



NOVA SCOTIA FEDERATION
OF MUNICIPALITIES

Survey on Municipal Police Agencies What We Heard Report

March 17, 2025



What We Heard Report: Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities Survey on Municipal Police Agencies

Overview

The Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities (NSFM) regularly monitors the state of policing in Nova Scotia as day-to-day policing is primarily a responsibility of municipalities in this province. In 2023, NSFM conducted an in-depth survey that included all municipalities in Nova Scotia to reach a deeper understanding of opportunities and challenges related to policing from the municipal perspective. In April 2024, NSFM continued this effort by sending a survey to municipalities that receive services from a municipal police agency.

On April 12th, 2024, NSFM distributed a survey to the Mayor and CAO of municipalities that receive policing service from their own municipal police agency or that of another municipality. This amounted to a list of 11 municipalities, including the Town of Annapolis Royal, the Town of Kentville, the Town of Bridgewater, the Town of Amherst, the Town of Truro, the Town of Stellarton, the Town of New Glasgow, the Town of Trenton, the Town of Westville, Halifax Regional Municipality, and Cape Breton Regional Municipality. The letter from the NSFM CEO solicited a response to 8 questions and is included in Appendix A of this report. An in-person meeting of the abovementioned municipalities took place on May 15th, which the NSFM CEO and Policy Advisor attended as observers. Meeting attendees were once again asked to submit written responses.

This survey effort accomplished a response rate of 91% with 10 of 11 potential respondents submitting a written response. As such, survey responses provide a highly-representative sample of concerns and aspirations regarding municipal police agencies.

The sections of this report are roughly organized in the same order as the survey questions were ordered with some slight rearrangement to draw attention to overarching themes across responses to different questions. Reports on trends among respondents are accompanied by sample quotes that concisely express common sentiments.

The consultation conducted with this survey is especially important with the Provincial Police Review taking place, new policing standards being recently established, and the continuation of the renegotiation of Provincial-Municipal Service Exchange.

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Executive Summary

Policing is a costly responsibility, and municipalities are dedicated to ensuring a high standard of public safety in their community. In providing for this high standard of public safety with an adequate and effective police agency, municipalities incur costs related to salary and compensation, as well as training, enhancements of service, increased complexity of crime, and the purchase of equipment and other supplies. These costs are especially pressing for municipal police agencies as they are typically found in urbanized municipalities and service centres, which feature unique law enforcement needs and are regularly subject to daily influxes of visitors who do not pay taxes to the municipality providing the service. Survey respondents call for recognition of these challenges and for the development of a fairer fiscal framework that provides more support for the important work of municipal police agencies.

All respondents highlight the cost and administrative challenges of officer training. The candidate selection requirements and travel costs associated with existing accredited training institutions put barriers between municipal police agencies and important human resource development. Respondents often mention that municipal police agencies experience challenges with recruitment and retention.

Many respondents mention the challenges arising from responsibilities that are downloaded on them from other orders of government. These downloaded responsibilities include highway patrol, central support services, and a proposed re-assignment of officers under the Additional Officer Program (AOP). While the AOP is a widely-appreciated source of financial support, it has become outdated and is in need of increased funding to provide the support it used to. Respondents signal a willingness to take on more responsibilities, including the provision of central services to surrounding regions, if the necessary financial resources are made available.

Another factor that is creating pressure on municipal police agencies is the growing prevalence of homelessness, addictions, and struggles of mental health and the public expectation that police be the first responder to a growing range of social issues. This growing prevalence adds to an already notable burden created by the obligation of officers to maintain custody of people brought to hospital waiting rooms. These social issues, which are often not related to specific criminal behaviour, are characterized as a significant demand on time and resources that could be better spent doing core police work and an aspect of public safety could be better responded to by an organization with training in this field. This growing scope of work is also reported to have negative effects on officer mental well-being.

Respondents often mention that, in the context of these many challenges, a poor relationship with the RCMP and Nova Scotia Department of Justice inhibits a more cohesive and collaborative approach to generating solutions. Respondents frequently call for the creation of a municipal police agency liaison modelled around the existing RCMP liaison to the Department of Justice. Respondents also call for more support for and engagement with Boards of Police Commissioners.

While municipal police agencies are able to overcome disputes with other municipal agencies relatively quickly, the different organizational structures, priorities, and protocols of the RCMP create additional barriers to a culture of collaboration. The RCMP and municipal police agencies are reported to nevertheless engage in regular calls for assistance that go in both directions. Interoperability and interorganizational collaboration could be improved through shared training as well as shared equipment and other resources, standardizing equipment, and engaging in bulk purchasing could help to accomplish economies of scale and build trust between agencies.

Collaboration is key to increasing capacity to support a high standard of public safety and further potential remains to be pursued. Municipal police agencies report shared service agreements between groups of municipalities and also stand to provide central support services on a more widely-distributed, road-ready regional basis.

When asked how well the Police Act functions as a basis for police governance, respondents call for clearer definition of the roles and responsibilities and consideration of how Boards of Police Commissioners could be better supported and composed. Defining clearer roles and respective responsibilities of each role is characterized by respondents as an ideal way to support collaboration and interoperability.

When asked about their hopes and expectations regarding the provincial Policing Standards, which were still upcoming when the survey was distributed, respondents express optimism that minimum response times and road-ready resources would be recognized as strengths by which to measure a police agency's capacity to provide adequate levels of policing. Respondents also express concern that, rather than addressing a perceived bias toward the RCMP, these standards would encompass this bias. Respondents also express hope that these provincial standards would be created with consideration of providing the training resources and funding necessary to fulfill them.

Questions and Responses in Detail

What existing pressures are discussed by your Board of Police Commissioners and Councils?

Rising Costs

When asked about significant pressures, respondents primarily brought up the increasing cost of policing and the increasingly large portion of the municipal operating budget that policing occupies. This increasing cost for municipal police agencies is, in part, driven by the compensation and benefits that help to attract and retain talented officers.

Respondents frequently specified that rising costs are not caused solely by compensation, but rather are the result of necessary equipment costs, enhancements in service delivery to address increasing demands, and the increasing complexity of crime. Respondents often note that the costs of equipment, supplies, services, and building costs are also subject to inflationary pressures.

As will be discussed throughout this report, the difficulty securing and affording training is also a pressing cost concern mentioned by all respondents. The low availability of training from accredited training institutions and candidate selection requirements create costly challenges for municipalities.

“Rising costs are also found in training, equipment, time and other resources required by police for investigations and public safety initiatives [...]. Public expectations, case law, changes and advances in technology have all resulted in increased workload that requires additional resources (both human and capital).” (Respondent #4)

One respondent also mentioned that an increasing prevalence of hate crimes, increased severity of crime, and increased frequency of emergency weather events have also driven up costs.

Towns as Service Centres

Survey respondents often mention that the towns and urban centres in which their municipal police agencies operate are service hubs for the surrounding region. This creates a daily influx of visitors from outside of these urban hubs, which significantly increases the effective “daytime” population of these municipalities. Because municipalities are predominantly funded on the basis of property tax, there are few ways for them to recover policing costs provided to those who do not live or own a business in the town or urban hub in question. This creates an inequity between taxpayers in Nova Scotia and a capacity challenge that is systemic for municipal police agencies.

Recruitment and Retention

Despite efforts to offer competitive compensation and benefits to their officers, nearly all respondents also mentioned challenges recruiting and retaining officers. Recruitment challenges are attributed to a poor public image of policing at this current time.

Training Accessibility

Across responses, there is a reoccurring theme of difficulty accessing sufficient training. Survey respondents suggested that the cost, availability, and accessibility of training adds significant pressure on municipal police agencies; candidate selection requirements and travel costs put barriers between municipal police agencies and important training.

Some respondents pointed out that although streamlined training may help deploy cadets quicker, such streamlining can create limitations and additional training costs for municipal police agencies further downstream who need to train officers on fundamentals (e.g.: carbine training).

Downloading of Responsibilities and Further Costs

Survey respondents frequently expressed concern with new responsibilities being downloaded by other orders of government. Such downloading increases costs and adds to operational challenges. A distinct part of downloading is that another order of government assigns new responsibilities without providing additional resources to help fulfill these new responsibilities.

Respondents brought up specific concerns regarding the downloading of police support services, which have been discussed in Nova Scotia as “central support services” since 1995. Despite wording in the 1995 Service Exchange Agreement, highway patrol and support services related to identification, telecommunications, and investigations, among others, are no longer being provided to municipal police agencies by the provincial government.

“RCMP/DOJ decisions relating to centralized services and 100-series highways is a clear departure from established practice and understanding of Provincial RCMP responsibilities.” (Respondent #4)

Further, changes being made as part of the federal policing transformation are creating gaps in coverage. A specific concern in Nova Scotia is the proposed reallocation of Additional Officer Program (AOP) resources toward mid-level organized crime, rather than the street-level crime they were originally allocated to.

Need to Update Additional Officer Program (AOP) Funding

Respondents unanimously mentioned that the AOP is no longer working for a couple of specific reasons. The primary reason is that the funding allocated to municipal police agencies for each position under the program (i.e.: \$100,000) no longer covers the cost of an officer as it did when the program was first established in 2007. Another reason that respondents called for a review of the AOP is that joint operations under the Boots in the Street mandate have collapsed because of vacant positions in the RCMP portion of these operations, including supervision.

As stated above under *Downloading of Responsibilities*, changes being made by other orders of government and the RCMP could create further gaps in ground-level, day-to-day policing by requiring the repurposing of important resources, such as the AOP.

Growing Public Demands and Social Issues

Survey respondents frequently mentioned that new public demands and growing social pressures are straining the capacity of municipal police agencies. Examples of these new demands arise from incidents related to homelessness, mental health, and addictions, which police officers are not always the best or necessary response to. Survey respondents state that there are other organizations that are more appropriate and effective in responding to these social issues. The lack of government investment in these other agencies effectively leads to other subtle instances of downloading as explained in the quotes below.

“Mental health services need more support and funding. Officers are doing work that other organizations should be operating. Officers are becoming frontline social workers but there is no additional funding to support this.” (Respondent #3)

“The lack of provincial crisis mental health and addictions support services is causing huge impacts on the core delivery of police services and leads to involuntary hospital visits, hospital transportation, assessment of individuals in distress, and run the risk of providing inadequate navigation support to vulnerable people.” (Respondent #8)

Most respondents mention how calls related to mental health are a substantial addition to the officer workload and often involve officers being stuck in waiting rooms due to obligations under the Involuntary Psychiatric Treatment Act (IPTA). One survey respondent called for more provincial investment and leadership in rolling out the Crisis Intervention Training of the Nova Scotia Health Authority.

Drains on Capacity to Connect with Community and Officer Wellbeing

Survey respondents stated that the pressures explained above amount to significant limitations on the ability to maintain and strengthen connections with community members and engage in Community Policing. Survey respondents also stated that these pressures also have knock-on effects on the health, mental well-being, and morale of municipal police officers.

Lack of Trust and Connection the Provincial Policing and the Department of Justice

Survey respondents frequently comment on the unfortunate state of the relationship between municipal police agencies and the RCMP on an organizational level. Respondents state a number of reasons for this including the reoccurring transfer of RCMP officers that makes it more difficult to form working relationships with specific people.

More importantly, while *officers* from the different agencies are reported to work well together, there is a notably strained interorganizational working relationship. Survey respondents attributed this strained relationship to debates emerging from the mass casualty event that began in Portapique. This distrust is worsened by perceptions of officers being recruited, or “poached”, by the RCMP during joint training and joint operations, which adds to retention challenges mentioned above.

Further, survey respondents regularly expressed the belief that the RCMP receives favorable treatment and significantly more opportunities to advise the Department of Justice on issues and solutions related to policing in comparison to municipal police agencies. This concern with the

RCMP results from the current state of the relationship with the Department of Justice and the lack of a formalized dialogue or liaison position similar to that of the RCMP, which respondents also expressed concern about.

“It often appears that the conversation is one-sided, and even when consulted, the voice of municipal police is ignored. It often appears that the version of policing that our government understands is the version often provided to them by the RCMP. It appears that this results in decisions made by the Department of Justice that support the RCMP consistently.”
(Respondent #4)

What expanded or additional support(s) could serve as solutions to these pressures?

To investigate the other side of the coin regarding the pressures identified above, the survey followed up with a question on what expanded or additional supports could serve as solutions to these pressures.

AOP and Other Provincial Investments

The most frequently occurring suggestion among survey respondents was to expand funding for the AOP. Survey respondents suggested that funding going toward AOP positions in the RCMP that are not filled should be allocated to municipal police agencies that are filling these positions.

Respondents also characterize the AOP as a model of financial support that could be used for new mandated services, such as support services. Introducing and expanding other forms of financial support would also provide meaningful, arms-length support to municipalities with their own police agencies.

Examples of other desired investments noted by respondents include Crisis Intervention Training and community capacity to conduct outreach and support for people experiencing homelessness or mental health challenges. Respondents signal a readiness to continue to respond to calls related to mental health but believe this is best done in partnership with other organizations.

“The Province could help by funding community navigators or crisis response positions within the municipal police service. [The Department of] Health could expand mental health outreach and response in the community, non-profit groups could provide housing options, province could invest in public housing.” (Respondent #9)

Another existing position mentioned by survey respondents that could be expanded to relieve pressures on municipal police is that of the Sheriffs. Respondents suggest that Sheriffs could be responsible for transporting or taking custody of people being admitted to hospitals.

Clearly Defined Roles

Survey respondents frequently mentioned the importance of clearly defined roles to avoid scope creep and to avoid counterproductive disputes. As municipalities, the provincial government, the provincial police, and paramedics each play a direct role in public safety, it is important for the responsibilities that each hold to be clarified and updated. Respondents occasionally suggested that this clarification be provided in the Nova Scotia Police Act.

Regarding mental health, homelessness, or addiction challenges, respondents stated that the appropriate role of police should be better defined through consultation and communicated to partner organizations and service providers.

Board of Police Commissioner Provincial Appointees and Support

Survey respondents also suggested that the role of the provincial appointee on Boards of Police Commissioners should be better defined and supported; all of these positions should be filled and have a specific purpose.

Survey respondents suggested that Boards of Police Commissioners could be more supported, as was recommended by the Mass Casualty Commission (MCC), with access to legal advice and research capacity.

Urban Challenges and Opportunities

Some respondents called for some form of financial support that helps urban centres provide a high standard of public safety to residents, workers, and visitors.

Municipal police agencies are also said to be able to provide enhanced services to more of their surrounding towns and rural areas, if this opportunity could be supported with new sources of revenue.

Police Support Services

Respondents suggested that, if the necessary funding was available, municipal police agencies could provide support services and develop regional service hubs to ensure the availability and quality of these important supports.

Corresponding to the concern with downloading of support services on municipal police agencies, survey respondents suggested that the provincial government maintaining financial responsibility for these services would be a reasonable and valuable form of support.

Municipal Police Agency Liaison to the Department of Justice

Survey respondents suggested that a Liaison position could be created to foster an improved dialogue between municipal police boards, chiefs, and the Department of Justice. This position could be modelled around the liaison position that the RCMP has with the Department of Justice.

Do you see any opportunities for further collaboration on the provision of central support services?

Because police support services are so significant, NSFM's survey inquired further about opportunities for increased collaboration on the provision of central support services. In response to this question, respondents proposed a number of ideas.

The most frequently occurring response proposed the creation of support service hubs across the province; certain specialized support services would be readily available at each of these hubs and could be utilized by both municipal police agencies and the RCMP detachments. This would ensure that support services are not overly-concentrated in Halifax.

“A Regional Hub model could provide support services rather than have most support services come from Halifax. This way services can be deployed and arrive within a consistent timeframe. This can be done for services such as ERT, IDENT, Canine, Public Order Unit. Police agencies can collaborate on staffing these positions with training and equipment being provided by the province. This will build capacity.” (Respondent #4)

Respondents often mentioned that agreements have already been established among some municipal police forces for Canine, Forensic Identification and integrated Major Crime Investigation services. While municipal police agencies have shown an ability to collaborate, respondents frequently call for the Province to provide the funding for these support services.

As was mentioned above, survey respondents consistently called for clearly defined roles and key terms. With respect to support services, such clarification was called for in the definition of central support services and in the designation of roles and responsibilities for providing these services. Further, survey respondents expressed the need for clarification of the provincial government and provincial police service’s role in providing specialized or support services, as well as clarity in costing, resourcing, priority of accessing services, and capital funding.

Some respondents suggested that roles could be established on the basis of a tiered system that recognizes the different sizes and capacities of a municipality or municipal police agency. Examples of such a tiered system are found in Quebec and Manitoba. Respondents further suggest that specializations could be developed in each tier and municipalities could receive provincial funding to provide certain services to make up for the dissatisfactory quality and availability of current support services options.

Respondents also mentioned that collaborating on the funding and provision for training is a viable and valuable opportunity.

Do you experience barriers to collaboration with other municipal police agencies or the RCMP?

The survey sought to identify barriers to collaboration with other municipal police agencies and the RCMP. Survey respondents report that day-to-day cooperation typically functions well and that challenges tend to arise at the interorganizational level (e.g.: strategy, oversight policies, and protocols).

These interorganizational challenges are reported to be more pronounced between municipal police agencies and the RCMP than they are between different municipal police agencies. Survey respondents shared that when challenges arise between municipal police agencies, they are typically worked out efficiently by the Boards of Police Commissioners. However, differing sizes, priorities, and geographic locations of various municipalities can cause barriers to arise for municipal police agencies.

Many survey respondents mentioned that, despite interorganizational challenges, on-the-ground collaborations with local RCMP detachments are functioning well. Vacant positions in RCMP detachments are reported to cause challenges occasionally, such as when joint units resourced by the AOP are not staffed.

Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) spoke to the benefits of their dual-force arrangement that has both the Halifax Regional Police and the RCMP detachment within the purview to the same Board.

As was included in responses to the question on pressures, respondents brought up the unfortunately strained relationship between municipal police agencies and the RCMP. This strained relationship is explained as resulting from a number of factors including i) the characterization of municipal police agencies as not as well trained or qualified as the RCMP, ii) the consistent rotation of staff positions that can interfere with relationship building, and iii) the perceived tendency of some RCMP officers to use joint operations and training as opportunities to recruit experienced officers.

“Relationships with RCMP are short-lived and impacted severely, rarely meeting their potential. By the time new people arrive and start to get comfortable in their roles, they often move on and the process starts over. The assignment of municipal members is long-term, often lasting decades, which results in strong relationships that have a firm foundation built on trust, communication and a much deeper understanding of each other’s skills, abilities, and knowledge.” (Respondent #4)

How often does your police agency receive requests for support from the RCMP?

Another survey question inquired about how often the respondent receives requests for assistance from the RCMP.

Some survey respondents, including HRM, reported that they received an equal number of requests for support *from* the RCMP as their municipal police agencies make *to* the RCMP. Other survey respondents reported a high number (i.e.: over a hundred annually) of requests being regularly made by the RCMP for backup and support. Only one respondent stated that requests for assistance from the RCMP were infrequent.

Do you see any opportunities to increase interoperability?

The survey further inquired about respondents’ views on opportunities to increase interoperability.

The most frequently made suggestions from respondents was shared training. Respondents suggest that shared training could draw on or develop local subject-matter experts and support consistent knowledge, skills, and procedure across agencies. Additionally, shared equipment and other resources, standardizing equipment, and engaging in bulk purchasing could help to accomplish economies of scale and build trust between agencies. HRM’s dual-force model exemplifies how integrated software and protocols can support dynamic and consistent collaboration.

Survey respondents also called for a focus on developing a culture of collaboration and a clarification of roles that would make interoperability more practical. Some respondents state that a considerable degree of interoperability has already been reached and it is the building of a respectful and trusting relationship that is required to move toward the fuller potential of collaboration.

Some survey respondents suggested that a Specialized Service Hub model could also increase interoperability and coordination between all police agencies providing services in Nova Scotia.

Do you think the current Police Act allows you to effectively administer policing?

The survey attempted to identify barriers or gaps in governing legislation by asking how well the Police Act enables the administration of policing.

Survey respondents often stated that the framework provided in the Police Act does not define roles and responsibilities clearly enough. This lack of clarity is raised by survey respondents specifically regarding Boards of Police Commissioners, the provincial police, and civil servants who represent the Department of Justice. Survey respondents referenced recent shifts in interpretation of municipal police responsibilities as proof that further clarity is needed.

Survey respondents also called for more support for Boards of Police Commissioners, as called for in the MCC, and a review of the Code of Conduct for board members and complaints process in the Police Regulations. Some survey respondents called for a restructuring of Boards of Police Commissioners to include more municipally-appointed community representatives.

Survey respondents suggested that roles, such as Special Constables, or Sheriffs, could be better defined and expanded to address capacity concerns (e.g.: traffic control, hospital transport).

Survey respondents frequently mentioned that most administrative difficulties arise from a lack of support and communication from staff and senior staff of the Department of Justice. Survey respondents suggest that the solution to this difficulty is a liaison position or institutionalized channel of dialogue.

Some respondents suggested that the Police Act is in serious need of review.

What hopes or expectations do you have regarding the upcoming new Provincial Policing Standards announced by DoJ?

In anticipation of the new Policing Standards being announced, the survey inquired about what survey response hope or believe these standards will entail.

Survey respondents suggested that standards should define core policing duties and how they relate to enhanced or specialized services. Respondents also expressed that the creation of new standards could be a way to open a conversation on economies of scale, mutual aid, and integrated approaches. Respondents also mentioned that standards should not proceed with the assumption that one size fits all.

Survey respondents often called for the Standards to increase transparency and accountability and to increase consistent and responsive policing services. Survey respondents expressed expectations that minimum response times and 24/7 service would be called for by standards in the interest of the most responsive service to the public possible.

Survey respondents frequently expressed hopes that the new Standards would recognize the importance of support services being readily available rather than simply accessible by formal agreement.

Survey respondents expressed hope that training standards will be established with the ability to obtain any necessary training in mind. As was expressed throughout the survey, accessibility and affordability of training is a pressing concern for municipal police agencies. The abovementioned concern about RCMP favouritism was brought up specifically with regard to how training is accredited and provided in Nova Scotia; many survey respondents mentioned that municipal police agencies possess resources that could be used for local training purposes but are not recognized by the provincial government as such. Respondents also expressed concern that the standards and how they are audited would encompass a prevailing bias toward the RCMP.

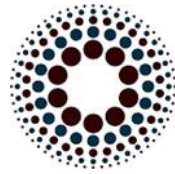
Some survey respondents suggested that the standards should include access to funding opportunities and that the standards should be based on a coherent set of principles, such as Sir Robert Peel's Principles of Policing.

Concluding Statement

This survey has helped to confirm and deepen NSFM's understanding of pressing issues and opportunities for municipal police agencies in Nova Scotia. While the importance of these insights is perpetual, they are especially important in the context of the Provincial Policing Review, upcoming renegotiation of service exchange, and newly established policing standards.

Municipal police agencies must bear the growing costs of maintaining a high standard of public safety as well taking on new responsibilities arising from downloading and emergent social issues. Among the findings of this survey, the importance of making training affordable, accessible, and collaborative was a consistent theme. Respondents consistently indicate that they are ready to partner with the provincial government, provincial police, and other first responders to find sustainable and effective ways to address growing public demands and the increased complexity of crime. However, with the overall cost of core police responsibilities already growing, updating financial supports, such as the AOP, and defining clearer roles is necessary for this collaboration to succeed. No single organization can address the growing demands of crime prevention and community safety independently. Knowing this, respondents to this survey called for the development of a culture of collaboration. These findings are aligned with other public statements made by the Mass Casualty Commission, the Nova Scotia Chiefs of Police Association, municipal police reviews and correspondence, and NSFM's past work on policing.

NSFM would like to express gratitude to the elected municipal officials and municipal staff that took part in responding to this survey. NSFM would also like to express gratitude in advance to the Department of Justice for taking these insights into consideration as they progress in the Provincial Policing Review with NSFM as a partner. NSFM endorses these findings as an important contribution to the next chapter of public safety in Nova Scotia.



12 April 2024

(Delivered via email)

Dear NSFM members with municipal police agencies,

RE: Municipal Police Agencies Opportunities and Challenges

This letter is being sent to the ten NSFM members that have their own municipal police agencies. All municipalities are experiencing challenges related to the cost and effectiveness of policing services to some degree. However, NSFM recognizes that municipal police agencies experience distinct challenges and offer distinct opportunities in pursuit of providing a high standard of public safety to Nova Scotians. Municipal police have a long and proud history in Nova Scotia and stand to offer important insights on the future of policing in this province.

Following our series of consultations on policing in 2023, NSFM would like to delve deeper into the opportunities and challenges that characterize municipal policing. In our recent consultation on policing, NSFM identified pressing issues in municipal policing that include but are not limited to:

- Communication between municipal police agencies and the Department of Justice (DoJ) could be improved by creating a designated Municipal Police Liaison similar to the RCMP Liaison.
- The cost of policing is rising. Additionally, municipal police agencies in towns and regional municipalities are required to provide these services to a significantly larger portion of the population than is included in their municipality's tax base. Therefore, financial assistance similar to the Additional Officer Program (AOP) is called for.
- Central support services are relied on but are not always readily available or of sufficient quality. Similarly, Biological Casework Analysis is paid for by all Nova Scotian municipalities, but these services are not always sufficiently high-quality or available when needed.
- Police officers are often called on to assist people experiencing breakdowns in mental health and are required to maintain custody of people awaiting treatment at a hospital for long durations of time. This is a drain on officer time that would be otherwise spent preventing and investigating crime and could be more appropriately done by an alternative designated position.

Appendix A

We invite you to work with your Board of Police Commissioners or whoever else you deem appropriate to provide further information on significant issues and opportunities that would make a difference to your police agency and constituents. **Please submit a response to this letter to info@nsfm.ca by May 31st.** Please consider the following questions in addition to any other aspects of policing that you and your council would like to comment on.

- What are the existing pressures discussed in your Board of Police Commissioners and council meetings related to policing?
- What expanded or additional supports could serve as solutions to these pressures?
- What hopes or expectations do you have regarding the upcoming new Provincial Policing Standards announced by DoJ?
- Do you see any opportunities for further collaboration on the provision of central support services?
- Do you experience barriers to collaborating with other municipal police agencies or the RCMP? How often does your police agency receive requests for support from the RCMP?
- Do you see any opportunities to increase police interoperability?
- Do you think the current *Police Act* allows you to effectively administer policing? If not, what would useful changes look like?

Discussions on policing in Nova Scotia will take place as part of a comprehensive review of policing, being conducted by the [Police Review Engagement Advisory Committee](#) and technical consultant Deloitte. NSFM is dedicated to representing all municipalities and understanding the distinct challenges that they experience.

Thanks in advance for contributing your perspective to this important discussion.

Kind Regards,



Juanita Spencer,
CEO, Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities