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**Halifax Regional Council
Committee of the Whole
December 13, 2005**

TO: Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

SUBMITTED BY: Betty MacDonald
Betty MacDonald, Director, Governance & Strategic Initiatives

DATE: December 8, 2005

SUBJECT: Council Focus Areas: Public Safety

INFORMATION REPORT

ORIGIN:

On October 11, Council approved a list of Council Focus Areas. Staff committed to return to Council with status report on each item and a suggested approach to further action on the item. Discussion was to include an analysis of current initiatives, issues, options for resolution, capacity and implications.

BACKGROUND

Council has recently indicated focus areas it wishes to address. These include (in no particular order):

Regional plan	Community relations
Transit	Youth
Infrastructure	Community recreation
Traffic	Community development
Public safety	Economic development
Tax Reform	
By-law enforcement	

Staff committed to preparing a document on each of these focus areas for Council discussion and direction at a Committee of the Whole meeting. Specifically, staff committed to describing its

understanding of Council's concerns, what is currently being done in each of these areas, the issues impacting these areas, options for addressing these issues, and the implications of pursuing these options.

DISCUSSION

The issue of Public Safety touches on a number of services provided by HRM. The Discussion papers attached highlight the issues and options Council may wish to consider in addressing the issues. It is recognized that these issues will not be resolved quickly. Staff will work under Council's direction to address the issues as appropriate.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct budget implications as a result of the material discussed herein.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES / BUSINESS PLAN

This report complies with the Municipality's Multi-Year Financial Strategy, the approved Operating, Capital and Reserve budgets, policies and procedures regarding withdrawals from the utilization of Capital and Operating reserves, as well as any relevant legislation.

ALTERNATIVES

ATTACHMENTS

Appendix A - Council Focus Areas: Overview Public Safety
Appendix B - Bylaw Enforcement
Appendix C - Fire Standards
Appendix D - Police Resourcing

A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/council/agendasc/cagenda.html> then choose the appropriate meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.

Report approved by: _____

Betty MacDonald, Director, Governance & Strategic Initiatives

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COUNCIL FOCUS AREAS

**OVERVIEW
PUBLIC SAFETY**

Background and Discussion Paper

December 13, 2005

1. INTRODUCTION

Public Safety has been a top priority for HRM from the beginning. In the development of outcomes citizens expect from their municipality, safety is of primary concern. Citizens expect:

- timely and appropriate emergency response
- a feeling of safety when in their neighbourhoods or elsewhere in HRM
- buildings, properties and infrastructure in HRM to be safe, healthy and well maintained

2. COUNCIL CONCERNS

At Council's September workshop, Councillors identified a number of issues/concerns/opportunities related to safety, such as:

By-law Enforcement

All inclusive animal by-law, litter, care of public property, dangerous and unsightly lack of enforcement and off-road dumping, noise, boarded up buildings policy, public right of way issues

Youth

Crime, youth strategy, youth offenders act

Public Safety, Police Fire, EMO

Equitable policing resources, policing visibility, youth crime, EMO readiness, policing stats in comparison with rest of country, youth offenders act, crosswalks and streetlights, fire increase rural service levels, social conscience

These issues are complex, related to social conditions, and not easily addressed. Solutions requires both short term and long term initiatives. In many areas, HRM's mandate is limited, thereby requiring strong working relationships with other stakeholders and service delivery organizations.

3. PRINCIPLES

The discussion on community focus November 29, 2005, identified a number of principles which apply when considering public safety.

- Community and Citizen Focus - all citizens have a stake in ensuring that HRM is a great place to live, work and play;
- Innovative and Effective Partnerships - partnerships and collaboration lead

- to better, stronger community programs and efficient use of resources;
- Citizens and Communities as Drivers of Change - ongoing and meaningful input is required regarding program and service provision, development and use of facilities, resource allocation, etc;
- Relationship Building - building relationships between government, citizens, and community groups is a powerful tool for social change and ensures better coordination of resources;
- Community Action - involving citizens through action based community initiatives is an effective way of engaging in civic issues;
- Community Stewardship - communities need to help develop and own solutions to their issues;
- Council Advocacy - Councillors are well positioned to act as advocates for issues in communities throughout their Districts.

4. Current Initiatives

There are numerous initiatives, such as those listed below, in many of HRM's business units that impact on public safety. A number of these will be touched upon in the Council Focus Areas discussions to follow.

HRP/RCMP

Traffic Division
Quick Response
Community Response
Initiatives in Schools
Neighbourhood Watch
Citizens on Patrol
Block Parents
Seniors Programs
Crime Stoppers
Arrive Alive
Noggin Knowledge

By- Law Enforcement (includes 10 Business Units)

Environmental Services
Litter
Youth Live

Planning & Development
Inspections

Governance
Community Response Team (graffiti, CPTED)

Fire and EMO

Training and Standards
Rural Fire
Initiatives in Schools
Fire Safety - Safe Communities
Emergency Measures Plan

Transportation & Public Works
Traffic control

Shared Services
Civic Addressing
Call Centre

COUNCIL FOCUS AREA

BYLAW SERVICES
Background and Discussion Paper

December 13, 2005

Introduction

This report, and the accompanying presentation, are intended to provide Council with an assessment of the current state of the Bylaw Services program. In addition, it includes a summary of the program enhancements currently underway. The report and presentation also seek Council's direction related to the future focus of the program.

Current Status

HRM currently has 115 bylaws that require services. A relatively small portion (approximately 10-15%) represents the majority of the demands for service. These are considered to be the primary Service Area Priorities. They are, in no particular order:

Dangerous and Unsightly Premises	Land Use Compliance
Minimum building standards (Fire Safety / M-100)	Noise
Snow and Ice Removal	Vacant Buildings
Lot Grading	Nuisance
Animal Control	Taxi regulation
Illegal Dumping	Solid Waste
Temporary Signs	Blasting

The issue of bylaw enforcement has grown in profile throughout the community. There has been a substantial increase in the demands for bylaw services over the past several years. Since 2002, Community Projects has experienced a significant increase in enforcement related service requests. A substantial portion of this overall increase has been in the areas that require the most time and resources to investigate and resolve. For example:

- Overall requests for service have increased by 33%
- Dangerous and Unsightly Premises (D&U) complaints have increased 39%
- There has been a 190% increase in the number of remedies to non-compliant properties
- Snow and Ice complaints have increased 55%
- Solid Waste complaints have increased 42%

During the same time period, Planning and Development has experienced a similar increase in enforcement related service requests.

- Land use bylaw complaints have increased by 25%
- Prior to 2004, there was no coordinated program to enforce zoning regulations specifically
- Planning and Development has developed a coordinated program and assigned dedicated resources to carry out this task.
- The number of unresolved, open investigations has been reduced from approximately 600 in 2002 to approximately 300 in 2005
- The available resources as well as the volume and complexity of this work still generate long time lags between the initial complaint and the completion of the investigation.

Since 2002, the increased service demand has been accommodated primarily through improved business practices, organizational restructuring, and bylaw harmonization. While further improvements can always be achieved through careful management:

- There have been no substantial increases in the resources applied to the program over that same time period
- Given the increasing workload and no corresponding increases in staff, management practices alone have not, and will not, be able to keep pace with the increasing demand for service
- Under these circumstances it can be expected that service levels will decline

Council Concerns

Council has identified a series of specific areas of concern related to bylaw services:

- Time Frames for initial responses to Councillors and the public
- Time frames for gaining compliance
- More proactive enforcement
- Additional service after regular business hours
- More consequences for repeat offenders
- Better responses to properties with multiple offences
- Cost of enforcement
- Security of enforcement staff

Current Initiatives

There are a number of initiatives and program enhancements that have been undertaken over the past few years. These enhancements have taken the form of refinements in business practices, the addition of technical resources (such as new case management computer software), and minor additions of staff resources. The attached table includes a summary of these initiatives within the context of the above referenced areas of concern.

Options and Implications

Given the current circumstances, there are three basic approaches available at this time. It is important to note that these alternatives are based on the presumption that only minor gains can be achieved through further business process refinements or alterations to operating standards.

1. "Status Quo"

This would involve maintaining the existing program of incremental improvements in efficiencies while acknowledging the gap between demand and resources.

2. Significantly Increase Resource Levels

It is possible to increase “service levels” (eg. response times) without substantially adjusting “Service Area Priorities” (eg. dangerous and unsightly properties) while maintaining the existing “flat” service priority model (eg. all complaints receive equal priority). Substantial additions of staff resources would likely be required. Actual numbers of additional staff resources would depend on the desired service levels.

3. Conduct a Service Level Review

Staff and Council could work together to develop a clear indication of which service areas are most significant. Staff and Council could also work together to develop acceptable service levels/performance standards within the context of these Service Area Priorities. Appropriate resources could then be put in place with a reasonable expectation of success.

Summary

Improvements to the function of the bylaw service program have been completed and more are ongoing. However, there has been a substantial increase in public demand for enforcement service. Current service levels are not considered to be acceptable. Further, improvement to service levels are not likely based on procedural and managerial enhancements alone. Further improvements are also possible through the application of additional resources but the costs are much higher. Additional improvements are possible by adjusting the priorities of the program to more efficiently apply resources to the most significant violations.

Staff seek Council’s direction as to the preferred approach.

ISSUES	INITIATIVES/OPTIONS	IMPLICATIONS
<p><u>1) SERVICE AREA PRIORITIES</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dangerous and Unsanitary Premises • Land Use Compliance • Minimum building standards (Fire Safety / M-100) • Noise • Snow and Ice Removal • Vacant or Boarded Up Buildings • Nuisance • Erosion and Sedimentation Control • Animal Control • Taxi regulation • Illegal Dumping • Solid Waste • Temporary Signs • Blasting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Violations are currently given a relatively equal priority for response • Option - Develop a clear indication of which Service Areas get the highest response priority • Option - Increase the service level for specific bylaws by reassigning existing staff and/or hiring additional staff • Service Area Priorities are expected to increase as a result of adoption of new regulations such as Temporary Signs, Vacant or Boarded up Building, and Nuisance • Changes to organizational responsibilities with respect to minimum building standards regulations are currently being developed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Status Quo - involves incremental minor improvement but the existing gap between resources and demand for service would remain → Changes to the priority assigned to some or all of the Service Areas will result in increased clarity for staff and the public → Service levels associated with some Service Areas will improve and some will decline depending on the relative priority decisions → This could result in additional costs to accommodate increases in resource levels → Unless priorities are adjusted or additional resources are applied, these new regulations will result in reductions in overall service levels → Re-allocation of resources or the addition of new resources will be required

ISSUES	INITIATIVES/OPTIONS	IMPLICATIONS
<p>2) SERVICE/PERFORMANCE LEVELS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall communications with Council and the public Quicker initial response to Councilors and public Reduction in total time required for resolution of violation 	<p>→ Staff are exploring additional opportunities for Councilors to have some level of access to Case Management software</p> <p>→ Option - Develop improved communication / education program for the general public with regard to bylaw enforcement</p> <p>→ Community Projects recently added 3 more FTEs and P&D recently added 3 more FTEs</p> <p>→ Option - Continue to add staff and operate under existing Service Area Priorities; or</p> <p>→ Examine Service Area Priorities as suggested above and re-assess resource levels required to succeed prior to further increasing resources.</p> <p>→ Case management software has been developed for everyday file management and to track and analyse short and long term performance and trends among violations</p> <p>→ Improvement in service levels using current resources have been achieved through better business practices, performance standards etc.</p> <p>→ Amendments to the MGA were adopted in 2003 to reduce the time frame for Orders To Remedy for dangerous and Unsightly premises</p>	<p>→ Should provide Council with a self-directed method of gaining status updates and substantially improve overall communications</p> <p>→ Significant task that could require some diversion of resources from enforcement program</p> <p>→ Likely to result in improvements to turnaround times but has cost implications</p> <p>→ Should result in better coordination and record keeping which will in turn assist in minor improvements to turnaround times</p> <p>→ No further substantial improvement in current service levels is likely to be achieved as a result of this initiative alone</p> <p>→ Should result in reduction in overall times required to obtain resolution in dangerous and Unsightly premises only</p> <p>→ Will have no impact on other type of violations</p>

ISSUES	INITIATIVES/OPTIONS	IMPLICATIONS
<p>2) SERVICE/PERFORMANCE LEVELS (Cont.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● More service outside regular business hours ● More proactive enforcement ● More consequences for repeat offenders and better responses to properties with multiple offences ● Compliance vs punitive measures ● More utilization of alternative legal mechanisms ● Costs of enforcement - "user pay" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Community Projects provide extended service hours for May to Oct and P&D staff operate on an "as needed" overtime basis year round → The current enforcement program is primarily complaint driven → New case management software will analyse trends and help identify "problem" owners and properties. This data can be used to prioritize enforcement actions and modify recommended penalties → The current program is focussed on gaining compliance and any punitive measures are considered secondary → Options for increased use of Summary Offence Tickets and court injunctions are currently underway → Costs of enforcement are currently carried by HRM. Minor amounts are sometimes recovered through fines assigned by the Court 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Some improvement in service levels are likely but substantial improvements will require considerable investment of resources → The current complaint driven program generates volumes that represent a challenge to HRM's ability to adequately respond given the existing program and resource levels → No measurable changes to date due as the system has not been operational long enough but substantial improvements are anticipated → Staff resolve a substantial number of complaints by gaining compliance without punitive measures. Extending those files through the process to gain punitive measures would require increased resources → Should result in a simpler and quicker process for some types of violations → Cost recovery is typically through fines but the level of fines is not adequate to offset a substantial portion of HRM's costs. Staff continue to explore this option.

ISSUES	INITIATIVES/OPTIONS	IMPLICATIONS
<p>3) DAY TO DAY OPERATIONAL PRIORITIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Life Safety • Damage to Public Property • All others 	<p>↑</p> <p>Regardless of the Service Area Priorities outlined above, all requests for service that have implications to the life and safety of the residents of HRM are given first priority in all cases</p>	<p>↑</p> <p>Less substantial violations will be secondary to imminent life safety issues and this can result in delays to service in some circumstances</p>
<p>4) COMMUNITY STEWARDSHIP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Based Problem Solving 	<p>↑</p> <p>Staff in the CAO's office are currently researching programs across Canada for the development of community based solutions as an alternative to traditional bylaw enforcement methods</p>	<p>↑</p> <p>Could generate innovative alternatives not currently under consideration</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public/Community Education 	<p>↑</p> <p>There are currently no formal initiatives underway with regard to community education programs regarding bylaw enforcement</p> <p>Option - Staff could undertake a process to develop a formal public educational program</p>	<p>↑</p> <p>Development of a program of this nature would use staff resources that would otherwise be applied to the enforcement program</p>

COUNCIL FOCUS AREA

PUBLIC SAFETY

Fire and Emergency

December 13, 2005

1. INTRODUCTION

On September 15 and 16, 2005, Council, the Chief Administrative Officer, Deputy Chief Administration Officer and Senior Management Team attended a Priority Setting Workshop. At subsequent Committee of the Whole meetings, twelve Focus Areas were identified, one of which was Public Safety. More specifically, the questions relating to Fire and Emergency were in relation to: Increase in Rural Service levels and EMO Readiness.

2. COUNCIL/COMMUNITY CONCERNS

During the priority-setting workshop, Council listed expectations regarding public safety:

- Safe Communities and Streets
- Improved Response Times
- Increased Public Confidence
- Effective Deployment of Existing Resources
- Residents feel Safer
- Improved Citizen Participation and Involvement
- Increased Visibility
- Consistent Delivery of Proactive Programs

3. BACKGROUND

In March of 2003, Fire & Emergency Service were requested by Council to prepared a report regarding the closure of Patton Road Fire Station - Upper Sackville. Fire Service had already been work on developing a Service Delivery Standard that would encompass all of our Fire Service and advised the Councillor that the request for a report is directly linked to the Service Delivery Standard. In June, 2005, Western Region Community Council requested a report regarding the deployment of staffing in this area. An information report was sent to the Community Council advising that the Service Delivery Standard will address this matter. Community Council also requested that communities were to be consulted prior to changes in standards being made.

The Service Delivery Standard developed by the Fire Service has been a part of the Business Planning process for the past few years.

COUNCIL STRATEGIC TOPIC: PUBLIC SAFETY

ISSUE	OPTIONS	IMPLICATIONS
<p>Increase in Rural Fire Service Levels</p>	<p>Council approve the Service Delivery Standard as developed by the Fire Service</p> <p>Use National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1710 & 1720 as standards of service delivery.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide for service level enhancements in future years. - Reduced ability to respond in areas of low volunteer availability.
<p>EMO Preparedness</p>	<p>Budget and Business Planning will be used to provide a phased in approach to develop a plan for implementation of EMO readiness. IE Comfort Centres and back-up electrical power in fire station.</p> <p>Plans being revised for dealing with a Pandemic event.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Residents will have access to centres in the event of an emergency. - Ability to provide service to our residents when a Pandemic arrives and plan to address public service in the event of a Pandemic. IE Close recreation programs, etc.



Service Delivery Standards

for

Halifax Regional

Fire and Emergency



November 22, 2005

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Introduction and Background

In 2001, the Chief Director requested an internal committee of Fire & Emergency Chief Officers to look at the current service levels within HRM, and compare them to similar municipalities in an attempt to benchmark and establish service levels for Halifax Regional Fire and Emergency. HRM does not have established service delivery standards for determining acceptable levels of emergency services provided by Halifax Regional Fire and Emergency.

Prior to the 1996 amalgamation of the current HRM, each municipal unit controlled its own Fire Service. This service was (and is today) made up of both career and volunteer Firefighters. In some cases, the two groups worked side by side, and in others, the two rarely interacted. Generally, the local Fire Department was controlled by each respective community, resulting in 38 individual Fire Departments in the current HRM area. These Departments developed and followed their own rules on how they would operate, but their goals were usually the same: arrive at the emergency with as many firefighters as possible. Without minimum standards in place, there was no evaluation of the effectiveness or efficiency of the provision of the emergency service, which resulted in a lack of ability to measure anything other than losses related to fire.

The key to successful mitigation of emergencies is based on a combination of factors including Dispatch, Turnout, and Response times (defined later). Several factors need to be considered when establishing service levels, including risk to life and property, hazards and population demographics.

Several municipalities were contacted, and information was obtained electronically where available on the Internet. The service levels provided by these municipalities were compared with the current level of service provided within HRM, in order to establish benchmarks for analysis.

The research by the committee coincided with the international debate over two proposed NFPA (National Fire Protection Association) Standards, **NFPA 1710 ‘Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations, Emergency Medical Operations, and Special Operations to the Public by Career Fire Departments’**, and **NFPA 1720 ‘Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations, Emergency Medical Operations, and Special Operations to the Public by Volunteer Fire Departments’**. These standards have since been adopted by the NFPA.

The Chief Director allowed the committee leeway to develop a workable standard, which did not necessarily have to be based on the NFPA 1700 series standards. The working group has looked at several adopted municipal models, the NFPA 1700 series standards, insurance standards and military standards for providing protection to non-military structures on military bases. The decision was made to develop recommendations for service levels based on the NFPA 1700 series standards, with logical deviations taking into account the diversity of fire protection districts serviced by Halifax Regional Fire and Emergency Service.

Definitions

Due to some confusion around terminology commonly used in Fire & Emergency, the following terms are defined to clarify time intervals and station coverage areas:

- Dispatch Time:** The point of receipt of the emergency alarm at the public safety answering point, to the point where sufficient information is known to the dispatcher and applicable units are notified of the emergency.
- Turnout Time:** The time interval from the receipt of the call notification by the station(s) or apparatus, until the time the apparatus notifies the Dispatch Centre that they are en route to the call.
- Response Time:** The time interval from when the apparatus notifies Dispatch that they are en route to a call, until the time the apparatus notifies Dispatch that they are on scene at the call location, when vehicles are operated at a safe operating speed as defined by policy.
- Station Coverage Area:** The geographic area that can be covered from an identified station location within a specific time interval.
- Fire Response Districts:** The geographic boundary of a defined area which is primarily serviced by a specific fire station.

Additional definitions are included in Appendix “A” of this document.

SERVICE DELIVERY OBJECTIVES FOR ALL EMERGENCIES

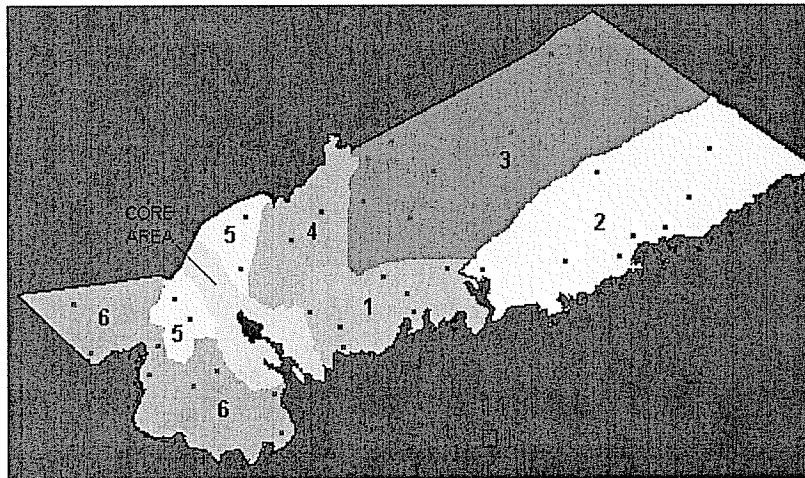
Service level delivery standards are proposed to encompass the services as outlined in Halifax Regional Municipality Administrative Order 24, Respecting Fire and Emergency Service in Halifax Regional Municipality. For a list of services, see Appendix “B” of this document.

Acceptable Exemption: The times for response as indicated in this standard will not apply to island properties which are not accessible by public roadway, private roads, or properties accessed through travel over privately owned bridges. In those situations, the actual response times will be used, will be deemed to be acceptable under the requirements of the Service Delivery Standard, and will be excluded from the annual calculations.

Extraordinary Exemption: Notwithstanding any other provisions of this Service Delivery Standard, in order to deal with any natural disasters or other similar conditions, or in the event a State of Emergency has been invoked, the Service Delivery Standard does not apply. Responses under these conditions will be excluded from the annual calculations.

Data Gathering and Analysis:

Benchmark data comparison for response times was done with London, Ontario; Edmonton, Alberta; Indianapolis, Indiana; Vancouver, Washington.; and Kitchener, Ontario. The committee noted with interest that some of the municipalities listed above are currently working on a 5-year project to implement NFPA 1710. The issue in HRM is somewhat more complex, given that the NFPA 1700 series standards are based on either a fire service that is primarily volunteer (NFPA 1720), or a fire service that is primarily career (NFPA 1710). The proposed standard for HRM is essentially a hybrid of the two NFPA 1700 series Standards, accounting for the diversity of the communities that are served by Halifax Regional Fire and Emergency throughout the municipality.



*Red dots indicate Rural Fire Department locations.

Dispatch Time (All Fire Protection Districts)

Accurate verification of Dispatch Time will require implementation of the new CAD/RMS project. Manual verification of calls is the only process that can currently determine accurate Dispatch Time intervals.

Halifax Regional Fire and Emergency will establish a standard which will see a Dispatch Time of 60 seconds or less, 90% of the time, for all fire protection districts.

A one-minute (60 second) Dispatch Time would be in accordance with the NFPA 1710 recommendation, for fire protection districts with a population density of over 100 persons per square kilometer.

A one-minute (60 second) Dispatch Time would be in accordance with the NFPA 1720 recommendation, for fire protection districts with a population density under 100 persons per square kilometer. For structural incidents, this will include a minimum dual station response (Automatic-Aid).

Single unit or single station responses would occur for non-structural incidents through protocols developed by Halifax Regional Fire and Emergency, in consultation with the fire protection districts and other neighboring contract and Mutual Aid Fire Departments.

This Dispatch Time will be audited annually by Halifax Regional Fire and Emergency, in cooperation with 911 Fire Dispatch and an outside source, if required, at the discretion of the Chief Director of Halifax Regional Fire and Emergency. This audit will comply with the intent of the Corporate Scorecard theme of "Safe Communities."

Turnout Time (Fire Protection Districts with population exceeding 100 persons per sq.km)

Turnout Time is available for Stations 2 to 18 (Core). This was analyzed and compared to existing standards and times for other municipalities. It was felt that this data was significant to the areas protected by these stations.

Halifax Regional Fire and Emergency will establish a Turnout Time standard of one (1) minute or less, 90% of the time for Fire Protection Districts 2 to 10 and 12 to 18 (Core). This time will be audited annually by Halifax Regional Fire and Emergency and an outside auditor, if deemed necessary by the Chief Director. This audit will comply with the intent of the Corporate Scorecard theme of "Safe Communities."

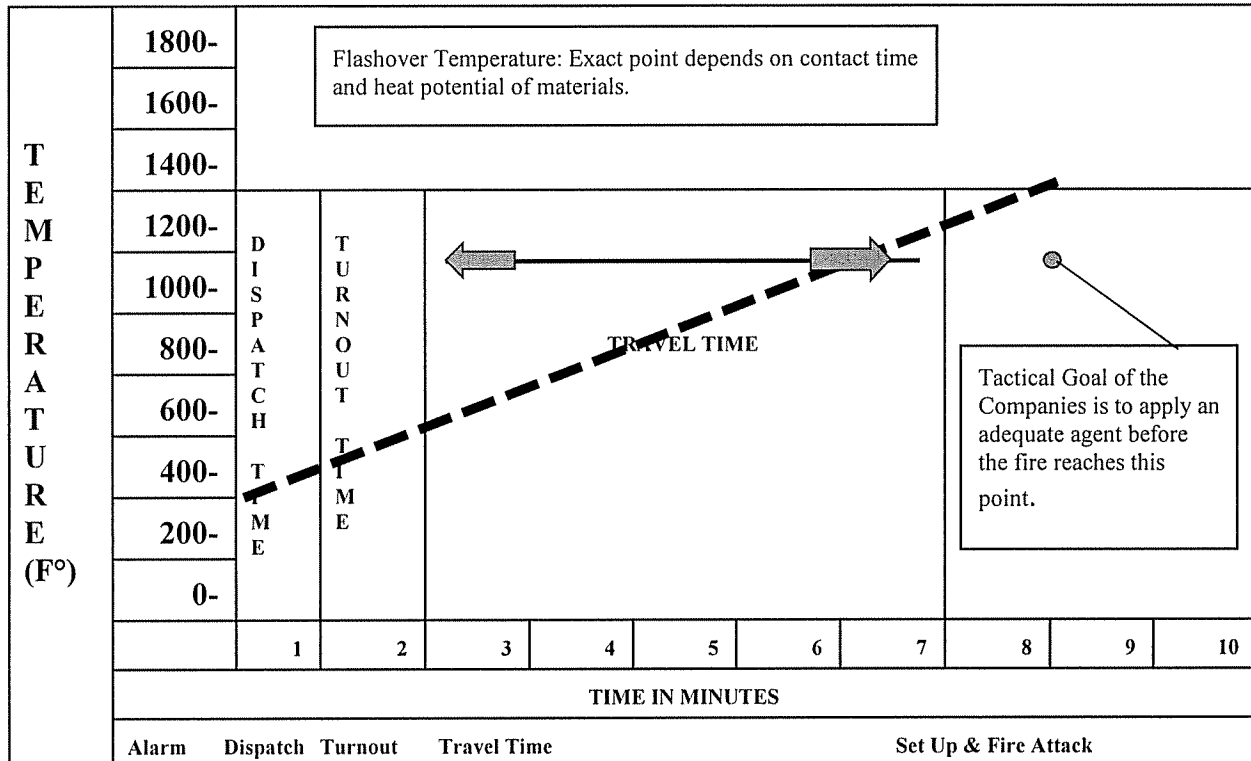
Response Time (Fire Protection Districts with population exceeding 100 persons per sq.km)

Sample data of response times was obtained for Stations 2-18 (Core) from the database currently available to Halifax Regional Fire and Emergency. The data was then analyzed for reporting and recording errors, and 15% of the data which was suspect was eliminated from the final analysis. The calls were then broken down by category, and whether or not the call was a single unit response (involving only one piece of fire apparatus), or a multiple unit response (involving more than one piece of fire apparatus). The details of this analysis were then plotted against the definition provided by the NFPA 1710 Standard. Varying times of response above the time recommended in the Standard were plotted to give an analysis that would allow an imperial value, in this case "time", which would show the gaps in service delivery dependent upon the standard selected. This material is supplied in a mapping format for ease of interpretation. This response data was based on response time being the time from which the fire apparatus departed the station, as recorded by Dispatch, to the time the unit actually arrived on scene.

The International City Manager's Association (ICMA) endorses the concept that in fire stations should be strategically located throughout the city, which would enable the first-arriving pumper to reach a structure fire and apply water before flashover. Flashover is typically considered to occur when the room temperature reaches 1100 °F. It is considered relevant because that is the point at which an unprotected person in that room would not be expected to survive.

The ICMA uses the fire growth characteristics of a residential fire. It is recognized that physical conditions in a residential occupancy (low ceiling heights, relatively small compartments, extensive combustible fuel loadings, etc.), all contribute to an extremely fast-developing fire that will cause a rapid flashover condition. The ICMA's recommended travel time is derived from the time-to-flashover being approximately 8-10 minutes for residential occupancies. Recent data indicates that the time to flashover in residential occupancies may even be quicker due to peoples' tendency to incorporate more and more highly combustible materials into their homes.

Time Versus Products of Combustion



It is recommended that the Response Time standard criteria of five (5) minutes or less, 90% of the time, for the arrival of the first arriving apparatus be adopted by Halifax Regional Fire and Emergency, regardless of the nature of the emergency service to be provided. It is recommended that the Response Time standard criteria of eight (8) minutes or less, 90% of the time, apply to the arrival of additional apparatus dispatched with the first arriving apparatus. For an upgraded alarm, it is recommended that the Response Time standard criteria of eight (8) minutes or less be adopted by Halifax Regional Fire and Emergency, to have a full first alarm assignment on scene 90% of the time. A full alarm assignment will be requested by the first arriving apparatus for structural incidents, or as deemed necessary.

Full Alarm Assignment in the Fire Protection Districts with population exceeding 100 persons per sq. km. will consist of two (2) Engines (1 Officer and 3 crew members each), one (1) Aerial Unit (2 crew members), one (1) Tactical Unit (2 crew members): Total 12 personnel. In addition to the operational personnel, an Incident Safety Officer and Chief Officer to act as a dedicated Incident Commander will also be dispatched.

This standard would be applicable to areas of the HRM with a population density of over 100 persons per square kilometer, and where there are career staff employed in that protection district. Currently this would encompass the majority of the Core, with the exception of Station #11 Fire Response Area. (Based on estimated population density per square kilometer from calculated civic address population. To be reviewed with the next Stats Canada Population Survey, in conjunction with the Civic Address Population numbers from HRM GIS).

This “time” will be audited annually by Halifax Regional Fire and Emergency, and an outside auditor if deemed necessary by the Chief Director. This audit will comply with the intent of the Corporate Scorecard theme of “Safe Communities.”

Turnout Time - Fire Protection Districts with population under 100 persons per sq.km)

Long term data is unavailable for Stations 19 to 63 (Rural: Composite/Volunteer) due to the lack of reliable data prior to the implementation of changes in Dispatch and the radio system. The future capability of verification of data for Stations 19 to 63 (Rural: Composite/Volunteer) has improved with the implementation of the CAD/RMS project.

Halifax Regional Fire and Emergency will establish a Turnout Time standard of six (6) minutes or less, 90% of the time for Stations 19 to 63 (Rural), when the response is by volunteer members.

Stations with career staff (Composite Stations) will meet the turnout time criteria of one minute or less, 90% of the time, when career staff are present.

This “time” will be audited annually by Halifax Regional Fire and Emergency and an outside auditor if deemed necessary by the Chief Director. This audit will comply with the intent of the Corporate Scorecard theme of “Safe Communities.”

Response Time - Fire Protection Districts with population under 100 persons per sq.km)

Until the implementation of the proposed CAD/RMS project, there is limited reliable statistical reporting from Stations 19 - 63 (Rural/Composite).

It is recommended that the response standard criteria of ten (10) minutes or less for the arrival of the first arriving apparatus be adopted for fire protection districts that have a population density of under 100 persons per square kilometer. This would include all Rural/Composite Stations and Station 11.

This "time" will be audited annually by Halifax Regional Fire and Emergency, and an outside auditor if deemed necessary by the Chief Director. This audit will comply with the intent of the Corporate Scorecard theme of "Safe Communities."

It is further recommended that fire protection districts with a population density of over 25 persons per square kilometer, have daytime coverage with a minimum of 4 personnel on duty from 0700 to 1800 (these are the peak hours when the majority of responses are likely to occur - Monday to Friday where response by volunteers may be significantly delayed), unless the fire protection district can substantiate, through call records and verifiable data, that the community has adequate daytime coverage by Volunteers, to comply with the service standard for Fire Protection Districts with population under 100 persons per sq/km.

It is further recommended that fire protection districts with a low availability of volunteers during weekday daytime hours, (0700 to 1800) and with specific high occupancy risks (industry, schools, nursing homes, hospitals and seniors complexes), or with a lack of operational membership, consider staffing to a minimum of the above level.

In an effort to support recruitment and retention of volunteers, Halifax Regional Fire and Emergency have received an additional HR support staff member to deal with this North American trend of declining numbers of volunteers.

It is also recommended that when the population density in a fire protection district increases to 50 persons per square kilometer that a mandatory review of the service level in the fire protection district occur. This review must consider the industrial and commercial base of the community, as well as facilities such as schools, hospitals, homes for special care, seniors complexes, etc. The review must demonstrate that the staffing level is adequate, or that the volunteer turnout provides a satisfactory level of fire protection for the fire protection district. It may be appropriate in some communities to consider implementation of 24-hour coverage, with a minimum of four personnel, due to coverage and turnout issues.

Once a fire protection district has a population density that exceeds 90 persons per square kilometer, consideration should be given to future growth and development, in order to plan for the station to be able to provide response in accordance with the service standard, for fire protection districts with population density exceeding 100 persons per square kilometer.

Alternative staffing proposals for stations in close proximity to each other may result in a higher level of staffing responding from a single station, in order to provide a more efficient and effective level of service delivery. This should be considered if the service level delivery for the combined fire protection districts can be verified against the criteria, as addressed above.

Fleet:

Core (Stations 2 - 18): Based on current numbers of apparatus and maintenance of the current fleet reserve, there will be no change. This is based on a 20-year replacement schedule. Construction of additional stations will require additional apparatus, and this would be based on future growth to meet the proposed delivery standard.

Rural (Stations 19-63): A fleet replacement schedule is currently being developed as part of an Overall Fleet Plan, and will be followed based on adequate funding being provided through the Rural Tax Structure, to create a sufficient reserve to allow for fleet maintenance and replacement. Fleet consolidations will be considered if supporting consolidation of facilities occurs.

Facilities:

As part of this Service Standard, Halifax Regional Fire and Emergency proposes to undertake a Station Location Study for the entire area serviced by HRM, and will develop a Station Location Plan based on the Service Delivery Standard. We presently have a Station Location Study for the urban area dated 1997, which will be revisited based upon this Standard because of population growth, proposed development (Regional Plan) and traffic issues. Implications of the interface between the Rural and Core areas have not been fully studied, and may have an impact on proposed new stations. This emphasizes the need for an overall study encompassing the entire area serviced by Halifax Regional Fire and Emergency, including those areas currently under contract to other municipalities.

Core (Stations 2 - 18):

The construction of a new fire station (Penhorn) will allow for the consolidation of 2 existing stations (King St. & Woodside). Projected growth between Clayton Park and Bedford will strain the ability to respond from the existing stations and may create the need to construct an additional station in this area. Development in the Morris/Russell Lake areas may have an impact on delivery in those areas, which will be considered in the updating of the Station Location Study. We are also studying the need and feasibility of a marine-side terminal, and firefighting/rescue capability for Halifax Harbour.

Rural (Stations 19 - 63):

Station consolidation will be considered based on future fire station location studies. Station locations will be based on the service standard. Consolidation and future growth will be based on meeting these service level standards. Adequate financial resources will need to be included in future capital budget proposals.

Initially several facilities may require upgrades to allow for the placement of staff during weekday hours in stations identified as the hub of each response district, in accordance with the Regional Plan. This plan will be phased in over a period of time, as funding allows, in order to fill the identified gap of personnel resources for daytime responses.

Training Facilities:

The current training facilities utilized by Halifax Regional Fire and Emergency were constructed by the former City of Halifax in the mid-1980's to support 6 fire stations and approximately 220 members. No provisions were made for expansion, and the use of live fire training structures. This facility has a use as a primary training facility for pump operations, engineer driver training and aerial operational training, due to the exceptional water supply provided to the site. However, there is a significant need for a fire training facility which will allow for year-round live fire, flashover and natural gas training, as well as CBRN (Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear), confined space, trench rescue, collapse rescue and high angle technical rescue training. If properly designed and funded, the facility could be utilized for vehicle extrication training, hazardous materials response training and could be used by other municipal departments for trench training, confined space training, natural gas and driver training. A Capital Reserve is proposed at \$1,000,000 per year for 3 years, to provide a facility that will allow Halifax Regional Fire and Emergency members to maintain required levels of training. Federal Funding of \$1,000,000 dollars is available on a cost-sharing basis from the Federal Joint Emergency Preparedness Program: Urban Search and Rescue Project for a training facility.

Personnel

Based on the implementation of this Service Standard, the current situation will require an increase in personnel complement. This does not include provisions for increase in complement based on the construction of additional stations due to population growth, urban growth, or integration of any Federal firefighting forces.

Future staffing increases will be phased in through the Business Planning process and available budget allocations.

Summary of Recommendations

- **For Fire Protection Districts with population density exceeding 100 persons per square kilometer.**
 - A dispatch time of 60 seconds be established as a standard by HRM.
 - A turnout time of 60 seconds be established as a standard by HRM.
 - A response time of 5 minutes, or less - 90% of the time be established for single unit responses, or for the first arriving unit of a multiple unit response.
 - A response time of 8 minutes, or less - 90% of the time be established for subsequent arriving units of a multiple unit response or alarm assignment.
 - A full alarm assignment consists of 2 Engines, 1 Aerial, 1 Tactical Unit, for a total of 12 personnel.
 - An Incident Safety Officer and a dedicated Incident Commander will be dispatched on full alarm assignments, with no response time criteria.
 - A subsequent alarm assignment consists of a minimum of 2 units (configuration acceptable to the Incident Commander) for a total of 8 additional personnel.

- **For Fire Protection Districts with population density under 100 persons per square kilometer.**
 - A dispatch time of 60 seconds be established as a standard by HRM.
 - Staff Turnout: A turnout time of 60 seconds be established as a standard by HRM.

Volunteer Turnout: A turnout time of 6 minutes or less - 90% of the time be established as a standard by HRM.
 - A response time of 10 minutes or less - 90% of the time be established as a standard by HRM.

C. Annual Auditing

Annual auditing is recommended for all service delivery standards. This will allow for confirmation of service levels and serve as a planning tool for future growth.

- 1) A population density of more than 25 persons per square kilometer will require a review, to determine the need for daytime coverage by career staff. Verifiable data of volunteer turnout to the standard during daytime hours, to meet the turnout and response criteria established as a standard by HRM.
- 2) A population density of more than 50 persons per square kilometer will require a review to determine the need for daytime coverage by career staff. This review must also consider infrastructure, industry and high occupancy risks. Verifiable data of volunteer turnout of sufficient numbers to provide protection services on a consistent basis must be provided, or consideration given to providing either daytime or 24-hour staff.
- 3) A population density of more than 90 persons per square kilometer will require a review to determine the need to plan for future growth and provision of services, once the population density exceeds 100 persons per square kilometer.
- 4) Alternative staffing proposals for stations in close proximity can be proposed/considered and implemented to provide more effective and efficient service delivery, provided the turnout and response criteria for each protection district can be met.

Appendix "A"

Definitions:

Alarm Time: The point of receipt of the emergency alarm at the public safety answering point, to the point where sufficient information is known to the Dispatcher to deploy applicable units to the emergency.

Apparatus: A motor-driven vehicle or group of vehicles designed and constructed for the purpose of fighting fires.

Company Officer: A supervisor of a crew/company of personnel.

Dispatch Time: The point of receipt of the emergency alarm at the public safety answering point, to the point where sufficient information is known to the Dispatcher and applicable units are notified of the emergency.

Emergency Operations: Activities of the fire department relating to rescue, fire suppression, emergency medical care, and special operations, including response to the scene of the incident and all functions performed at the scene.

Fire Apparatus: A fire department emergency vehicle used for rescue, fire suppression, or other specialized functions.

Initial Full Alarm Assignment: Those personnel, equipment, and resources ordinarily dispatched upon notification of a structural fire.

Initial Attack: Firefighting efforts and activities that occur in the time increment between the arrival of the fire department on the scene of a fire, and the tactical decision by the Incident Commander that the resources dispatched on the original response will be insufficient to control and extinguish the fire, or that the fire is extinguished.

Initial Rapid Intervention Crew (IRIC): Two members of the initial attack crew who are assigned for rapid deployment to rescue lost or trapped members.

Public Service Answering Points (PSAP): Any facility where 911 calls are answered, either directly or through rerouting.

Rapid Intervention Crew (RIC): A dedicated crew of firefighters who are assigned for rapid deployment to rescue lost or trapped members.

Rescue: Those activities directed at locating endangered persons at an emergency incident, removing

those persons from danger, treating the injured, and providing for transport to an appropriate health care facility.

Response Time: The time that begins when units are en route to the emergency incident, and ends when units arrive at the scene.

Structural Firefighting: The activities of rescue, fire suppression, and property conservation in buildings, enclosed structures, aircraft interiors, vehicles, vessels, aircraft, or like properties that are involved in a fire or emergency situation.

Supervisory Chief Officer: A member whose responsibility is to assume command through a formalized transfer of command process, and to allow company officers to directly supervise personnel assigned to them.

Sustained Attack: The activities of fire confinement, control, and extinguishment that are beyond those assigned to the initial responding companies.

Turnout Time: The time interval from the receipt of the call notification by the station(s) or apparatus, until the time the apparatus notifies the Dispatch Centre that they are en route to the call.

Appendix “B”

The Halifax Regional Fire and Emergency Service has committed to provide an emergency service to the following (In Accordance With: HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NUMBER 24 RESPECTING FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICE IN HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY)

Fire and Fire Related Emergencies:

Structural and Wildland:	Offensive and Defensive
Medical Response:	Medical First Responder
Vehicle Rescue:	Operational
Water Rescue:	Operational
Ice Rescue:	Operational
Structure Rescue:	Operational
Confined Space:	Operational
High Angle Rescue:	Operational
Hazardous Materials:	Operational
Search and Rescue:	Assistance (Ground Search & Rescue)
Fire Prevention/Education:	Inspections, Investigations, Public Education

COUNCIL FOCUS AREA

PUBLIC SAFETY
(Police Resourcing)
Background and Discussion Paper

December 13, 2005

1. INTRODUCTION

On September 15 and 16, 2005, Council, the Chief Administrative Officer, Deputy Chief Administration Officer and Senior Management Team attended a Priority Setting Workshop. At subsequent Committee of the Whole meetings, twelve Focus Areas were identified, one of which was Public Safety. More specifically, the question of whether or not HRM is adequately resourcing its police services to meet public expectations was posed. This report is intended to outline the need for HRM to examine policing strategically to ensure it is positioned to respond to immediate and future public safety needs of our citizens.

Visibility of police has decreased over the years because policing has become a very complex business. Recent Canadian research into policing has revealed there is an increase in demand for police services that exceeds increases in police resources. There were a series of court cases that substantially increased the required number of investigative steps and the amount of paper work generated in handling cases that proceed to court. There was also an associated increase in time for handling specific types of crimes as the legal requirements changed. While the introduction of computer technology has improved access to criminal information and the exchange of criminal intelligence between enforcement agencies, it has significantly increased the administrative time required to input and manipulate information. Overall, there is a decrease in police capacity and an increase in demand for services. By-Law and other enforcement groups have also suffered from this phenomenon.

As the role of police becomes more complex from judicial and legislative changes and the resulting in-house policy changes, it directly affects the ability of the officer on the street to maintain the same level of service. As judicial and legislative decisions increase the time required to investigate and prosecute cases, it detracts from the time that is available for officers to respond to calls for service, conduct preventive patrols, investigate offences and engage in the delivery of pro-active community policing programs. Further, police are frequently asked to participate in changes to the legal system and other new studies such as our CAD/RMS project that require our officers to be taken from first line response to make these projects a reality.

Reporting requirements have become much more extensive to satisfy the needs of judicial decisions. For example:

- 30 years ago, a domestic assault complaint would take from 30 minutes to one hour to investigate; today, serious domestic assault investigations can take up to 12 hours
- 30 years ago, a case of an impaired driver would take one hour of investigative time; today, officers are tied up for 4-5 hours
- Mental Health cases have committed 2-5 officers for periods of up to 10-12 hours on one incident alone. In extreme cases, more than two officers have been involved and these incidents carried on to the next shift period, so you start your new shift 2-5 officers short.

Ultimately, these types of occurrences reduce our visibility on the street.

HRM Policing Services are continually under scrutiny regarding the quality of investigations. As such, and from a risk-management perspective, we have an obligation to exercise due diligence in all areas of service delivery.

Mandatory training is also a critical component of policing in the 21st century. Police officers are required to maintain their certification in Use of Force Continuum, First Aid and Chemical Biological Radiological and Nuclear Training to name a few. Whether this training is mandated by the Nova Scotia Police Act, RCMP Act or agency specific policy, it is an essential component of preparing officers to carry out their duties that must be evaluated on an annual basis and entails a significant time commitment.

Police management has continually asked patrol officers in their downtime to get out of their cars and interact with the members of their community. A recent Canadian study has shown that an officer on patrol spends more than 4 hours per day carrying out administrative duties and report writing. Officers interviewed stated that the introduction of mobile data terminals has made it possible to do paperwork in their police vehicles and estimated that some 80% of their time on patrol, when not actively responding to calls, is spent doing paperwork over the mobile data terminals.

The world changed after the tragic events of 9/11. Historically, we have been involved in such things as Joint Forces Operations around such issues as Drug Enforcement and Organized Crime, but 9/11 made the world a much smaller place to live in as well much more complex from a National Security perspective. Police now find themselves being drawn into the issue of community safety in a much different way. The events of 9/11 have shown us is that world terrorism is not only a global issue but a community issue as well as all terrorism starts in a local community. As a result, the national and international demands from a policing perspective are even more complex.

As the complexity of the role of policing is changing, calls for service within HRM have also increased. This situation is compounded by the fact that from 1996 to 2004, the population in HRM has steadily grown and this cycle is projected to continue. On a national level, population growth in Canada more than doubled between 1962 and 2003, while the number of police resources increased by only 1.7 times.

Policing within HRM has not kept pace. Starting in 1996, there was a steady down-sizing of HRP from 438 to a low of 393 in 1999. From 1999 to 2002, there was no growth. And in 2002, Council approved an increase of 10 positions. This remained stable until this year when 16 new officers were authorized for traffic safety in the urban/suburban core of HRM and to expand the Quick Response Unit outside of HRP. Between 1996 and 2001, Halifax Detachment resources increased from 146.5 to 162.5. The establishment has remained stable at 162.5 since that time.

2. COUNCIL/COMMUNITY CONCERNS

During the priority-setting workshop, Council listed its expectations regarding public safety:

- Safe Communities and Streets
- Lower Crime Rates
- Improved Response Times
- Increased Visibility
- Increased Public Confidence
- Consistent Delivery of Proactive Programs
- Lower Incidence of Youth Crime
- Effective Deployment of Existing Resources
- Adequately Resourced Police Services
- Residents feel Safer
- Improved Citizen Participation and Involvement

Throughout the Fall of this year, HRP and RCMP held a series of Town Hall meetings to gauge citizens' concerns. An analysis of those meetings, as well public meetings held over the past five years, highlighted the followings themes:

- Increased demand for service and police visibility
- Youth Crime/Violence
- Traffic Safety
- Street-Level Crime/Disorder Issues
- Noise (Youth, Traffic and Construction)
- Law Reform (YCJA, MVA, Off-highway Vehicles Act, Sentencing, Noise By-law)

Overall, the message we repeatedly heard from citizens is that while they are pleased with the quality of policing they receive, they are not content with the quantity.

3. CURRENT INITIATIVES

In 2003, Halifax Regional Police and Halifax Detachment of the RCMP ventured into a new model of police service delivery known as Integrated Policing. As a result, efficiencies were found in service delivery, enabling police to enter into new investigative ventures that were impossible before.

In late 2004/05, police again reviewed the service delivery model and changed its Patrol Strategy to the Community Response Model of Policing. This strategy involves sector based poling as part of a new community response approach to community problem-solving. It also entails forming strong working relationships with By-Law, Community Development, Community Response Team, Traffic Authority, Fire Service, Recreation, CANB to name a few.

Also in 2004/05, Council approved 32 new police positions to create a region-wide traffic service and enhanced patrol response to combat crime issues throughout HRM.

To combat increasing crime, police have conducted Special Operations targeting such things as youth crime, robberies, motor vehicle theft and other disorder type crimes that attack the very fabric of our communities.

In an effort to address public safety concerns, Police are currently partnering and consulting with other orders of government to influence changes in law and justice system practices.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

Police recommend that:

Council request the Board of Police Commissioners review HRM Policing Services with a view to developing an effective, long-term police resourcing strategy.

Council request the Board of Police Commissioners to assess the impact of any changes to the service delivery model of policing resulting from upcoming negotiations of the Provincial Policing Contract.

Council initiate dialogue with the three orders of government to determine roles and responsibilities for national, provincial and municipal policing.

Council increase resources and fund police to an effective level to meet public expectations and address the complex environment of the police service delivery model.

COUNCIL STRATEGIC TOPIC: PUBLIC SAFETY

ISSUE	OPTIONS	IMPLICATIONS
<p>Police Visibility Increased Demands for/on Police Increased Complexity of Policing</p>	<p>Council request the Board of Police Commissioners review HRM Policing Services with a view to developing an effective, long-term police resourcing strategy.</p> <p>Council request the Board of Police Commissioners to assess the impact of any changes to the service delivery model of policing resulting from upcoming negotiations of the Provincial Policing Contract.</p> <p>Council initiate dialogue with the three orders of government to determine roles and responsibilities for national, provincial and municipal policing.</p> <p>Council increase resources and fund police to an effective level to meet public expectations and address the complex environment of the police service delivery model</p>	<p>Provides basis for good decision making on future police deployment and requests for future operational and capital needs.</p> <p>Potential significant increase in policing operating budget.</p> <p>Dialogue would provide a policy framework for policing which would clearly define roles and responsibilities for federal, provincial and municipal policing within Canada. This has the potential to eliminate duplication of service.</p> <p>Increased community satisfaction. Reduced crime rate. Increased police operating and capital budget.</p>