

H Division

Halifax District Detachment



Citizen's on Patrol (COP) Program

Prepared By: Supt. Dennis Daley

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At the Board of Police Commissioners meeting held on October 16, 2015, under item 7.1.5 the following motion was passed with a request for follow up from the RCMP:

THAT the Board of Police Commissioners request a report regarding the extent of support for the COPs Program in RCMP patrolled areas including, but not limited to financial, capital, operating and the provision of equipment.

In the Province of Nova Scotia, within RCMP jurisdiction, there are approximately 180 Citizen's on Patrol (COP) volunteers, consisting of 17 active groups. The COP Program is managed by Community, Aboriginal & Diversity Policing Services (CADPS) out of RCMP headquarters in Dartmouth. At the local or community level, RCMP Detachment Coordinators are responsible for coordinating their local COP groups within the Province. These coordinators attend COP meetings, disseminate information to volunteers and address concerns.

The Citizen on Program mandate is to **record and report**. COP volunteers make patrols in their personal vehicles as the "eyes and ears" of the community reporting any crime or suspicious activity to the police via mobile phone. Before going on patrol, COP volunteers sign on with the Integrated Emergency Services within HRM or RCMP Telecoms in Truro. This information is passed on to a frontline supervisor who contacts them via cell phone and provides an update as to where he or she requires the COP volunteers to patrol. These patrol areas are usually an area where there has been a spike in break and enters, thefts from vehicles, and other crimes of mischief and/or property damage.

Financial/Capital Support

- There is no specific budget allotment from Nova Scotia RCMP (financial, capital, operating or provision of equipment) for the Citizen on Patrol program. However, Halifax District provides monetary compensation for gas consumed for patrols:

2014/15: funding for COP groups that support the following detachments: Tantallon, Lower Sackville, Cole Harbour North Central and Sheet Harbour in the amount of \$2,970.00

2015/16 YTD: funding for COP groups that support the following detachments: Tantallon, Cole Harbour, North Central and Sheet Harbour in the amount of \$900.00.

As other funding is not provided by the RCMP, it is up to each COP group to seek funding for equipment purchases.

- Though the RCMP does not support Citizen on Patrol through a budget allotment, support is given to the Program through Divisional co-ordination, development of standard operating procedures, COP training and local level regular member contacts.



Training of Citizen on Patrol Volunteers:

- Community Aboriginal and Diversity Policing Section held combined training in October 2015 for both COP and Victim Services volunteers. These day long training sessions included presentations on legal authority, being inconspicuous, department, street level drug activity, outdoor scenarios with actors and police cars, and a mock court room with a Crown prosecutor.
- The RCMP/COP Advisory Group meets once every quarter. This group consists of Detachment Coordinators and representatives of various COP Groups. This allows both the RCMP and volunteers to plan ahead in determining what is best for the program. In addition, Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) are being developed in order to streamline the COP Program. It is expected the SOP will be finalized in 2016 and discussions will be held at the detachment level with the COP groups.

Use of RCMP Police Radios

- In previous years, the RCMP in Nova Scotia has supported COP groups to fundraise and purchase their own police radios. While on patrol in their communities, COP's listened to radio broadcasts and were the "eyes and ears" for calls of service as they were dispatched. If a group did not purchase their radio, they would utilize one from the RCMP detachment. However, they did not actually have the required RCMP security clearance to do this.
- As a result of a Citizen on Patrol review in late 2013, it was determined that in order to be in possession of police radios and listen to protected information requires a RCMP Reliability Status clearance (RSS). The cost and time involved in raising the security clearance of the COP volunteers was deemed too high, so the police radios were removed from the Citizen on Patrol program. This was not a popular decision and since 2013 the program experienced a drop from 27 active groups division-wide to 17.
- In 2015, RCMP and HRP have adopted a new radio system known as TMR2. Advanced encryption is a standard feature of TMR2. In order to provide agency interoperability and ensure security of "keys" it is vital to implement rigorous operating procedures. The Province of Nova Scotia, the owner of the radio system, has stipulated the RCMP's national standards will be adopted for the management and operation of all encrypted radios. The move to the TMR2 radio system is a major advancement within policing, however, it does not help the Citizens on Patrol program as once again volunteers do not meet the enhanced RCMP security.

Portable (Mobile) Speed Radars

- Five COP groups in the province have purchased, through fundraising, portable speed radars each of which is mounted on a trailer. These groups are responsible for setting up the radar trailers in high traffic areas in order to collect stats such as vehicle speeds. As well, they are utilized as a preventative tool to discourage speeding and promote safe driving. This initiative is strongly supported by the RCMP.



Halifax District Citizen on Patrol Programs:

Currently there are six active COP Volunteer groups within Halifax District:

- Cole Harbor: 17 members.
- Tantallon: 18 members (does not include the Prospect group).
- Beechville-Lakeside-Timberlea: 9 members.
- Lower Sackville: 5 members. This COP group is active, but only to deploy the speed trailer.
- Sheet Harbor: 12 members.
- North Central: 15 members.

Citizens on Patrol have demonstrated their value within Halifax District by assisting their respective detachment in their crime reduction strategy by patrolling identified hot spots, conducting seat belt surveys, conducting property checks, deploying radar trailers and obtaining the speed data. In the past, Citizen on Patrol have made direct contributions to the arrest of impaired drivers, identifying insecure businesses, monitoring loitering youth and extra eyes and ears on Halloween.

Unfortunately there are two COP Volunteer groups within Halifax District that have recently folded. The Prospect Road COP group stated they folded because there was a lack of interest from the overall group and recent changes in the policy related to the use of portable radios. The Musquodoboit Harbour COP group folded in the summer of 2014 due to a lack of interest.

Halifax District RCMP is committed to our volunteers. We are privileged to enjoy the assistance of numerous volunteers including members of our various Citizens on Patrol groups, our Victim Services unit who assist victims of crime through the justice system, Auxiliary constables who assist in patrols, parades and crime prevention initiatives, Chaplain Services who assist with next of kin notification and employee mental wellness and finally members of the Commanding Officers Advisory committees. These dedicated individuals assist in our Detachments, our Community Policing Offices and our communities in a multitude of roles. They give freely of their time, knowledge and talent, helping to build better, stronger and safer communities.

Respectfully submitted,

Supt. Dennis Daley

A.OIC Halifax District RCMP

November 20th, 2015.