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# GAZETTE

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## ISOLATED POST

The realities of policing in remote communities

### Arctic security

Protecting Canada's northern border

### Northern New Zealand

Dirt roads and one-person stations

### Autism disorder

Signs for police to watch for





# Policing outside of the cities

When the North West Mounted Police first marched west in 1874 to police the vast open land that is now Saskatchewan and Alberta, there was no such thing as urban policing. Today, even with more than 50 per cent of Canada's population living in cities, the tradition of policing Canada's remote landscapes and small communities continues.

The RCMP serves in about 200 isolated posts across the country. Many of these are found up North while others are located along the long stretches of rugged coastline and in the rural or remote regions of the interior. Policing in these communities is inherently different from urban policing and, in this issue, we look at what it's really like to be posted in a smaller, isolated detachment where the closest neighbouring town could be hours away.

We begin with *Gazette* writer Caroline Ross's cover article on policing the Canadian Arctic, an area that includes more than 150,000 kilometres of coastline. She looks at the increasing pressures on the North, where rising temperatures, melting sea ice and untapped oil and gas reserves make this region easier and more desirable to access — and also more challenging for police and their partners to secure.

Caroline also looks at the day-to-day realities of police work in isolated communities across Canada. Whether it's in the island community of Bella Bella, B.C., where flying or boating in is the only option, or in the Arctic community of Coral Harbour, Nunavut, where dealing with ailing Ski-Doo's and furnaces is part of general duty, officers in these posts face a range of challenges that their counterparts in larger cities likely don't encounter.

We also provide an overview of the new RCMP backup policy and the strategies that small, isolated detachments have adopted to meet the requirements.

We hear from Dr. Barb Schmalz, an RCMP psychologist based in Calgary, who talks about the psychological side of working in isolated posts.

Ontario Provincial Police Insp Mark Allen looks at policing in the remote areas of Ontario and addresses the four big challenges that officers contend with outside that province's urban centres.

Police agencies outside of Canada face similar issues, and have developed their own policing solutions unique to their needs.

Cst Andrew Small of the Kent Police in England describes the role of Kent's rural and environmental crime co-ordinator — a job tailored to the English countryside.

Dr. Judy Putt of the Australian Institute of Criminology looks at the increase in illicit substance abuse in remote areas of Australia and how police in that country have developed some promising initiatives and strategies to tackle the problem.

Sarah Kennett of the New Zealand Police describes the problems police face in the harsh and remote Northland Region and some of the innovative programs they've created to deal with these problems.

Finally, Jason B. Moats, author of *Agroterrorism: a guide for first responders*, spells out the logistical problems connected to a major agricultural incident and how police will be involved.

While policing in remote areas may seem like daunting, isolating work, there are plenty of positive aspects, too. We hope this issue provides a realistic balance of both the challenges and rewards these posts offer.

Katherine Aldred

## More to explore on remote policing from the Canadian Police College Library

[www.cpc-ccp.gc.ca/library-biblio/library-biblio-eng.html](http://www.cpc-ccp.gc.ca/library-biblio/library-biblio-eng.html)

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Cst Kyle Edwards stops for a moment to take in the scenery at Valley of Thrasher Lake, a 30-minute ride by all-terrain vehicle from the RCMP detachment in Paulatuk, N.W.T.

Cst Todd Scaplen

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### ON THE COVER

Policing in a remote, northern detachment like this one in Takla Landing, B.C., requires the ability to integrate into the local community and adjust to the isolated landscape and often harsh conditions.

Photo:RCMP

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### NEW POLICE RESOURCING MODEL

Detachment commanders know how difficult it is to determine the number of general duty officers required to ensure a given level of police service within a community.

That task is now a lot easier, thanks to a National Police Resourcing Model (PRM) launched in 2007 by RCMP Community, Contract and Aboriginal Police Services (CCAPS).

The PRM is a workload-based measurement tool that crunches data on a detachment's call volume, call types, travel time per call, event distribution and available officer hours. The tool then churns out detailed reports showing how increases or decreases in the detachment contingent affect service levels, and vice versa.

Commanders need only review a graph to see how a given scenario will play out — how many priority calls officers can immediately attend, or how much unallocated time will be left over for proactive work —

says Insp Craig Duffin of the CCAPS Resourcing Model Unit.

The tool is intended for divisional use, and Duffin expects to have a national network of trained PRM analysts in place by spring 2009.

In Alberta, PRM analysts Peter Fullbrandt and Mary Day have run reports on 55 of the province's 145 detachments. "I've surprised some detachment commanders in terms of when they thought their busy periods were (occurring)," says Fullbrandt, adding that the reports also help identify opportunities for targeted enforcement or crime reduction initiatives.

S/Sgt Gary Graham used PRM reports to flesh out a larger business case for increasing the RCMP establishment in Okotoks, Alberta. Graham presented municipal decision-makers with three options for police service, ranging from staying with the status quo to upping the establishment by four officers.

"What I like about (the PRM output) is that it really does give the community and elected officials an opportunity for



RCMP

How many general duty officers does your detachment need to provide more than just immediate call response? The RCMP National Police Resourcing Model can tell you.

meaningful input to the (police) establishment in the town," says Graham. Partners have a clear idea of how their funding decisions affect public safety, he says.

PRM reports currently rely on historical data, but CCAPS intends to develop a forecasting capacity based on data collected over the next five years.

— Caroline Ross

### UPPING INTELLIGENCE ON SEX CRIMES

Adult sexual assault victims in British Columbia can now report to police anonymously through community-based victim assistance agencies, thanks to a new third-party reporting protocol that took effect in fall 2008.

The protocol involves a partnership between the RCMP, municipal police forces and community-based victim assistance programs across B.C. It is the first province-wide protocol in Canada, and stakeholders hope it will encourage more women — particularly marginalized sex workers — to share information with police.

"Often women that work in the sex trades have had run-ins with the police," says Tracy Porteous, executive director of the Ending Violence Association of B.C., the organization that spearheaded the initiative. "(These women) wouldn't necessarily think of calling the police first-off, but they often come forward to community-based

victim services programs for (help) managing the psychological aftermath of being sexually assaulted."

Under the protocol, victimized women can fill out a standard questionnaire that is forwarded to police under conditions of anonymity. Police can then use the information to help identify patterns, develop profiles and modify patrol strategies. Investigators also have the option of going back to a community victim service agency to ask if a particular victim is willing to come forward and speak openly with



police, says Det/Cst Kathleen Tchang of the Vancouver Police Sex Crimes Unit.

Some women do come forward, says Tchang, and that opens the door for investigations that wouldn't otherwise be possible.

The anonymous reporting service is offered by 62 community-based victim assistance programs across B.C., thanks to funding provided by the RCMP and Justice Canada. "Sex workers travel around (the province), and they bring their stories with them," says Tchang. "Now we have a way to hear about those stories."

Police forces across B.C. also share information from the reports through their provincial computer system, allowing investigators to link information across jurisdictions and hone in on sexual predators who move between cities.

The protocol is based on best practices that have been operating in Vancouver, Victoria and Prince George since the early 1990s.

— Caroline Ross



## STRENGTHENING INTERPOL-UN CONNECTIONS

There's a new face at Interpol's United Nations office in New York.

Harper Boucher, former D/Commr of the RCMP's Atlantic Region, was appointed as the Special Representative of Interpol to the United Nations in April 2008. Boucher will spend the next three years working to strengthen communication and co-ordination between Interpol and the United Nations in areas of common concern, including terrorism, organized crime and trafficking in drugs, arms and human beings.

Interpol has police resources in 187 of the 192 UN member states, says Boucher. Interpol can also leverage its I-24/7 information system and global databases such as the lost and stolen passports databank to support relevant UN efforts.

"The key is to determine where Interpol can play a greater role," says Boucher. "I have to make sure we don't

breach the political side of the UN house, but we talk about operations — a very tactical approach to how we can help member states in terms of safety and security."

Interpol's UN office was established in 2004 and was previously headed by Dr. Ulrich Kersten, former president of the German Federal Criminal Police. Kersten's legacy includes the Interpol-UN Special Notice to help enforce UN sanctions against terrorists and terrorist organizations.

Boucher is already moving forward on a number of promising initiatives, including a partnership with the UN Department of Peacekeeping to provide training and support for local police in conflict zones, and a project to build police capacity in countries that have identified gaps in implementing the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

"Transnational crime has progressed to a new form of geopolitics, with its own character, logic, structures and support systems," says Interpol Secretary General Ronald K. Noble. "The need for international co-operation has never been greater



Jeanette Kroes

Former RCMP D/Commr Harper Boucher is now building relationships between Interpol and the United Nations in New York.

in dealing with this new reality, and it's a challenge which the Interpol-UN partnership is ideally placed to meet."

Boucher served 37 years with the RCMP and has significant experience in forging strategic partnerships with various levels of government.

— Caroline Ross

## NEW TECHNOLOGY COULD HELP BUST GROW OPS

A new Canadian technology may do more than help curb electricity theft, it could also put a damper on marijuana grow operations that suck stolen power.



RCMP

The wireless electrical meter suite — designed by Calgary-based dTechs Electrical Profile Management Ltd. — monitors electricity usage along a primary power line and alerts utility providers to instances of excessive consumption. It's then up to the power companies to address the situation, either by cutting power to the offending homes or by notifying police of suspected criminal activity.

"We see electricity theft in about 95 per cent of (the) grow operations (we investigate)," says Sgt Keith Hurley of the Southern Alberta Marijuana Investigation Team (SAMIT), a unit comprised of officers from the Calgary Police Service and the Alberta RCMP.

Hurley estimates that SAMIT busts about 10 per cent of the active grow operations in Calgary each year, thanks largely to tips provided by public and police sources. Thousands of operations remain undetected, he says.

The meter technology has the potential to help locate more grow operations, particularly those that don't have outwardly visible indicators like blackened basement windows. However, Hurley stresses that

law enforcement will only benefit from the technology if utility companies endorse the tool and commit to reporting instances of atypical power consumption.

That's what's happening in Calgary, where dTechs has been testing the tool in collaboration with local utility providers and SAMIT.

During one test in May 2008, the tool pinpointed four residences that were drawing excessive power within a neighbourhood of 927 homes. SAMIT later seized \$750,000 worth of marijuana plants and over 31 kilograms of packaged marijuana from two of the four homes.

Hurley emphasizes that electricity theft is only part of the puzzle in grow-op investigations. "We have an obligation to find more evidence than just power theft," says the Calgary Police officer, noting that tips and surveillance remain crucial tools.

The meter technology is the brainchild of Roger Morrison, a former Calgary Police Service drug sergeant who has investigated over 750 grow operations. Morrison founded dTechs in 2005.

— Caroline Ross



# Picture this

## Software gives eyewitness facial recollection a new look

*Ever heard of EFIT-V? It's the latest generation in facial imaging software, and it can create accurate facial composites with minimal verbal input from eyewitnesses. Det/Cst Clifford Clark, a witness interviewing specialist, chaired the United Kingdom E-FIT user group from 2004 to 2008. Now a member of the New Zealand Police, Clark speaks with Gazette writer Caroline Ross about how EFIT-V is changing the landscape of facial imaging.*

### First, what is facial imaging software?

Facial imaging software is used to generate the face (of a suspected offender) from the memory of an eyewitness. In essence, it's about getting the eyewitness's memory of the offender's face into a tangible form that everyone else can see.

### Why is EFIT-V so "leading edge"?

EFIT-V treats the suspect's face as a whole, rather than a collection of separate facial features that the witness must identify and change one by one. After the witness selects the suspect's gender, ethnic appearance, hair style and general face shape, the software generates nine faces. The witness then chooses the face that is "most similar" (to his or her memory of the suspect), and the software creates a new generation of faces based on the chosen face. With each successive generation (of faces), the program reduces the variation between each of the faces, so they become more similar to each other — and to the witness's memory of the offender.

### How does this "whole-face" approach differ from other facial imaging techniques?

The majority of software packages use a system that builds a face by combining photographs of (individual) features, which are placed together to make up the whole face, then changed or corrected feature by feature — for example by selecting a nose from a database of images. FBI sketch artists (also) rely on the witness looking for each feature one by one from an album of many faces, thus the initial selection of features is in isolation.

### What makes the whole-face approach more effective than other approaches?

Psychology has taught us that humans are good at recognizing whole faces but not so good at recognizing individual features, particularly from faces that are unfamiliar. If you saw a face for only a moment, it would be very difficult to pick out that unfamiliar person's eyes from hundreds of examples, yet you might be able to recognize that person's whole face in a crowd.

### How much verbal input must a witness provide for EFIT-V to be effective?

EFIT-V is largely visually driven rather than verbally directed. Previous systems relied on a full cognitive interview (with the witness) to help develop a description of the offender prior to developing the composite face on the computer. It would appear that EFIT-V may do as well with no interview, or with a shortened version. The software provides an opportunity (for witnesses) to see (multiple) faces, pick the closest image, and/or reject images that are least like the offender. It thus plays to our inherent capacity for recognition rather than requiring us to negotiate limited descriptions, which are easily misinterpreted.

### What are the advantages for law enforcement?

EFIT-V does seem to be much faster than conventional methods (with regard to arriving at a usable facial composite). There is also evidence that EFIT-V can be



Tom Clark

Describing a suspect's face in detail is a difficult task for most eyewitnesses, says Det/Cst Clifford Clark of the New Zealand Police, pictured here with a facial imaging system that relies more on visual — not verbal — input.

effective with witnesses who are less able to communicate, for example children, people who speak a different language, or people who suffer from cognitive impairment. Witnesses can point to images rather than describe what they want.

### Any final comments?

It's important to remember that a facial composite is only an image from a witness's memory, often from a fleeting glance. It will never be a photograph of the offender. Facial composites help us solve crimes by helping us find suspects, but it is still good quality detective work that will prove or disprove any suspect's involvement in an offence. ■



# PROTECTING CANADA'S NORTHERN BORDER

## A multi-faceted approach

By Caroline Ross

On August 23, 2007, a Norwegian sailboat with links to organized crime landed in Cambridge Bay, Nunavut, a 1500-person hamlet 200 kilometres north of the Arctic Circle. The boat had originally cleared Canada customs in Halifax, then left Canadian waters, sailed to Greenland, picked up a suspected affiliate of the Norwegian Hells Angels, and re-entered Canadian waters without reporting to customs in nearby Gjoa Haven, Nunavut.

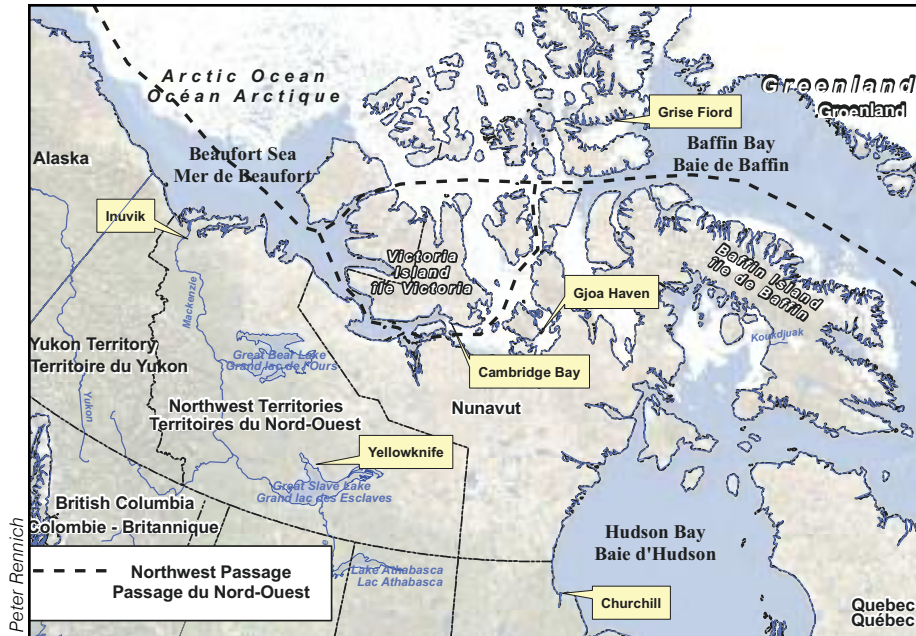
A year earlier, on September 18, a Romanian man linked to human smuggling and drug trafficking made his fourth attempt to enter Canada illegally — this time by sailing from Greenland to Grise Fiord, Nunavut. He was apprehended by local RCMP.

Incidents like these could become more common as rising temperatures and melting sea ice open the Northwest Passage — a shipping route through the Arctic Ocean — and expose Canada's 156,029-kilometre Arctic coastline to international marine traffic.



Cpl Peter Marshall looks out over the Arctic sea ice in Gjoa Haven, Nunavut, where a Norwegian sailboat with Hells Angels connections illegally evaded customs in summer 2007.

Cst Glenn Regan



Sixty-four per cent of Canada's total coastline lies in the Arctic Ocean. Melting sea ice means that the Northwest Passage shipping route could have seasonal ice-free periods in as little as 10 years.

Add in the fact that the Canadian Arctic is believed to contain several untapped oil and gas reserves, and it's easy to see why Arctic sovereignty is now a priority for the Government of Canada.

It's also a growing concern for the RCMP, the agency that often provides the first line of defence across much of Canada's frozen North.

### Arctic first responders

Almost all of Canada's Arctic border lies in the territories of Nunavut and the Northwest Territories, which together comprise 34 per cent of Canada's land mass and less than one per cent of its population.

Several federal departments and agencies share responsibility for protecting this remote coastline. The Department of National Defence co-ordinates military planning and response, and conducts sovereignty patrols. The Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) has a mandate to monitor incoming persons and goods, while the Canadian Coast Guard handles Arctic search and rescue.

The RCMP's main role in the North is to deter activities that threaten border

integrity or national security, and to ensure the legitimate use of inland waterways. But necessity often drives the force to act as a first responder for incidents that fall under other federal jurisdictions.

"The RCMP is the only (federal enforcement agency) that is in every community in the North," says Supt Grant St. Germaine, criminal operations officer for the Northwest Territories RCMP.

Most other agencies provide a seasonal presence or send personnel and equipment north in response to an incident, but the RCMP has permanent detachments in every one of Nunavut's 25 communities and in 23 of the Northwest Territories' 34 communities, including all seven hamlets on the Arctic coast.

"If a ship under foreign flag suddenly shows up in the Arctic and there's a problem with it — customs issues, immigration issues, a rescue — the RCMP are (usually) the closest ones out there," says St. Germaine. "In most cases, we're going to be tasked with the initial response, and (our partners) show up down the road."

That's what happened in Cambridge Bay, when the vessel from Norway arrived

with its customs-dodging crew and its Hells Angels connections. Local RCMP co-ordinated the initial customs check, arrests and border investigation until CBSA officials arrived from Vancouver.

With regard to unauthorized landings like this, the RCMP has the Arctic environment on its side, says Supt Bob Wheadon, criminal operations officer for the Nunavut RCMP. "(The land) is really barren and isolated. . . . If people were to go anywhere, they'd go to a community, and we have (officers) there."

### Protecting Canada's back door

Intrepid adventurers aside, what about the potential for increased commercial shipping to open criminal inroads into northern Canada? That potential certainly exists at the Port of Churchill, Canada's only operational Arctic sea port.

Located in northern Manitoba on the shores of Hudson Bay, the Port of Churchill provides a seasonal link to the Arctic Ocean. The port was traditionally used to export Canadian agricultural products to a global market, but it began receiving inbound shipments in October 2007.

The first such shipment came from Russia: a large load of ammonium nitrate (fertilizer) bound for the Canadian Prairies. "Of course, when you have a large quantity of ammonium nitrate, it's got other possible uses as well," says Insp Robert Bazin, the RCMP officer in charge of border integrity in Manitoba.

Loaded vessels from Asia and the Middle East also dock in Churchill — and the growing influx of ships certainly challenges local CBSA and RCMP resources, says Bazin. To help augment local capacity, Bazin organized a supplementary port patrol program, whereby officers from RCMP border enforcement, customs and excise, and immigration and passport sections in Winnipeg and Calgary join a CBSA dog handler and head to Churchill at least once during the July-to-November shipping season. The team synchs up with local CBSA and RCMP officers to inspect inbound cargo and crews for border offences, but the



visits also serve a higher purpose.

“Right now, we don’t have a whole lot of intelligence about what’s going on in the North — specifically in a port that is like a back door to the country,” says Bazin. “We’re trying to get a sense of any vulnerabilities we may have in that area and what we can do to mitigate them.”

**Patrolling inland waterways**

The RCMP’s northern jurisdiction also requires officers to police inland waterways. In the Canadian Arctic, the waterway with the most potential for exploitation may well be the Mackenzie River, which runs 1,738 kilometres through the Northwest Territories, from Great Slave Lake in the south to the Beaufort Sea in the northwestern Arctic. A traditional supply route, the river carries significant barge traffic and provides access to several new mining and gas developments in the territory.

“If somebody were to blow up one of those barges, (particularly near the docking site at the south end of the river), it could effectively eliminate the shipping route,” says St. Germaine. “There’s the potential for significant economic impact to northern Canada.”

The RCMP’s territorial Integrated Border Enforcement Team (IBET) already conducts annual patrols of the Mackenzie using a vessel based on Great Slave Lake. St. Germaine says the IBET program is now implementing additional measures to address the expected increase in river-based activity. Last year, the program partnered with several other federal departments to acquire a new quick-response vessel that will augment current patrol capacity. The vessel will be stationed in Inuvik, at the north end of the river, and will also be available to attend security incidents in the Beaufort Sea.

Both vessels and their crews will be put to the test during an RCMP-led Arctic sovereignty exercise planned for the Beaufort region in the summer of 2009.

But the patrol program has one shortcoming: a lack of resources, says St. Germaine. “We have IBET vessels, but we

don’t have an IBET section. When we crew the boats, we’ve been relying on volunteers from the detachments.” He hopes that the upcoming exercise will highlight the need for a permanent IBET unit in the Northwest Territories.

**Preparing for the future**

From an RCMP perspective, the biggest threat to Canadian Arctic security at present may well be a lack of intelligence about where the real threats and vulnerabilities lie — both now and in the future. Bazin sees the gap in the Port of Churchill, and he’s not alone.

“We currently have no intelligence-

gathering capacity (in Nunavut),” says Wheadon, who is banking on a nationally driven business case that could bring as many as 30 new criminal intelligence resources to the RCMP’s northern divisions. The extra capacity would also assist the national Marine and Ports program, which requires more ground-level intelligence before it develops a specific Arctic program.

In the meantime, it’s up to the handful of officers on Canada’s frozen northern border to hold the fort.

“It’s (about) being cognizant of what’s going on, and being as proactive as we can be,” says St. Germaine. ■

**Diamonds in the rough**

Canada is the world’s third-largest producer of diamonds by value, and our diamonds are renowned for their high gem quality.

These factors make the Canadian diamond industry a potential target for criminal infiltration, and the cutting sector based in Yellowknife, Northwest Territories, is particularly vulnerable.

“Traditionally we didn’t have diamond cutters in Canada,” says Sgt Darrell Robertson, who served three years with the RCMP Diamond Protection Service in Yellowknife. Most cutters came from overseas, many from Eastern European countries known for their established cutting industries — and their established organized crime networks.

In 2001, Robertson and his colleagues launched an initiative to educate mine staff and government hiring agencies on how to effectively screen foreign job candidates. It was a timely initiative, given that the diamond boom brought people from 64 countries to Yellowknife between 2002 and 2003.

The diamond unit is now staffed by one officer, with assistance from specialized units as required. But proactive work remains vital to the industry’s long-term integrity, says Cpl Scott MacPherson, who co-ordinated the program for the last half of 2008. MacPherson worked with mining stakeholders to develop a divisional RCMP policy on sharing information and protecting diamond shipments that must be diverted due to weather or other unforeseen circumstances.

While all sectors of the diamond pipeline are subject to risk, the potential for opportunistic theft is somewhat lower at mine sites themselves.

“The mines are very remote,” says Cpl Kelly Ross, who runs the RCMP diamond program in Alberta. Most operations are only accessible by air, he says, and ground-level security is second to none.

— Caroline Ross

# Policing in isolated communities

It's what you make of it

By Caroline Ross

Travelling for two hours by boat to attend a call at night, guided only by GPS and radar. Scaring bears from streets and schoolyards. Arriving at your detachment during a storm to discover that the furnace has exploded and left everything coated in soot.

This is reality when you're an RCMP officer stationed in one of Canada's 268 isolated posts — defined by the Treasury Board of Canada as communities that face unique challenges related to small populations, harsh climates, and/or limited access by commercial transportation or all-weather roads.

Remote policing isn't for everyone, but those who like it often stay well beyond the minimum service requirement of two or three years. Isolated-post work has definite challenges, but it also has unique benefits, not the least of which is a sense of personal fulfillment that is hard to find elsewhere.

## You want to go where?

The RCMP is the police of jurisdiction in some 200 isolated posts across Canada. All detachments north of the 60th parallel are in isolated posts, as are several detachments in the northern and coastal regions of Canada's 10 provinces.

Providing quality policing in a community that is hundreds of kilometres from a service hub is no easy task. In Bella Bella, B.C., and Island Lake, Manitoba — two island-based communities — the only way in or out is by air or water, and the only way to attend calls on neighbouring islands is by boat (or by ice road, during the winter in Island Lake).

Posts like these rely on RCMP Air Services for everything from transporting prisoners and attending court to replacing faulty computers and providing relief services. Of course, all travel is weather-dependent. If winds are high, waters are

“Probably the biggest challenge is the infrastructure.”

Cpl Shaun Haubrick

rough or snow is blowing, no one goes anywhere.

“Probably the biggest challenge (for me) is the infrastructure,” says Cpl Shaun Haubrick of Coral Harbour, Nunavut, a 850-person speck on the Arctic tundra. “Our garage is getting older, some of our Ski-Doos don't work, there's a furnace that needs to be replaced, and we always have water and sewer problems. That takes up a lot of my time (beyond being) just a policeman,” he says.

Administrative staff, stenographers, janitors and cell guards are also hard to come by, so officers often fill the roles themselves.

Nor is it easy to staff isolated posts, says C/Supt Marty Cheliak, commanding officer for the RCMP in Nunavut. “Human resources is my biggest challenge,” says Cheliak. “We have 25 detachments, all fly-in, no roads and only one (force) plane from Iqaluit. We currently have in excess of 35 vacancies (in 138 positions) and we bring in 14 to 18 members (from outside Nunavut) on relief duties each month.”

Even “southern” isolated posts face similar staffing problems, says Cpl Dion House, commander of the three-person detachment in Manning, Alberta, a five-and-a-half-hour drive north of Edmonton. There are now so many staffing vacancies in urban RCMP detachments that officers have little incentive to volunteer for isolated posts, he says.

“Career-wise, you can get any promotion you want anywhere in Canada right now, if you have the proper baggage,” says House. “People don't want to come (to Manning) and spend \$700 (a month) for rent in government housing. Essentially, that's a mortgage payment.”

It's also difficult to keep senior offi-

Cpl Doug Schiffner, serving on relief in Coral Harbour, Nunavut, examines repairs that he, Cpl Shaun Haubrick and a local resident made to the detachment sewer pipe after it burst. The trio used plastic, duct tape and a good dose of ingenuity to complete their work.



Caroline Ross

cers in remote locations, says House. He has policed in northern Alberta for 12 years but says Manning will be his last remote posting because his children are getting older. “I’ll do this one year here, then I will have to get back to a major centre to allow (my kids) the opportunity to continue with outside programs, university and college.”

Potential recruits may even be put off by misconceptions that isolated posts are more violent than the rest, says Cst Kyle Ushock. Before he was posted to Bella Bella, Ushock was told to be ready for a fight every night. “It wasn’t like that at all,” he says. “The community here is great and very supportive of us.”

### This is the best place to be

So what leads RCMP officers to volunteer for isolated posts in the first place? The desire for freedom, independence and adventure ranks high on many officers’ lists, but it goes beyond that.

“These detachment members do everything from the barking dogs to homicides,” says House in Alberta. “They have a wealth of experience when they come out, and their knowledge base and levels of confidence are greater than (those of officers) sitting in the (urban) hubs. . . . (Commanders) can’t get guys to come to the North, but boy, they’re trying to steal us from the North when our time is up.”

Beyond the variety of police work, officers in isolated posts also have the opportunity to learn specialized skills such as marine navigation, wilderness survival or wildlife management.

And officers agree that a small community is a great place to raise a family. The daily commute is rarely more than two minutes, so there’s plenty of time to spend with kids. It’s even possible to combine family time with work, says Haubrick, who sometimes does proactive community walks around Coral Harbour with his sled-bound children in tow.

For some officers, a stint in an isolated post can be a wise financial decision. You’re far from the commercial temptations of the city, you live in subsidized government housing, and you receive a

standard isolated post allowance to help offset the higher costs of living.

“It’s a good way to save,” says Cst Jeff Henderson in Baker Lake, Nunavut. “My wife and I paid off a student loan and a wedding in one year.”

However, the biggest reward for many officers may well be the personal relationships they develop in the isolated communities they serve. Police and residents are often on a first-name basis, and officers regularly participate in local events like fishing derbies, sports tournaments and community pageants. Officers are also the first people residents turn to for help, even for a ride to the hospital or an extra hand digging out after a snow storm.

“**You’re not just investigating crimes, you’re actually a part of the community.**”  
*Cpl Ben Sewell*

“You’re not just investigating crimes, you’re actually a part of the community,” says Cpl Ben Sewell in Beaver Creek, Yukon. “There’s a feeling that you’re actually making a difference in these communities because they’re small.”

### You get what you give

Positive community partnerships are key to the success of isolated-post policing. Without these relationships, even something as simple as entering the school to give a drug talk may prove impossible.

Isolated-post officers truly embrace the saying, “you get what you give.” So it is in Bella Bella, where officers



Courtesy Sgt Ren Osmond

Bi-weekly meetings with local Innu elders help detachment members integrate into the unique culture of their community, says Sgt Ren Osmond (centre) of Natuashish, Labrador.

attend the annual restorative justice camp for high-risk youth run by a local non-profit society. And in Natuashish, Labrador, where the detachment incorporates community input into its annual performance plan and has developed a cultural orientation program that links new officers with resident Innu elders. And in Cape Dorset, Nunavut, where the detachment provides information and support to the local Alcohol Education Committee that oversees the hamlet’s liquor supply.

“We’re really just a small cog in a big wheel,” says Sgt Ren Osmond in Natuashish. It’s the combination of police–community initiatives that has the most impact, he says.

But it’s not a perfect system. Officers posted to a community for two or three years can’t ensure continuity of police programming, says Mavis Windsor, director of social development in Bella Bella. And it’s especially hard on the community when several officers rotate out at once.

But officers who come willing to immerse themselves in their communities can make a big difference, says Windsor. Henderson in Nunavut agrees.

“Get out in the community, make it your home,” he says. “It’s all what you make of it.” ■



# What are the biggest challenges facing police in remote communities?

## The panellists

Cst George Cook, Old Crow Detachment, Yukon Territory

Cpl Wendy Martin, Cartwright Detachment, Labrador

Supt Andrew Boland, Northwest Region Human Resources, RCMP

### **Cst George Cook**

Many of the policing challenges faced by members in remote communities are the same as those in Canada's urban areas. We deal with manpower shortages and budget constraints, just as every other police service does. We still attend domestic disputes, deal with impaired drivers and investigate everything from break and enters to serious assaults and worse.

But remote postings present many unique challenges as well. Three-member detachments such as mine are common in the North. Training, vacation, medical appointments and court commitments often take one member out of the community, leaving only two members available for duty. Since police services are required 24 hours a day, we face months with little or no time away from work. We are either on shift or on call every day.

Also, members of the community approach us for policing matters when we are walking the dog or at the post office. People call us at home to report crimes, and they come to our homes to report for probation. There is no getting away from work.

At my current post, the Canada Border Services Agency, the Yukon Sheriff's Office, and Yukon Family and Children's Services are not present in the community.

We often deal with work that would normally be done by one of these partners, such as clearing U.S. citizens when they enter the country at the local airport.

Having only two police officers available when the closest help is three hours away by plane presents other challenges. Shifts are worked alone while the second member remains on call if needed. Many calls require more than one member because of safety reasons, because the incident has multiple scenes or because there are several calls for service at the same time. When more than two people are needed, members often turn to family and friends for help. My wife has guarded prisoners for me while I've gone to a domestic call: she brought our two-year-old daughter to the detachment and watched the prisoner until I returned.

There are personal challenges, too. The lack of services, recreation and shopping all impact members and their families. For instance, getting groceries involves ordering them from a store in another town, arranging for someone to deliver them to the airport, and then having them flown in. There is also the separation from family and friends, and the added expense of being far removed from a major centre.

But despite these drawbacks, the experience is worth it. I've been to parts of the

country that few people can say they've ever seen, and I've met some of the nicest people whom I'll never forget.

### **Cpl Wendy Martin**

Police officers inherently face a multitude of challenges on a regular basis. These include response time, human resources, equipment, budget, voluntary on-call and access to specialized sections to name a few.

But policing in northern and/or remote communities brings extraordinary challenges. Many communities are not connected by road and must be policed by boat, snowmobile or Twin Otter plane. Travelling 100 kilometres by snowmobile in -40 C increases response time.

This distance affects the number of calls for service in remote areas. If we cannot be there to respond to the immediate complaint, the communities will often elect to deal with violent and serious criminal issues themselves.

Trying to find the right person suited for the job has to be one of the most challenging aspects of remote policing. The RCMP looks for members who can function and thrive in a remote lifestyle. But it can be difficult to find people who are willing to sacrifice two, three or even four years without access to such basic amenities as medical and recreational facilities, supermarkets and paved roadways. Many members feel that the current compensation does not outweigh the sacrifice. Despite this, there are always Mounties willing to serve in these communities.

In terms of equipment, I have quickly learned how to do more with less. It is not simply a matter of having a sufficient budget to cover the expense of obtaining

“ Trying to find the right person suited for the job has to be one of the most challenging aspects of remote policing.

*Cpl Wendy Martin* ”



Cpl. Ben Sewell

required equipment. Identifying whether the equipment is available, arranging to have it shipped to your unit, and maintaining it once you have it are all considerations for police in remote areas. One positive thing is that many of the people living in these remote communities have their own pool of expertise and are more than willing to lend a hand when needed.

“On-call” is another challenging issue. With two police officers required to be available for duty 24/7, restrictions for leave, non-emergency medical procedures and educational training has significantly increased. Trying to balance operational requirements, finances and officer safety with a member’s quality of life and personal wellness is an ongoing struggle. There will have to be a significant increase in human resources and budget for these small communities to allow for proper compensation and improved quality of life of these members.

One thing I took for granted in past postings was having immediate access to specialized sections such as forensic identification experts and police dogs. Having specialized units on site isn’t normally possible in remote communities. You often have to find a way to preserve evidence or ship it out to sections in urban areas.

Policing remote communities in Labrador has provided me with some of the most fulfilling moments of my career.

Despite the challenges, it is an experience I recommend to anyone.

**Supt Andrew Boland**

From a recruiting and staffing perspective, identifying the right people to deliver effective police services in remote communities is a big challenge. A police officer in a small town plays an important role — one that extends beyond simply policing. These officers also become an integral part of the community. Getting the right police officers into the community is critical, as is ensuring that their families are prepared for living in a remote community. Police officers in remote locations need strong support from their families. Most small communities have few police personnel, so police officers’ families, by extension, become part of the policing network.

Police officers who serve in small, remote communities must be able to work independently and with a high level of ingenuity. Not only are community amenities usually sparse — perhaps one store, one school, no banks, no movie theatres — but so are on-site police resources. In small or isolated communities, services such as forensic identification are not always available, so officers must be creative and resourceful. Officers also require well-developed interpersonal skills, as they often rely heavily on the general public to assist with day-to-day

police functions. For instance, a teacher in the town’s only school may also be the only Justice of the Peace, or there may be only one mechanic in town to keep the police vehicles operating.

Human resources personnel are always on the lookout for the right people when recruiting for and staffing remote locations. Career development and resourcing advisors often have to let police officers themselves know that they have the skills and abilities to excel in remote environments. Staffing personnel can identify these qualities and find the right people by working with front-line supervisors and managers and getting to know the people in their police organization.

Staffing personnel must also ensure that officers have the right motives for seeking a remote posting. A two-year posting can feel very long if a person took the post only for personal reasons such as finances. The members must want to be there, to serve the people in the community, to develop themselves into strong police officers, and to be leaders in the community.

Police managers should encourage officers to take on the challenge of policing in a remote community. Not only will it be rewarding for their careers, but the satisfaction of making a difference in a remote community will never be forgotten — by the member or by the community. ■

# Officer backup in small detachments

## Flexibility the name of the game

By Caroline Ross

Ensuring adequate backup for officers in small detachments is challenging, but it's not impossible, as experience across the RCMP has shown.

In December 2007, the RCMP announced a new backup policy that requires a minimum of two officers to attend calls involving violence, anticipated violence, domestic disputes, weapons, suspected weapons, subjects who pose a threat to self and others, or travel to areas where communications are known to be deficient.

The policy upholds the RCMP's occupational health and safety requirements under the Canada Labour Code and affirms long-standing force principles on backup procedures. But commanders in small detachments still face practical challenges: having two officers available for duty 24/7 isn't easy when you have fewer than 10 members on staff and can't sustain a 24-hour shift schedule.

"The smaller the detachment, the bigger the impact," says Gord Dalziel, an

RCMP Staff Relations Representative in British Columbia.

Of course, one solution is to increase the number of officers in small detachments, but that's not always possible given provincial, territorial and municipal policing budgets.

Fortunately, commanders in these small detachments are an innovative lot.

"The RCMP is so diverse across Canada, with so many different mandates, landscapes, logistics, and legislation," says Insp Troy Lightfoot, officer in charge of RCMP Operational Programs. "Commanders across the force have developed a variety of different (backup) methods, each effective in its own context."

Nunavut operates a relief unit that supplies replacement officers to any of the territory's 25 small fly-in detachments when regular members depart for vacations, training or court. Saskatchewan is assessing options to amend and amalgamate detachment service zones across the province's network of long, flat roads.

Other regions meet backup needs

through community constable programs, contracts with municipal partners, or "hubbing" strategies that deploy centrally stationed resources to nearby "satellite" detachments.

But what happens when you command a two-person detachment and none of these options fit the bill? Then you revert to a situation where both officers are on permanent standby for the duration of their postings.

"I'm on call 24 hours a day," says Cpl Ben Sewell, commander of the two-person detachment in Beaver Creek, Yukon. "I can't go hiking with my family. I can't even enjoy a beer at dinner because I have to be available for duty."

This option involves a significant degree of personal sacrifice, and it also raises concerns about officer well-being over the long term.

Cst Mike Simpson remembers the mental, physical and emotional strain that he and his lone partner encountered during a particularly busy period in Igloolik, Nunavut.

"I've never been as busy (as I was) that three weeks," says Simpson. "My partner went on stress leave a few months later, and I was very close to being burned out. I was quite fatigued on all levels."

In such cases, it's incumbent on senior managers to regularly check in with front-line officers and ensure that backup requirements aren't compromising officer or public safety.

"It's a matter of getting out there, of picking up the phone to make sure that people are OK," says C/Supt Marty Cheliak, commanding officer of the RCMP in Nunavut. Cheliak visits each of Nunavut's 15 two-person detachments at least twice a year and keeps senior staff sergeants on call to support front-line officers at any time for any reason.

"The majority of managers are keenly aware of the need to balance resource costs with the safety of members and the public," says Lightfoot, who previously commanded a small, isolated detachment in northern Labrador. "That's the balancing act, and we do it quite well, I think. We're not perfect, but we're doing a fine job of providing safety to our members and the public." ■

Who's got your back? An officer checks in during a service call in Iqaluit, Nunavut.



RCMP



# Sachs Harbour

*When RCMP Cst Todd Midgett went up North for his second posting, he had more than himself to consider: his wife Tammy Olivier joined him in the tiny hamlet of Sachs Harbour, Northwest Territories. Tammy writes about the first eight months of her life as a member's wife up North.*



Cst. Todd Midgett

Sachs Harbour, N.W.T.

## August 2008 Summer in Sachs Harbour : “Balmy” days and 24-hour daylight

I’ve never had a \$9,000 grocery order or bought a case of ketchup in one go. But when your groceries get delivered only once a year, this is the reality.

I have lived in many small towns, but none as small as Sachs Harbour, population 120. I wasn’t entirely sure what to expect when we arrived, but I knew that there wouldn’t be a Starbucks within walking distance.

Landing in the spring is a definite bonus: the long stretches of Arctic daylight allow us to get to know this small town. Getting used to the 24-hour daylight was tough, but like anything, you adjust. The spring weather has been co-operative, with temperatures averaging a relatively balmy 5 degrees Celsius.

Living so close to the water is fabulous, and I love looking out over our beautiful sea

view from my living room. Being able to walk everywhere (three minutes to the post office/general store) is a bonus, and the dog is thrilled to have me at home.

I already have a friend in Joey, a 60+ local who chairs the local Co-Op board and understands my sense of humour (Arctic Co-operatives Ltd. is a community-owned retail store). Meeting people is very easy here, and Joey has helped me adjust to this new way of life.

I have been corresponding over the Internet with everyone I left behind in Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia. They are all fascinated by our adventure.

So far, I really like it up here. I can get used to not eating out, hitting the mall or taking in a movie on a Saturday night. With a little imagination, the general store becomes just like the West Edmonton Mall, and the satellite dish and microwave popcorn fill in for the movie theatre.

## January 2009 The long and dark of it : Winter months bring new challenges – and opportunities

Our enormous grocery order arrived by barge in August — three weeks late. We soon learned one of our first lessons of living in the Arctic: when you order a year’s worth of groceries in May, the expiration dates start then! By the time our two pallets arrived, more than 50 per cent of the order had passed its best-before date. We’ve been drinking juice like crazy before we have to throw it away.

Taking a quick trip to Mexico in December to restore our vitamin D levels was a real treat. Although December is the longest, darkest month, it wasn’t as bad as we anticipated (we had images of a black abyss). Until mid-January, we got a few hours of dusk-level light around noon, but after that, the sun managed to rise above the horizon, which is heaven in the Arctic. We are told that the next couple of months are the real winter. March is “blizzard month,” with the wind chill taking temperatures to the -50s.

I had no idea that the Sachs Harbour job market would be so prosperous. I moved here prepared not to work for two years, but by summer I was running the postal outlet four hours a week. It’s been a great way to meet everyone in town and become part of the community. In October, one of our teachers broke her leg, and as a result, I’ve been substitute teaching for Grades 1 to 3. I hope I’ll end up teaching them more than they are teaching me, but right now it’s a toss up!

Our next big Arctic challenge is planning for the arrival of our first child in July. How many diapers do we need to order for a full year?

It’s hard to believe we’ve been in Sachs for over eight months already. The idea of two years was daunting at first, but as we approach the half-way mark, it’s flying by. If I’m not careful, I might actually miss this place once we’re gone . . .

– Tammy Olivier

# The challenges and rewards of relief work



Cst. Todd Scaplen

Two cairns mark the entrance to the community of Ulukhaktok, N.W.T.

**By Cst Todd Scaplen  
RCMP Yellowknife Detachment**

After spending the first three years of my policing career in the tiny community of

Behchoko in the Northwest Territories (known as G Division in the RCMP), I knew what I was getting myself into when I joined the G Division Relief Section. For the next two years, I would be on the road

## Up North Policing, community and culture

*The unique culture and languages of the North can make working in geographically isolated communities particularly challenging — and rewarding, according to Cpl Yvonne Niego, an Inuk RCMP member who grew up and later worked in the northern community of Baker Lake, Nunavut. Niego talks about the importance of community connections, as well as her own challenges when she left the North for a posting in a southern urban centre.*

One of the first challenges that a police officer will face in a remote detachment is establishing a healthy relationship with the community. Whether in uniform or not, a police officer is often seen as being “on duty” all the time.

Also, in many remote two- or three-person detachments, there is no immediate backup other than the people who live in the community, so getting to know them is important.

Allow the community members to get to know you. Their experiences and perceptions are likely to be different from yours, therefore communicating

constantly, living in small isolated detachments up North.

Based out of Inuvik, the relief section is a team of five members responsible for ensuring that all two-member detachments in the Northwest Territories have someone to fill in when one of their members goes on vacation, attends training or travels outside the community for another reason. The relief section ensures that there is never a member working alone in a community, and also assists other communities that face shortages or need additional support.

When I joined the section in 2006, there were five two-member postings in G Division: Lutselk’e, on the eastern arm of Great Slave Lake; Wha Ti, northwest of Yellowknife; Tulita, at the junction of the Great Bear and Mackenzie Rivers; Paulatuk, on the northern coast; and Ulukhaktok, on the west coast of Victoria Island. In 2008, a sixth two-person detachment opened in Sachs Harbour on Banks Island. I had the opportunity to work in all of these communities, and each had its own special qualities and perks.

Being on the relief section always presented a few challenges. For starters, working at a different detachment for a week or a month at a time means you are away from home for long stretches. In my two years on the section, I spent only 35 days at my home base in Inuvik.

I travelled with a hockey bag and a

with them requires extra investment. Establishing yourself in a community will allow you to work better because people will want to help you. And personally, you will develop many relationships and experiences of a lifetime.

With a varied workload and no direct supervision from divisional headquarters, working in a remote detachment can be a great opportunity to develop police and management skills, as well as solid relationships with the community.

In northern society, where long winter months and lack of daylight can be suppressive on the mind, body and soul, it is



Cst. Todd Scaplen

The town of Paulatuk, N.W.T., in January.

very strong plastic tote, into which I packed everything I thought I would need. Still, I often had to borrow items from other RCMP members, or from teachers, nurses and other community members. I considered my computer, camera and fishing gear to be essential items for every relief posting.

When you first arrive in a community, the local RCMP members always provide a “Coles Notes” description of the town,

including the problem houses and the people to be wary of. Some communities have 150 people; others 800. You may not know the residents’ names right away, but the locals always know who the new “cop” in town is.

Many homes in these tiny northern communities do not have civic numbers, which can make it difficult to find a particular house. Often, you rely on community members who are walking by to point out houses

very important to get out and visit, even if there is nothing to say. My motto is “engage, relate and incorporate.”

Since moving from Nunavut to Ottawa three years ago, it has been a challenge for me to adjust to the big city and the southern culture. Like many, I struggle on the long commute back and forth from my house to the office.

In the North, I would be close enough to pick my kids up for lunch, get home to eat, and maybe even clean up afterward. In the evening there would be plenty of time to take them to visit with the elders.

But just as the pace of life has increased in the South, it is also changing in the North, leaving huge generation gaps.

Most northern youth speak only English and cannot communicate with their grandparents or elders. Many youth therefore turn to police officers for coaching sports and organizing extracurricular activities. There is no greater satisfaction than to see the young people you coached go on to become leaders in their community.

— Cpl Yvonne Niego

until you learn where everyone lives.

The smaller communities do not have high call volumes compared to larger detachments. That can take some getting used to, but there is always something to do. Whether it’s helping someone get identification for medical-related travel, helping someone transport a large package from the airport, or simply giving an elder a ride home from the grocery store, RCMP members are seen as more than just police officers. Community involvement is key, as it keeps you busy and lets residents know you are interested in them and their culture.

Alcohol remains a big problem in the communities, especially after the plane arrives with a large delivery. It can be frustrating to watch the cases of alcohol come off the plane and not be able to do anything. However, during my last few months on the section, some communities voted to restrict the amount of alcohol that each resident could bring in at a given time. It seemed to help, and it also gave the police a bit more power to stop large amounts of alcohol from entering the towns.

During my time on the relief section, I responded to domestic disputes, suicidal persons, sexual assaults, aggravated assaults, mischief and many other Criminal Code and territorial offences — most related to alcohol and substance abuse. Members must also be careful because all homes in the communities have firearms for hunting purposes, and safe storage can be an issue. Fortunately, I was never in a situation that I considered extremely dangerous.

While the challenges were many, working on the relief section also came with rewards. Getting out on the land to see and experience the North was a remarkable opportunity. Having a baby muskox walk up to me because it got separated from its mother, watching a grizzly bear play with a fox, and ice fishing with a local elder remain unforgettable experiences.

In the long run, it was worth every second. I met some amazing people, saw some spectacular landscape and wildlife, and I got paid to do it. ■



# Policing rural and remote Ontario

From grow ops to kids' camps, challenges abound

By Insp Mark Allen  
 Manager, Crime Prevention Section  
 Ontario Provincial Police

The challenges of policing in rural and remote communities in Ontario are numerous.

The Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) is one of the largest deployed police agencies in North America. With 5,600 uniformed staff supported by 2,000 civilians and 853 auxiliary members, the OPP provides front-line police services to 315 municipalities in Ontario, operating through 165 detachments, five regional headquarters and one divisional headquarters. The OPP is responsible for policing 922,752 square kilometres of land and 110,398 square kilometres of water.

Of the OPP's remote detachments, roughly 20 per cent comprise suburban and traffic detachments, 50 per cent are rural posts in western, southern and eastern Ontario, and 30 per cent are located in the north of the province.

In addition to providing direct policing services to all areas of the province not covered by a municipal police services, the OPP provides specialized policing services — such as emergency response, major case management, underwater search and recovery and forensic identification — to many municipal police services.

While the OPP polices many urban and suburban areas, this article focuses on some of the more prevalent challenges facing police in rural and remote communities.

## Grow operations

Grow operations continue to be a major

source of concern in rural and remote areas of Ontario. Over the last several years, the stakes have increased as incidents involving homicide, assault of innocent citizens, or the use of tripwires, booby traps and other dangerous devices have occurred at grow sites across Ontario.

One significant and highly dangerous incident occurred approximately 50 kilometres northeast of Orillia, at a grow operation under OPP surveillance. With Drug Enforcement Section (DES) officers on the perimeter, an Emergency Response Team (ERT) member camouflaged on the ground inside noticed a fully uniformed individual wearing tactical clothing — including body armour clearly marked “Police” — and carrying a shot gun walking straight towards the ERT member's position.

Initially believing a mix-up in communication may have occurred and the individual approaching may have been a DES member, the ERT member challenged the individual at gunpoint and was successful in disarming and arresting the individual without incident. The individual turned out to be a grower dressed in police tactical clothing. Several other arrests were made and the crop was harvested and destroyed.

Subsequent to the incident outside Orillia, a group of all-terrain vehicle (ATV) enthusiasts riding on a remote public trail near Carnarvon stumbled across growers tending to their operation. Several of the ATV riders were pistol-whipped and had their vehicles and identification stolen. And in eastern Ontario, a

homicide took place when “pot pirates” attempted to rob a grow operation.

Incidents like these are becoming more common as those engaged with grow operations go to extremes to protect their valuable crops. The OPP operates an aggressive aerial eradication program each year in an effort to locate and destroy large-scale grow operations.

## Domestic violence

Domestic violence, while problematic in all communities, provides unique challenges for both victims and police in rural and remote communities. Services including shelters and counselling are spread thin across many rural and remote communities, and transportation for victims to access such services can be difficult.

Issues surrounding the small-town everyone-knows-everyone reality make it very hard for victims to reach out for assistance. For many victims living in remote and rural communities, the prospect of what comes next after disclosing an incident of domestic violence may seem worse than the situation they face if they simply keep quiet and endure the violence.

In the last six years, 29 per cent of homicides investigated by the OPP have been domestic-related. The OPP has made domestic homicide prevention a priority. The force now has a dedicated domestic violence investigator in several detachments across the province and is working towards having this full-time dedicated position in all detachments.

## Youth

Youth issues also present unique challenges for police in rural and remote communities. When young people in rural areas are asked about their biggest concerns, they regularly cite a lack of activities and resources. In many areas, youth are bored, and boredom can lead to inappropriate and illegal activity. In Ontario, young people between the ages of 15 and

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**Grow operations continue to be a major source of concern in rural and remote areas of Ontario.**

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This police impersonator was among five people arrested at an outdoor marijuana grow site in rural Ontario under surveillance by the Ontario Provincial Police. As the popularity of outdoor grow ops increases, “pot pirates” like the one pictured above will go to extreme lengths to steal the illegal crops, including dressing up like police.

*Courtesy of OPP Drug Enforcement Section*

24 are responsible for a disproportionate number of property and violent crimes.

With information readily available online, youth in all areas of the province are “connected” to the wired world, and the perceived protection of living in small, close-knit communities no longer exists. Cyber-bullying; child-luring; violent video games, media images and graphic websites; and easy access to pornography all contribute to victimization and early sexualization of young people if Internet usage is not properly supervised.

The OPP has created an online risk

co-ordinator position within its Youth Issues Unit and has developed an Online Exploitation and Threats course to provide front-line officers who work with youth with the knowledge and skills to teach online safety. The course also teaches officers how to use the Internet — particularly social networking sites — while conducting investigations.

### Aboriginal policing

Policing in remote, northern Aboriginal communities presents significant challenges. Some communities are accessible only by air or, during winter months, by ice road. First Nations police services in Ontario are funded for front-line service only and must continually negotiate with provincial and federal governments to acquire additional resources that address officer workload, safety and retention issues. Of the 134 Aboriginal communities in Ontario, 113 have First Nations officers policing their communities.

The OPP supports First Nations policing by providing the specialized services not included in front-line funding. As well, the OPP Aboriginal Policing Bureau

has a mandate to support First Nations policing effectiveness and to contribute to healthy communities.

A recent community-based example is the “North of 50” kids’ camp, held during the summer of 2008. OPP officers took a group of kids from Pikangikum, an Aboriginal community near Kenora that was identified by the United Nations as having the highest suicide rate in the world, to a camp setting for a week. The kids had a rare chance to participate in fun, healthy activities and explore positive lifestyle choices, all with the

supportive guidance of police officers who acted as camp counsellors. The camp allowed police to build significant bridges, and follow-up activities continue to occur.

The OPP is also committed to providing its personnel with Native Awareness training. The force delivers a week-long training program approximately 20 times per year, in addition to a seminar series and presentations to new recruits. The OPP Native Awareness training explores Native culture, customs, colonialism and Indian Residential Schools, and has been described by many officers as the best training they have ever received.

### Natural resources

Ontario’s North is rich in natural resources that support large commercial operations in many rural and remote communities. When the demand for these resources diminishes and commercial operations such as mines or mills close down, these communities — often one-industry towns — suffer significant job losses and financial pressures that place stress on families. Increases in crime and domestic violence can be tied to situations where towns basically close their doors.

These are just some of the issues that provide major challenges to OPP services deployed in rural and remote communities. Large geographic policing zones, safety and backup issues, recruitment and retention of experienced officers, and family challenges associated with living in remote communities can make policing in these communities difficult.

Despite these challenges, some OPP members have chosen to spend much of — or all of — their careers in the north. These individuals embrace the northern lifestyle, the beauty, and all that the great outdoors has to offer.

The OPP also works with the RCMP, which faces many similar challenges in rural and remote communities, to share ideas and information on how best to serve our northern and remote communities, and how to support members policing those communities. ■

# New Zealand's Northland police

Coping with harsh terrain, remote roads and social deprivation

By Sarah Kennett  
New Zealand Police

Reaching isolated rural communities at the end of long, windy gravel roads is a reality for police in the Northland District of New Zealand.

Northland, one of 12 police districts in New Zealand, is also one of the most rural regions in the country. Almost half of the district's population lives in rural areas.

## Rural challenges

Northland has about 380 police personnel working in 21 stations, including the district headquarters. Fourteen stations are manned by one to three staff. In New Zealand, rural police officers often work alone, which has its risks. Backup can be some time away.

Police work in rural areas is varied, and includes everything from taking part in a search and rescue operation at sea, to being the first to arrive at a serious incident of violence, to assisting someone whose car has broken down.

Policing a small station can mean that local residents expect their police officers to be available 24/7. This has an impact on each officer's family, as officers' houses are often located next door or close to the station. Phone calls and knocks on the door can come at all times of the night and day.

Rural officers know their communities inside out, and having strong community links enables good intelligence gathering and willing assistance from the public when required.

Many people know each other and notice when something is not quite right in their neighbourhoods. Assistance from the public often leads to the apprehension of offenders.

At 56 per cent Northland's crime resolution rate is one of the highest in New Zealand.

Due to the large coastline and occasional flooding, support from community



The Northern Advocate

Cape Brett, near the Bay of Islands in northern New Zealand.

and volunteer groups is essential to address capacity and capability issues.

The remote geography and difficult terrain is even more challenging due to poor communication systems. Cell phone coverage is erratic, and many Northland homes do not have broadband Internet connections.

Having half the population in rural areas also creates challenges when an emergency call comes in. With the long distances and unpaved (gravel) roads, arriving at a scene can take half an hour or more.

The myriad of long gravel roads also makes it easier for criminals to carry out their business undetected — and makes apprehension by police difficult.

Rural residents are encouraged to form neighbourhood support groups, so they can look out for each other and in some instances prevent crimes from occurring.

## Road safety

Northland has one of the highest road death tolls in the country due to poor driver behaviour, unforgiving terrain, high rainfall and lack of paved roads. The district has 6,573 kilometres of road, but only 2,969 kilometres are paved.

It is an ongoing effort for police to reduce deaths and serious injury on the district's roads. Northland Police focus on changing driver behaviour by increasing the perception of risk and asking members of the public to report dangerous driving.

With about a third of fatal crashes in 2008 involving alcohol, police have also increased their focus on intoxicated drivers. Northland Police formed a Rural Road Policing Team in 2008 to focus on drunk drivers who avoid detection by driving off the main roads. Two Traffic Alcohol Groups (TAGs), each with six officers, also carry out road checks, stop-



ping drivers for random breath tests. The Rural Road Policing Team is based in Whangārei, but covers the whole district.

Police also consult with the local government and the New Zealand Transport Agency to improve road infrastructure.

**Drugs and alcohol**

Alcohol and illicit drugs continue to be key drivers of crime in Northland. Almost half the recorded crime has alcohol as a contributing factor.

Police are involved in a unique project that aims to reduce alcohol-related harm in the Far North area of Northland. The Far North Alcohol Team — comprised of police, the Far North District Council and the Northland District Health Board — ensures that licensed premises comply with the Sale of Liquor Act. They share information on ways of reducing the harm caused

spray. During last year’s operation, 45,000 plants were recovered and 218 people were arrested on drug-related charges.

**Other special units**

The Search and Rescue Team works alongside the volunteer land search and rescue organization. Over the years, these officers and volunteers have rescued people from cliffs, caves, the bush and the sea. They are also involved in searches for missing people, such as hunters and hikers.

The Armed Offenders Squad, also based in Whangārei, responds to serious incidents where offenders have firearms or other serious weapons and pose a threat to themselves or others around them. If an urgent response is required and the incident is a significant distance away, police will deploy the Northland Emergency Services Trust helicopter to expedite travel.

of Maori who are offending. The *iwi*-led Crime Prevention Plan is one such initiative. Driven and owned by Maori with support from police and social agencies, the initiative focuses on reducing offending and victimization within Maori communities by supporting *iwi* to develop proactive crime prevention strategies for these communities.

**Community empowerment**

Northland Police District Commander Supt Mike Rusbatch says that while Northland is one of the most socially deprived districts in the country — with problems relating to poor health, low education, poor housing and high unemployment — it has a strong sense of community identity.

“Northland Police have formed some strong partnerships with other agencies to tackle the problems caused by high social deprivation,” says Rusbatch. “The public are also the ‘eyes and ears’ for police and have often been helpful in assisting us to resolve or prevent crime.”

In December 2008, Northland Police led a campaign called Northland Community Pride Week. The campaign involved participation from all emergency service groups and from various government and non-government agencies working in crime prevention, education and social services.

The aim of the campaign was to encourage community ownership of community safety, a goal that is in line with the New Zealand Police vision of “Safer Communities Together.”

Following the launch, a series of articles written by local journalists appeared in the local media. The articles covered issues like family violence, burglary, alcohol and road safety, and each contained advice on how people could keep themselves safe and where they could go if they became a victim of crime.

While policing in Northland has many challenges — like diverse communities, a large rural population and difficult terrain — working with the community helps police deal with these challenges and makes the district a safer place to live and work. ■

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**The myriad of long gravel roads makes it easier for criminals to carry out their business undetected.**

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by excessive drinking. The three partner organizations are located in the same office, so they can share information and resources to better counter the many social problems caused by excessive alcohol consumption in the communities.

Concerning drugs, Northland’s relatively mild climate provides ideal growing conditions for cannabis. Forty per cent of the cannabis crops seized nationally originate in Northland, and the drug has a significant and widespread impact on the district’s communities in terms of crime and poor health.

The Organized Crime Squad, based in Whangārei, conducts an annual drug operation targeting cannabis growers. During the operation, which runs from December to March, the squad executes a number of search warrants and uses an airplane to spot cannabis plantations across the district. The squad seizes samples from identified plantations and destroys cannabis crops with a

**Seasonal crime**

Northland’s abundant coastline, sub-tropical climate and many popular beaches attract a number of domestic vacationers and international tourists in summer.

The district’s population swells by more than 200,000 from December to March. This seasonal influx poses a challenge for police. Throughout the summer, extra officers are deployed to popular destinations in an effort to reduce crime such as disorder, violence and property damage.

**Indigenous people**

Northland is home to one of New Zealand’s largest populations of Maori, the indigenous people of the country.

Maori comprise 32 per cent of Northland’s population but are over-represented in crime and victimization statistics. For this reason, New Zealand Police continue to build relationships with Maori by working with *iwi* — tribal groups — and other agencies to reduce the number

# The rural beat

## Kent Police engage environmental crime co-ordinator

By Cst Andrew Small  
Kent Police, U.K.

About four years ago, Kent Police — one of the 43 police forces in England and Wales — conducted research to determine the issues of greatest concern to people living in rural communities. These issues included theft of agricultural equipment and trespassing for the purposes of poaching. While the research confirmed that residents were confident about rural policing, it also showed a clear need for police to broaden their awareness of problems in the countryside.

In 2005, following the research, Kent Police created a rural and environmental crime co-ordinator position — the first of its kind within the U.K. Police Service.

The co-ordinator focuses his efforts on several areas, including wildlife, environmental crime, heritage crime and crime prevention as it relates to public order and anti-social behaviour in rural and coastal areas.

The introduction of the role has

received highly positive feedback from the farming community, while remote communities say they feel more reassured now that they have a dedicated officer.

### Rural partnerships

One of the co-ordinator's primary objectives is to proactively engage Kent's rural communities and build relations with partner agencies, such as local councils and farming organizations.

This work has been so successful that the co-ordinator is now in regular contact with more than 40 organizations, including Natural England (responsible for wildlife licensing and protection of various protected areas), the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA), the Forestry Commission of Great Britain and local wildlife trusts. In particular, the co-ordinator has developed a solid working relationship with the farming community and now regularly attends National Farmers' Union meetings.

### Crimes against animals

Since 2005, the co-ordinator has led several national and international wildlife crime investigations in Kent that have resulted in convictions. These successes were achieved by working in partnership with experts who could demonstrate the effects of animal cruelty, sometimes using forensic techniques.

One case involved badger baiting, an

illegal rural activity in which a badger is captured from the wild and placed in a pit with a fighting dog. The subsequent attacks serve to entertain spectators.

In a joint operation with the RSPCA, Kent Police used seized video evidence of the incidents to convict one person of animal cruelty offences in 2006. This person was also banned from possessing pets for five years.

A second case led to the first conviction of dolphin harassment in England. The animal in question was a solitary dolphin that regularly swam in the waters off the Kent coast and was protected from interference by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. The dolphin had become a common attraction for visitors, and the community — with the help of the local media — launched a campaign to protect it.

In June 2007, a member of the public noticed and videotaped two men entering the water and touching the dolphin. This harassment was also witnessed by a local police officer. Police arrested the men and launched an investigation in partnership with marine conservation groups and dolphin behavioural experts. Both men were convicted in April 2008.

### Protecting heritage

Kent has a rich heritage and there are many cultural and architectural sites at risk from deliberate damage and interference. The rural and environmental crime co-ordinator has worked with archaeologists and English Heritage to ensure that the nation's history is protected.

The co-ordinator developed a heritage crime course for police officers and archaeologists — the first of its kind in the U.K. Greater information sharing has subsequently led to the conviction of a person who damaged five archaeological sites in Kent and Sussex between July and December 2007.

The rural and environmental crime co-ordinator collaborates with eight police officers across Kent who act as additional points of contact in rural communities. As a team, these officers can more effectively address rural crime, and the constant contact with neighbourhoods ensures that residents' concerns are rapidly addressed. ■

As part of a multi-agency operation that began in 2005, Kent Police worked with Kent Fire and Rescue and a volunteer special constable to seize a motorcycle and arrest two people for nuisance behaviour around the woodlands of Kent.



Courtesy of the Kent Police

# 9/11 on the farm

## Responding to an agroterrorism incident



Jason B. Moats

Anyone with a master's degree in microbiology could create a biological disease agent for use in an agroterrorism attack, says Jason B. Moats, author of the book *Agroterrorism*.

*A major agroterrorism incident could be more complex than the response to 9/11, says Jason B. Moats, author of the book *Agroterrorism: a guide for first responders* (Texas A&M University Press, 2007). Moats talks with Gazette writer Caroline Ross about the potential for biological disease agents to shatter the American livestock industry, and explains why emergency responders must keep an open mind.*

### Why would an agroterrorism attack involving livestock surpass 9/11 in terms of response?

(With 9/11), we could see where the dust stopped, but you can't do that with foot-and-mouth disease, mad cow disease or (other biological agents) that can travel in the air for hundreds of miles. Illness in animals is also an observed behaviour; by the time a cow or pig starts to show symptoms, it's typically well into the disease. Diseases can spread tremendously fast, and the agriculture industry is so interconnected that if one piece starts to fail, other pieces are affected. For example, foot-and-mouth disease affects sheep, cattle, goats, swine — all of which we like to eat.

Livestock is economically the largest sector in (American) agriculture.

### What role will law enforcement play in an agroterrorism incident?

Because this is a biological incident at heart, the people in charge (of the response effort) will be largely veterinarians and animal health professionals. Law enforcement officers may be asked to help trace back the disease, and they will certainly be involved if there is a criminal or terrorist element. They will also be involved in perimeter security and (monitoring) checkpoints for animal (traffic).

### What are the challenges in perimeter security?

A lot of it comes down to communication and knowing where your authority starts and stops. Let's say we send a New York City police officer to central Kansas to help monitor traffic during an incident. His job is to pull over vehicles carrying alpaca, because alpaca is a susceptible species to the disease at hand. Well, how do you train a law enforcement officer what an alpaca is? And what is his authority (with regards

to the animals he stops)? In the U.S., a city law enforcement officer may not have the authority to put an animal down. He may have to wait for the game warden to show up.

### How can police forces address these challenges?

Part of it requires planning — a lot of planning and exercising different scenarios. The short answer is to develop an indoctrination program so officers arriving at the scene get a day of training, or to provide job guides for officers to flip through in the midst of a crisis. But the point remains that this will be a shared response. It's going to require co-operation between law enforcement, emergency management and the rest of the public safety community, working hand in hand with the agricultural community, from veterinarians to research institutions. We need to be asking these questions now, together, instead of when disease hits.

### How would you rate the current state of readiness for an agroterrorism incident in North America?

It's better than what it was, but there's still a long way to go. Disease detection technologies have improved a lot since 2000, but the focus has been on human health. And we haven't done many agricultural exercises (within the emergency response community). We haven't paid enough attention to animal health.

### What is the emergency response community's biggest misconception regarding agricultural incidents?

It's when they stand up and say, "Dealing with cows and pigs? That's not my responsibility!" Yes, it is. These incidents start and end at the local level, and everybody owns part of the response. I guarantee that national and state bodies are working to solve this, but the answer really begins with the conversation at the local level, because what is done in the first hours of an incident will have a huge effect on how the incident ends. ■

# Taking on the challenge

## Psychological preparedness and coping in an isolated post

By Dr. Barbara J. Schmalz  
PhD, R.Psych.  
Divisional psychologist, RCMP

The excitement and challenge of policing in remote locations is an integral part of RCMP history. Time has not much altered the stories that members share about experiences in isolated posts. The adventure and anticipated experience of working in the North, for instance, continues to entice members at various stages of their careers. After an experience in a remote post, a member can speak with confidence about the personal and career gains, the good and the bad, and what worked and what didn't work so well.

At the RCMP, a prospective posting in an isolated location is initiated by the member; it is a self-directed career option. Given the voluntary nature of the application, a certain degree of "self selection" has already occurred. Sometime later, as part of a required medical screening, the member participates in a psychological screening process to ensure that there are no psychological vulnerabilities at that point in time that would impact healthy operational functioning in the isolated location.

Remote policing presents a unique set of psychological challenges. A certain type of functionality and resiliency is desirable, if not necessary, not only to "survive" remote postings, but also to manage effectively in remote communities. What are the psychological challenges one might expect to face in remote locations?

### Psychological challenges

The environmental and cultural context represents the biggest challenge for a member's psychological stability in remote locations.

The environmental extremes can significantly affect psychological health. For example, in a northern posting, minimal natural light throughout the winter months will affect mood, increasing the risk for developing depression, particularly among those who are predisposed to mood disorders. As well, extremely cold temperatures can reduce the opportunity for physical activity, thereby restricting available methods of stress reduction.

The lack of or difference in social and cultural activities limits opportunities for meeting social needs, and creates a risk of social isolation and loneliness.

Whether the member is single, married, dating or in a long-distance relationship, an isolated posting has the potential to create sufficient strain on existing relationships, and it can often eliminate the development of such relationships for an extended period of time. The strength of a relationship — with or without the spouse relocating — will certainly be tested during an isolated posting.

Alternatively, members will talk about the mature development of a relationship as a result of two or three years in the North, where a co-operative effort at communication leads to a stronger bond. The challenges of parenting will also be highlighted due to the lack of extended family and supports, the lack of available child care, fewer alternate educational opportu-

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**A commitment to life balance is essential for healthy long-term functioning, for members taking on the challenges of policing in isolated posts.**

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nities and a possible reduction in extracurricular activities.

Depending on a member's stage of life, working in an isolated post can create a unique set of life challenges. Living and working far away from one's extended family is not uncommon for members of a national police force. However, when faced with such life changes as childbirth, illness, and aging parents, these missing support systems are amplified in remote locations, where accessibility to transportation is limited. The age and stage of child-bearing and child-rearing should be taken into consideration since unique stressors may be created if parents or children have special medical or psychological needs. For example, the lack of accessible, qualified medical specialists will increase stress levels if a couple is faced with fertility problems or has a child with special needs.

### Preparedness and coping

A commitment to life balance is essential for healthy long term functioning for all members, but is guaranteed to build resilience to take on the challenges of policing in isolated posts. Before embarking on a northern transfer or accepting a remote posting, it helps for police officers to understand how effective they are at paying attention to their needs outside of work. It is all too easy to work 24/7 at the exclusion of all else, especially in the North. Regardless of the amount of time or

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**An isolated posting has the potential to create sufficient strain on existing relationships, and it can often eliminate the development of such relationships for an extended period of time.**

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the appeal of the activity, making a commitment to set aside some time for physical, social, intellectual, mental and spiritual activities will help a police officer's overall emotional health. While the nature of the activities may be different than in other locations, the gains will be the same.

Marital and family situations can both enrich and complicate the psychological health of a member in a remote location. Maintaining open communication with family members about the positive and negative events and challenges is very

important. Couples and parents share in the responsibility of ensuring that they and their children don't become "isolated" in the remote posting. Social and emotional withdrawal is a risk that can lead to depression as well as marital and workplace conflict. There is a strong tradition of members taking care of each other as "one big family" in small northern communities. This sense of community will make the experience second to none. But without it, some members will struggle.

Many members can experience a great

deal of growth, on many levels, while on a remote posting. While members often rave about the professional strides that can be made in these settings, many also recognize a psychological maturity and growth that takes place in themselves and in their families.

The adventure and cultural experiences can certainly be unique and enriching, but crucial to gaining any of the above is the member's attitude. Mental health professionals know that how people think — their attitude — will determine how they feel and ultimately how they function in their day-to-day lives. Understanding and checking one's attitude to life in general — and to specific areas of life such as work and family — is a prerequisite to having a productive and positive experience in remote detachments. Put simply, if a negative attitude prevails over time, eventually most aspects of the member's functioning will be affected, and problems will arise.

The staffing procedures that are in place for RCMP isolated postings do provide some parameters for ensuring psychological stability. Scheduled trips out of the community and limited duration postings at any one location are intended to create a supportive environment that will reduce long-term, adverse affects. The rest is up to the individual.

It is very important for members to reach out to each other, at work and at home, on a regular basis. Keep the relationships going and put effort into making them better. If things start to deteriorate, there is ample assistance available through RCMP Psychological Services and the Member and Employee Assistance Program.

The goal is to start off healthy, stay healthy and return healthy — and hopefully to have gained from the adventure. The best way to learn about policing in remote postings is to speak to members who have been there — they are the true experts! ■

*Dr. Barbara J. Schmalz has spent 10 years conducting psychological screening assessments for RCMP officers seeking limited duration and isolated postings.*



# Policing illicit drugs in remote Australia

By Dr. Judy Putt

Australian Institute of Criminology

In Australia, much is known about the distribution and use of illicit drugs in urban centres, but very little is known about the extent of the problem in rural and remote regions.

Yet research in northern Australia over the past decade has documented an increase in cannabis use. The research shows that up to two thirds of men and one fifth of women in some remote areas regularly use the drug. Young people as young as 10 or 11 also smoke the drug.

Concerned about increased signs of cannabis use in remote Indigenous communities — and about the impacts of this use on those communities — Australia's National Drug Law Enforcement Research Fund (NDLERF) commissioned research on the policing implications of cannabis and other illicit drug use in such communities.

The final report is based on fieldwork, consultations, literature and legislative reviews, and a survey of 792 officers from four Australian police forces. It highlights some of the challenges and opportunities for police who must address illicit drug use in Australia's rural and remote regions.

months is about 10 per cent, but the use of illicit drugs is much higher among offenders. On average, nearly half of a sample of persons apprehended and detained by police in cities test positive to cannabis, while 25 per cent test positive to methamphetamine and 10 per cent to heroin.

In general, alcohol and volatile substances such as inhalants have been perceived to be the main substances of concern to police in rural and remote areas — alcohol because of its link to violence, and volatile substances because of the harm they cause to abusers and to persons who are victimized by abusers. In addition to alcohol and substance abuse, many parts of remote Australia have experienced a dramatic rise in the cannabis trade, to the point of regular deliveries and high levels of use.

Indigenous persons are the primary residents of many remote, isolated regions in Australia. Many of these communities have young populations, and viable economic activities are largely confined to tourism, artwork and national park stewardship.

According to the NDLERF police survey, officers in rural and remote jurisdictions believe that the most serious problems among local Indigenous people are alcohol (80 per cent), cannabis (44

pave the way for a more rapid expansion in amphetamine use.

## Impacts

The impact of widespread and heavy cannabis use on isolated communities can be very profound. Some of the poorest and youngest users in north Australian communities spend between one- and two-thirds of their weekly income on cannabis. The social and economic costs include reduced participation in community life, as well as exacerbation of family violence, mental health problems, conflicts and disorder — especially when community leaders and other influential residents are involved in using or selling illicit drugs.

Conventional drug enforcement strategies are rarely suited to rural and remote areas, especially to Indigenous communities where police officers are highly visible and where distrust may exist because of past poor contact between Indigenous people and the police. In such circumstances, it is not feasible for police to infiltrate drug networks, cultivate informants or conduct surveillance. When dealing with drug-affected people or those found in possession of small quantities of drugs, rural and remote police are also hampered by the lack of specialized drug services.

Policing in rural and remote Australia also has a very different character to policing in cities. In small communities and towns there may be little or no back-up. Travelling long distances on patrol and to attend calls is commonplace, and there are logistical challenges related to isolation, including high costs for transportation and equipment. Police officers are very much a part of the local community, and much of the reported crime is unsophisticated property crime or violent crime. These factors all affect officers' ability to address drug crime in remote regions.

## Solutions

In the NDLERF report, rural and remote police officers indicated that better-resourced crisis-oriented services such as

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**Many parts of remote Australia have experienced a dramatic rise in the cannabis trade, to the point of regular deliveries and high levels of use.**

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## The illicit drug context

Undertaken every three years, the National Drug Strategy Household Survey (2007) shows that the most common illicit drug used in Australia is cannabis, although usage has dropped in recent years. The proportion of the general population who self-report using cannabis in the past 12

per cent), inhalants (33 per cent), petrol (18 per cent) and amphetamines (11 per cent). Nearly half of these officers also believe that amphetamine use within the Indigenous population has increased in the past three years. The cannabis networks that often involve local and non-local Indigenous people may also



Dr. Judy Putt

Laverton police patrol an area near the Ngaanyatjarra communities in the western desert of Australia.

sobering-up shelters and 24-hour health care services were most effective in helping drug-affected people. In some instances, good relationships also exist between police and local community-run services such as night patrols and community health services. Overall, however, there are very few registered or suitable drug-diversion programs, and there are currently few alternatives to simply putting drug-impaired persons into safe police custody.

Police in rural and remote locations can play a valuable role in reducing the harms from and demand for drugs, as well as in intercepting the drug supply. Tackling illicit drugs involves good community policing and developing more effective or innovative drug law enforcement. Police are often the main drivers in crime prevention activities such as sport and youth activities, and they are often the first or only service contacted to deal with drug-affected persons and attendant problems in remote communities.

In Indigenous communities, good community policing means learning about the local socio-cultural practices, beliefs, family networks and politics. Cultural competence and building collaborative relationships with local stakeholders are fundamental underpinnings to good practice. Indigenous liaison offi-

cers can provide invaluable assistance, and such positions exist in most Australian states and territories, with 70 per cent of police surveyed indicating that they had at least one liaison officer in their local area.

Organizational support is vital and key challenges include the following:

- Identifying and rewarding the skills necessary to work in sparsely populated, high-need locations
- Increasing remote area placements and ensuring there is proper training and induction for police officers and their families
- Recruiting, supporting and developing Indigenous staff
- Using, police information systems to broaden the evidence base needed for effective targeting and monitoring initiatives
- Building partnerships with other government agencies, non-government organizations and communities

Police in Australia have developed some promising initiatives and strategies that should help tackle illicit drug use in remote Indigenous communities. Examples include:

- Multi-functional police facilities that provide services to outlying communities, require specific selection and training of staff, and house staff from other agencies in a collaborative environment (Western Australia Police)
- An integrated approach to community consultations, which engages local Indigenous communities in problem solving and employs Indigenous staff at various levels in the organization (Queensland Police)
- Remote communities drug strategy, which includes legislative reform, enhanced information sharing, and the use of drug detection dog units on main transport routes (Northern Territory Police)
- Indigenous drug action teams, or locally based committees that bring members from different agencies together to reduce the harms resulting from both licit and illicit drug use (South Australia Police)
- A cross-border intelligence desk that co-ordinates drug-related intelligence across multiple desert communities and three jurisdictions in central Australia (South Australia, Northern Territory and Western Australia Police)

There remains a need to respond to local and regional issues through the development and implementation of community policing plans. Such plans must embrace good practice in community policing and build on an appreciation of local cultural conditions and capacity, with specific targets and measures that address problematic illicit drug use and supply.

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 To access the full NDLERF report (monograph publication 15), please visit [www.ndlerf.gov.au](http://www.ndlerf.gov.au).

*Dr. Putt is the general manager of research at the AIC where she was worked since 2004. She has extensive research, policy and practice experience in the areas of drug policy, Indigenous criminal justice issues and juvenile justice.*

# Just the facts

Police in rural, coastal or northern communities may encounter a range of crimes that target the natural-resource economy. Whether it's illegal logging or fishing, wildlife poaching, diamond theft or agricultural crime, the offence is usually specific to the local environment. Here's a look at some of the resource-driven crimes that affect communities where nature is at the forefront.

Illegal logging accounts for over one-tenth of the global timber trade and costs timber-producing countries between US\$10-15 billion per year in lost revenue, according to the World Bank.

Twenty per cent of timber theft incidents discovered on federal government land resulted in arrest, and 24 per cent of arrest cases were prosecuted, according to a 2003 analysis of timber trespass and theft in the Southern Appalachian region of the U.S.

Between 2002 and 2007, Canadian authorities laid 180 criminal charges in relation to the seal hunt.

U.K. police are cracking down on hare coursing — the illegal pursuit of hares with hounds. The offence occurs on recently harvested farmlands and is often accompanied by other crimes such as theft, property damage and intimidation.

In 2006, Australian authorities seized a record number of 365 illegal fishing boats, thanks to an AU\$390 million government allocation to increase surveillance and coastal patrols.

U.S. government statistics indicate that game wardens are nine times more likely to be killed on the job than are other law enforcement officers.

The average poacher is between the ages of 25 and 45 and already has a police record, according to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources.

Over 60 per cent of farms in California's San Joaquin Valley were victimized by crime in 2004. The most common offences were vandalism and small equipment theft.

More than 16,000 head of cattle and calves — valued at over US\$9 million — were reported missing or stolen from California farms and ranches during the last decade, according to the state Bureau of Livestock Identification.

As much as 88 per cent of agricultural crimes are not reported, according to the Urban Institute.

Between 2005 and 2006, Ontario's largest electricity delivery company, Hydro One, reported a 1,150 per cent increase in theft of copper materials from hydro substations across the province.

The remote location and heavy security of Canadian diamond mines make Canadian diamond exploration and mining processes less vulnerable to infiltration by organized crime groups, says a 2004 report by the Criminal Intelligence Service Canada.

Some US\$10 million in illegal wildlife is seized at the U.S. border every year, according to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Mexico, Canada and China are the top three suppliers for the illicit U.S. market.

**SOURCES:** World Bank: [www.worldbank.org](http://www.worldbank.org) ; Virginia Tech, Electronic Theses and Dissertations, "An analysis of timber trespass and theft issues in the Southern Appalachian region" (1 May 2003): [scholar.lib.vt.edu/theses/](http://scholar.lib.vt.edu/theses/) ; Fisheries and Oceans Canada, "Facts about seals - 2008": [www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/seal-phoque/facts-faits\\_e.htm](http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/seal-phoque/facts-faits_e.htm) ; Norfolk Constabulary, "Illegal hare coursing — is it happening near you?": [www.norfolk.police.uk](http://www.norfolk.police.uk) ; Lincolnshire Police, "Hare coursing": [www.lincs.police.uk](http://www.lincs.police.uk) ; Australian Broadcasting Corporation, "Illegal fishing crackdown working: Abetz" (11 May 2007): [www.abc.net.au](http://www.abc.net.au) ; North American Wildlife Enforcement Officers Association: [www.naweo.org](http://www.naweo.org) ; Urban Institute, "A process and impact evaluation of the ACTION program" (18 Apr 2007): [www.urban.org](http://www.urban.org) ; San Francisco Chronicle, "Cattle rustling on the rise in California" (16 Dec 2007): [www.sfgate.com](http://www.sfgate.com) ; Toronto Star, "Copper capers" (11 Apr 2008): [www.thestar.com](http://www.thestar.com) ; Criminal Intelligence Service Canada, "2004 annual report on organized crime in Canada": [www.cisc.gc.ca](http://www.cisc.gc.ca) ; Mint magazine, "Profits from wildlife poaching funding criminals, terrorists: U.S." (7 Mar 2008): [www.livemint.com](http://www.livemint.com) ; U.S. Department of State, "International illegal trade in wildlife: threats and U.S. policy" (22 Aug 2008): [fpc.state.gov](http://fpc.state.gov)





# E-13 Neighbors Network gets residents talking

By Joseph Porcelli  
Neighbors Network  
Boston Police Department

If there were a technology to connect residents by geographic region, educate them about crime prevention, and give them the ability to communicate and collaborate, you'd want to know about it, right?

In April 2008, the Boston Police Department (BPD) launched a pilot social network called the E-13 Neighbors Network (<http://e13.bostoncrimewatch.com>). The online network allows residents of the BPD's E-13/Jamaica Plain neighbourhood district to find out who their neighbours are, get information about criminal activity on a street- or neighbourhood-level, and — most importantly — build community-police relationships in the spirit of community policing.

The BPD developed the Neighbors Network after experiencing an increase in participation in its Neighborhood Crime Watch program. The jump in participation occurred after the BPD implemented a coalition organization model, which empowers and trains residents to build grassroots, street-by-street neighbourhood watch groups. Within a year, the initiative had produced over 50 such groups, covering 75 per cent of the streets in the

neighbourhood of Charlestown. In 2006, the watch groups significantly contributed to a 16 per cent net reduction in violent and property crime. While the initiative had positive effects, the BPD felt that an online tool was needed to support the effort and sustain the momentum.

The Neighbourhood Watch groups initially used Yahoo and Google groups to communicate. While these technologies served the purpose, it was difficult for residents to locate their neighbourhood groups and get involved. In addition, the volunteer-run street groups tended to operate in silos and were not always aware of or communicating with each other.

In late 2007, the BPD became aware of the Ning social networking platform. A robust platform that requires no knowledge of code, Ning now forms the technological foundation of the E-13 Neighbors Network. The platform includes such features as blogs, forums, video and photo sharing, customizable pages, and the ability to personalize profiles, add friends and — most importantly — create groups that serve as street- and zone-communication and collaboration spaces.

The way the E-13 Neighbors Network works is simple. After creating a profile, a citizen is able to join a group on the street in which he or she lives, as well as the

**The online network allows residents to find out who their neighbours are, get information about criminal activity on a street- or neighbourhood-level, and build community-police relationships.**

group representing his or her larger neighbourhood zone. Inside the groups, residents can participate in discussions about local happenings or post information on crime or community efforts. The BPD and authorized citizen moderators have the ability to approve or decline membership requests and delete inappropriate discussions.

The network also allows the BPD to post messages for specific street groups, neighbourhood zone groups, or the entire network, allowing for targeted communication. Additionally, BPD moderators can embed RSS feeds from other BPD online tools like CitizenObserver and the BPD news blog, providing users with a one-stop shop for all their BPD-related information.

The Neighbors Network affords citizens the opportunity to explore and join on their own time, and it requires limited management and support from the BPD.

Since the network's launch, it has grown to include 467 members (the E-13 neighbourhood population is 31,587). Boston City Hall has noted the success and is developing a plan to roll out Neighbors Networks in each of Boston's 11 neighbourhood districts. The mayor's office and other city departments will also utilize the networks to conduct outreach and offer their services to members. ■

*Joseph Porcelli is the former civilian program co-ordinator and director of the Neighbors Network at the Boston Police Department. He now serves as the director of online operations and partnerships for Be the Change Inc., a non-profit group advocating active citizenship and citizens' involvement in public policy discussions.*





# Chaos in Mumbai

## Principles of hostage negotiation hold true in worst circumstances

By Joseph Scanlon

Horrific as they were, the November 2008 events in Mumbai — where armed terrorists took over the Taj Mahal Palace hotel, the Oberoi Trident hotel, a Jewish outreach centre and several other buildings — were a reminder that the techniques and principles of response to a hostage situation remain valid even in the most severe cases.

In a hostage incident, a team of people familiar with the typical patterns of hostage situations must respond appropriately. Their tasks include establishing an inner and outer perimeter, negotiating with those involved, gathering intelligence, assembling an assault team, and monitoring communications and the media.

The hostage-taking in Mumbai provided a lesson in two specific principles of hostage response: first, always separate what leads up to an incident from the actual standoff that develops, and second, assume that the media will reveal everything they know about the incident.

The first principle was taught by Dr. Harvey Schlossberg, the New York Police Department detective who pioneered hostage negotiation and also taught at the Canadian Police College. Schlossberg stressed that one must separate the events leading up to a hostage incident from the actions that follow, but why?

The answer is that just because a terrorist kills when an incident begins does not mean he will keep killing. Schlossberg and others have observed that, as time passes, a bond can develop between the

hostage takers and hostages. It is difficult to kill someone you get to know. This bond was first identified during a bank hostage incident in Sweden and is called the Stockholm syndrome.

Even if hostages are being tortured, as was the case in Mumbai, it is still worth negotiating with the hostage takers. Only if hostage takers kill on schedule does one have to assume they will keep taking lives. Only then is an assault required — as in 1980, when the United Kingdom Special Air Service conducted an assault of the Iranian Embassy in London, where 26 hostages were held for six days. In this case, the hijackers carried through with their threats to kill hostages at specific times.

The second principle is based on research into media behaviour during hostage incidents in the United States and Canada. It implies that the media will often report on hostage incidents without considering the possible impacts of the coverage.

In the past, media reports have led to hostages being tortured or killed. During one prison hostage incident in Canada, the media incorrectly reported that one of the hostage takers was a known child killer. In actual fact, this individual was a hostage, not a hostage taker. But the real hostage takers were so upset at being associated with such an individual that they tortured the man until the media report was corrected. This type of violent reaction could easily have occurred in Mumbai, where the media were filming and reporting live images and, in doing so, putting hostages' lives at risk.

### Handling media during a hostage situation

Here are a few guidelines for police on how to deal with the media during hostage-taking incidents:

1. Remind the media on-site and off-site of the implications of reporting certain information. This applies not just to reporters at the hostage site but also to off-site editors who decide what gets shown. During a four-day incident in Oak Lake, Manitoba, the editors at one media outlet censored their on-site reporter's material because they did not trust the discretion of his reporting. Most media can be sensitized to the potential harm their coverage can cause if they are approached in a polite way.

2. Establish whether the hostage takers are paying attention to the media and, if so, which media. Once it is known which specific station or channel the hostage takers are listening to or watching, it is possible to alert these stations that their broadcasts are of particular importance.

3. Control media access to the site, especially during a critical moment such as an assault. This may mean cutting power so that hostage takers can't see what is being telecast, or it may mean making a deal with journalists such that they can film events but not broadcast them until the incident is over.

4. Ensure that every police spokesperson understands that anything he or she says is likely to be heard and seen by the hostages and the hostage takers, and may affect their behaviour. In fact, anyone making public statements during an incident should consider the possible impact of his or her words.

— Joseph Scanlon

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**The media will often report on hostage incidents without considering the possible impacts of the coverage.**

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M.p. Imageart



A German military assault team conducts a combat demonstration in Berlin.

When the Mumbai incidents began, scores of guests were trapped in the Taj Mahal Palace hotel. Hotel staff — acting quickly and courageously — called guests and told them to stay in their rooms, barricade their doors and make no sound. However, the media persisted in showing visuals of guests looking out the hotel windows. Anyone with a television — including the hostage takers themselves — could have determined where in the hotel those guests were hiding.

Similarly, at the Jewish centre in Mumbai, the media showed live coverage of a military assault team descending from helicopters onto the roof. That real-time coverage could have provided enough time for the terrorists to kill the remaining hostages before the assault team entered the building.

Were the terrorists at the Taj Mahal hotel and the Jewish centre watching television? Since only one terrorist survived, we will probably never know. But evidence from past hostage incidents shows that terrorists are mesmerized by the media, and what they see and hear affects their behaviour.

Since telephone lines in hostage incidents are usually controlled by police, hostage takers are cut off from other sources of information — and they become avid

watchers of television. During one incident in a prison, those monitoring events could hear the hostage takers calling out numbers. They later figured out that the hostage takers were calling out the channels of television stations that were carrying media reports of the incident.

It is clear that the media can be significant players during a terrorist incident, and this reality must be considered when planning a response. Using the media to communicate with hostages and advise them what to do is not an option if such an action might alert terrorists to the hostages' presence or location in a building.

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**Today, everything that is broadcast over radio, television or the Internet will be listened to and watched by hostage takers and will affect what they do.**

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The incidents in Mumbai also highlight the problems that can arise in drawn-out incidents — especially with the mass media present. The Mumbai situation did not last for seconds, minutes or even hours, but for days.

Confrontations between armed hostage takers and rescuers — whether police or military — are high drama. Those holding

the hostages are threatening to kill unless demands are met. The authorities are trying to find some sort of compromise. The result can be a television spectacular, but one that can put the lives of innocent people at risk when too much information is made public.

Recently, the CBC along with Canadian officials persuaded all news media to keep secret the fact that a CBC reporter had been kidnapped in Afgh-

anistan. CBC officials later said that news coverage would have put the reporter's life at risk. News coverage during hostage standoffs can easily have the same effect. All incidents involving hostage demands, negotiation and response call for discretion.

From scores of past incidents, we know that the media will call hostage takers and will talk to them for as long as the authorities allow such communications. We know that in those conversations, they will ask, "What are your demands?" We also know that hostage takers who did not start with specific demands will soon come up with some.

Today, everything that is broadcast over radio, television or the Internet will be listened to and watched by hostage takers and will affect what they do.

Much of what happened in Mumbai reinforces what we already know from less high-profile Canadian events — it's just easy to forget those principles when the incident is so dramatic and unfolds in a country so far away. ■

*Joseph Scanlon is professor emeritus and director of the Emergency Communications Research Unit at Carleton University. He has written several articles on the impact of media on hostage rescue and taught for many years on the Incident Commanders-Hostage/Barricaded Persons course at the Canadian Police College in Ottawa.*



# Autism and policing

## Tips for dealing with persons who have autism

By Ellen Gervais  
National Crime Prevention  
Services, RCMP

Autism is a neurological disorder that manifests as a developmental disability. It usually appears within the first three years of life and affects areas of the brain associated with social interaction and communication skills.

Among the five pervasive developmental disorders, autism is the most common, affecting about 20 in 10,000 Canadians. Current data suggests that autism is four times more likely in men than in women. The disorder lasts a lifetime and there is no known cure.

When responding to a call for service involving an autistic person, it is helpful for police officers to have an understanding of the disorder. With knowledge and training, police officers will be better equipped to approach or apprehend individuals affected by autism while ensuring their own safety and the safety of the public.

### Recognizing the signs

Autism is a broad spectrum disorder, meaning that an afflicted person may possess a low, medium or high level of functioning based on communication skills, learning abilities and personal independence.

Recognizing the signs of autism can help police officers more effectively deal with an afflicted individual. The signs include the following:

- self-stimulation (rocking back and forth, arm flailing)
- wandering
- inability to process information
- lack of eye contact
- laughing at inappropriate times
- inability to answer simple questions (may be perceived as non-compliant)
- preoccupation with shiny items such as jewelry or an officer's badge
- argumentative, inattentive or insubordinate

- inability to grasp the intended meaning of messages
- flicking wrists in a constant motion
- twirling objects
- exhibiting echolalia (repeating your words verbatim or mimicking your actions)

### What to do

When approaching an individual who you believe may have autism, try to talk to them in a calm, soothing manner using direct, short phrases. Simply asking the person if they have autism may result in a confirmation. Do not raise your voice or be confrontational with the individual, as this may exacerbate their anxiety and result in inconsolable yelling, physicality or self-injury. Avoid direct eye contact.

Be conscious of personal space. When persons with autism perceive an invasion of their personal space, they can quickly turn violent. This not only puts them at risk of hurting themselves, but also increases the risk to the officer's physical safety.

Autistic individuals can demonstrate an unusually strong attachment to inanimate objects such as car antennas, pieces of paper or beads. To suddenly remove these objects from their possession can provoke a high level of anxiety and result in threaten-

**When approaching an individual who you believe may have autism, try to talk to them in a calm, soothing manner using direct, short phrases.**

ing physical reactions or self-injury. Returning the confiscated item can have a calming effect, allowing you to question the person or resolve the problem.

Individuals with autism may exhibit inappropriate behaviours such as grabbing for your shiny badge or pen, talking to themselves but not responding to you, appearing as if deaf, covering their ears and looking away, or speaking too loudly or too softly. Avoid touching autistic persons if safety is not at risk and don't stand too closely behind them as they may suddenly lurch backward.

Be aware that sirens and lights can cause sensory overload in a person with autism, which can lead to extreme anxiety, physical rebellion or non-compliance. Some autistic individuals are hypersensitive. Loud sounds or unusual stimuli can cause them pain and anxiety.

Officers accompanied by a police dog should be aware that a dog's bark or mere presence may cause anxiety in someone with autism, making it more difficult to approach or question the person.

## References and resources

### **Autism Society of Canada**

[www.autismsocietycanada.ca](http://www.autismsocietycanada.ca)

### **Dennis Debbaudt's Autism Risk & Safety Management**

**Information and resources for law enforcement, first responders, parents, educators and care providers**

[www.autismriskmanagement.com](http://www.autismriskmanagement.com)

### **Autism Canada Foundation**

[www.autismcanada.org](http://www.autismcanada.org)





Individuals with autism may exhibit inappropriate behaviours such as grabbing for your shiny badge or pen, talking to themselves but not responding to you, appearing as if deaf, covering their ears and looking away.

There will be times when a police officer is unable to practise the approaches mentioned above, but being armed with knowledge increases the chance of a more successful intervention.

There will also be instances when restraining an autistic person is necessary. People with autism are known to have under-developed trunk muscles (hypotonia), which can compromise their breathing. As soon as safety allows, turn the person on their side to facilitate normal breathing. Many individuals afflicted with autism also suffer from cardiac conditions, asthma and seizures.

Finally, people with autism lack a fear of danger and may exhibit an insensitivity to or a high tolerance for pain.

### Wandering

Autistic people have a tendency to slip away from their caretakers silently and undetected. When they do, they are at great risk of wandering into traffic or other dangerous areas.

Many individuals with autism have a fascination with water — drowning is the leading cause of death among people with this disorder. When searching for a missing person who is known to have autism, check local water sources.

If they wander off, autistic individuals may actually hide from their rescuers, respond with aggression or even try to re-enter a burning building.

When approaching someone who you suspect may have autism, simply ask them if they have autism or if they carry identification. Many autistic persons carry personal information in the form of a card or a velcro enclosure with their name and address written on it. They may also carry the Autism Emergency Contact Form or wear something with the word “autism” written on it. Check for shoe tags, jewelry, bumper stickers or tags hanging from zippers or belt loops that may reveal a person has autism.

There are new, effective, yet non-invasive methods of tracking a family member

**When interviewing or detaining persons with autism, expect that the interview process will take longer than usual. Autistic people may seem evasive or vague in their responses when questioned.**

who has autism. These new technologies should be considered if the individual is prone to wandering. Police officers may be spared considerable time and resources, and the family much concern, if an individual is carrying or wearing one of these useful devices.

### Interviewing

When interviewing or detaining persons with autism, expect that the interview process will take longer than usual and be aware of the unusual behaviours already mentioned.

Autistic people may not show any signs of remorse or may seem evasive or vague in their responses when questioned. They may not have the capacity to understand their rights, and it is beneficial to ask them questions that elicit a “yes” or “no” response. When possible, consider using an autism specialist during the interview process, or ask for permission to videotape the interview.

Ensure that your initial report mentions that the detained person has autism, and alert jail authorities that the person will require additional supervision. It is also in the best interest of everyone involved that a medical evaluation be conducted.

Law enforcement activities involve many roles, responsibilities and risks. Raising one’s awareness of disorders such as autism can be worth its weight in gold in terms of recognition, prevention and resolution. You can practise the best possible strategies by arming yourself with knowledge about autism and other autism spectrum disorders. ■



# Latest research in law enforcement

*The following are excerpts from recent research related to justice and law enforcement. To access the full reports, please visit the website links at the bottom of each summary.*

## **The impact of performance measurement frameworks on police organizations: a literature review**

**By Gavin M. Knight  
for the New Zealand Police**

Over the last three decades, management reform has swept through public sector agencies of western nations, bringing with it private sector practices aimed at improving efficiency, effectiveness and accountability. Police agencies, while initially resistant, have, since the 1990s, been impacted by some of these reforms. Crises of police legitimacy have been the catalysts that triggered many instances of these reforms being introduced.

One of the more significant management reforms adopted by police is the introduction of performance measurement frameworks. However, although these frameworks are intended to support organizational effectiveness, if performance measures are too narrow in scope and focus on external legitimacy, they may actually work against police effectiveness. They may actually be reducing the ability of police senior managers to control their organizations, and may be creating organizational misalignment.

This paper discusses this evidence and offers explanations through the perspectives given by organizational theories. It concludes that performance measurement in police may indeed be able to support improved performance. However, to be effective, performance measures need to be carefully designed, taking the perspectives of front-line staff and middle managers into account.

The literature discussed contains numerous criticisms of existing performance measures used by police. It also provides evidence that “loose coupling” has resulted from performance measurement frameworks that are perceived by middle managers as inimical or irrelevant to the needs of the organization. Loose coupling exists where agents are disconnected from organizational goals. This can be caused by administrative arrangements and by environmental factors such as an organization’s social norms. Loose coupling manifests itself as a gap between formal structures and work practices. Formal rules are often broken and decisions are often not implemented.

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**If performance measures are too narrow in scope and focus on external legitimacy, they may actually work against police effectiveness.**

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There are reasons why police executives would want to measure performance. Performance measurement frameworks demonstrate accountability. If properly designed, they may also alert police managers to emerging issues with the effectiveness of business processes that, if untended, may turn into crises of legitimacy.

It follows that better measures are required if loose coupling is to be reduced and organizational effectiveness improved. Developing such better measures, however, may not be straightforward. Whereas performance measures can and do drive behaviour, it is difficult to come up with measures that are useful and avoid unintended adverse behaviours.

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To access the full report, please visit:  
[www.police.govt.nz/events/2008/research-symposium/programme.html](http://www.police.govt.nz/events/2008/research-symposium/programme.html)

## **An uncertain future: law enforcement, national security and climate change**

**By Chris Abbott  
for the Oxford Research Group (U.K.)**

Climate change is riding high on both domestic and international political agendas as countries face up to the huge environmental challenges the world now faces. While this attention is welcome, less energy is being focused on the inevitable impact climate change will have on global and domestic security issues and the related policy implications.

Climate change can no longer be considered solely as an environmental issue. The well-documented physical effects of climate change (global average temperature increase, rise in sea levels and altered weather patterns) will have secondary socio-economic impacts (loss of infrastructure, resource scarcity and the mass displacement of peoples). These in turn could produce serious security consequences (civil unrest, intercommunal violence and international instability) that will present new challenges to governments trying to maintain domestic stability.

Those agencies tasked with protecting and sustaining national security will need to adapt to better cope with a changing global environment. Major areas of potential strain for the police and security services are likely to include the following:

*Demands for greater border security:*  
Demanding enhanced and more aggressive border security is likely to be the knee-jerk reaction from some politicians




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**The human resource planning and management functions in the police sector in Canada have, for the most part, not kept pace with the evolution of the human resource functions in modern organizations.**

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and sections of the general public. While such measures are unlikely to succeed in the long-term, the protection of national and maritime borders and the detention of illegal immigrants is likely to become an increasing priority for the police and coast guard.

*Changes in rates and types of crime:* It is likely that a rapid rise in immigration will also lead to a change in the rates and types of crime that police forces will have to deal with, as there are clear differences in cultural attitudes towards certain offences, such as impaired driving or knife crime. Related to this will be a greater need for a wide range of interpreters, sensitive community liaison programs and better co-operation between the police and various embassies and consulates.

*Policing new legislation:* Policy responses to climate change and the need to reduce carbon emissions will undoubtedly require new legal mechanisms that will need rigorous policing. For example, enforcing regulations in carbon trading and investigating corruption or fraud in such a system is something that police forces are likely to play a role in. Other potential areas of investigation may include breaches of increasingly strict environmental regulations and fraud within the voluntary greenhouse gas offset markets.

*Responding to natural disasters:* As already mentioned, flooding, wildfires and extreme weather events will increasingly impact on population centres. One only needs to remember the impact of Hurricane Katrina on New Orleans in 2005 to understand the massive demands such events place on the police to both

maintain security and provide emergency response and disaster management, including evacuation. Police forces will need to develop far greater planning integration with other local emergency services and federal disaster response agencies, and factor the likely effects of climate change into existing disaster management plans.

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 To access the full report, please visit:  
[www.oxfordresearchgroup.org.uk/publications/briefing\\_papers/unce rtainfuture.php](http://www.oxfordresearchgroup.org.uk/publications/briefing_papers/unce rtainfuture.php)

**A national diagnostic on human resources in policing**

**By the Hay Group  
 for the Police Sector Council  
 (Canada)**

In this report, the Hay Group has presented the results of an extensive 10-month (2006–2007) analysis of the current human resource planning and management practices in the policing sector. Specifically, we examined processes and practices in four critical areas of human resource management: recruitment and retention, education and training, succession planning and leadership development, and the application of competency-based human resource management frameworks.

Our key finding is that the human resource planning and management functions in the police sector in Canada have, for the most part, not kept pace with the evolution of the human resource functions in modern organizations.

Our assessment has identified oppor-

tunities for improvement in each of the four domains that we analyzed. The key recommendation is that policing should start behaving like a co-ordinated sector rather than a coalition of separate employers.

In the domain of recruitment and retention, we recommend a nationwide campaign promoting policing as a career. Police organizations should pool resources and compete against other employment sectors rather than develop their own advertisement campaigns and compete with each other.

In the education and training domain, our key discovery was that while the sector does invest heavily in this area, most of that investment is required just to stand still, in the form of training that is required in order to maintain existing skills and certifications. This is necessary and unavoidable, but it diminishes the opportunity to undertake real employee development.

In the domain of succession planning and leadership development, we found the police sector to be particularly ineffective. This is where the fragmented structure of policing has the greatest impact. Given that more than half of the police organizations in Canada have fewer than 25 employees, they are unlikely to pay attention to succession planning and leadership development. But the leadership demands in small, municipal police organizations are diverse and can be as demanding as many second- or third-level leadership roles in large, urban police organizations.

Many of our recommendations are offered within the context of a competency-based approach to human resources management. Competency-based approaches represent best practices in the private sector, the public and the police sector, with some two-thirds of police organizations currently using these approaches within at least some of their human resource processes.

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 To access the full report, please visit:  
[www.policecouncil.ca/pages/publicationHRDiag.html](http://www.policecouncil.ca/pages/publicationHRDiag.html)



# Community Corrections Liaison Officer program

## Forging stronger partnerships in the justice community

By Ryan Benson

Communications advisor  
Correctional Service of Canada

When police officers in Winnipeg were working a recent string of break and enters, they had reason to believe the suspect was a federal parolee — the trouble was finding him. All they had to work with were an outdated photo and some stale contact information from before his incarceration.

With few leads, the investigators turned to the local Community Corrections Liaison Officer (CCLO), who was able to secure a recent photo and updated contact information from the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC). Soon afterwards, investigators picked up the suspect and charges were laid.

CCLOs are police officers who work with CSC under the terms of the Interchange Canada Program. They are located within CSC parole offices and in Community Correctional Centres, and the above scenario is just one example of how they are strengthening ties and facilitating information sharing between justice partners across Canada.

“CSC has always received good service from the police,” says Angela Knoll, project manager from CSC’s Community Reintegration Operations. Knoll highlights the enhancements to police–parole communications as a result of the CCLOs being in place.

“Parole officers now have increased access to information that assists both CSC and the police with managing offenders in the community,” she says. “The police officers are with us on-site and able to be more actively involved.”

What has been the most surprising to some law enforcement officials is the quality and quantity of information they

have been getting from the program.

“There’s a different dynamic between the offender and the parole officer and this, of course, is to our benefit,” explains Cst Ben Rosentreter, a CCLO assigned from the Winnipeg Police Service. “As a police officer, I can sit across from an individual and have him or her say very little, but these individuals seem to open up and speak more freely with their parole officer.”

**“ Parole officers now have increased access to information that assists both CSC and the police with managing offenders in the community.”**

*Angela Knoll, CSC*

The mandate of the CCLO program is to enhance public safety by strengthening the ability of police and parole officers to work in a more integrated manner. This partnership also assists in the supervision of higher-risk offenders and facilitates the apprehension of offenders who are unlawfully at large (UAL).

Police officers apply to the CCLO program from a variety of Canadian police agencies at either the municipal, provincial or federal level. Successful candidates must have a minimum of five years experience in active policing duties and a minimum of two years experience in criminal investigations. Following the selection process, CCLOs are provided with orientation and training through a variety of means, primarily on-the-job training.

“The best way for a police officer to

learn what parole officers do is to do the job with them,” says Knoll. Regular conference calls are held to address ongoing operational issues. A national training meeting was held in 2007 to provide CCLOs with more in-depth information about CSC policies and practices relevant to their job.

### A day in the life

The CCLO’s role highlights information sharing, such as working with police to track down UAL offenders or ensuring police forces are kept apprised of parolees being released into a community.

A typical day for a CCLO might include participating with a Case Management Team on release planning for higher-risk offenders, assisting in the development of structured supervision plans, and developing intervention strategies in the community for higher-risk offenders whose risk level may have increased during the release period.

For Sgt James Clover, a former CCLO who has returned to the Edmonton Police Service, working with parole officers provided increased knowledge of — and respect for — the work they do. Clover says that the CCLO’s contribution to public safety became much clearer to him once he recognized that the link between police and corrections are the parolees themselves.

“(The parolees) are the ones who we are collectively working to reintegrate and hold accountable in a collaborative measure, while trying to keep the risk to the community as manageable as possible,” explains Clover. “It’s important to communicate to the public that these tasks are a communal responsibility.”

Ultimately, the real winners are the communities served by CCLOs in conjunction with their colleagues at CSC.





Ryan Benson

CSC Parole Officer Dalila Boukhalone reviews an offender's file with OPP Cst Liana Ouellette at the Collins Bay Penitentiary in Kingston, ON.

"The longer the police officers have been around, the more connections they have in the community and with other police forces in the area," says Knoll, adding that these connections help ensure the safety of Canadians.

There is also direct support to communities through events such as the upcoming Public Safety Forum to be held in the spring of 2009. The forum is being organized by RCMP Cpl Mike Wallsmith, a CCLO who works from the Vernon, B.C., parole office.

Wallsmith is co-ordinating the forum in conjunction with local CSC offices and police, and local organizations like Crime Stoppers. The goal is to help the community better understand how CSC deals with offenders and their

transition from institutions into the community, as well as how the local parole office works with police to monitor and assist former inmates who navigate this challenging process.

As a representative of both CSC and the RCMP, Wallsmith wants to provide the public with a better understanding of how the two organizations work together to keep tabs on offenders. He also wants to help people learn more about factors that can contribute to recidivism, such as drug abuse or ties to street gangs. To Wallsmith, the CCLO role is a great fit for peace officers.

"CCLOs get to exercise a combination of the two approaches that are needed to better deal with criminal elements," he says. "The first is the proactive side.

Events like (the Public Safety Forum) . . . demonstrate community engagement and education in conjunction with police and other government agencies, hopefully averting situations where negative influences can create crime."

This proactive approach complements the time that officers like Wallsmith spend in the reactive side, focusing on enforcement and tracking down individuals who have fallen prey to negative influences.

At the end of the day, the CCLO initiative better enables police and parole officers to work together towards managing higher-risk offenders in the community and facilitating the reintegration process, while building links between the two.

"As partners in the criminal justice system, everything we do is fundamentally about public safety," says CSC Commissioner Don Head. "This initiative expands the capacity of police and parole officers, and will serve us well as a strategic foundation for future collaborations with police services to meet our mutual public safety objectives." ■

**“ There’s a different dynamic between the offender and the parole officer and this, of course, is to our benefit.**

*Cst Ben Rosentreter, CCLO*





# Interest soars in Airport Watch program

By Jacques Brunelle  
National Security Criminal  
Investigations, RCMP

Aircraft enthusiasts watch from behind the runway fenceline as Emirates airline flight EK207 touches down on a Toronto runway, ending its 15-hour nonstop run from Dubai. For these enthusiasts, however, watching aircraft is more than just a hobby. These uniformed volunteers are also contributing to the safety and security of a major Canadian airport.

With roots at the Macdonald-Cartier International Airport in Ottawa, Canada, the Airport Watch (AW) program has evolved into a major crime prevention program with more than 400 community volunteers donating 15,000 hours a year at eight airports across North America.

In this era when airports are viable targets for terrorist groups and other criminal elements, the volunteer-based AW groups have assisted their respective airports by reporting suspicious activities and potential aircraft safety hazards to the airport authorities. The concept is similar to a Neighbourhood Watch initiative, in which volunteers are the essence of the program.

The AW national co-ordinator provides guidance and information to local startups, which are initiated by volunteers, the airports or airport police. Each chapter is independent and operated by the volunteers in close co-operation with the airport authority. Uniformed airport security officers, airport police, or in some cases plainclothes RCMP national security teams liaise with AW volunteers at each airport.

The program is flexible to accommodate the unique situation of each airport. In Montreal, for instance, the airport authority

set up the program and airport police provided background checks on all the volunteers. In other locations such as Sydney, Australia, the federal police in co-operation with the airport authority are providing all the set up.

AW volunteers are professional and highly motivated by their passion for aviation. They have passed police background checks, and their observations — often described as “community intelligence” — can be very effective. The Montreal airport authority, Aéroports de Montréal

(ADM), was quick to capitalize on valuable information supplied by its AW volunteers by starting the first airport suspicious incident reporting system. The system allows AW volunteers to submit information to a secure website for assessment by ADM security.

Every AW volunteer is briefed by local police or expert guest speakers on the general threats that any major airport faces, including illicit access through perimeter fencing, vandalism, theft, and possible information-gathering activities by criminal organizations. Even surface-to-air-missile awareness is provided. Volunteers are briefed about potential hazards to themselves through their own volunteer health and safety representatives.

AW members normally report any suspicions to the airport operations centre by mobile phone or by a secure link on the airport’s website. As they drive to and from the airport, they also watch for suspicious vehicles parked within 15 kilometres of the runway approaches, as well as non-routine events occurring outside the airport’s perimeter. Because of this program, more and more airport authorities are aware of what goes on outside their perimeter fencing.

The AW program has many reported successes to date, including the discovery of cut perimeter fencing, unlocked gates,



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On a visit to the Montreal-Trudeau International Airport, Ottawa Airport Watch volunteers observe the arrival of an Airbus A380, and chat with the local media about their role as observers.

and wild animals or birds on or near aircraft operating areas; the observation of possibly faulty equipment on aircraft; and the provision of leads for police or national security investigations. AW volunteers do not take any direct action with regards to their observations. They report events as concerned citizens and have no additional authority. Their motto is “observe, record and report.”

Forward-thinking airport authorities appreciate the benefits that AW groups provide — both for airport officials and local communities. Many airports have put the program into operation with little expense, and a new launch creates a flurry of media interest, with the focus on positive community participation and innovative airport security. The latest airports to become partners in the AW concept are Montreal-Pierre Elliott Trudeau, Montreal-Mirabel and Minneapolis-St. Paul international airports.

Across North America, AW volunteers have become an important part of airport security networks. Airport authorities work with the volunteers to devise appropriate reporting processes, and airport police often stop and chat with volunteers during patrols.

The AW program is approved by the International Civil Aviation Organization and Transport Canada. ■