

Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security

Minister's Mandate Letter

November 2, 2020

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Tab 1 Scenario note

Issue:

The Minister of Public Safety is scheduled to appear before the House Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security (SECU) regarding the Minister's Mandate Letter. You and other senior officials from Public Safety, CSIS, CBSA, Correctional Service of Canada, and the Parole Board of Canada will attend to support the Minister.

The Committee has provided the Minister with an opportunity to deliver opening remarks. Public Safety Canada has provided a copy of the Minister's opening remarks, available at Tab 2.

RCMP officials have provided a series of hot issues notes for the Minister and Commissioner, available at Tab 3. Additional documents particular to the Commissioner's Mandate Letter are also included at Tab 4. SECU Committee overview and member biographies are available at Tab 5.

Confirmed witnesses

6:30 pm to 8:30 pm

- Bill Blair, Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness
- Brenda Lucki, RCMP Commissioner
- Rob Stewart, Deputy Minister of Public Safety Canada
- David Vigneault, Director of CSIS
- John Ossowski, President of CBSA
- Anne Kelly, Commissioner of the Correctional Service of Canada
- Jennifer Oades, Chairperson of the Parole Board of Canada

Rounds of questioning:

Members of the Committee are allotted six minutes to both ask questions and receive responses during the first round of questioning. In the second round (time permitting), the allotted time for questions and answers is reduced to five minutes.

- Typical order of questioning for the first round: Liberal, Conservative, Bloc, NDP.
- Typical order of questioning for the second round: Conservative, Liberal, Conservative, Liberal, then 2.5 minutes each for the Bloc and NDP.

Departmental officials present at Committee are responsible for supporting the Minister's accountability in Parliament. As departmental officials are not primarily responsible for exercising the powers of the Crown, their relationship to Parliament is different from that of Ministers. While Ministers are responsible for political, partisan matters, and for defending public policies before Parliament, deputy heads and officials support Ministers in providing explanations and information on public policies that Ministers could not be expected to provide due to the level of detail or complexity.

When responding to questions from committee members, keep your answers brief and factual. Avoid taking a position, providing your opinion, stating your personal recommendations or speaking on behalf of others on a given issue. Do not divulge classified information, Cabinet confidences or any information that contradicts privacy laws. Additional tips for responding to Parliamentary Committee questions are included at Tab 6.

Background:

On September 23rd, 2020, Parliament resumed following prorogation. Her Excellency the Right Honourable Julie Payette, Governor General of Canada, delivered the Speech from the Throne

to open the second session of the 43rd Parliament and outline the government's agenda. As a result, SECU invited Minister Blair to attend an appearance to provide Members of the Committee with an opportunity to ask the Minister questions about his mandate, which remains unchanged and is current as of December 2019.

The Minister may choose to respond to, or defer to one or more of his officials for questions.

Key messages:

Key messages regarding issues from the Minister's Mandate Letter and the RCMP Commissioner's Mandate Letter, as well as other interrelated issues, are included in the briefing material prepared for the appearance at Tab 3.

Strategic considerations:

- Vice-Chairs Shannon Stubbs (Conservative) and Kristina Michaud (Bloc Québécois), and member Jack Harris (NDP) are the Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness critics for their respective parties.
- Joël Lightbound (Liberal) is the Parliamentary Secretary for the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness.
- MP Pam Damoff (Liberal) is the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indigenous Services.
- In October 2020, SECU Vice-Chair MP Shannon Stubbs (Conservative) was critical of the government's response to the Indigenous fisheries dispute in Nova Scotia saying that the response was "too little, too late."
- SECU Vice-Chair MP Kristina Michaud (Bloc Québécois) was critical of the RCMP's initial response to the Wet'suwet'en crisis. She supported the RCMP's withdrawal from the Wet'suwet'en area and has expressed support for the creation of Indigenous police services as one way to rebuild trust between Indigenous people and law enforcement.
- SECU members MP Tako van Popta (Conservative) and MP Glen Motz (Conservative) have both been vocal opponents of the government's ban of 1,500 types of assault-style firearms.
 - In February 2020, Mr. Motz sponsored a Medicine Hat, Alberta resident's petition which garnered more support than any other in the country's history. Mr. Motz stated that support for the firearms petition "...speaks volumes to the frustrations Canadians felt with the Liberal plan, the misguided plan, on proposing a ban on firearms."
 - In May 2020, Mr. van Popta took issue with the government's firearms ban and issued a statement expanding on his opposition. While Mr. van Popta stated that he believes legal gun owners in Canada are safety-minded and law-abiding citizens, he opposed the creation of the firearms legislation, believing that enforcement of existing laws and tougher penalties are more effective in preventing individuals from committing crimes with illegal weapons. Mr. van Popta further stated that the "...Liberal government is choosing to spend millions of dollars to force law-abiding gun owners to turn over their property, when that money could be much better spent on border enforcement and stopping the illegal firearms trade currently occurring at our border."
- Mr. Motz has previously raised concerns about a perceived erosion of border security, noting his concerns are "not just with respect to the crisis of illegal border crossers, but also with drugs, handgun smuggling, human trafficking by many of the gangs running

drugs, and the massive backlogs in the monitoring and deportation of known terrorists, criminals and national security risks”.

- In the past, Mr. Motz also called for the Minister of Public Safety to direct the RCMP to dismantle the rail blockades that were set up in support of Wet’suwet’en hereditary chiefs while decrying the economic costs of the disruption.
- SECU member MP Jack Harris (NDP) has been outspoken on the topic of systemic racism and policing. In June 2020, SECU committee members approved Mr. Harris’ motion to study systemic racism in Canadian policing (the study was halted during the government’s prorogation). Mr. Harris previously stated, “We need the Public Safety Committee to meet to get concrete answers from the minister and RCMP Commissioner about how they intend to address the systemic racism inherent in Canada’s law enforcement. The police are supposed to serve and protect. That should go for everyone, but it clearly doesn’t. We can’t continue to do nothing while Indigenous and Black people and other racialized communities are forced to live in fear and mistrust of the police.” He further noted, “The RCMP in particular has a long history of enforcing race-based laws on behalf of the government of Canada against Indigenous peoples and no amount of reports and enquiries have stopped the treatment we see day after day.”
- Previously, when asked for his reaction to the RCMP Commissioner's remarks on systemic racism, Mr. Harris felt that it will be difficult to confront problems within the organization and that they can’t be resolved one complaint at a time, “It really just shows how far we have to go for a solution.”
- Mr. Harris has also been critical of the RCMP’s relationship with Indigenous populations, stating “We’ve had 150 years of the RCMP imposing race-based laws on Indigenous people and something very, very significant has got to be done to change that. I think we have to treat it as a crisis and try to find a crisis-based solution for this systemic racism.” He also expressed “...the Inuit live with mistrust of the RCMP”.
- Mr. Harris has been advocating for the federal government to set standards for police to follow, acknowledge the systemic problems within policing, and act to de-escalate encounters between police and Indigenous and Black Canadians where it can. He believes that Black and Indigenous Canadians “are over-policed, overcharged, over-injured and killed when being arrested by police.” He added, “When you look at the systemic racism behind the high rate of incarceration and arrest for Black and Indigenous people in this country, it’s pretty clear that those standards need to be set.”
- At his appointment to SECU in 2020, MP Damien Kurek (Conservative) indicated that priority issues for him are rural crime, the ban on assault-style firearms, and “issues at our borders”. He also noted his desire to “address the risks of foreign influence in Canada and the smuggling of illegal weapons at the border”.

Tab 2 Opening remarks

Tab 2a Minister's opening remarks

Mr. Chair, Vice-Chairs and Committee members, good afternoon and thank you for inviting me to join you today.

I'm pleased to be joined today by:

- Rob Stewart, Deputy Minister, Public Safety Canada;
- Brenda Lucki, Commissioner, RCMP
- John Ossowski, President, CBSA;
- David Vigneault, Director, CSIS;
- Anne Kelly, Commissioner, CSC
- Jennifer Oades, Chairperson, Parole Board of Canada

For those of you who are new to this Committee, welcome to your new roles.

I'm sure this is the first of many opportunities for me to meet with you.

I very much look forward to working with you on the many important issues that fall within my mandate.

And I appreciate the invitation to say a few words about those issues today.

Clearly, the world has changed dramatically since I was given this mandate last fall.

In very short order, the Government shifted its focus to the pandemic response.

That remains our key priority.

And it continues to be my primary focus.

We've taken unprecedented action to limit the spread of COVID- 19 in Canada.

Under my purview, that has included many actions to protect our borders.

We took the necessary step of restricting optional and discretionary travel across our borders early in the pandemic.

And we continue to review those decisions, in regular consultation with our domestic and international partners.

We recently announced a scaling-up of the federal public health presence at the border, now covering 36 ports of entry that account for 90 per cent of all traffic into Canada.

That represents a total force of 190 public health officers, up from 18 when the pandemic began. The Canada Border Services Agency is working very closely with the Public Health Agency of Canada, including on strengthening compliance and enforcement efforts on mandatory quarantine and isolation orders.

Our Border Services officers are doing a remarkable job in a very challenging situation, working around the clock to protect Canadians.

I'll continue to do everything I can to make sure they have the resources they need.

And I intend to follow through with the important measures we introduced before the pandemic.

For example, enhancing civilian oversight, which is central to maintaining public confidence in our law enforcement agencies and the rule of law.

I intend to re-introduce legislation that will enhance the Civilian Review and Complaints Commission's review powers.

Under that legislation, the Commission would be responsible for handling reviews and complaints that are not related to national security activities, for both the CBSA and the RCMP.

It will continue to be fully independent, and will ensure that the public can continue to expect consistent, fair and equal treatment when dealing with law enforcement agencies.

I have been very clear about the need for improved standards for responding to public complaint and review investigations in an expeditious manner.

I look forward to working with this Committee, and with all Parliamentarians, on this process, to ensure we develop the best possible legislation to serve all Canadians.

With respect to other legislation, we have an ambitious agenda ahead.

As you know, the Prime Minister asked me to serve as Minister of Public Safety in part because of the unique focus I can provide – from my decades of experience in policing on the front-lines.

We can't ignore the reality that firearms-related crime remains high in Canada.

I've seen that first hand.

And I'm determined to address it as a priority.

On May 1, our Government took decisive action to protect the public by banning over 1,500 models of assault-style firearms, as well as component parts for some of the newly prohibited firearms.

We have put in place an amnesty to give existing owners time to come into compliance with the law.

The amnesty also provides a temporary exception for Indigenous persons exercising section 35 Constitutional rights to hunt and for sustenance hunters to allow for continued use of a previously non-restricted firearm until a suitable replacement can be found.

We have also signaled our intent to implement a buyback program as soon as possible

I would like to reiterate that this government is committed to ensuring that affected owners and businesses are compensated fairly, while at the same time making sure implementation and management costs of such a program are well-priced and sustainable.

Keeping in mind our top priority is ensuring the safety and security of Canadians, the Government will further its efforts to look at a range of options.

And we will work with Parliament, provinces, territories and First Nations to get this right for law-abiding gun owners and businesses.

The ban and buy-back program are key elements that are part of a wider series of measures we will take to pursue our efforts to target firearm-related crime in Canada.

I have been very clear that we that we need to strengthen Canada's gun control framework.

That's why this Government intends to introduce a red-flag regime to reduce cases of intimate partner violence, and suicide by temporarily removing firearms from individuals who pose a danger to themselves or their partners or kids.

We will strengthen firearms storage requirements to deter theft, and enhance police tracing capacity.

And we will work with our partners from other levels of government, to give municipalities the ability to further restrict handguns, and establish a dedicated funding stream to help municipalities fight gang-related violence and expand diversion programs that keep at-risk youth out of the criminal justice system.

We also know that we must do more to prevent smuggled guns from entering Canada.

That is why we will introduce tougher penalties for trafficking and smuggling offences.

And we will continue to make important investments in the RCMP and CBSA, to strengthen border controls and reduce the number of guns being smuggled across our borders

Colleagues, this is a time for action on many fronts, and this Government intends to follow through and deliver for Canadians.

I've spoken to just a few of the many commitments entrusted in me.

I also look forward to co-developing a legislative framework for First Nations policing, which recognizes First Nations policing as an essential service.

And I remain committed to continuing efforts to reduce the smuggling of opioids, and other synthetic drugs.

In particular, as I've noted to this Committee earlier this year, I welcome your thoughts on the role of the Government in combatting anti-Black and anti-Indigenous racism, and ending systemic racism writ large.

As anti-racism protests continue around the world, we are all listening, learning and reflecting on how systemic racism contributes to injustice and inequality in Canada.

Colleagues, I'm deeply honoured to carry out the mandate the Prime Minister has entrusted in me.

And I look forward to your continued advice and engagement in keeping our borders secure and our communities safe.

Thank you very much, and I look forward to your questions.

Word count: 1,138 (10 mins)

Tab 3 Questions and answers

Tab 3a Sexual assault review

Proposed response:

- For years, we have known that sexual assaults are among the most under-reported crimes in Canada.
- With the goal to strengthen public trust in policing, survivors are encouraged to report these serious crimes through whatever mechanism they are most comfortable with.
- The RCMP is working hard to ensure that all sexual assault survivors feel comfortable bringing their allegations forward; receive the same standard of care regardless of jurisdiction; and, trust investigators to thoroughly and professionally investigate these crimes.
- The RCMP established the National Sexual Assault Review Team (SART) to conduct reviews of sexual assault investigations, provide recommendations and guidance for further action. SART also developed tools and training resources to enhance police officer knowledge, skills and practices related to the investigation of sexual offences.
- The creation of an Advisory Committee for Sexual Assault Investigations also serves as an open forum to share information on good practices, as well as discuss challenges and concerns with respect to sexual assault investigations.
- Further, the RCMP is committed to establishing external sexual assault review committees in all Divisions where it is the police of jurisdiction. This is an important accountability mechanism that has proved beneficial to many police agencies in North America.
- To date, these committees have been established in six divisions and the remaining divisions are on track to form committees by Spring 2021.
- Working collaboratively with victim advocates and other experts will strengthen the RCMP's response to sexual assault crimes, and improve the quality of these investigations, while enhancing public trust.
- The RCMP and myself are committed to ensuring that victims are treated fairly by the justice system and that investigations into these crimes are conducted effectively.

Background:

In February 2017, the Globe and Mail published an investigative series on how police handle sexual assault allegations, highlighting that police classify, on average, one in five reported sexual assaults as unfounded. The series also uncovered stories that raised questions about how some investigators may treat victims of sexual assault.

In response, the RCMP launched a review of 2,225 unfounded sexual assault investigations. The RCMP also created the Sexual Assault Review Team (SART) at National Headquarters to examine all aspects of how the RCMP addresses sexual assault cases; identify best practices; formulate recommendations to enhance investigations going forward; and, develop and implement trauma-informed training for employees at all levels.

The file review and consultation resulted in key findings and culminated with the RCMP's December 2017 report entitled *The Way Forward: The RCMP's Sexual Assault Review and Victim Support Action Plan Report*.

Additional context:

Budget 2018 included \$10 million over five years, and \$2 million per year ongoing, for the RCMP to establish the Sexual Assault Review Team, complete the expanded file review, and provide accountability across the force for investigations. The funding also provides for the establishment of an external advisory committee, better supports for victims, and the development of training.

Actions taken by the RCMP:

Since 2018, the funding received has allowed the RCMP to complete and implement many aspects of the Way Forward Action Plan, such as completing reviews of: all 2015, 2016 and 2017 sexual assault investigations that were not cleared by charge (i.e., over 30,000 sexual assault files); the Kelowna RCMP Detachment's 2018 and 2019 unfounded sexual assault investigations; and sexual assault investigations involving child victims under the age of 12.

The RCMP has also developed several tools, resources and courses to help RCMP members improve their knowledge, skills and practices, including: the Common Sexual Assault Investigational Gaps Guide; the Consent and Sexual Assault Myths Course; Guidance with respect to UCR Scoring; the Using a Trauma Informed Approach Course (now mandatory for all RCMP employees that interact with the public); and updating the RCMP's Sexual Assault Investigations Best Practice Guide.

The RCMP also created an Advisory Committee for Sexual Assault Investigations (ACSAI) that includes representatives from all RCMP divisions where the RCMP is the local, general duty police of jurisdiction. ACSAI serves as an open forum to share information on good practices as well as discuss challenges and concerns with respect to sexual assault investigations. The Committee also provides recommendations and guidance on sexual assault training, investigative policies and procedures.

Finally, establishing external sexual assault review committees is an important accountability mechanism that has proved beneficial to many police agencies in North America. To date, Sexual Assault Investigations Review Committees (SAIRCs) have been established in six (6) RCMP divisions for this purpose. Most of the remaining divisions were well on their way to have their respective SAIRCs established by spring/summer 2020; however, training sessions and implementation have been delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Once physical distancing measures are relaxed, the SAIRC training and implementation will resume.

Tab 3b Mandate letter commitment – 100 additional officers

Issue: The Minister's mandate has a commitment to provide additional support to the RCMP, so that it can hire and train 100 additional officers specialized officers

Proposed response:

- The Royal Canadian Mounted has explored a number of options; however, there is no material progress to report at this point.
- This is largely due to (Redacted) and the need to remain aligned with the RCMP's Department Review and 2020 Budget ask.
- The RCMP could not fund such an initiative within current budgetary constraints, nor has there been a vehicle identified to date to access the required funding.

Background:

In the Minister's Mandate letter, he is asked to provide additional support to the RCMP, so that it can hire and train 100 additional officers specialized in narcotics trafficking and other international priorities to more effectively serve as liaisons for Embassies abroad.

The RCMP has explored a number of options; however, there is no material progress to report at this point.

It should be noted that when the commitment was first announced, the RCMP's position was that it would be extremely difficult to deliver 100 new resources. This is largely due to (Redacted) and the need to remain aligned with the RCMP's Department Review and 2020 Budget ask.

Further, the financial implications associated with the deployment of members overseas would be significant, with high-level estimates in the range of \$50 million for an initial deployment (and annually ongoing). The RCMP could not fund such an initiative within current budgetary constraints, nor has there been a vehicle identified to date to access the required funding.

Financial requirements aside (Redacted)

Tab 3c Firearms and gangs

Issue: Mandate commitments to strengthen gun control and ban assault-style firearms.

Proposed response:

- We have seen consensus across the country that more must be done to counter firearms-related violence and keep our communities safe.
- When our government was elected a year ago, we put forward a comprehensive gun control agenda. On May 1, we delivered on a key element of this agenda by banning over 1,500 models of assault-style firearms and ending the proliferation of these dangerous firearms in our communities.
- We have also put in place an amnesty to give existing owners time to come into compliance with the law and signaled our intent to implement a buyback program as soon as possible to remove these firearms from the Canadian market.
- While the ban was a crucial first step, it is only one of a series of measures that our Government is taking to target gun crime in this country.
- We know that most gun crime in our major cities is committed by gangs using handguns.
- That is why we have committed to working with provinces and territories to enable municipalities to further restrict or ban handguns and we will establish a dedicated funding stream for cities to fight gang violence and support prevention programs to keep youth-at-risk out of the criminal justice system.
- We also intend to impose tougher penalties for trafficking and smuggling offences and make important investments in the RCMP and CBSA to target cross-border smuggling and prevent these illegal firearms from entering the country and getting into the hands of criminals.
- In addition to these initiatives, our Government will also strengthen firearms storage requirements to deter theft, enhance police tracing capacity and introduce measures to reduce gender-based violence and suicide by temporarily removing firearms from individuals who pose a danger to themselves and those around them, including their partners or kids.
- These measures are top priority for this government and we will bring them forward at the earliest opportunity.

If pressed on buyback:

- We are looking at a range of options, and will work with Parliament, as well as provincial and territorial partners to get this right for law-abiding gun owners and businesses while making sure that program costs are well-priced and sustainable.
- To assist in meeting this dual objective, my Department has published an amended request for proposals (RFP) on October 16 to obtain professional for the provision of advice on options and approaches to further inform and build upon ongoing efforts to develop a buy-back program. Specifically, this advice would focus on firearms pricing models, as well as on the design, implementation and management of a buy-back program for recently prohibited firearms.
- This amended RFP is reflective of the feedback we have received from prospective bidders following the conclusion of the previous solicitation process which, unfortunately, did not yield to the selection of a successful bidder.

Background:

Firearms-related homicide doubled from 2013 to 2017 (134 to 267) but fell slightly in 2018 (249). Shootings have now become the most common method of homicide. According to police, gang

violence accounted for approximately 52% of firearms-related homicides in 2017 and 51% in 2018.

This rising firearms-related violence is fueling public concern and giving rise to demands for federal action to curtail the availability of firearms in Canada.

On May 1, 2020, the Regulations Prescribing Certain Firearms and Other Weapons, Components and Parts of Weapons, Accessories, Cartridge Magazines, Ammunition and Projectiles as Prohibited, Restricted or Non-Restricted were amended to prescribe as prohibited approximately 1,500 models of firearms and their variants, along with upper receivers for some newly-prohibited firearms. Of those, nine principal models of assault-style firearms are prohibited as they have semi-automatic action with sustained rapid-fire capability (tactical military design with large magazine capacity), are of modern design, and are present in large volumes in the Canadian market. Also included are two categories of firearm that exceed safe civilian use: firearms with 20 mm bore or greater or with a muzzle energy of greater than 10,000 Joules.

Designing a buyback program: request for proposal and way forward

In August 2020, Public Safety Canada published a Request for Proposal (RFP) seeking professional services for the development of advice on options and approaches to inform firearms pricing models, as well as the design, implementation and management of a buyback program for recently prohibited firearms. The original RFP closed on September 9.

Unfortunately, the bid evaluation process did not yield to the identification of a winning bidder. This is an unfortunate yet not uncommon outcome in the sphere of public procurement. Public Safety has redeveloped the RFP based on extensive consultations with the Industry, and launched the new RFP on October 16. This RFP is set to close on November 10, and should lead to a contract award sometime in the late November timeframe.

The RFP is built in two phases. The first focuses on developing pricing and compensation models and design options. The second, determined through a task authorization process, will focus on the implementation, while the exact tasks and scope will be further refined with the successful contractor and will be based upon the outcomes of phase 1. Overseeing the storage, transportation and destruction of confiscated firearms would not be services covered under the current RFP. The contractor is expected to complete extensive research in order to develop various options required under the contract, and may be privy to some personal information. To that extent, the security clearance requirements have been established accordingly.

Both Public Safety Canada and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police will be ready to work with and assist the winning bidder to advance its work as expeditiously as possible.

Firearms smuggling

The cross-border smuggling of firearms poses a threat to the safety and security of Canada. Given the availability of firearms in the United States, including firearms that are strictly controlled or prohibited in Canada, most seizures happen at the Canada-US land border. The CBSA seizes large quantities of firearms every year from U.S. citizens, mostly from non-compliant travellers attempting to retain their personal firearms while travelling. There is no doubt, however, that there are firearms entering the country undetected, as evidenced through gun crimes in Canada that involve illicit firearms.

The CBSA is leveraging investments made through the Initiative to Take Action against Gun and Gang Violence, to enhance its capacity to stem the flow of inadmissible travellers and illegal firearms entering Canada at vulnerable points of entry and through postal facilities. It is also procuring equipment to enhance air cargo security and pallet imaging, enhancing intelligence

collection and production abilities, and improving border operations through measures aimed at enhancing the CBSA's capacity to detect and interdict illegal firearms at the border.

Guns and gangs

The Government has made federal investments of up to \$327.6 million over five years, and \$100 million ongoing, to establish the Initiative to Take Action Against Gun and Gang Violence. The majority of resources, approximately \$214 million over 5 years is allocated to provinces and territories (PTs) to combat the issue of gun and gang violence in communities across Canada. These resources complement existing efforts under the National Crime Prevention Strategy through the Youth Gang Prevention Fund, which received additional \$8 million over four years beginning 2019.

Twelve PTs have signed multi-year funding agreements under the GGVAFF. Prince Edward Island is currently engaged in the signature process for their contribution agreement.

Jurisdictions have prioritized a number of initiatives including:

- Ontario has launched Justice Centres holding individuals accountable for their offences while connecting them to services (such as health, mental health, addictions, housing, and employment supports) that reduce the risk of re-offending;
- Québec is developing an approach to street work in Aboriginal communities via a pilot project to support communities and increase the protective factors for Aboriginal youth; and
- Nunavut is raising public awareness of firearm safety and the root causes of violence and mental health challenges through a multi-faceted educational campaign.

The Government also provided \$86 million to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and Canada Border Services Agency to enhance firearms investigations and strengthen controls at the border to prevent illegal firearms from entering the country.

Tab 3d Unconscious bias training for law enforcement

Proposed response:

- Keeping our communities safe is a key priority. Canada's law enforcement and security agencies must be transparent and accountable, and must also continue to advance efforts to address systemic racism and discrimination.
- These practices contribute to building trust and accountability, promote a strong and resilient society, and enhance the goal of keeping Canadians safe.
- I have made a commitment to ensure that all officials in Canada's law enforcement and security agencies have access to unconscious bias and cultural competency training, and I am pleased to note that efforts to achieve this are underway.
- Public Safety is enhancing and expanding training on implicit bias in national security, which complements other diversity training offered by the government. We held our first pilot training on implicit bias and diversity specifically for national security practitioners in July 2020, and are planning to expand the training to others in Public Safety and portfolio agencies in the months ahead.

Background:

The Prime Minister's Mandate Letter directs the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness to ensure that all law enforcement and security officials have access to unconscious bias and cultural competency training. This commitment was reaffirmed during the most recent Speech from the Throne on September 23, 2020, where modernizing anti-bias training for police and law enforcement was highlighted among other priorities related to combatting systemic racism.

There is evidence that implicit bias training, if treated as a "checkbox" or one-off exercise, does not necessarily lead to lasting inclusion and change and could, in fact, have the opposite effect. To respond to the mandate letter commitment, the National Security Policy Directorate at Public Safety conducted research, engaged with experts and consulted with partners to create a multi-level program on implicit bias, diversity and identity, one that will target officials at all levels of national security to implement meaningful change in policies, programs, operations and systems.

The first stage of the program was launched in July 2020, when Public Safety contracted and organized a pilot training session on implicit bias in national security work that was delivered to 17 participants of Public Safety middle managers. The National Security Policy Directorate is in the process of evaluating and expanding the pilot training session, and has targeted the training of 80-100 national security practitioners from Public Safety and portfolio agencies by the end of March 2021.

While some additional training is planned to continue this work in the 2021-2022 fiscal year, its impact and long-term sustainability will be extremely limited in the absence of additional resources to expand the breadth and reach of the training.

Tab 3e Indigenous policing

Proposed response:

- I have been mandated by the Prime Minister to work with the Minister of Indigenous Services to co-develop a legislative framework which recognizes First Nations policing as an essential service and to expand access to the First Nations Policing Program (FNPP) to additional communities.
- The commitment to accelerate the co-development of a legislative framework for First Nations policing was reiterated in the recent Speech from the Throne.
- Indigenous communities deserve equal access to policing services that are professional, dedicated and culturally appropriate. In order to effectively serve Indigenous communities, police services need the resources, the equipment and the facilities to get the job done.
- I have started conversations with some Indigenous leaders in order to lay the foundation for working together to co-develop legislation.
- We remain seized with the urgency to co-develop a new legislative framework for Indigenous policing, one which recognizes and acknowledges the jurisdictions of First Nations.

Background:

Since 1991, the Government of Canada has supported policing services in First Nation and Inuit communities through the First Nations Policing Program (FNPP), a program that is cost-shared with provinces and territories in accordance with a 52% federal and 48% provincial/territorial (PT) cost-share ratio. In 2018-2019, Public Safety Canada (PS) provided over \$146 million under the FNPP to support 1,321 police officer positions in over 450 First Nation and Inuit communities in Canada.

The FNPP has had a significant and measurable positive impact on the safety of First Nation and Inuit communities funded under the program. Based on an analysis of FNPP-funded police detachments, there has been a 26% decrease in incidents of crime from 2004 to 2014, with a 25% reduction in incidents of violent crime. However, gaps and funding inequities remain: 1/3rd of First Nation communities are not covered by the Program, there is a limited FNPP presence in the Territories and no presence in Nunavut, and Metis communities remain ineligible for the Program. In addition, the funding mechanism of a discretionary program, where Indigenous communities are forced to compete against each other for limited funding, has been widely criticized by Indigenous and other stakeholders as being inappropriate for an essential service such as policing.

Protests across Canada and the United States against police brutality have compelled discussions about systemic racism and discrimination in Canadian institutions, including in the justice system. This has included conversations on the delivery of policing services across Canada, including in Indigenous communities. Members of Indigenous leadership, activists, academics and other stakeholders have proposed changes to the delivery of policing services in communities, including more robust civilian oversight and training on de-escalation training and unconscious bias.

To respond to these key issues, your mandate letter currently states the following with respect to the way forward for Indigenous policing: "With the Minister of Indigenous Services, co-develop a legislative framework for First Nations policing, which recognizes First Nations policing as an essential service, and work with interested communities to expand the number of communities served by First Nations policing." Similarly, the Speech from the Throne includes a commitment to: "accelerate work to co-develop a legislative framework for First Nations policing as an essential service."

Progress on this mandate commitment would support Indigenous women and girls, which are disproportionately affected by all forms of violence. It is important to note that the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG) made the following Call for Justice (5.4) in its final report: “We call upon all governments to immediately and dramatically transform Indigenous policing from its current state as a mere delegation to an exercise in self-governance and self-determination over policing. To do this, the federal government's First Nations Policing Program must be replaced with a new legislative and funding framework, consistent with international and domestic policing best practices and standards, that must be developed by the federal, provincial, and territorial governments in partnership with Indigenous Peoples.”

In addition to several key meetings with potential partners and stakeholders that you have had over the past several months, including the Assembly of First Nations (AFN), the First Nations Police Governance Council and Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada, departmental officials continue to lay the groundwork to make progress on this mandate commitment. This includes providing funding to the AFN to establish a dedicated policing sector and engagement of the FNPP Stakeholder Panel, FPT officials and the First Nations Chiefs of Police Association.

Tab 3f Reducing opioid / drug smuggling

Proposed response:

- Protecting Canadians from the harms associated with illegal substances, especially in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, continues to be a priority for the Government of Canada.
- From January 2016 to December 2019, the opioid overdose crisis claimed the lives of more than 15,000 Canadians and represents a significant and ongoing public health emergency.
- The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the opioid crisis, leading to a reported increase in opioid-related deaths and substance use harms in 2020.
- With the convergence of two devastating public health crises, our efforts to promote a collaborative, comprehensive, and evidence-based approach to drug policy are even more critical.
- Canada's response to the opioid crisis, and problematic substance use in general, balances public health and public safety considerations, and emphasizes the importance of demand and supply reduction measures as encompassed in the Canadian Drugs and Substances Strategy.
- For Public Safety Canada, efforts to disrupt and dismantle the activities of domestic and transnational organized crime groups involved in the illicit drug trade are a top priority.
- Without a doubt, COVID-19 and restrictions introduced to slow its spread are transforming the illicit drug landscape and we are observing a number of alarming trends, including changes in drug availability, pricing, and adulteration.
- We know that transnational organized crime groups involved in the illegal drug trade are continuing to conduct business despite supply limitations.
- As these groups adapt to restrictions on their movement across borders, they are modifying their production methods, trafficking modes and smuggling routes.
- For instance, there are reports of organized crime groups using cutting agents to stretch stockpiles of illicit drugs that cannot be replenished due to reduced cross-border flows.
- Additionally, instead of using passenger modes, traffickers are relying on commercial vehicles, air cargo, marine containers, and the postal mode to move product.
- This is a testament to the robustness and entrenchment of illegal drug operations.
- It is clear that we need an enforcement capability that is equally agile and equipped to counter modified methods of production and shifting trafficking patterns.
- Public Safety Canada, together with its portfolio partners, is actively working to support law enforcement in addressing the supply of illegal substances, including synthetic opioids like fentanyl and its analogues, which are a key driver of the worsening opioid crisis.
- As the COVID-19 pandemic progresses, Public Safety Canada will continue to monitor emerging trends in the illicit drug market and will engage with its portfolio and international partners to advance supply reduction policies to mitigate the harms posed by these substances.

Background:

The opioid overdose crisis in Canada is a national public health and safety epidemic of significant concern to the Government of Canada. From January 2016 to December 2019, there were more than 15,000 apparent opioid-related deaths across Canada. A significant portion of these deaths are attributed to fentanyl and its analogues.

The opioid crisis is now worsening amid the COVID-19 pandemic, increasing the risks to people who use drugs and resulting in unprecedented overdoses and deaths. Public health officials

anticipate that 2020 will be the deadliest year on record, with Alberta, British Columbia, Ontario, and Saskatchewan all reporting spikes in overdose morbidity and mortality since March 2020. Canada's opioid response requires a whole-of-government approach that balances public health and public safety considerations. The Canadian Drugs and Substances Strategy (CDSS), which is founded on the pillars of harm reduction, prevention, treatment, and enforcement, informs this approach and fulfills the Government's commitment to collaborative, comprehensive, and evidence-based drug policy.

The impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the illicit drug supply

Border closures, travel restrictions, and other social changes are disrupting the illegal drug supply, affecting the market availability of opioids and other drugs, as well as the precursor chemicals used to manufacture synthetics. Measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 are leading to increased adulteration and toxicity as traffickers rely on potent cutting agents, like fentanyl, to stretch existing stockpiles of illicit substances.

The pandemic has also impacted the way in which organized crime groups are operating in the illicit drug market. Intelligence indicates that these groups are adjusting their production methods, developing new smuggling techniques, and using different routes to circumvent ongoing restrictions. For instance, traffickers now rely on commercial vehicles, air cargo, marine containers, and the postal mode to move product.

Efforts to address the illicit drug supply

Coming into force in May 2017, Bill C-37, *An Act to amend the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act and to make related amendments*, amended the *Controlled Drugs and Substances Act* (CDSA), the *Customs Act*, and the *Proceeds of Crime (Money Laundering) and Terrorist Financing Act* to further address the opioid overdose crisis. Notably, the Bill introduced regulatory mechanisms to restrict the importation of designated devices (e.g. pill presses) used in the illegal production of pills. It also removed the 30 grams or less mail exception, granting border officers the authority to open international mail of any weight, on suspicion the item contains prohibited, controlled, or regulated goods.

Budget 2018 included funding for Public Safety Canada to coordinate with and disseminate information to law enforcement in support of the opioid crisis response. Activities include hosting five roundtable events, strengthening international partnerships to help reduce the cross-border flow of illegal substances, and increasing policy capacity to address supply-related issues. It also included funding for the CBSA to expand safe examination capacity for goods suspected to contain highly toxic substances, establish additional detector dog teams, and augment intelligence and risk assessment capacity.

Pursuant to the Minister of Public Safety's current mandate to work with partners to reduce the smuggling of opioids and other drugs across Canadian borders, Public Safety Canada is working with federal, provincial, and territorial partners, as appropriate, as well as in international fora to disrupt domestic and cross-border flows of illicit drugs and precursor chemicals.

Tab 3g Online hate / harassment

Proposed response:

- The experience that Canadians have online should be free from hate and harassment.
- Public Safety's Canada Centre for Community Engagement and Prevention of Violence provides leadership to advance programming, research and policy priorities to prevent hate, racism and violence online.
- Through the Community Resilience Fund, the Canada Centre supports research and programming to build evidence and local level capacity to counter hate and violence online.
- I recently announced over \$700,000 in funding to YWCA Canada for their project Block Hate: Building Resilience against Online Hate Speech, which will strengthen the way Canadians respond to online hate, creating safer online spaces for young Canadians.
- My department has been working closely with the Department of Canadian Heritage on the development of a regulatory framework for illegal and harmful online activity, which will significantly contribute to a safer online environment.
- The Canada Centre is a supporting partner for the Anti-Racism Strategy, and is investing to expand efforts in areas such as improving reporting of hate incidents, training and education, public awareness, research about online dynamics, and supporting new programs.
- We also work closely with Women and Gender Equality (WAGE) in their development of a National Action Plan on Gender-Based Violence, helping to inform their approach to addressing hate online.
- Our efforts to keep Canadians online also align with our international commitments under *Christchurch Call to Action*.

Background:

Canada Centre for Community Engagement and Prevention of Violence

The Canada Centre for Community Engagement and Prevention of Violence (Canada Centre) leads the Government of Canada's efforts to counter radicalization to violence in all its forms, including online hate.

On December 11, 2018, the Canada Centre launched the National Strategy on Countering Radicalization to Violence. Its three priorities are: (1) building, sharing and using knowledge; (2) addressing radicalization in the online space; and (3) supporting interventions.

Through the establishment of the Community Resilience Fund (CRF) in December 2016, with \$7 million available each year, Public Safety supports research and programming to build the evidence base along with local capability and capacity to counter radicalization to violence in Canada. As of October 9, 2020, a total of 39 project agreements have been signed, representing a total investment of \$29,384,336. Examples of CRF projects specifically dealing with hate include: YWCA Canada's project, Block Hate: Building Resilience Against Online Hate Speech; and, MediaSmarts's project, Pushing Back Against Hate in Online Communities. These efforts align with the Minister's 2019 mandate commitment to continue supporting the work of the Canada Centre and investing in front-line programs that work to counter violent extremism.

Online harms

The Canada Centre for Community Engagement and Prevention of Violence (Canada Centre) at Public Safety leads the Government of Canada's efforts to address violent extremist and

terrorist use of the internet. This includes regular engagement with digital industry, likeminded governments, civil society, and academia. The Canada Centre is also helping to shape the Department of Canadian Heritage's development of a regulatory framework for illegal and harmful activity online.

In addition, the Canada Centre is contributing to international efforts, through various multilateral forums, including the Christchurch Call to Action, Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF), and the Global Internet Forum to Counterterrorism (GIFCT), as well as funding for initiatives, such as \$1 million to Tech Against Terrorism, to assist researchers and tech companies in eliminating violent extremist content online.

Public Safety and its portfolio agencies are investing in efforts to address online harms, including violent extremist and terrorist use of the internet (VETUI), child sexual abuse and exploitation online (CSEA), hostile activities by state actors (HASA), and encryption.

Public Safety and Canada's Anti-Racism Strategy

Canada's Anti-Racism Strategy, with \$45 million in funding over three years, aims to take immediate steps in combatting racism and discrimination, focusing on increasing equity of access and/or participation among people and communities most impacted by racism and discrimination.

In support of the Anti-Racism Strategy, the Canada Centre is receiving \$0.9 million over three years to complement work specifically addressing hate, by helping address hate crimes and hate speech, in areas such as reporting, training and education, public awareness, media reporting, online policy research, building and synthesizing an evidence base, and supporting new pilots/programs, responding to the need identified by engagement participants for further and increased action on hate crimes and hate speech.

Tab 3h Sipekne'katik First Nation Moderate Livelihood Fishery

Proposed response:

- I want to begin by re-affirming that the Government of Canada and the RCMP support the treaty rights of First Nations, as well as the rights of all Indigenous Peoples, and condemns the violence committed related to the fisheries dispute in Nova Scotia.
- The RCMP takes its primary role of upholding public safety extremely seriously, and has been present from the beginning of the dispute, while Governments work to achieve a lasting resolution rooted in the recognition of legitimate Mi'kmaq treaty rights.
- The Nova Scotia RCMP will continue to take steps to ensure that those who unlawfully interfere with or threaten the safety of any person or property will be held accountable in accordance with the laws of Canada. Acts of violence or vigilantism will not be tolerated, and will be investigated fully by police.
- The RCMP has increased its presence in the Meteghan area. I am aware that charges have been laid and multiple investigations are ongoing for crimes committed against individuals, including the assault of Chief Michael Sack, as well as crimes perpetrated against property, such as the likely arson of the lobster pound that took place on October 17.
- The RCMP's increased posture also includes uniformed officers maintaining high visibility and conducting roving patrols in communities and on the water. Uniformed resources are supplemented by additional Strategic Tactical Operations resources from multiple jurisdictions, and the RCMP Emergency Response Team has a vessel for immediate deployment, if necessary.
- The Nova Scotia RCMP Division Liaison Team is continuing to engage with Indigenous and commercial fishers to build and maintain relationships towards de-escalation and a peaceful resolution.
- All efforts towards de-escalation and peaceful dialogue are being made amongst the stakeholders, with the RCMP playing a key role.
- I am also aware of the temporary injunction issued by the Nova Scotia Supreme Court, and I have full confidence that the RCMP will respond in accordance with this order.
- The RCMP's involvement in this dispute will continue to focus efforts on maintaining safe and peaceful conditions for all involved.

Background:

Tensions exist between Nova Scotia Indigenous and non-Indigenous (commercial) fishers. On September 17, 2020, the Sipekne'katik First Nations Band in Nova Scotia implemented its own self-regulated lobster fishery (Sipekne'katik Livelihood Fishery). Non-Indigenous commercial fishers oppose the new self-regulated fishery, since it is not regulated by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO), and allege illegal lobster trapping and sales during the off-season by Indigenous fishers. First Nations groups deny that this is an illegal fishing activity, citing the Marshall Decision, which guarantees the right of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq First Nations Peoples to fish and hunt, making a "moderate living" during any period of the year. As of yet, "moderate livelihood" has not been defined. Non-Indigenous commercial fishers have held protests at DFO offices in the area to demonstrate their displeasure with the lack of enforcement activity. On October 13, 2020, a large group of Non-Indigenous commercial fishers (approximately 200) gathered at a lobster plant in New Edinburgh, Digby County, Nova Scotia, which they suspected of purchasing perceived illegally-caught lobster by the Sipekne'katik Band. A van belonging to

an Indigenous person was set on fire and sustained extensive damage. On October 14, 2020, approximately 150 Non-Indigenous commercial and 50 Indigenous fishers, along with supporters, were at the New Edinburgh lobster pound and tensions were elevated. During interactions between the two groups, Chief Sack of the Sipekne'katik Band was grabbed and pushed and had his shirt ripped. On October 17, 2020, around midnight, Yarmouth County RCMP and West Pubnico Fire Department, as well as other mutual aid fire departments responded to building fires at two locations including the New Edinburgh lobster plant. The plant incurred significant damage; it was not occupied at the time; no employees were injured; and a man is in hospital with life-threatening injuries. The investigation has determined the fire to be suspicious and the investigation of both incidents is ongoing, with video of the lobster plant incident received by the RCMP on October 19, 2020. The Meteghan RCMP has also laid charges in relation to the assault of Chief Michael Sack, as well as the van arson incident. On October 21, 2020, the Nova Scotia Supreme Court issued a temporary court injunction to prohibit anyone from stopping Sipekne'katik band members from accessing the Saulnierville/Weymouth wharves and the New Edinburgh pound, as well as preventing interference on the water.

Social media posts and protest activity:

A significant number of social media posts surfaced from mid-September, including video recordings of mischief, theft, firearms offences, and the dangerous operation of motor vehicles. Some of these social media posts also allege racist acts committed against Indigenous fishers, including denial of access to certain restaurants and businesses/resources in the area. Subsequent social media posts condemning the arson of the New Edinburgh lobster plant were also generated. These posts often also included calls for justice, displeasure with the perceived lack of RCMP response, a demand for increased Federal government and RCMP action, and support from the community. Protests and solidarity activities are expected to continue across the country in the upcoming weeks.

RCMP response:

In response to the ongoing tensions, approval was received and additional RCMP resources were deployed to the area to keep the peace after the province of Nova Scotia declared a state of emergency pursuant to *Article 9* of the Provincial Police Service Agreement. This includes officers from across and outside Nova Scotia with specialized training in de-escalation and crowd control, and an emergency response team. The RCMP continues to investigate all known incidents, as well as any additional incidents brought forward. The RCMP Divisional Liaison Team, trained in community conflict management, remains engaged with parties on both sides of the dispute, as well as with DFO.

Tab 3k RCMP workplace harassment

Proposed response:

- The RCMP is committed to providing its employees with a safe and respectful work environment, free from harassment and violence.
- The RCMP has implemented multiple policy and program change initiatives to create a more respectful, inclusive and diverse workplace.
- These changes will address findings and recommendations identified in the 2017 reports from the Civilian Review and Complaints Commission and Sheila Fraser.
- It will permit the RCMP to be in compliance with the changes brought about by Bill C-65. The amended Canada Labour Code will come into effect on January 1, 2021.
- Increased focus will be placed on prevention initiatives and early informal resolution of workplace conflicts.
- The RCMP will increase impartiality and timeliness in investigations and decision making by centralizing the workload under full-time resources for a more consistent harassment resolution process.
- The RCMP is continuing to work with the Management Advisory Board to identify further opportunities to improve policies and processes, including identifying the resources and structural changes that may be required to provide a stronger foundation for a healthy and effective working environment.

Background:

In May 2017, the Civilian Review and Complaints Commission (CRCC) released its Report on Workplace Harassment in the RCMP coinciding with the release of the Review of Four Cases of Civil Litigation Against the RCMP on Workplace Harassment — Report to the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness by Sheila Fraser (the Fraser Report). The RCMP continues to undertake efforts to address the findings of these reports.

CRCC Report - The CRCC conducted a review of the RCMP's policies and procedures on workplace harassment and investigated whether the recommendations from the CRCC's 2013 Public Interest Investigation Report into Issues of Workplace Harassment within the RCMP were effectively implemented. The CRCC concluded that the RCMP did not adequately implement the 2013 recommendations, and confirmed that harassment and bullying continue to be a serious problem. Consequently, ten additional recommendations to address harassment were proposed in the 2017 report. The recommendations focused on improving processes, clarifying definitions and enhancing training.

Fraser Report - In November 2015, four women with lawsuits alleging harassment during their time at the RCMP wrote an open letter to the Prime Minister and all Liberal Senators and Members of Parliament requesting that they prevent the RCMP from discharging them prior to the conclusion of their legal proceedings. The Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness committed to reviewing these cases and appointed former Auditor General Sheila Fraser to review the cases. The objective was to review how harassment policies, procedures and the legislative framework were applied by the RCMP, to identify gaps and make recommendations. The review resulted in three recommendations: strengthen the governance framework and consider the creation of a civilian board to oversee organizational changes; establish an independent harassment investigation process; and conduct an independent review of the RCMP's Health Services and the grievance process.

In the Spring 2019, the proposal for the creation of a separate and independent process was tabled and approved. This new process will be aligned with the CRCC & Fraser report recommendations and the Commissioner's mandate. Key elements of the new process include:

- An independent process separate from the chain of command;
- Full time civilian investigators and civilian decision makers;
- A focus on early conflict resolution, where appropriate;
- Additional support to complainants throughout the harassment resolution process; and
- Increased prevention efforts through employee awareness and communication campaigns.

These transformational changes have been developed in consultation with key stakeholders, including member and public service bargaining agents, and the RCMP Management Advisory Board. Transition to the new process is scheduled to begin in September, 2021.

The structure anticipated under this new process have been aligned with the requirements of the recently announced changes to the Canada Labour Code regulations on harassment and violence in the workplace (former Bill C-65) that will come into force in January 2021.

In early 2019, the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness announced that the Government of Canada would be establishing an Interim Management Advisory Board to provide the RCMP Commissioner with expert external advice on the management and administration of the RCMP. The Interim Board is a critical step in helping advance the priorities of RCMP transformation, including the development of a “People First Strategy,” RCMP business modernization and employee health and well-being. The Minister also highlighted that legislative changes to the *Royal Canadian Mounted Police Act* had been included in Bill C-97.

Tab 3I RCMP's efforts to enhance diversity and inclusion

Issue: Statistics from April 1st, 2019 published in the RCMP's 2018-2019 Annual Employment Equity Report show that the increase in the number of individuals who self-identify as members of one or more employment equity groups has been slow compared to previous years.

Proposed response:

- We are committed to providing every part of the country with culturally competent policing that can serve Canadian communities in a bias-free and professional manner. Seeking and welcoming individuals from all backgrounds into the RCMP is important to achieving this goal. The RCMP is an organization where dignity is expected and respect is earned.
- The RCMP continues to work towards modernizing its culture which includes being more inclusive and diverse.
- Like many federal departments, the RCMP has adopted Gender-based analysis+ as a tool to examine systemic issues and inequities. The RCMP Gender based analysis is being used as the organization reviews its recruiting practices, the training offered to front line officers, and as it continues to make key changes to workplace and operational policies.
- The RCMP is continuing to work with the Management Advisory Board to incorporate its expertise in a number of areas, including workplace culture, human resources and governance.
- The RCMP is making concrete progress in establishing the foundation for change and to address key issues including diversity and inclusion, Wellness and Reconciliation.
- The RCMP is also actively supporting the National Action Plans to address gender-based violence, calls to justice from the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Commission, as well as the Anti-Racism Strategy led by Canadian Heritage.
- While there are a number of actions underway, seeing changes in its workforce in an organization as large as the RCMP will take time, but I am confident that the organization is moving in the right direction.

Background:

The RCMP is committed to modernizing its culture to foster an inclusive workplace that welcomes diversity. The RCMP prioritizes recruiting qualified applicants from broadly diverse backgrounds to offer culturally competent police services to Canada's communities. We believe that diversity makes us a more innovative and resilient organization that is better able to serve all people of Canada.

The RCMP is currently working with a variety of cultural and community groups across Canada to raise awareness about opportunities for a career in policing. Career presentations and recruiting events, which take place across the country, will answer specific questions from diverse groups applying to and joining the RCMP.

We intend to continue efforts toward a more broadly diverse workforce through targeted initiatives including career fairs and cultural events that position the RCMP as an employer of

choice; and to attract people who may not have considered a career in policing.

Ove the past two years, the RCMP has initiated a review of its policies and programs to ensure they are barrier-free. This included a GBA+ of its recruiting process, which identified areas for improvement. Further reviews are underway to address areas that are barriers to diverse applicants. The RCMP is also developing a strategy to increase diversity at the senior levels in response to a recent audit of Commissioned Officer Staffing.

Recently, the RCMP launched a pilot program to help Inuit candidates navigate the recruitment process. The goal is to encourage Inuit candidates to consider a career in policing with the RCMP, as well as to gain a better understanding of the unique challenges faced by Inuit applicants with a view to improving the application process.

Tab 3m Recent and upcoming legal cases

Proposed response:

- The following legal cases have recently attracted media attention or may do so in the near future (e.g., for upcoming hearings).
- Assoun, Glen: The Governments of Canada and Nova Scotia made initial compensation payments to Mr. Assoun last fall. (Redacted)
- BigEagle certification hearing: (Redacted) The matter is currently under reserve.
- Corus Entertainment: (Redacted)
- Cullen inquiry: Although this is a provincial inquiry, the Federal Government committed to participating and co-operating fully with the work that will be done in British Columbia. While federal officials will not be able to provide information that would compromise any ongoing investigations or prosecutions, there will be information that we will be able to share and to learn from.
- Firearms reference hearings: There are currently 108 applications for reference hearings across Canada resulting from the May 1, 2020 reclassification of firearms from restricted to prohibited. It is the Crown's position that the letter sent to affected owners informing them of reclassification, is not a "revocation" of their previously-held restricted registration certificates that would have entitled them to a hearing.
- Fraser/pilgrim: The RCMP is currently in the process of reviewing the recent Supreme Court decision and its implications to determine what steps need to be taken. The RCMP has committed to reviewing its job-sharing arrangements. The RCMP remains committed to building an inclusive and barrier-free workplace for all of its member and employees and has instituted GBA plus analysis to ensure that policies and practices reflect the needs of diverse groups of people.
- Meng extradition: This matter is currently before the courts and it would be inappropriate to comment on the litigation. Canada is a country governed by the rule of law. Extradition in Canada is guided by the *Extradition Act*, international treaties and the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, which enshrines constitutional principles of fairness and due process.
- Nasogaluak certification hearing: The certification hearing on this litigation is scheduled to take place before the Federal Court in January 2021. A certification motion is a procedural step. The merits of the claim will not be addressed at certification, but will rather follow based upon the decisions that flow from this certification hearing. Canada's factum will be filed on November 9, 2020.
- Portapique inquiry: The shootings in Nova Scotia shocked us all, and it's important that we work to make sure nothing like it ever happens again. The RCMP will offer any support necessary to ensure this inquiry will be undertaken in a thorough, independent and compassionate manner, and that the three commissioners will find the answers we are all seeking.

Background:

Assoun, Glen – Mr. Assoun spent almost 17 years in prison and five years on strict parole conditions for the 1995 murder of Brenda Wray in Nova Scotia before the Minister of Justice set aside his conviction in February 2019. In October 2020, at the request of the Nova Scotia Justice Department, the province's Serious Incident Response Team agreed to investigate whether the RCMP had destroyed relevant evidence in the matter.

BigEagle certification hearing – This is a proposed class action advanced on behalf of the families, extended families, estates and community members of the Indigenous women and

two-spirited individuals whose murders or disappearances remain unresolved. The certification hearing took place before the Federal Court on September 21 to 25, 2020 and the Court's decision is currently on reserve.

Corus Entertainment – Corus is producing a news story on an RCMP constable who was the subject of an RCMP Adjudication Board disciplinary proceeding in relation to alleged sexual involvement with underage sex-workers. Corus seeks the lifting of the publication bans imposed by the Board in relation to the member and one of the complainants, as well as an unredacted copy of the Board's written decision. The hearing will take place before the Federal Court on November 9, 2020.

Cullen inquiry – In May 2019, the British Columbia Provincial Government announced the Cullen Commission of Inquiry into Money Laundering. According to the Terms of Reference, the inquiry will focus on three primary elements (1) the extent of money laundering in various sectors, notably real estate, gambling, financial services and professional services; (2) the regulatory authorities that oversee these sectors; and (3) the barriers to effective law enforcement respecting money laundering. Evidentiary hearings begin October 26, 2020 and are expected to run until April 2021.

Firearms reference hearings – On May 1, 2020, an Order in Council amended *Criminal Code Regulations to prohibit*:

- nine types of firearms by make and model and their variants;
- firearms with a bore diameter of 20 mm or greater and those firearms capable of discharging a projectile with a muzzle energy greater than 10,000 joules, and
- the upper receivers of M16, AR-10, AR-15, and M4 pattern firearms.

As a result of these amendments, 108 applications for firearms reference hearings have been initiated across the country. There are four hearings scheduled to take place in the Ontario Provincial Court on October 27, 2020. There are also 7 judicial applications that claim the regulation itself is invalid and unreasonable but these are at a preliminary stage.

Fraser/pilgrim – On October 16, the Supreme Court released a 6-3 decision which found that the RCMP's job sharing policy infringed section 15 of the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. It did not strike down any pension legislation. The majority sent the matter back to the RCMP to determine "the methodology for facilitating the buy-back of pension credit is for the government to develop, but any remedial measures it takes should be in accordance with this Court's reasons."

Meng extradition – The United States of America seeks the extradition of the Wanzhou Meng for alleged conduct that amounts to fraud contrary to s. 380(1) of the *Criminal Code*. The USA alleges that in 2013, MENG, in her role as Chief Financial Officer of Huawei Technologies Ltd., misrepresented facts to HSBC regarding Huawei's business dealings in Iran. She was arrested on December 1, 2018 when she arrived at the Vancouver International Airport. Hearing of witness testimony in relation to the defence application for a stay of proceedings on the basis of alleged abuse of process is scheduled from October 26 to 30, 2020.

Nasogaluak certification hearing – This is a proposed class action that claims damages for systemic negligence, breach of fiduciary duty, and breaches of section 7 and 15 of the *Charter*, based on allegations of unlawful assaults committed by RCMP officers against Aboriginal people in the three territories. It seeks to have a class certified back to 1928. The certification hearing is scheduled for January 25 to 29, 2020. The Crown's factum must be filed by

November 9, 2020.

Portapique inquiry – A gunman in possession of multiple illegal firearms, a replica RCMP vehicle, and a partial RCMP uniform carried out a spree of killing and destruction of property on April 18 and 19, 2020 in Nova Scotia. He was ultimately located and killed by the RCMP. Various investigations are ongoing, including one by RCMP Major Crimes, two under the Canada Labour Code, and one by the Nova Scotia Serious Incident Response Team. On October 22, 2020 the Minister of Public Safety and the Minister of Justice of Nova Scotia issued a joint news release announcing that the public inquiry in response to the April mass shooting tragedy in Nova Scotia has been established and the Commissioners will now begin their work. A proposed class action has also been commenced on behalf of victims and their families.

Tab 4 Hot issues

Tab 4a Commissioner's mandate letter

Brenda Lucki, Commissioner
Royal Canadian Mounted Police
RCMP National Headquarters
73 Leikin Drive
Ottawa ON K1A 0R2

Dear Commissioner Lucki:

Congratulations on your appointment as the 24th Commissioner of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP). As Commissioner, you have a key role in ensuring that the RCMP are keeping Canadians safe, and safeguarding Canadians' rights and freedoms in an open, inclusive, and democratic society. Canadians deserve a police service which reflects our shared values and the diversity of Canada, from coast to coast to coast. In May 1873, the Parliament of Canada established the RCMP and Canadians are proud to celebrate this 145-year history. You will be building on the existing strengths of the RCMP and its members and employees; you will be leading a world-class organization, unlike any other.

Open and Accountable Government (2015) recognizes that the integrity and coherence of government activities depend strongly upon Ministers' ability to coordinate their respective portfolios in an integrated way while respecting any necessary operational independence. Section 5(1) of the *Royal Canadian Mounted Police Act* provides that, under the direction of the Minister, the Commissioner has the control and management of the RCMP and all matters connected to the Force. I want to be clear that the Government of Canada recognizes and respects that police independence underpins the rule of law and ministerial direction cannot infringe on the independence of the RCMP in the exercise of police powers in criminal investigations. In exercising the authorities conferred upon me in the *Department of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness Act*, section 5, I will rely on your advice and input to help me establish strategic priorities for the RCMP and to anticipate and manage issues that affect public safety or the soundness of the organization.

In leading one of Canada's oldest and most prestigious institutions, your role will be to reinforce the very best of the RCMP and to support the organization through a period of transformation to modernize and reform the RCMP's culture. This transformation includes continuing to ensure the health and safety of RCMP employees and members are protected, including from harassment and violence in the workplace, and enhancing its role in reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples. Ultimately, these actions will bolster the efficacy, the credibility and the trust upon which the RCMP's authority depends.

I have great confidence in your ability to lead the RCMP through a transformation of its culture and management practices. Innovative governance is an enabler of cultural change and I look forward to hearing your views on ways to enhance the RCMP's internal and external governance structures and practices. You will want to ensure that the RCMP is well managed and that it efficiently and effectively delivers policing services based on appropriate priorities while keeping Canadians safe and protecting their civil liberties.

In support of culture change, you will need to prioritize that the RCMP is free from bullying, harassment, and sexual violence, including a comprehensive response to the underlying issues identified in recent reviews undertaken by the Civilian Review and Complaints Commission for the RCMP and Sheila Fraser. Part of that work will also be leading the organization through the unionization of regular members and reservists and engaging constructively with a new bargaining agent.

A priority will also be to implement measures that address mental health and wellness across the RCMP, including the issues identified in the 2017 Spring Report from the Auditor General of Canada on Mental Health support for employees.

I know you will continue to act and lead the RCMP in a manner that supports our continued efforts for a renewed, nation-to-nation relationship with Indigenous Peoples, based on recognition of rights, respect, co-operation, and partnership given the current and historical experiences of Indigenous Canadians with policing and the justice system.

I would encourage you to foster a collaborative and cooperative working relationship with all stakeholders and partners including the RCMP's civilian review bodies, the new National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians and other national security review bodies, Public Safety Portfolio agencies, and other federal departments and agencies.

It is important that Canadians see themselves reflected in the people that police them. To that end, I would encourage you to ensure that the RCMP is representative of Canada's diverse population, including gender parity, and that women, Indigenous Peoples and minority groups are better reflected in positions of leadership.

The presence of the RCMP in our communities is a vital component of both our public safety and our national security. At its best, the RCMP embodies what Canada and Canadians aspire to be: upstanding, loyal and committed to the pursuit of justice.

The RCMP must be a modern organization that reflects Canadian values and culture, and has the trust, confidence and the enthusiastic support of the people they serve.

As a proven leader with almost 32 years of service in the RCMP, there is no question you are equipped to keep our communities safe and secure and to transform and modernize the RCMP.

As the Commanding Officer of Depot, your commitment to ensuring cadets receive the best possible training – including on diversity, inclusion and a respectful workplace – and your work to improve the relationship between Indigenous communities and the RCMP in northern Manitoba are important building blocks upon which to strengthen the foundation and set a new course for the RCMP.

Know that you have my support to advance measures to address your key mandate priorities and I look forward to a productive and collaborative working relationship.

Yours sincerely,

The Honourable Ralph Goodale, P.C., M.P.

Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness

Tab 4b Update on Commissioner mandate initiatives

Briefing note to the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness

Issue: To provide you with an update on the RCMP Modernization Mandate

In 2018, the Commissioner's mandate letter called on her to support the organization through a period of transformation to modernize the RCMP's culture and management practices. This includes ensuring the RCMP is free from bullying and harassment.

Over the past two years the RCMP developed and launched "Vision 150," a plan to lead the RCMP through its 150th anniversary in 2023. Its goals are to build a healthier, more diverse and professional workforce to support leading-edge policing, with the ultimate objective of a modern and inclusive RCMP culture.

The Commissioner has prioritized employee engagement in shaping Vision 150, holding over 75 in-person Town Halls and soliciting input via an online "Innovation Inbox," which received thousands of contributions and suggestions for a more modern RCMP.

Global dialogue continues to focus on racial discrimination in policing, with calls for increased transparency and accountability in police interactions. While this note describes current and ongoing work under Vision 150, in the coming weeks the RCMP will announce additional actions to address systemic issues and to ensure bias-free and equitable service to all Canadians.

Current status:

Evidence-based results:

- To measure progress in advancing modernization and culture change and to clearly articulate the intended high-level organizational results in the short, medium and long-term, the RCMP is developing a Results Framework. The framework will ensure organization-wide alignment of goals and allow for communication on progress with employees and stakeholders.
- RCMP modernization initiatives, many of which are detailed throughout the remainder of this document, have been developed in consideration of the achievement of the following Results Statements that define the desired RCMP organizational culture:
- The RCMP is a healthy and inclusive organization that provides modern policing services.
- RCMP culture is characterized by respect for diversity and the contributions of all employees.
- Employees, communities, partners and other stakeholders have trust and confidence in the RCMP.

Governance and accountability:

- The RCMP Management Advisory Board (MAB) was established in June 2019 as an independent group of experts to provide guidance on organizational change. The MAB has met routinely, with task teams working on workplace culture (focused on the harassment process), human resources, governance and the RCMP budget.
- In line with recommendations that the RCMP increase civilian expertise, a new Chief Administrative Officer position was created to guide corporate functions, and experienced public servants were appointed to senior human resources, finance and technology roles.
- A new Deputy Commissioner of Action, Innovation and Modernization was created to provide continuity and oversight to the RCMP modernization agenda.

- Recent Public Service Employee Survey (PSES) results indicate progress in employees' trust in management. In 2019, 53% of RCMP employees reported "I have confidence in the senior management in my department or agency," up from 37% in 2017. Additionally, 61% reported that "Senior managers in my department or agency lead by example in ethical behavior," up from 47% in 2017.

Culture change and employee wellness:

In recent years the RCMP has adopted a holistic approach to culture change, focused on: diversity and inclusion, leadership, and building trust in the harassment prevention and resolution process.

Diversity and inclusion:

- Gender-based Analysis Plus (GBA+) is being fully implemented across the organization, as a tool to modernize RCMP policies and programs. GBA+ modernization of RCMP uniform and grooming policies in 2019 received significant positive employee feedback.
- The RCMP is implementing Character-Based Leadership (CBL) in recruitment, training and promotions policies to assess and develop people-centered competencies alongside operational skills development. This will ensure that individuals with the character and skills to ensure respectful work environments are hired, developed and promoted.
- National and divisional Gender and Harassment Advisory Committees have been established to provide ongoing advice to the Commissioner and Commanding Officers on issues related to gender, sexual orientation, harassment, equity and inclusivity.
- In June 2020 (in line with Pride month), the RCMP will release a Guide to Supporting Transgender, Non-Binary and Two-Spirit Employees. This is the most comprehensive guide of its kind geared toward a Canadian law enforcement agency.
- Gender parity has been advanced in the senior ranks. As of June 2020, seven of 15 RCMP divisional Commanding Officers are women, as are five out of ten Senior Executive Committee members as of July 2020.
- The RCMP national Equity, Diversity and Inclusion strategy will be officially launched in Fall 2020, with a focus on identifying and reducing workplace and service delivery barriers for diverse people. It will also include anti-racism and anti-discrimination training for senior leaders and managers.
- New civilian criminal investigator positions will ensure the RCMP has the diversity of skills to detect and disrupt modern forms of criminality, including financial and technology-based crime.
- The RCMP will conduct an Organizational Culture Inventory to ensure a strong baseline against which to measure future progress in positive culture change. Using a globally tested approach, the inventory will identify current organizational strengths and challenges through employee surveys and interviews. The results will provide an evidence base to prioritize future action.
- The RCMP will undertake a review of its core values in consultation with key stakeholders to ensure they are modern and inclusive, and develop a values statement for the organization to articulate expected behaviours.
- According to the PSES, in 2019 59% of employees agreed that "I would recommend my department or agency as a great place to work," up from 47% in 2017. RCMP employees are also more likely to agree (61%) that they "would be supported by my department or agency if I proposed a new idea" compared to 48% in 2017.

Mental health and well-being

- Well-being continues to be an organizational priority, with a key focus on enhancing prevention and early intervention.
- All RCMP employees are required to participate in "Road to Mental Readiness" training.
- The Support for Operational Stress Injury Program has been expanded, providing peer support to employees and veterans with the goal of resocialization.
- A ten-year RCMP longitudinal study is underway to enhance understanding of the impacts of front-line work on mental health, by tracking cadets throughout their early career.
- As of Fall 2020, all cadets at Depot will receive the Unified Protocol, a psychological treatment protocol used to build resiliency.
- The RCMP is developing a new Well-Being Strategy (2020-2025) focused on ensuring a cohesive, comprehensive and evidence-based approach to the prevention and treatment of mental health and wellness.
- The Commissioner has recently established a National Mental Health Advisory Group comprised of current and former employees and family members with lived experience, to provide ongoing advice on mental health issues and initiatives.

Addressing harassment

- In line with a series of recommendations, in the coming year the RCMP will establish an Independent Centre for Harassment Resolution (ICHR), a civilian-staffed harassment regime outside the chain-of-command, to ensure employees have access to a trusted, consistent process that is accessible, timely and accountable. It will provide:
 - Increased investigative capacity, to improve the timeliness of investigation and resolution of complaints; and improved communication and supports.
 - Additional training for supervisors and managers on addressing workplace conflict, and increased use of the Informal Conflict Management Program.
 - Increased focus on prevention and workplace restoration.
- In the coming months, Justice Bastarache will complete his report on the claims made by women RCMP employees under the Merlo-Davidson class action settlement. The RCMP is currently developing a draft response, highlighting culture change actions and the new harassment regime.
- According to the PSES, self-reported rates of harassment have declined from 20% in 2018 to 18% 2019, bringing the RCMP closer to the Government of Canada average of 14% (2019).

Learning and development

- The Foundations of Leadership course was implemented in 2019 to complement existing supervisor and executive development courses, to ensure a "cradle-to-grave" leadership continuum. Available to all employees, the curriculum teaches the basics of leadership, including self-awareness, ethics, unconscious bias, conduct, and dealing with conflict.
- The 26-week Cadet Training Program curriculum is continually updated to respond to current needs in front-line policing and to promote a respectful workplace. Changes include:
 - The introduction of the Blanket Exercise, to teach the historic and contemporary relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. To date, over 2,100 cadets have participated.
 - The addition of learning materials about Truth and Reconciliation and the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls.

- Training on dealing with people with mental health issues and/or who are in a state of crisis, including scenarios in which cadets practice de-escalation techniques with actors.
 - Content on the policy for investigating missing persons.
 - Overhaul of the sexual harassment case study, and content on the correlation between power imbalances and harassment, in particular, sexual harassment.
- As part of ongoing efforts to ensure that survivors of sexual assault are treated fairly by the criminal justice system, a "Using a Trauma-Informed Approach" course is now available.
- GBA+ is currently being used to assess the Cadet Training Program curriculum. This will include the consideration of ways to enhance techniques to respond to vulnerable and/or diverse populations.

Recruitment

- The RCMP recently completed an integrated assessment of the effectiveness of the Regular Member recruitment process. Recommendations are being implemented to improve governance, tools and processes, and to better track results.
- A renewed RCMP Recruitment Strategy is being developed to attract diverse applicants with the necessary attributes, characteristics and skills required for modern policing. As a first step, the RCMP is reviewing its approach to attracting and screening Regular Member applicants, as well as the best tools to assess and process high-quality candidates with people-centered skills.
- GBA+ was applied to the RCMP recruitment process to identify unintended barriers for key groups. As a result, a new RCMP aptitude test will be introduced to ensure an inclusive approach.
- Increasing Inuit representation among the RCMP in Nunavut is a priority and is critical to enhancing service delivery to communities. The RCMP has partnered with the Government of Nunavut and Inuit organizations to develop and deliver a pilot recruiting program for potential Inuit applicants. Designed to eliminate barriers for Inuit applicants and to facilitate the navigation of the RCMP hiring process, the program welcomed an initial seven participants in January 2020.

Indigenous reconciliation

Given the complex and longstanding history with Indigenous communities, the RCMP has an important role to play advancing Truth and Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples. RCMP efforts have focused on:

- Increasing understanding and knowledge of the history of Indigenous communities and people in Canada: a new "Cultural Awareness and Humility" course promotes understanding of the impacts of culture and personal identity on actions, perceptions and interactions. It will be made available to all RCMP employees and to other law enforcement agencies via the Canadian Police Knowledge Network.
- Implementing inclusive practices, including the option of swearing legal oaths on an eagle feather, incorporating Indigenous cultural items into RCMP ceremonial dress, and the display of culturally relevant articles in detachments.
- Strengthening investigative standards related to missing persons, and improved policies for communication with families.
- Enhancing RCMP support to restorative justice initiatives across the country to reduce the over-representation of Indigenous people as victims and offenders.

- Building strong collaborative relationships with Indigenous communities through participation in community dialogue, events and outreach activities.
- Ongoing development of an RCMP National Reconciliation Strategy to coordinate and enhance efforts, aligning with broader Government of Canada actions to address the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the National Inquiry into MMIWG Calls for Justice.
- Establishing a Memorandum of Understanding between Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada and the RCMP to ensure close collaboration in enhancing the safety and well-being of Inuit women and their children.
- The Commissioner has recently established an Indigenous Lived Experience Advisory Group comprised of current and former Indigenous RCMP employees to provide advice on reconciliation and addressing systemic issues.
- The RCMP will work with Public Safety Canada on a review of the First Nations Policing Program, as well as re-examine the use of Special Constable Program to ensure locally responsive policing in Indigenous communities.

Modern policing operations:

Policing operations have become increasingly complex due to changing social pressures and the borderless nature of crime.

- Through the Departmental Review exercise, the RCMP has developed comprehensive strategies to modernize operations, including the development of a Digital Policing Strategy. It identifies the sequencing of investments required across RCMP business lines to effectively police in the digital era, including new technical capabilities to respond to current events, e.g.:
 - Planning for the deployment of body-worn cameras for front line members, as well as the standard distribution of situational awareness tools (e.g. Blue Force tracker)
 - Improving remote public access to police, including online reporting of non-urgent crime
- The RCMP will work with PTs to standardize serious incident response team protocols, to ensure transparency, accountability, and independent observation in the review of matters involving police officers, including death, assault and injury.
- The RCMP continually reviews its policies, procedures, training and equipment to ensure its effectiveness. A Crisis Intervention De-Escalation course was launched in 2016 and is mandatory for all police officers. The RCMP will continue to review use of force policies to identify areas for improvement, with a continued focus on the use of de-escalation techniques.
- The RCMP is working with Public Safety Canada to examine the full cost and benefits of existing contract policing arrangements, including the impact on the delivery of the federal policing mandate and specialized RCMP services.
- Broader analysis could be undertaken with PTs to examine systemic issues in current public safety models, and to develop options for integrated models to better harmonize public health and safety service delivery.

Communicating on RCMP modernization:

In consultation with the Management Advisory Board, the RCMP has developed the report "Moving Forward: Road to 150," to publicly highlight key progress on modernization, and to signal forward priorities (next 3-5 years) under the Vision 150 framework. A draft of the report is attached for your review and feedback.

Tab 4c Initiatives to address systemic racism

Introduction

- For the RCMP to meet expectations and fulfil its mandate of keeping Canadians safe, it needs the confidence and trust of:
 - Canadians,
 - our partners and stakeholders in the community,
 - and our employees who all work together to deliver these vital services.
- To date, the RCMP has made many improvements, but the reality is: the RCMP knows it can still be better.

Initiatives

- The RCMP has taken several steps to meet the expectations of the Government of Canada, Provinces and Territories, Communities it serves, and all Canadians.
- RCMP is consulting with and taking steps to build trust with Indigenous, Black and other racialized communities, including
 - Assembly of First Nations,
 - Indigenous women's groups, Patuuitit, NWAC,
 - Federal Black Employee Caucus, Association of Black Law Enforcers, and
 - Key leaders like Senator Murray Sinclair and Marion Buller.
- We have also engaged with Government of Canada partners ISC, CIRNAC, PS, and Statistics Canada.

Key initiatives:

- Supporting greater integration of community, health and social services through increased collaboration to improve responses to calls related to mental health crises, wellness checks, and assisting persons with other unique needs.
- Implement local policing models that meet the needs of Indigenous, northern and rural communities, including community-led safety models and unarmed response options.
- Updating RCMP crisis intervention and de-escalation tools and training to ensure officers are provided with tools and techniques that reflect promising or best practices.
- Reviewing and updating the RCMP's core values to ensure values are inclusive, well-understood, and continue to reflect a modern Canada.
- Engaging in consultation and discussion with communities, policing partners, the National Police Federation, and the Office of the Privacy Commissioner on a broader implementation of body-worn cameras. Officers in Iqaluit will soon be taking part in a limited body-worn camera pilot project.
- Working with key stakeholders, experts and employees on the collection of disaggregated race-based data on police interactions with racialized and Indigenous peoples.
- Strengthening timelines in RCMP public complaints process by implementing new service standards including a service standard of 6 months to respond to public interest interim reports received from the Civilian Review and Complaint Commission, down from the current 18-month average. The current backlog will be cleared within 12 months.
- Disclosing police information on a routine basis. This will include disclosing
 - Information on police intervention (use of force);
 - Information on calls for service, including mental health-related calls and wellness checks; and,
 - RCMP employee diversity statistics.

- Ensuring transparent oversight of serious incidents by working actively with provincial and territorial partners to formalize cooperation protocols with police oversight bodies to ensure that serious incidents (including death, assault, injury or serious misconduct) involving on-and off-duty police officers are referred to independent agencies for rigorous and objective investigations and enhanced transparency.
- Immediately launching a robust Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy. This will include mandatory anti-racism and cultural awareness and humility training for all employees.
- Establishing an Office for RCMP - Indigenous, Collaboration Co-Development and Community Accountability (RICCCA), focussed on RCMP-Indigenous relations.
- Implementing divisional reconciliation strategies through co-development and implementing a national strategy in line with Government of Canada's actions to address the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Calls for Justice.
- Enhancing representation of Indigenous, Black and People of Colour communities in the RCMP through the mobilization of pro-active recruiters who are reflective of racialized communities.
- Reducing bias in the recruiting process, by implementing modern applicant screening tools to promote diversity and ensure candidates have the qualities, characteristics and attributes needed for a modern policing organization.
- Increase the use of restorative justice by continuing to work with jurisdictions to increase referrals to restorative justice programs across the country, and to support the establishment of programs where none exist. This work will be undertaken thorough consultation and collaboration to meet local community needs.
- Partner with Indigenous women's groups by establishing formal agreements with Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada and the Native Women's Association of Canada to enhance the safety and well-being of women and children.
- Leveraging diverse civilian expertise in criminal investigations to support its federal criminal investigative mandate.
- Examining the Cadet Training Program through a diversity lens to ensure a modern, inclusive approach.
- Establishing an Independent Centre for Harassment Resolution: a centralized, independent and civilian unit to offer a full suite of harassment resolution services.

Tab 4d Indigenous relations and reconciliation

Speaking points:

- The RCMP is continuously working towards building trusting relationships and delivering responsive, culturally-aware and trauma-informed policing services for Indigenous communities and peoples across Canada.
- The RCMP is committed to improving the relationship with all Indigenous communities, supporting survivors of violence and their families, and ensuring that investigations are robust, professional and result in justice for the survivors and their families.
- Some aspects of the RCMP's work, such as those in support of reconciliation, are a long-term commitment that will take place in the daily activities of the RCMP's members and employees working with and in Indigenous communities, urban and rural (see Appendix A for examples).
- In the short term, the RCMP has been taking steps to strengthen cultural awareness and trauma informed training, and communication with families; improve investigative practices; expand consultations and engagement with Indigenous groups; and to increase Indigenous representation within the workforce.
- While COVID-19 has temporarily shifted the focus of decision-makers over these past months, the RCMP remains committed to making progress in the safety and protection of Indigenous communities and people.
- The RCMP acknowledges that relationship building takes time and local initiatives must be community-driven and supported. Building strong relationships based on mutual trust, respect and empathy between police and local communities is fundamental.
- Significant work to support Indigenous communities is taking place in the areas of, investigative and justice initiatives, crime prevention, and training, with much of this work embedded as part of the organization's policing and community practices (see Appendix A for examples).
- The RCMP continues to work on improving its consultation with Indigenous partners and to provide opportunities for cultural competency training and experiential learning opportunities to employees throughout their careers to ensure delivery of a culturally-responsive police service for Indigenous and other diverse populations across Canada.

Appendix A: national examples of the RCMP reconciliation efforts

RCMP eagle staff:

An eagle staff is a unique, sacred symbol that represents traditional Indigenous culture and clans. It is used at ceremonies and celebratory functions, much like a nation's flag would be. The RCMP's national Eagle Staff was first unveiled in March 2018 at the Odawa Friendship Centre in Ottawa. This eagle staff was created to recognize and honour First Nation people on Turtle Island, and in the spirit of reconciliation (specifically Truth and Reconciliation Commission Call to Action #57), to raise awareness of First Nation people and culture. Currently, the sole Eagle Staff is kept at National Headquarters, and is taken to numerous events across the country, including the Commissioner's change of command ceremony, the grand entry to events with the Assembly of First Nations, and the Moose Hide Campaign, as well as events in the divisions such as the recent Eagle Feather event in "D" Division.

Eagle feather protocol:

First introduced in Nova Scotia (H Division), and now in place in many other divisions, the RCMP is providing victims, witnesses, suspects and police officers the option to swear legal oaths on an eagle feather. An eagle feather is used in the same way as a Bible or affirmation. Many divisions across the country are now developing their own "Eagle Feather" protocols in partnership with the local provincial/territorial Department of Justice, and through consultation with the First Nation Peoples of

that territory. Many First Nation teachings believe there is a direct connection between the Eagle and Creator, with the Eagle considered sacred. When the eagle feathers are sent to RCMP detachments, they are cleansed during a smudging ceremony led by an Elder. To honour the eagle feather, it is placed in a red case for safe storage, as the case symbolizes protection and healing. Cadets graduating from the RCMP Training Academy can now swear or affirm their graduating oath with an Eagle Feather. The swearing-in protocol at Depot will evolve to incorporate key spiritual components of Inuit and Métis culture in the near future.

Kairos blanket exercise:

Participants stand on blankets representing Indigenous land and physically walk through the historical eras of pre-contact, treaty-making, colonization and resistance. The exercise is an interactive learning experience that gives participants a real sense of how the European settlement of Canada impacted Indigenous peoples. Participants take on the roles of Indigenous people and are exposed to the same betrayal, loss, suffering and discrimination experienced by them. The exercise is included in the RCMP Cadet Training Program as part of the module on missing persons. The Blanket Exercise is recognized as a leading cultural awareness exercise for RCMP employees, and is being delivered throughout the organization.

Community Constable Program (CCP):

The CCP was created to provide an alternative service delivery option in some Indigenous communities in Canada. The CCP involves armed, uniformed peace officers recruited from the communities they serve, whose primary focus is on crime prevention and building relationships within those communities.

Community Program Officer (CPO) program:

The CPO Program provides communities with civilian, unarmed, non-peace officers who focus exclusively on crime prevention and reduction, as well as community engagement/mobilization. CPOs contribute to safer and healthier Indigenous communities, work to engage youth and reduce youth involvement in crime, support sustainable long-term responses to youth crime and victimization, focus on early intervention and root causes of crime, and facilitate evidence-based youth crime prevention, intervention, diversion and re-integration programs.

Moose Hide Campaign (MHC):

The MHC is one of the movements that fits with the RCMP's commitments to deliver culturally aware and responsive police services and to build relationships and partnerships with hundreds of Indigenous communities, to collaboratively work with the communities to end violence against women and children. The RCMP's support for the MHC included the distribution of around 13,600 MHC pins across the country. The ultimate goal is to distribute pins to all 30,000 RCMP employees. In G Division, on October 21, 2018, the Wha Ti Detachment and community partners hosted a successful MHC event at the Community Cultural Centre.

Métis Community Liaison Officers:

Métis Coordinators provide community engagement and outreach to Métis settlements, communities and partners. These coordinators are situated throughout several provinces and one territory, working within RCMP Indigenous policing sections. Additionally, they promote crime prevention programs and have established information-sharing networks with Métis governments.

Memorandum of understanding on Indigenous artifacts of Métis origin:

The RCMP commits to repatriation of certain artifacts, namely a knife, crucifix and book of poetry, of which it has documented ownership, to the Métis people. Currently, these items are held in RCMP care in Regina, with the repatriation to occur in the future when the museum for Louis Riel and the Métis is completed in Manitoba.

Historic RCMP agricultural land transferred to the Regina Indian Industrial School Commemorative Association (RIISCA):

Over 500 First Nations and Métis children from 43 Indigenous communities across the prairies were sent to the Regina Indian Industrial School (RIIS), which was closed in 1910. It is estimated that at least 35 of the children who died at RIIS are buried in unmarked graves in the cemetery. The RCMP training academy (Depot) owned an adjacent piece of land to the cemetery. An arrangement was made to transfer the land to the RIIS Commemorative Association from the Government of Canada. On June 25, 2019, the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, the Honourable Ralph Goodale, announced the transfer of the RIIS cemetery from the RCMP as the Crown's representative, to the RIISCA. This land transfer honours the memory of the children buried in the cemetery during the school's 19 years of operation. The RIISCA publically expressed that this event exceeded their expectations, and was a true example of reconciliation. As an ongoing contribution, Depot has offered to assist with seasonal maintenance and repairs of cemetery grounds and fencing.

RCMP land transfer to the City of Winnipeg, Manitoba:

In another collaborative act of reconciliation, in 2019 the RCMP donated a piece of land in Winnipeg to the city where an old forensic lab was previously located. This was done so that the municipality could erect a marker to commemorate the Assiniboia Residential School.

Indigenous Pre-Cadet Training Program (IPTP):

This program engages Indigenous communities to nominate young Canadian Indigenous people to participate in the program, which provides hands-on experience at the RCMP training program.

RCMP Commissioner's National Indigenous Advisory Committee:

This committee was formed in 1990 to provide strategic advice and cultural perspective on matters pertaining to the delivery of Indigenous policing services in all provinces and territories, except Ontario and Quebec. Commissioner meets with the committee bi-annually, additionally the committee provides collaboration and input on a wide-range of RCMP initiatives that impact Indigenous communities.

National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG):

In addition to the RCMP's commitment to community engagement, the RCMP remains committed to supporting the Final Report with the resulting Calls for Justice from the National Inquiry into MMIWG in Canada. The RCMP established a team based in Ottawa dedicated to respond to the National Inquiry, supported by Major Crime and Indigenous Policing Units in every division. The RCMP cooperated with, and responded to, all requests for information as per the Terms of Reference given to the Inquiry. The team is working with and in support of all RCMP divisions, the RCMP's policing partners through the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police, the First Nations Chiefs of Police Association and the RCMP Veterans Association.

National Indigenous Organizations (NIO):

The RCMP is committed to achieving reconciliation with Indigenous peoples through a renewed relationship built on recognition of rights, respect, cooperation and partnership. The RCMP has dedicated resources to liaise with the NIOs and maintain regular ongoing communication and relationship building.

National Orange Shirt Day – every child matters:

Each September 30 marks "Orange Shirt Day", and RCMP employees take the opportunity to show their support by wearing orange to signify that "every child matters". This is a reconciliation effort by employees across the RCMP, who wear orange to commemorate the thousands of First Nations, Métis and Inuit children who were removed from their homes and forced to attend residential schools. Orange

Shirt Day is also an opportunity for Indigenous people, communities and the RCMP to come together in the spirit of reconciliation. L Division, V Division and others have notably been involved in these activities.

The RCMP Reconciliation Working Group (RRWG): -

Worked with an Indigenous Academic to inform the RCMP's Reconciliation Framework: delivered a position paper to support this for the organization. The RRWG is driven to provide a strategic and consistent approach within the RCMP's Reconciliation efforts for a long term and sustainable cultural movement. The importance of the RRWG is to reach out across business lines and divisions, abiding by the following mission statement, "To create and sustain a robust culture of reconciliation that prioritizes the education and awareness of all employees fostering a change in the culture of the RCMP to attain and promote trust with our Indigenous clients, partners, communities, people and employees."

Agora online training:

Training and awareness initiatives are important to educate and inform our employees about reconciliation. The RCMP has incorporated cultural awareness training for all members, starting with the Cadet Training Program at the RCMP Training Academy and continuing for all employees with in-service training throughout their careers. This training includes the online Aboriginal and First Nations Awareness course, as well as division-specific Indigenous Cultural Humility and Awareness training, which is tailored to reflect the Indigenous groups of each province or territory plus divisionally-delivered interactive workshops that cover over 500 years of Indigenous history, with topics on pre-contact, treaty-making, colonization and resistance. Furthermore, the Aboriginal and First Nations Awareness Course must be completed by all officers in order to successfully qualify for the constable promotion process. The course must be completed by officers between six months and two years of initial service with the RCMP and all Public Servants within the organization upon hiring.

Uniform Dress Policy:

An advancement of reconciliation with Indigenous employees saw the review of the Uniform Dress Policy in 2019. Regular Member employees can request to incorporate Indigenous ceremonial items of honour and distinction into the RCMP ceremonial uniform. Eagle feathers and the Métis sash can be seen with the Red Serge on ceremonial occasions and special events across Canada. Ongoing consultation continues with Inuit members and community groups to incorporate a distinct honorary Inuit piece to be worn on the ceremonial uniform. Together, these amendments to the RCMP Uniform and Dress policy supports greater equity, and celebrates the critical work of Indigenous members embodying meaningful change both within the RCMP, and across diverse Canadian and Indigenous communities. To be transparent in decision-making a published tracker was posted on the organization's internal website for employees to follow requests. All requests were granted.

Restorative Justice:

The RCMP is a referral mechanism for Restorative Justice (RJ); to work with community and Indigenous (traditional) justice programs by referring appropriate cases to RJ programs pre-charge, where available. RJ focuses on addressing the harm the crime caused, and encouraging offender accountability. The RCMP has been working with its federal and provincial partners and has been strengthening employee awareness of the role the RCMP plays in reducing the number of Indigenous people in the Criminal Justice System. A review of policy and procedures has been completed and in July 2019, the RCMP introduced organizational use of specific RJ codes in order to increase tracking of Investigations where referrals to RJ are made.

Operational impacts

While many reports point to changes required in the delivery of policing services, the RCMP has been proactively updating policy and procedures in order to effect operational changes to better serve

Indigenous communities. The work continues, but the RCMP has already made several changes to its policies, procedures, and training in recent years, including:

- establishing a National Office of Investigative Standards and Practices to provide expertise and oversight on major case investigations;
- updating policies and procedures for missing person investigations to improve quality, oversight and communication with families;
- updating the Human Deaths policy to include provisions for greater cultural sensitivity;
- enhancing the RCMP's participation in restorative justice initiatives across the country;
- expanding consultation and engagement with Indigenous leaders and Elders at the national, divisional and local level, including establishing an Indigenous consultative group of academics and advocates that provide input on violence prevention initiatives and operational policy.
- developing training and Policy with First Nations Elders, to best address resource protests and other major events, that provides police officers with the skills and abilities required, using alternative dispute resolution techniques, to resolve conflict effectively between disagreeing parties.

Missing persons

For several years now, the RCMP has been working on improving communication and implementing a number of new initiatives relating to missing person's investigations. As part of the RCMP's Missing Persons Strategy, an updated Missing Persons Policy was published in 2016. This policy continues to be updated as and when needed. The RCMP continually reviews, updates or creates new operational policies based on a number of internal and external factors or reviews.

Key updates to the policy include:

- A Missing Person Intake and Risk Assessment form which must be completed for all incidents of missing persons. This form was developed to improve the quality of missing person investigations by:
- Providing a more detailed document with a greater number of categories to better describe the missing person, including ethnic origin and cultural affinity sections; and,
- Providing more uniformity/consistency in missing person investigations Canada-wide.
- Once filled out, the form is further reviewed and signed by a supervisor, who provides oversight and guidance throughout the investigation.
- Members must establish a communications schedule with the family of the missing person to provide updates to them on the status of the investigation based on the families' wishes.

The RCMP Indigenous advisory bodies have provided guidance regarding the Missing Persons training and the development of the Intake and Risk Assessment form.

Sexual assault case reviews

The RCMP is taking action to strengthen police training and awareness, investigative accountability, victim support, and public education and communication. The Sexual Assault Review Team (SART) was created in 2017 to specifically focus on reviews of sexual assault cases and procedures. This team did a review of all unfounded sexual assault cases from 2016, and produced a report with recommendations to help improve future investigations.

Key to this work is the organization-wide understanding of using a trauma-informed approach, and the creation of a guide for re-contacting victims.

Tab 5 Mandate and bios

House of Commons Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security (SECU)

The House of Commons Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security reviews the policies, programs and expenditure plans of government departments and agencies responsible for public safety and national security, policing and law enforcement, corrections and conditional release of federal offenders, emergency management, crime prevention and the protection of Canada's borders.

Chair	John McKay	Liberal
Vice chairs	Shannon Stubs	Conservative
	Kristina Michaud	Bloc Québécois
Members	Pam Damoff	Liberal
	Jack Harris	New Democrat
	Angelo Iacono	Liberal
	Kamal Khera	Liberal
	Damien C. Kurek	Conservative
	Joël Lightbound	Liberal
	Glen Motz	Conservative
	Gagan Sikand	Liberal
	Tako Van Popta	Conservative

John McKay- Liberal

Scarborough – Guildwood, Ontario

Election

- Elected to the House of Commons in 1997

Education and background

- Holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Toronto at Scarborough and a Bachelor of Laws degree from Queen's University
- Worked as a real estate attorney before entering politics

Points of note

- Chair of the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security (SECU), a position he has held since 2017
- Owing to his long tenure in the House of Commons, he has held a wide variety of critic positions and been a member of numerous Parliamentary committees and associations
- Served as the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence from 2015 to 2017 and to the Minister of Finance from 2003 to 2006

Shannon Stubbs- Conservative

Lakeland, Alberta

Election

- Elected to the House of Commons in 2015.

Education and background

- Holds a Bachelor of Arts (Joint Honours) in English and Political Science from the University of Alberta.
- Formerly worked in the Alberta provincial public service.
- Worked for the Wildrose Party as Chief of Staff and Director of Legislative Affairs.
- Prior to being elected, Shannon was a Senior Consultant with Hill + Knowlton Canada.

Points of note

- Vice-Chair of the House of Commons Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security (SECU) and member of its Subcommittee on Agenda and Procedure (SSEC).
- Conservative Official Opposition Shadow Minister for Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness.
- In May 2018, Stubbs sponsored motion M-167, that instructed SECU to study rural crime in Canada.
- She has been a vocal critic of the Government's ban on assault-style firearms.
- MP Stubbs issued a tweet on October 8, 2020 criticising the continued closure of the Canada-US border.
- She has been critical of the Government's response to the tensions in Nova Scotia pertaining to the lobster fishery and Indigenous rights.
- She was also critical of the Government's initial decision, now reversed, not to hold an inquiry into the Nova Scotia mass shooting.

Kristina Michaud- Bloc Québécois

Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, Québec

Election

- Elected to the House of Commons in 2019

Education and background

- Holds a Master's degree in international relations from the Université Laval
- Worked as a political advisor to interim Parti Québécois leader Pascal Bérubé

Points of note

- Vice-Chair of the House of Commons Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security (SECU)
- Bloc Québécois Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness Critic
- MP Michaud was critical of the RCMP's initial response to the Wet'suwet'en crisis. She supported the RCMP's withdrawal from the Wet'suwet'en area and has expressed support for the creation of Indigenous police services as one way to rebuild trust between Indigenous people and law enforcement.

Pam Damoff- Liberal

Oakville North – Burlington, Ontario

Election

- Elected to the House of Commons in 2015

Education and background

- Has a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Western Ontario
- Oakville Town Councillor from 2010 to 2015
- Worked in financial and investment banking positions for 27 years

Points of note

- Member of the House of Commons Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security (SECU)
- Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indigenous Services
- Recipient of the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal, and a number of other awards for her community service

Jack Harris- NDP

St. John's East, Newfoundland and Labrador

Election

- Elected to the House of Commons in 1987, 2008, 2011, 2019

Education and background

- Graduate of Memorial University, the University of Alberta, and the London School of Economics
- Was a member of the Newfoundland and Labrador House of Assembly for 16 years and spent served as 14 years as leader of provincial NDP
- Was a senior labour lawyer for many years

Points of note

- Vice Chair of the Special Committee on Canada-China Relations (CACN)
- Member of the Subcommittee on Agenda and Procedure of the Special Committee on Canada-China Relations (SCAC)

- Member of the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security (SECU)
- Member of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development (FAAE)
- Current NDP Public Safety critic and has previously served as the NDP's Public Safety critic, Justice critic, and National Defence critic
- Has advocated for the federal government to set standards for police to follow, acknowledge the systemic problems within policing, and act to de-escalate encounters between police and Indigenous and Black Canadians where it can
- Has been a strong advocate for the government to increase its capacity to provide search and rescue assistance to all Canadians. Specifically, he sought for Canada to meet the international readiness standard of 30 minutes at all times for search and rescue incidents, from tasking to becoming airborne
- Has also previously pushed for a review of the military justice system and has been a vocal supporter of the men and women in uniform

Angelo Iacono- Liberal

Alfred-Pellan, Quebec

Election

- Elected to the House of Commons in 2015

Education and background

- Bachelor of Arts in political science from McGill University
- A lawyer by trade, he has a *Juris Doctor* degree from the University of Ottawa, and a certificate in European community law from the faculty of law of Lyon, in France

Points of note

- Member of the House of Commons Standing Committees on Public Safety and National Security (SECU) and the Library of Parliament (BILI)
- During SECU's study of systemic racism in policing, he noted that the issues need to be addressed not only in the RCMP itself, but also in communities across the country. He also spoke to the importance of unconscious bias training for law enforcement and security agency employees.

Kamal Khera (Liberal)

Brampton West, Ontario

Election

- Elected to the House of Commons in 2015

Education and background

- A registered nurse by trade, she has degrees in psychology and nursing from York University
- Worked at the Centre of Addictions and Mental Health, Peel Family Shelter, William Osler Health Centre, and as a registered nurse in the Oncology Unit at St Joseph's Health Centre in Toronto

Points of note

- Member of the House of Commons Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security (SECU)

- Serves as the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Development
- Served as the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health from 2015 to 2017 and to the Minister of National Revenue from 2017 to 2018
- Issued a tweet in support of Peel Police's memorandum of understanding signed with the Ontario Human Rights Commission that commits the police service to develop legally binding remedies to address systemic racism in policing.

Damien C. Kurek- Conservative

Battle River – Crowfoot, Alberta

Election

- Elected to the House of Commons in 2019.

Education and background

- Bachelor's Degree in Political Studies and Communications from Trinity Western University and a Diploma in Biblical Studies.
- Former farmer and seasonal worker in the oil and gas sector.
- Worked for the Hon. Kevin Sorenson, M.P. while he was Minister of State (Finance) in Ottawa and more recently in Mr. Sorenson's Constituency Office.
- Worked at the Saskatchewan Legislature in a number of policy, communications, and research roles during the Brad Wall administration.

Points of note

- Member of the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security (SECU).
- At his appointment to SECU in 2020, he indicated that priority issues for him are rural crime, the ban on assault-style firearms, and "issues at our borders". He also noted his desire to "address the risks of foreign influence in Canada and the smuggling of illegal weapons at the border".

Joel Lightbound- Liberal

Louis-Hebert, Quebec

Election

- Elected to the House of Commons in 2015

Education and background

- A lawyer by trade, he holds Bachelor's degrees in Civil Law and Common Law from McGill University
- Studied Information Technology Law at the Master's level, specializing in internet privacy
- Prior to being elected, practiced law in Quebec City for a firm that specializes in immigration

Points of note

- Current Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health from January to September 2017 and to the Minister of Finance from 2017 to 2019.
- Member of the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security (SECU).
- Recently spoke in the House in support of the assault-style firearms ban and investments in "the RCMP and our law enforcement agencies". MP Lightbound also

issued a tweet in support of the assault-style firearms ban, specifically on its application to the Blackwater BW-15.

Glen Motz- Conservative

Medicine Hat – Cardston – Warner, Alberta

Election

- Elected to the House of Commons in 2016.

Education and background

- Served for 35 years with the Medicine Hat Police Service and retired as Inspector in 2015.
- Holds a Bachelor of Religious Education Degree from the Hillcrest Christian College.

Points of note

- Served as the Opposition Associate Shadow Minister for Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness from 2019-2020, and is a Member of the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians (NSICOP).
- Opposed to gun control measures and sponsored e-petition 2341, which calls for any new firearms laws, bans, buyback programs or changes to licencing be put before the House of Commons for debate.
- MP Motz has raised concerns about a perceived erosion of border security, noting his concerns are “not just with respect to the crisis of illegal border crossers, but also with drugs, handgun smuggling, human trafficking by many of the gangs running drugs, and the massive backlogs in the monitoring and deportation of known terrorists, criminals and national security risks”.
- He has expressed concern about rural crime and has suggested that RCMP resources in rural areas are insufficient.
- Expressed concern about the privacy of Canadians related to the Equifax hack, and co-wrote (with MP Paul-Hus) a letter to the Prime Minister to this effect
- Called for the Minister of Public Safety to direct the RCMP to dismantle the rail blockades that were set up in support of Wet’suwet’en hereditary chiefs while decrying the economic costs of the disruption.
- Has called in the House of Commons for the Government to “ban Huawei”.

Gagan Sikand- Liberal

Mississauga – Streetsville, Ontario

Election

- Elected to the House of Commons in 2015

Education and background

- Honours B.A. with a double major in Crime and Deviance and Philosophy with a minor in Anthropology from the University of Toronto.
- LLB Law degree from Brunel Law School in London, England.
- Worked for the Ontario office of the Attorney General and Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs.

Points of note

- Member of the Standing Committees on Public Safety and National Security (SECU) and Library of Parliament (BILI).

- In 2016, he introduced a Private Member's Bill (C-247) that would have allowed police to use a device that could detect the presence of alcohol without having to administer a breathalyzer test. It did not become law.
- During SECU's study of systemic racism in policing, he raised the disconnect between the actions required to address systemic racism and the views and positions of police unions, including the NPF.

Tako Van Popta- Conservative

Langley – Aldergrove, British Columbia

Election

- Elected to the House of Commons in 2019.

Education and background

- Holds an undergraduate degree from Trinity Western University and a law degree from the University of British Columbia.
- Had a 30 plus year law career with McQuarrie Hunter LLP.
- Former director at the Surrey Board of Trade and the Downtown Surrey Business Improvement Association.

Points of note

- Member of the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security (SECU).
- Recently completed the Firearms Safety Course in an effort to better understand his constituents' concerns about the assault-style firearms ban. He noted that "the real problem [is] illegal guns and gang violence", including cross-border firearms smuggling.
- He voiced concern in the House of Commons about the economic effects of the Indigenous rail blockades in support of the Wet'suwet'en.

Tab 6 Responding to parliamentary committee questions

The Chair of a parliamentary committee is responsible for recognizing members and witnesses who seek the floor, and ensuring that any rules established by the committee concerning the apportioning of speaking time are respected.

When witnesses appear in front of a parliamentary committee, remember that you are there at their request.

General tips for responding to committee questions

Committee appearances can be stressful events, especially if the dynamics amongst the committee members themselves are challenging. The Parliamentary Affairs Unit can help to coach witnesses and make suggestions on how to formulate responses during the appearance.

The following are some general guidelines to keep in mind as you prepare.

- Respond to committee members' questions through the Chair of the Committee.
- If the committee members engage in a heated discussion or a back-and-forth across the table, remain silent until the Chair has brought the meeting back to order. It is appropriate to ask for the member's question to be re-stated if need be.
- Regardless of the member's tone in posing the question, always respond to the question politely and in a neutral tone.
- Do not interrupt the committee member, even if they change the course of their question multiple times or seem to be rambling on. You may wish to take notes as the member is speaking so that you can tailor your answer accordingly.
- Once the member has finished speaking, make sure you understand the question before answering. Ask for clarification from the Chair or re-state part or the entire question as you understand it.
- Keep your answers brief and factual. Give the committee member the opportunity to ask a follow up question if they wish.
- If you are not sure that you have covered the information that the committee member is looking for, ask "does this answer your question"?
- Use plain language. Your goal is to inform the committee, and using overly technical language or bureaucratic jargon will only confuse or cloud the message you are trying to communicate.
- Avoid contradicting the Minister, senior government officials or the government's policy and taking a position, providing your opinion, stating your personal recommendations or speaking on behalf of others on a given issue.
- Do not divulge classified information, cabinet confidences or any information that contradicts privacy laws.

If you do not know the answer to a question

Do not answer in areas that you are not an expert. You may:

1. State that you are not the expert, and if you are comfortable and have the information to do so, attempt to head off the question.

Sample response: “Mr. Chairman, I am not the expert on that policy matter, however, I can tell you that in 2015, there were 72,039 impaired driving incidents, 3,100 (4%) of which involved drug-impaired driving.”

2. State that you are not the expert and offer to get back to the committee in writing.

Sample response: “Mr. Chairman, I am not the right person to answer that question, but if the committee wishes, I would be happy to take that question back and have the RCMP provide a written response”.

3. State that you are not the expert and suggest that the committee re-direct the question to the department who may be best placed to answer the question.

Sample response: “Mr. Chairman, I am not the right person to answer that question. Should the committee wish more information on that topic, I would suggest contacting the Department of Justice who are leading on that issue”.

4. Ask that political positions be re-directed to the Minister.

Sample response: “Mr. Chairman, I cannot speak to decisions regarding the course of action. I would respectfully suggest that the honourable member’s question would be best answered by the Minister of Public Safety”.

Difficult questions

The dynamics inside a committee room can sometimes be difficult to predict or manage depending on the personalities present and/or the issue being studied.

The following examples are designed to illustrate how a witness may handle these situations and still provide an answer in a calm, objective way.

If the question is hostile: position your statement and continue. (Sample response: “Looking at it from a broader perspective, I would suggest that the statistical evidence supports the change in the program.”), or simply shut down the question with “I appreciate your point of view” and move on.

If the question is inflammatory or false: respond with an objective fact. (Sample response: “Mr. Chairman, I respectfully disagree with that comment and think it would be useful to share with the Committee some facts we have on the issue.”)

If a parliamentarian launches a personal attack: shut down the issue quickly in a self-confident and firm way then get right back on topic. (Sample response: “I’m not sure what the member would like to know Mr. Chairman (smile and pause), but if the question relates to our consultations with our stakeholders then...”)

Navigating the trouble spots

Maintaining control of the conversation is the key to a smooth appearance. Here are some common situations that can cause witnesses to feel uneasy.

1. Constant interruptions by the committee member, especially when they perceive they are not getting the information they want to hear.

Strategy: Do not interrupt. Wait until the member is finished then continue with, "If I may finish my answer to the Member's previous question first..."

2. Being blind-sided by a question completely unrelated to the topic at hand.

Strategy: Use a two-step approach. Try beginning with, "Mr. Chairman, I don't see how this issue is related to what we are talking about here today." If the member persists, then, "Mr. Chairman, I am not the right person to answer that questions, but if the committee wishes, I would be happy to take that question back and have the RCMP provide a written response."

3. Rapid fire questions about several topics. Members often do this to try to maximize their time allocation.

Strategy: Do not let it overwhelm you. "Mr. Chairman, the member raises many different issues. I rely on your direction here. It may be more helpful to the committee if I could address one issue at a time."

4. Questions/assertions based on incorrect information. Because members have their own researchers and hear testimony from different sources, it is not uncommon for them to put forth a piece of information to see how you respond.

Strategy: Do not take a defensive position against incorrect information; rather correct the member at the earliest opportunity. "Mr. Chairman, I would first like to address the statistics quoted by the Senator. The accurate numbers are..."

5. Silence (after responding to a question). This is a common strategy when the committee is trying to get you to say more than you are comfortable saying.

Strategy: Provide a complete response, and then let the silence happen. Nod slightly and wait with anticipation for the next question. This signals that you are confident that you have provided as much information as needed.