

## First Nations policing

The RCMP polices most Alberta's First Nations communities, although 18 First Nations communities have made other policing arrangements through agreements with the province and Canada—either through a Tripartite Agreement (TA) or a Community Tripartite Agreement (CTA).

A **Tripartite Agreement** permits creation of a First Nation police service operating exclusively on reserve. The cost of First Nations policing under TAs is shared by Canada (52%) and Alberta (48%), subject to the availability of funds through the budget.

A **Community Tripartite Agreement** is an agreement between Canada, the province and the First Nations that provides for RCMP members to spend at least 80% of their time on reserve. The cost of First Nations policing under CTAs is the same as for TAs—shared by Canada (52%) and Alberta (48%), subject to the availability of funds through the budget. A CTA provides additional RCMP members to supplement the First Nations detachment.

First Nations Police services are governed by individual tripartite policing agreements among the First Nations, Canada and Alberta. Chief and council appoint local police commissions and these commissions are made up of citizens from the First Nations and council representatives. Their duties and responsibilities are similar to those described for municipal police commissions. The Minister of Justice and Solicitor General provides professional policing advice to the First Nations police services through the Director of Law Enforcement.

## Supplemental Enforcement Programs

### *Peace Officers*

Peace officers have authority under the *Peace Officer Act* and regulations. They are appointed by Alberta Justice and Solicitor General to uphold specific provincial statutes that include the *Traffic Safety Act*, *Weed Control Act*, and the *Gaming and Liquor Control Act*. The appointments fulfill a variety of roles and responsibilities relating to law enforcement such as traffic duty, court and prisoner security, commercial vehicle inspections and fish and wildlife management, among others.

Peace officers work within limited territorial boundaries for a specific employer, and are classified as peace officers only while performing the duties and responsibilities of their appointment. Some peace officers may be permitted to carry shotguns for animal control purposes, batons or oleoresin capsicum (OC/pepper) spray with authorization from the Minister of Justice and Solicitor General. All Alberta Sheriffs are trained and authorized to carry guns.

With approved training and permission from the Director of Law Enforcement, peace officers may enforce some *Criminal Code* offences such as minor theft or mischief offences (theft/mischief under \$5000).

Other peace officers with responsibility for large amounts of private/public property such as Universities or transit systems may be granted additional authorities to manage criminal events they encounter during the normal course of their duties.

These additional authorities are limited to performing administrative policing functions such as compelling an individual found committing an offence to court. This authority is only granted where the police service of jurisdiction approves and formalized interaction protocols are developed.

### *Sheriff services*

Alberta Justice and Solicitor General employ about 700 Sheriffs who play an important role in Alberta law enforcement. Sheriffs complement and support the work of police officers, allowing them to focus on more serious crime. Their work covers several areas: traffic safety, court security, prisoner transport, intelligence, executive security, Fugitive Apprehension Services (which works with local police services to bring to justice individuals free on outstanding warrants), and Safer Communities and Neighborhoods (which investigates problem properties where illegal activities may be taking place, such as drugs, gangs, or prostitution).

### *Traffic sheriffs*

The Sheriff Highway Patrol was implemented on September 1, 2006. Sheriffs have authority under the *Traffic Safety Act*, the *Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act*, the *Gaming and Liquor Act* and the *Provincial Offences Procedure Act*.

Through Integrated Traffic Units, Traffic Sheriffs work with RCMP police services to target aggressive and speeding drivers. They also participate in Joint Force Operations with the RCMP and other enforcement agencies.

Traffic Service Request can be made by the public by calling toll free 1-866-922-3389 or through the website at [www.sheriffs.gov.ab.ca](http://www.sheriffs.gov.ab.ca).

## 6. How policing in Alberta is funded

### **Grants**

Alberta provides the Municipal Police Assistance Grant to municipalities to help ease the financial burden on towns and cities responsible for their own policing.

The funds are to be used for police operating and administration costs including manpower costs, kit and clothing, equipment, police vehicles, etc. The funds are also intended for use by police commissions and policing committees for governance and oversight related initiatives.

The grants are paid to municipalities on formula basis, with the condition the funding is used specifically for policing and policing oversight.

### 2012-13 Grant Formula

<b>Municipalities with:</b>	<b>Base grant</b>	<b>Per capita</b>
Population from 5,001 to 16,666 receive	\$ 200,000	\$ 8
Population from 16,667 to 50,000 receive	\$ 100,000	\$ 14
Population over 50,000 receive	\$ -	\$ 16

- Based upon Alberta Municipal Affairs Official Population Data

### Distribution of fine revenues

The majority of provincial statute fine revenues are generated from traffic violations. Therefore in the communities where the police service is funded by the province, the traffic fine revenues go to the province. Large municipalities who pay for their policing service keep the fine revenues. The *Provincial Traffic Safety Act* was amended in 2005 to ensure that those municipalities that are required to provide for their own policing keep their traffic fine revenue. The exception is those communities that do not have to provide for their own policing, but who employ peace officers or pay for enhanced policing positions. These communities receive the fine revenue generated by those peace officers or enhanced RCMP positions. Essentially, whoever provides the policing service keeps the fine revenue.

There are however some provincial statutes which specify the distribution of fine revenues. The *Fuel Tax Act*, *Gaming and Liquor Act*, *Tobacco Tax Act*, or *Weed Control Act* provide that revenue from a conviction for an offence that occurred in a city, town, village, municipal district or Métis settlement or Indian reserve, the revenue goes to the municipal district or Métis settlement or First Nation. (Except where the offence occurred on a primary highway leading through a Métis settlement or Indian reserve, the fine goes to the province).

Where a statute does not provide for fine distribution (or in the case of late payment penalties) the revenue belongs to the province pursuant to the *Provincial Offences Procedures Act*.

When payment for a ticket is received by the court, it is entered into the court's computer system. Each month, the computer routinely transfers the funds to

banks for the appropriate jurisdiction. It is therefore important that in those communities utilizing peace officers and/or enhanced RCMP position for traffic enforcement that the coding of the traffic ticket be correct so that the community receives its fine revenue.

## **RCMP Municipal Cost Sharing**

Under the municipal policing agreements, cost sharing arrangements for RCMP services are as follows:

- In municipalities with a population under 15,000, the municipality pays 70% and Canada pays 30%.
- In municipalities with a population over 15,000, the municipality pays 90% and Canada pays 10%.

In a municipality with a population under 15,000, the RCMP Commanding Officer consults with the Chief Elected Official (i.e. Mayor) to determine how many officers are required, and the budget for the service. The Commanding Officer then prepares a provisional cost per member for the next fiscal year. Most RCMP costs for municipalities with populations under 15,000 are pooled to establish an average per member cost. Costs that are not pooled include; overtime, case management systems, and accommodation.

In a municipality with a population over 15,000, the RCMP Commanding Officer consults with the Chief Elected Official (i.e. Mayor) of the municipalities with respect to financial and resource planning. The Chief Elected Official advises the Commanding Officer how many officers are required, and the budget for the service. The Chief Elected Official also approves equipment purchases of \$100,000 or more and the basis of payment for such items. The Commanding Officer prepares a provisional cost per member for the next fiscal year and provides the Chief Elected Official with an estimate of the direct and indirect costs, such as overtime, cost for case management systems including the new *Police Reporting and Occurrence System* (PROS), and if applicable, accommodation cost.

The Government of Canada operates on a fiscal year from April 1st to March 31<sup>st</sup>, but bills each municipality and the province on a quarterly basis for RCMP services. Following March of each fiscal year, the RCMP billing is reconciled and a municipality may receive credit on either the first or second quarterly invoice of the new fiscal year. There is a similar annual reconciliation with the provincial policing budget.

## 7. Victims of crime

### **Financial Benefits Program**

Alberta's *Victims of Crime Act* created the Victims of Crime Fund and introduced the Financial Benefits Program in 1997. The fund is fully supported by surcharges on provincial offence fines and surcharges imposed by the courts under the Criminal Code of Canada. This fund financially supports the Financial Benefits Program as well as other victim programs and services. This money is used to support the Victim Financial Benefits Program that recognizes or acknowledges victims who were injured as a direct result of a violent crime in Alberta. It provides direct assistance with a one-time financial benefit based on the severity of the victim's injuries. The benefit amount is set in the regulation to the *Victims of Crime Act*.

The Victims of Crime Fund is administered by the Public Security Division within Alberta Justice and Solicitor General.