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## **BULLETIN!**

### **REPORT ON 6<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL JOINT MEETING Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police (CACP) Canadian Association of Police Boards (CAPB) Canadian Police Association (CPA)**

**Ottawa, ON  
Saturday, March 24, 2007**

The sixth annual meeting of the three national policing associations was held on Saturday, March 24, 2007 at the Chateau Laurier Hotel, following a reception and dinner held on Friday evening at the Army Officers' Mess. Association Presidents Chief Jack Ewatski of CACP, Ian Wilms of CAPB and Tony Cannavino of CPA welcomed the representatives of the three associations and set a conversant and informal tone for the day's work to follow.

In a slight departure from previous years, only two topics were selected jointly by the three associations in advance: National (anti) Drug Strategy and Policing Funding: 2,500 Officers. Time was identified at the end of the agenda for "burning issues" that arose throughout the day or that participants suggested as future agenda items.

Approximately thirty participants, representing the three associations, two federal government officials, and political staff members from the Offices of both the Prime Minister and Minister of Justice, attended.

Moderator Dorothy Franklin launched the day's proceedings at 08:45. Participants observed a moment of silence to commemorate those police officers who have fallen in the line of duty since the three associations met last. This annual ritual serves to emphasize the role of our front-line in serving our communities. Introductions followed and the meeting began.

#### **Topic 1: National (anti) Drug Strategy**

The objective of the session was to assess Canada's drug strategy to date, provide an opportunity to comment on its direction, and to identify key components the three associations would like to see addressed in a new national strategy. On March 19, 2007,

the broad strokes of a new national anti-drug strategy were announced by the Minister of Finance.

Speakers Chief Barry McKnight for CACP, Tom Stamatakis for CPA and Ivan Court for CAPB each presented the views of their respective associations on the questions posed in the objective statement. All speakers quickly agreed that Canada's drug policy and drug strategy lacked relevance to police and had created confusion among police and the general public (especially young people) around what is legal and illegal. The policing community is extremely supportive of reducing the harm to those who are addicted to drugs by stabilizing them and providing necessary medical care. But it is equally concerned that elevating "harm reduction" to the status of a "pillar" within a comprehensive strategy conveys acceptance for ongoing treatment of illicit drug use. This contradicts the message that drugs are harmful, and that their use causes many harms to individuals, families and the community. The objective of any comprehensive strategy ought to be to encourage people, and especially children and youth, to remain drug-free. The message that drugs are harmful ought to be the constant, regardless of which political party is in power.

Prevention is where the emphasis ought to be, with strategies tailored to address the specific nature of the various substances. For, example, the anti-tobacco campaign has yielded positive results, as has the MADD campaign against drinking and driving. The challenge is to use relevant messages, to exploit the new technologies used by youth to communicate them, and to use spokespersons who are credible, such as experiential youth themselves.

The representative of the Prime Minister's Office noted that details on the new national anti-drug strategy will be unveiled shortly, and she suggested that the three associations would likely be pleased with them. The three associations expressed interest in working together further on this issue, perhaps with an expanded constituency of stakeholders, once these details are known. The status of the government-funded *A National Framework for Action to Reduce the Harms Associated with Alcohol and Other Drugs and Substances in Canada* may be one of the questions to arise.

## **Topic 2: Policing Funding: 2,500 Officers**

The objective of the session was to determine whether the three associations have a shared strategy to present to the federal government on its 2006 election commitment to add "at least 2,500 more police on the beat in our cities and communities", and to articulate this strategy so as to be prepared for the meeting the three associations had requested with the government in their joint letter of September 25, 2006 to the Minister of Public Safety.

This lively session began with Chief Jack Ewatski providing the CACP interpretation of the election promise, and the policy, funding, process, priority-setting and governance issues that result from this kind of federal intervention in policing. Front-line policing in our cities and communities remains a provincial responsibility whose costs are largely borne by municipal tax-payers. Without resolution of these issues by governments that are responsible, the promised injection of new police officers remains an election ploy rather than a systematic assessment of what is really needed in policing, where, and who is responsible for responding to these needs.

Ian Wilms for CAPB highlighted the practical challenges to implementing this promise and advised a pragmatic approach that would involve a national recruitment campaign similar to that of the military (which, while including a piggy-back pitch for the RCMP, unfortunately does not do so for the rest of the policing sector). In the absence of clarity around the level and sustainability of funding for these new positions, he asked whether it might be more prudent to seek the funds for one-time capital expenditures that would provide needed protective equipment for officers.

Tony Cannavino for the CPA expressed dismay that the other two associations had “thrown in the towel” on this issue. He urged joint action to press the Minister of Public Safety for an accounting on where this promise sits, and a commitment to hold a round table for discussion on fulfilling this commitment and allocating the new resources. He recommended advising the Prime Minister of the policing associations’ concern at the apparent indifference of the Minister. He noted, further, that the figure of 5,000 new officers was the one used in his discussions with the Prime Minister.

The CACP and CAPB speakers strenuously objected to the interpretation that they had abandoned this issue, and returned to questions posed by Chief Ewatski. These focused on the three associations’ capacity and will to move ahead together in both securing these resources, and pressing governments to resolve the many issues that surface from such a promise.

Upon a recommendation from the floor, the three Presidents agreed to communicate in writing once more with the Minister of Public Safety, with a copy to the Prime Minister, seeking an opportunity to meet with federal and provincial governments. The three associations will urge federal-provincial-territorial Ministers to discuss this issue, will commit to putting forward a police plan for allocation of the promised resources to priority areas, and will leave to governments to resolve the issue of sustainability and the accountability issues around whether current policing levels are adequate or not for Canada’s community safety needs. No association wishes to risk non-delivery of additional front-line officers. It was agreed that the time had come to bring the policing concerns to the public.

## Burning Issues

1. Participants identified the imminent prospect of nation-wide protests igniting in late June, within the broader context of unresolved First Nations land claims and other issues of Aboriginal discontent. The CPA analysis of recent years' events in Ontario, and in particular the responses/non-responses of police and governments at provincial and federal levels and implications for public safety and the justice system, was the starting point for this discussion. Participants from other parts of the country agreed that the operational concerns around June preparedness can be conveyed to the RCMP through normal channels, and that the broader topic of Aboriginal discontent and implications for policing could constitute a future agenda item for the three associations.
  
2. In respect of a national recruitment campaign for policing, participants agreed that this issue ought to be addressed as an implementation challenge to filling the 7,000 current vacancies and finding 2,500 new police officers. The Police Sector Council (PSC) has previously requested support from Human Resources and Social Development Canada (HRSDC) for such a campaign, but with no success to date. The three associations agreed that they would ask advice from the PSC on the content of a letter to HRSDC that the three associations will prepare, to reinforce the need for a sector-wide recruitment campaign as a requisite for a police recruitment strategy.

## Conclusions

Participants expressed satisfaction with the day's meeting and the joint decisions that were taken to move the selected topics ahead. The Executive Directors Peter Cuthbert of CACP, Jennifer Lanzon of CAPB and David Griffin of CPA were asked:

on Topic 1 to consider convening a three-association event after details on the federal anti-drug strategy are unveiled, for the purposes of developing a joint response to the initiatives and direction outlined therein;

on Topic 2 to quickly prepare a joint follow-up letter to the Minister of Public Safety and issue a joint press release on the stalled government promise of at least 2,500 more police, the apparent lack of interest and disappointing lack of leadership by the Minister of Public Safety; and

on "burning issues"

i) to identify "First Nations discontent and implications for policing" as an issue for a future agenda; and

ii) to request assistance from the PSC in drafting a letter to HRSDC encouraging federal support for a policing recruitment strategy to enable the realization of both filling current and future vacancies and staffing the promised additional 2,500 police officers.

The meeting was adjourned at 15:00.

## **Report on Consultation with Federal Ministers (representatives)**

**Monday, March 26, 2007**

As the national body representing municipal police governing authorities, the Board of Directors of the Canadian Association of Police Boards (CAPB) meets annually with the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness Canada (PSEPC) and the Minister of Justice to discuss issues of concern to CAPB members. These meetings are in addition to the regular liaison that takes place between federal officials and the CAPB throughout the year.

On March 26, 2007 the CAPB Directors met with Diane MacLaren, Assistant Deputy Minister, Policing and Law Enforcement and Interoperability Branch, Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness Canada. The Honourable Stockwell Day, Minister of Public Safety Canada was not able to attend the meeting and sent Ms. MacLaren and some of her senior staff in his place. The Honourable Robert Nicholson, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada was unavailable for meetings. While the Board was disappointed not to be able to meet either Minister personally, a meeting with the Executive will be scheduled at a later date. The meetings with Diane MacLaren and her staff provided an opportunity to follow up on some of the Association's priorities.

The topics discussed were based on Resolutions ranked as most important by delegates at the 2006 CAPB Annual Conference in Edmonton, Alberta.

### **National Anti-Drug Strategy**

Ms. MacLaren was pleased to advise the Board of Directors that the \$63.8 million that has been allocated for a two year National Anti-Drug Strategy will focus on the elements identified in CAPB Resolution 06-1, namely: prevention, education, enforcement and treatment, with an added emphasis on the communication component. The new Anti-Drug Strategy is expected to deal exclusively with drugs and Health Canada will be responsible for strategies on alcohol and tobacco use. CAPB Director Ivan Court, NB, cited examples of successful, community based programs that have seen great success in Saint John. He expressed concern on the lack of sustainable funding for these types of programs. CAPB Director Emil Kolb, ON pointed out that Municipalities across the country need more

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resources to combat the growing drug problems they are plagued with; ie. Marijuana grow ops, crystal meth labs and crack cocaine houses to name a few. Mr. Kolb cited the success of drug treatment court pilot program in Toronto and requested the government continue to fund such programs. One of the overarching messages reinforced in this brief meeting is the importance of developing a comprehensive national communication strategy to education the population on illegal drugs and further to discourage people, particularly young people, from getting hooked on drugs in the first place.

### **Funding Gap between Federal and Municipal Governments to Fight Counter Terrorism**

CAPB President, Ian Wilms, AB asked Ms. MacLaren about the preparedness of municipalities for a counter terrorism attack. Every city should be able to respond to and prepare for Chemical/Biological/Radiological/Nuclear (CBRN) terrorist incidents and their disaster response should be prepared to last up to seventy-two (72) hours. Many cities are only prepared for eighteen (18) hours and with much of the CBRN equipment having expiry dates, there is a severe lack of resources for first responders. Ms. MacLaren expressed her concern over this issue and will get back to CAPB with further information.

### **CBRN Funding for Municipal Police**

CAPB Director Jim MacLeod, NS led discussion by citing that sixty (60%) percent of the population is policed by municipal forces, yet the majority of funding for CBRN training, education, provision of equipment, supplies and resources is not allocated to the municipalities. Mr. MacLeod noted the discrepancy in the provision of gas masks and training for municipal police. Ms. MacLaren acknowledged this point and will bring it to the Ministers attention.

### **Funding for Policing: 2500**

CAPB reinforced its position with CACP and CPA, as police stakeholders, to assist the federal and provincial governments in the design of the funding program for 2500 new officers. Ian Wilms underlined the critical need to launch a national recruitment strategy in the coming months, citing the fact that at the end of 2007 there will be a shortage of 7,000 municipal police officers in this country. CAPB is in a position to submit a proposal to PSEPC to put together a policing recruitment strategy to enable the realization of both filling current and future vacancies and staffing the promised additional 2,500 police officers.

### **Other Issues**

In the brief time the CAPB Board of Directors met with ADM MacLaren and her senior staff, Board members touched on these topics:

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- Work more cooperatively with the RCMP – it is after all one taxpayer and we need to stop operating in silos;
- Civilian oversight of the RCMP in contract policing – Ms. MacLaren advised the Government is preparing a response to Justice O'Connor's Report and we look forward to reviewing this when it is released;
- CAPB Board of Directors once again expressed the topic of any grants available through PSEPC for core funding for the organization. It was made very clear to Board members that funding is available on a per project basis only.



For additional information:

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