



June 2, 2005

## MEMORANDUM

TO: Vancouver City Council

FROM: Charlene Imai, Meeting Coordinator

SUBJECT: 2005 UBCM Resolutions

The following 13 resolutions have been received from City departments for Council's consideration on June 14, 2005. The resolutions, if approved by Council, will be submitted to the 2005 UBCM Convention.

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Submitted by</b>
COMMUNITY ACCESS PROGRAM (CAP)	Vancouver Public Library Board
LAWFUL ACCESS	Vancouver Public Library Board
EARLY LITERACY	Vancouver Public Library Board
ACCESS TO WELFARE	Housing Centre
JOB TRAINING	Housing Centre
HOUSING	Housing Centre
SUPPORTIVE HOUSING	Housing Centre
MENTAL ILLNESS AND ADDICTION SERVICES	Housing Centre
ACCESS TO A COMPREHENSIVE RANGE OF ADDICTION SERVICES THROUGHOUT BC	Drug Policy Program - Community Services Group
CBRN FUNDING RESOLUTION FOR MUNICIPAL POLICE FORCES	Vancouver Police Department
MUNICIPAL POLICE FORCES OBTAINING FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO UPHOLD THE NATIONAL SECURITY POLICY	Vancouver Police Department

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ELECTRONIC PROPERTY REPORTING LEGISLATION FOR SECOND-HAND PROPERTY DEALERS	Vancouver Police Department
ENCOURAGE MEMBERS OF THE UBCM TO ADOPT A SECURITY ALARM SYSTEM BYLAW SIMILAR TO THAT USED IN THE CITY OF VANCOUVER	Vancouver Police Department

Attachments

COMMUNITY ACCESS PROGRAM (CAP)

WHEREAS public libraries and community networks across Canada were the main initiators of the Government of Canada's Connecting Canadians agenda;

AND WHEREAS the Government of Canada, Provincial and Municipal Governments have systematically moved access to government information and forms to the Internet, often to the exclusion of other forms of access;

AND WHEREAS access to the Internet is now a necessity for equal access to government resources and democratic participation;

AND WHEREAS the Community Access Program was developed to fund libraries free, public Internet access;

AND WHEREAS according to the Statistics Canada 2003 Survey 30% of the British Columbia population do not have access to the Internet, and this percentage is higher in rural areas. In addition, access to broadband is significantly less in rural areas, thus increasing the digital divide;

AND WHEREAS British Columbia Public Libraries and Community Networks received \$2.7M from CAP in 2004/2005 down from \$5.2M in 2002/2003;

AND WHEREAS libraries are the main free Internet public access sites in Canada;

AND WHEREAS community networks provide access to socially excluded communities, groups and individuals as well as test new community-based technologies;

AND WHEREAS both libraries and community networks are major participants in overcoming the digital divide;

AND WHEREAS public demand for free Internet public access continues unabated;

AND WHEREAS demand for Internet access now includes training, assistance in printing and filling out important forms such as EI and support in Internet searching;

AND WHEREAS we have been advised that Industry Canada will announce the termination of the CAP program;

AND WHEREAS such cancellation will result in financial hardship for libraries and community networks, especially those in rural and poorer areas, resulting in an increase in the digital divide.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the UBCM write to the Minister of Industry Canada urging his reconsideration of the termination of the CAP program and the creation of a program providing ongoing support for library and community networks for public access and training;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the UBCM write all British Columbia MPs, sending them a copy of this resolution and expressing strong opposition to the termination of CAP;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the UBCM forward this resolution to the Federation of Canadian Municipalities for their consideration.

LAWFUL ACCESS

WHEREAS privacy is being eroded and surveillance increased both nationally and internationally since 9/11;

AND WHEREAS the Government of Canada has revived its 1992 Lawful Access Consultation Document in a recent series of consultations with the ostensible aim of updating law enforcement and national security capabilities to deal with new technologies;

AND WHEREAS the proposals would give law enforcement agencies the power, without judicial review, to compel service providers to store and save existing data specific to a transaction or client;

AND WHEREAS the proposals would allow law enforcement or national security representatives to compel service providers, including libraries which have only a partial exemption, upon written or oral request and without judicial review, to provide personal information about specific individual subscribers, including an individual's name, contact information and dynamic IP address;

AND WHEREAS the proposals would substantially erode existing safeguards that limit access to personal information by law enforcement and national security agencies;

AND WHEREAS no empirical data has been provided to justify the proposed measures;

AND WHEREAS the consultation process has not provided adequate opportunity for public participation and debate unlike its close co-operation between the government and the telecommunications industry.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the UBCM oppose the current Lawful Access proposals;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the UBCM urge the Minister of Justice to conduct a broad public consultation on the need for, and impact of, the Lawful Access proposals, including providing empirical evidence to justify its proposals and the reasons some organizations are excluded or partially excluded while others are not;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the UBCM write all British Columbia MPs, sending them a copy of this resolution;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that UBCM forward this resolution to the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) for their consideration.

EARLY LITERACY

WHEREAS current research in early childhood development shows that early interventions with language and reading experiences are essential in developing literate and engaged individuals;

AND WHEREAS qualified children's librarians are skilled in the delivery of pre-literacy programs for very young children and their caregivers;

AND WHEREAS the Minister of State for British Columbia has committed to a three year support for a Province-wide Books for BC Babies program in conjunction with the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Community Aboriginal and Women's Services;

AND WHEREAS the Premier of British Columbia has committed to making British Columbia the most literate jurisdiction in the world;

AND WHEREAS the Literacy Summit acknowledges the need for partnerships in extending the work of literacy into the community at large;

AND WHEREAS the Federal Government has given support for a National Children's agenda and allocates Family Literacy funding through the National Literacy Secretariat;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the UBCM write to the Premier of British Columbia and BC MLA's, the Prime Minister of Canada and MP's urging that there be enhanced cross-Ministerial financial support for early childhood literacy initiatives;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that UBCM urge local governments to support partnerships between public libraries and early childhood educators in fostering early childhood literacy programs both in the library and elsewhere in the community;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the UBCM forward this resolution to the Federation of Canadian Municipalities for their consideration.

ACCESS TO WELFARE

WHEREAS the number of people who are homeless has doubled in the Lower Mainland and increased throughout the Province in the past two years;

AND WHEREAS only one in five street homeless in the Lower Mainland is on welfare and receiving employment assistance;

AND WHEREAS it is impossible to find a job and participate in the economy without first having a place to live and impossible to get a place to live without an income;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM urge the Provincial Government to reduce the barriers and revise the eligibility criteria for accessing the BC Employment and Assistance program to ensure that the street homeless can access those benefits.

JOB TRAINING

WHEREAS there is an increasing demand for construction workers to build the Olympics and other related facilities;

AND WHEREAS there is an inadequate supply of BC construction workers;

AND WHEREAS there are an increasing number of people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness who could become employment-ready and obtain employment;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM urge the Provincial Government to financially support and expand employment services and training programs including programs like Bladerunners and other programs that provide assistance to help homeless people transition to employment.

HOUSING

WHEREAS one in five BC households are in core-need housing need and 15 % are paying more than 50% of the gross household income on rent;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM urge the Province to match the Federal funding for affordable housing included in the 2005 budget (\$1.6 billion over the next two years) that will be allocated to BC, to develop the program framework for investing the Federal and Provincial funding, and, through BC Housing, to initiate the development of social housing to meet the needs of vulnerable households across BC as soon as possible.



SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

WHEREAS the Ministry of Health's 2002 report on Best Practices for BC's Mental Health Reform, supportive housing is a best practice for addressing the needs of people with a mental illness;

AND WHEREAS supportive housing is a cost effective way of housing vulnerable people, noting that a bed in a psychiatric ward can cost \$500 per day compared to \$20-\$40 a day for supportive housing;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM urge the Provincial Government to work with Health Authorities and other partners to build more supportive housing throughout the Province and ensure that funding is available to provide the appropriate support services.

MENTAL ILLNESS AND ADDICTION SERVICES

WHEREAS people with mental illness and addictions have a higher risk for homelessness;

AND WHEREAS up to two-thirds of people who are street homeless in some municipalities have mental illness or drug addictions or both;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM urge the Provincial Government to expand services and funding for people with mental illness and addictions throughout the Province, including actions such as increasing service delivery through Assertive Community Treatment, providing services for individuals who have a concurrent disorder, implementing the Child and Youth Mental Health Plan, increasing detox, especially for youth, providing youth residential addictions treatment, etc.

ACCESS TO A COMPREHENSIVE RANGE OF ADDICTION SERVICES THROUGHOUT BC

WHEREAS the issue of addiction to legal and illegal substances is an issue for all BC municipalities and appropriate responses need to be developed province wide;

AND WHEREAS addiction is a health issue that needs to be addressed with a comprehensive health response;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM support access to a comprehensive range of health services to address drug addiction including prevention, treatment and harm reduction interventions so that residents of BC municipalities with drug problems have access to addiction services according to community need and distributed throughout the province.

CBRN FUNDING RESOLUTION FOR MUNICIPAL POLICE FORCES

WHEREAS society has placed significant emphasis on crisis and consequence management capacity in response to terrorist acts based on Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) events;

AND WHEREAS police services, and other first responders, will be the first to attend CBRN incidents within their local jurisdictions;

AND WHEREAS the lives of citizens will be directly impacted on the capacity of those first responders;

AND WHEREAS the acquisition and maintenance of these capabilities (training and equipment) is very expensive;

AND WHEREAS the current method of obtaining CBRN funding for municipal police services is through the Joint Emergency Preparedness Program (JEPP) grant, disbursed by the Office of Critical Infrastructure Protection and Emergency Preparedness (OC�PEP) after Provincial and Municipal government approval;

AND WHEREAS this present method of obtaining extraordinary funding has proven to be inadequate, time consuming and cumbersome;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of British Columbia Municipalities urge the Federal and Provincial governments to provide increased and streamlined funding opportunities for crisis and consequence management of Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear events directly to municipal police services (based on their current and identified police responsibilities).

## CBRN FUNDING RESOLUTION FOR MUNICIPAL POLICE FORCES

### Discussion

The current funding scheme recognizes that first responders require funding, training and support to respond to CBRN incidents (terrorist and non-terrorist). This is further supported by the report of the Senate Standing Committee on National Security and Defence (2004). The RCMP have received direct funding as the "primary" police response agency regarding issues of domestic security. Municipal funding to bolster CBRN response initiatives was funded through the Joint Emergency Preparedness Program (JEPP) grant, by the Office of Critical Infrastructure Protection and Emergency Planning (OCIPEP) based on funds allocated in the December 2001 Federal Budget. RCMP, as the national police force responsible for domestic security received direct funding whereas municipal police forces were funded through the JEPP grant process. The JEPP grants allowed for municipalities to acquire CBRN response equipment with a focus on decontamination, and to a lesser extent response capabilities. As a municipal police force, the Vancouver Police Department applied for funding through this process.

Using funds applied for in fiscal year 2002, approximately **\$160,000**, the Vancouver Police Department has purchased CBRN response equipment and has put money toward a CBRN/Clandestine Laboratory response vehicle. The Department is currently in the process of recruiting for the response team.

The Vancouver Police Department is the largest municipal police department in British Columbia, one of eleven (11) municipal forces in the province, and is a recognized leader in innovative approaches to municipal policing. The City is an international destination and for the 2010 Winter Olympic and Para-Olympic Games. The Department is currently in the process of renewing its commitment to the RCMP (Criminal Intelligence Division, Ottawa) as a first response agency to terrorist incidents, under Section 6(2) of the *Security Offences Act*. As such, the Vancouver Police Department takes on the responsibility for domestic terrorism response in the City of Vancouver.

This is an ongoing commitment. Consistent and streamlined funding arrangements need to be made to support these activities. Therefore, a resolution has been presented to reflect the need for direct funding of municipal police services in these circumstances.

What follows are excerpts from a progression of Solicitor General Canada reports, speeches and press releases that are relevant to this issue.

## Background

### Glossary

CBRN - Chemical Biological Radiological Nuclear

Crisis Management - incident management; measures required to prevent or resolve a terrorist threat or an act of terrorism

Consequence Management - measures to mitigate damage, loss, hardship and suffering by acts of terrorism, including measures to restore essential public services to affected populations

JEPP - Joint Emergency Preparedness Programme

OCIPEP - Office of Critical Infrastructure Protection and Emergency Planning, Department of National Defence

RCMP - Royal Canadian Mounted Police

SGC - Solicitor General Canada

### Counter-Terrorism Roles and Responsibilities: Policing

In April 2001, the Solicitor General Canada released a discussion paper on developing national terrorist incident response capabilities that states:

*The Government of Canada and, from an operational perspective, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), have primary responsibility for responding to domestic incidents of terrorism. However, in terms of operational response, the RCMP has always interpreted this as primary but not sole responsibility. This approach recognizes provincial/territorial and **municipal police responsibility** for the maintenance of law and order and public safety within provincial/territorial borders. This dictates that in many jurisdictions the operational response to terrorist incidents will include **municipal police forces and other first responders, acting in concert with the RCMP.** (SGC April 18, 2001, p3, emphasis added)*

This same paper assumes that *“speed is of the essence when responding to an incident of CBRN terrorism. Therefore and effective response is dependent on the creation of a local response capability”* (SGC April 18, 2001, p4).

Acknowledging that CBRN incidents also arise from incidents other than terrorism, crisis management of terrorist incidents rests locally:

*Provincial and territorial governments, and their respective police services, are responsible for law enforcement and public safety within their jurisdiction. Specifically, this means, in a terrorist incident, mounting an operational response consistent with any 6(2) [Security Offences Act] agreement or local arrangement that may be in place. (SGC April 18, 2001, p 13)*

Through consultation with the provinces and territories, the SGC concluded that *“no jurisdiction in Canada currently has the capacity to deal with a mass casualty situation, from the perspective of first responders or health services”* (SGC, March 2002, p1). Further, that *“basic awareness training in responding to CBRN terrorist incidents is urgently needed by all first responders...”* (SGC, March 2002, p2)

## Funding

The December 2001 Budget allocated \$7.7 billion for public security. Of that, *“more than half a billion dollars was allocated to strengthen Canada’s preparedness to prevent and respond to chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear (CBRN) threats”* (GOC, February 2003, p1).

Of that, the government provided *“\$59 M over six years for CBRN training for first responders, [and] allocated \$25 M to the RCMP to strengthen CBRN teams”* (GOC, February 2003, p 4).

Along with the need to train is the need for funding for equipment, resources and support.

*In terms of the acquisition of equipment, the Joint Emergency Preparedness Program (JEPP) funding model was discussed. Most jurisdictions commented that although many had received funding through the JEPP process, this program is considered to be too slow and cumbersome to be effective. ... Any funding model would have to take into account ongoing maintenance and longer-term replacement costs and allow for flexibility. ... Lack of funding is currently a barrier to the development of consistent and sustainable response capabilities across Canada.* (SGC, March 2002, p3, emphasis added)

## Needs and Agreements

One of the short-term needs identified was for *“a clear federal policy for enhancing the capacity of first responders to deal with a CBRN incident”* (SGC, March 2002, p14).

This corresponds with the Roles and Responsibilities identified in an overview of Canada’s counter-terrorism arrangements in 2002, the Solicitor General’s office stated that

*The nature of Canadian federalism is such that preventing or responding to a terrorist incident requires concurrent, co-operative and supportive action by federal, provincial, territorial and municipal governments, departments and agencies.* (SGC 2002, p3-4)

Part of this document identifies one of the responsibilities of the RCMP as being,

*To develop agreements with other police forces pursuant to sub-section 6(2) of the Security Offences Act, in order to define each others roles and responsibilities in the event of a terrorist incident* (SGC 2002, p3-12).

Where:

*The police service of jurisdiction is responsible for responding to all criminal offences, including terrorist threats and incidents. Should the police jurisdiction be other than the RCMP, the RCMP and the police service of jurisdiction responding in accordance with their agreement pursuant to sub-section 6(2) of the Security Offences Act.* (SGC 2002, p3-13)

Sub-section 6(2) of the Security Offences Act states:

*To facilitate consultation and cooperation in relation to the carrying out of the duties assigned to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police under subsection (1), the Solicitor General may, with the approval of the Governor in Council, enter into arrangements with the government of a province concerning the*

*responsibilities of members of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and members of provincial and municipal police forces with respect to the performance of duties assigned to peace officers in relation to any offence referred to in section 2 or the apprehension of the commission of such an offence. (SOA, RS 1985, c. S-7)*

Through these types of bilateral agreements, the Government of Canada understands that the

*Responsibility for CBRN incident response is shared by federal, provincial, and municipal governments. Civil emergencies are initially dealt with by first responders - police, fire fighters, and emergency medical personnel. (GOC, February 2003, p1)*

## Relationships

In a speech to the Canadian Police Association, Annual Executive Board Meeting and Legislative Conference, in Ottawa, March 24, 2003, the Honourable Wayne Easter stated:

*The importance of building relationships, listening and acting in partnership with the police community cannot be underestimated. Canada's safety and security depend on it. ... Our commitment is backed up by the allocation of almost ten billion dollars to national safety and security over the past two years. And our commitment continues. ... In no other area is the role of first responders more important than in emergency situations. In fact, 95% of emergencies are dealt with initially by front-line officers. ... Canada's safety and security requires a new culture in a world transformed by terrorism, ... Importantly, it requires input from you - the front-line police officers working daily to keep Canadians safe and our nation secure. (Easter, March 24, 2003; emphasis added)*

## Conclusion

It is evident that CBRN response initiatives, be they to terrorist or non-terrorist incidents, are built on strong partnerships. Municipal policing agencies play a key role in the integrated response structure. In the case of the Vancouver Police Department, there is a vision, expertise, willingness and the need to build specialized response teams. Through agreement with the Solicitor General and RCMP, the Vancouver Police Department *is* the first response policing organization in the jurisdiction. This responsibility, consistent with the federal RCMP mandate, requires adequate, direct funding.

## References

Easter, Wayne (March 24, 2003) "Speaking Notes for the Honourable Wayne Easter, PC, MP, Solicitor General Canada; To the Canadian Police Association Annual Executive Board Meeting and Legislative Conference, Ottawa, March 24, 2003", Ottawa: Ontario.

Government of Canada (February 2003) "Responding to CBRN Threats: A Federal Perspective", Ottawa: Ontario.



Government of Canada (1985) "Security Offences Act (RS, 1985); Chapter S-7", Ottawa: Ontario.

MacAulay, Lawrence (October 29, 2001) "Federal Solicitor General Outlines Canada's Anti-Terrorist Plan to International Chiefs of Police Conference", Press Release, Ottawa: Ontario.

Solicitor General Canada (2002) "An Overview of Canada's Counter-Terrorism Arrangements", Ottawa: Ontario.

Solicitor General Canada (March 2002) "Summary of the Federal / Provincial / Territorial Consultations on Developing Options to Strengthen National Consequence Management Capability for Terrorist Incidents October-December 2001", Ottawa: Ontario.

Solicitor General Canada (April 18, 2001) "Developing Options to Strengthen National Consequence Management Response Capability for Terrorist Incidents", Ottawa: Ontario.

MUNICIPAL POLICE FORCES OBTAINING FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO UPHOLD THE NATIONAL SECURITY POLICY

WHEREAS the Federal Government has recognized the role of policing and enforcement in upholding the, new, National Security Policy;

AND WHEREAS the Federal Government has allocated a sum of \$690 million, from unused, pre-designated Budget 2001 allotments, Budget 2003 contingency reserves and further supplemented by Budget 2004 funds;

AND WHEREAS the Federal Government has directed these funds to six (6) strategic areas: intelligence, emergency planning and management, public health, transport security, border security and international security;

AND WHEREAS these moneys have been earmarked for Federal Departments, including Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) with neither acknowledgement that municipal policing forces conduct intelligence and policing activities in lieu of these agencies nor any mention of directing funds to municipal policing forces that may engage in the same activities;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of British Columbia Municipalities urge the Federal Government to acknowledge the vital role that municipal policing agencies play in supporting Canada's National Security;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Union of British Columbia Municipalities encourage the Federal Government to establish proportionate funding schemes, prorated on RCMP allotments, and control mechanisms for municipal police forces engaged in activities of national importance.

## MUNICIPAL POLICE FORCES OBTAINING FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO UPHOLD THE NATIONAL SECURITY POLICY

### Discussion

The document *Securing an Open Society: Canada's National Security Policy (April 2004)* outlines the Federal Government's strategies for enhancing Canada's national security. Six (6) strategic areas are outlined in the policy: intelligence, emergency planning and management, public health, transportation security, border security and international security. Canadian municipal policing agencies are involved in each of these strategic areas, either through direct crisis management or in a consequence management role.

Although the Federal Government has addressed the issue of national security with foresight, it is not taking into account that actual on-ground, front-line policing occurs by many agencies other than the RCMP. For example, our largest port cities have municipal police forces that take responsibility for port policing. The Federal Government has allocated \$308 million to improving marine security, with funds to be dedicated to the Canadian Forces Marine Command, Transport Canada, the RCMP and the Canadian Coast Guard (PP37-39). No where in the National Security Policy does it state what funds the municipal police forces will receive.

The Senate Standing Committee on National Security and Defence, in their March 2004 publication, *National Emergencies: Canada's Fragile Front Lines; an Upgrade Strategy*, noted that:

*Getting funds into the hands of the heavy lifters - our first responders in police, fires, ambulance, hospital and other front line emergency units - will require smooth linkages between all levels of government.... The Committee would like to see evidence that [the Office of Critical Infrastructure Protection and Emergency Preparedness] is going to every length possible ... to ensure that first responders have the resources and support they need to do their jobs. (P. 18-19)*

Regarding the relations between Federal, Provincial and Territorial Governments, this report stated:

*The best way to serve the citizen is by listening to the first responders' needs and wants.... The challenge is to coordinate three orders of government - the federal order that funds (and plans); the provincial / territorial order that administers (and plans); and the municipal order that actually responds. A short list of "musts":*

- *All orders of government must be seized with the urgency of developing optimal disaster-response systems;*
- *Funding for resources and training must be adequate;*
- *Funding must be allowed to flow through to the local level where the resources and training are needed;*
- *Federal and provincial / territorial governments must co-operate in developing nation-wide contingency plans; and*
- *Federal and provincial / territorial governments must listen to first responders so that the resources and training provided are truly appropriate to their needs. (P. 37-38)*

## Conclusion

The first response agencies in Canada play a vital role in protecting national security. Many policing agencies are municipal and do not receive the same federal recognition as does the RCMP, nor the same funding. A mechanism for funding municipal policing agencies conducting the same work, in place of or augmenting the efforts of the RCMP needs to be recognized and put in place. Appropriate checks and balances are needed to ensure that funds are allocated according to need.

**ELECTRONIC PROPERTY REPORTING LEGISLATION FOR SECOND-HAND PROPERTY DEALERS**

WHEREAS property crime has become a major contributor to the overall crime rate in British Columbia;

AND WHEREAS Property Crime and the Illegal Drug Trade are closely linked;

AND WHEREAS a tremendous amount of police resources have to be dedicated to both the property crime issue and the illegal drug trade;

AND WHEREAS citizens of British Columbia are increasingly negatively impacted by both property crime and the illegal drug trade;

AND WHEREAS the problem of theft and robbery cost the Canadian economy several billion dollars a year;

AND WHEREAS electronic second-hand property reporting technology exists today and is presently in use in several jurisdictions across Canada, and has had a positive impact on the problem of property crime by assisting police in identifying active criminals and in returning property to victims;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of BC Municipalities urge the Provincial Government to adopt legislation making it mandatory to report second-hand property transactions to police, using the X-tract electronic property reporting technology that exists today.

**ELECTRONIC PROPERTY REPORTING LEGISLATION FOR SECOND-HAND PROPERTY DEALERS**

**Commentary**

Detailed commentary provided in attached 'Municipal Leader Briefing', authored by Syscon.



# Property Crime & Cash Conversion

## A Briefing Note for Municipal Leaders and Managers

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**The Xtract Secondhand Transaction Surveillance System is a commercial-off-the-shelf software solution to the twin challenges of policing secondhand transactions and solving property crime. This document is intended to brief Government Officials on the nature of the problem, competing solution approaches, and the successful approach pioneered by the City of Vancouver.**

### 1.0 Introduction

**“While the battle against property crime might seem futile, we can reduce it. The most useful thing we can do... is make our property harder to steal... Heroin-addicted break-and-enter types aren’t exactly master criminals, and if they can’t get into your house or car in a hurry, they’ll rob your neighbor instead...”**

**However, while prevention is key, the recovery of your neighbor’s stolen guitar - and perhaps even catching the thief who took it - shouldn’t be written off. Those efforts must be part of any sensible anti-theft campaign...**

**(P)olice and city councils must do what they can to make the thief’s life difficult. The City of Vancouver has done an exemplary job of this... Xtract is just the latest instance.”**

**Lead Editorial, Vancouver Sun  
30 October 2001**

In 2000, the shattering of glass or the cracking of door frames rang out 293,416 times across Canada. At an average of 803 times per day -- once every two minutes -- thieves relieved Canadians of hundreds of millions of dollars. British Columbia incurred some 142 such incidents per day, with one in six occurring in the City of Vancouver. As the clock ticked towards 2001, British Columbians were deprived of some \$100,000,000 worth of property. Most thefts involve items valued at less than \$500, which thieves easily convert into cash at local pawnbrokers and secondhand dealers. Given rising insurance premiums and deductibles, police also believe that property crime is significantly under-reported. Unless the claim significantly exceeds their insurance deductible, victims likely accept the theft and move on.

Already under surveillance by local police, the pawn industry offers several approaches to allowing police to access electronic transaction records instead of being inundated with paper reports, comprehensive analysis of which would require unacceptably high levels of human resource staffing. The limitations of these solution models can only be overcome with a system specifically designed to meet police investigative requirements.

In 2001, the City of Vancouver and the Vancouver Police Department implemented a successful program to improve secondhand transaction surveillance. With a combination of web-based electronic reporting, automated matching against stolen property records, and powerful, complex query tools, the City was able to increase its identification and recovery of stolen property by 300% in one year.

Local government leaders now have a tremendous opportunity to deploy a similar solution, and generate similar, measurable results in a tight timeframe. Xtract is an economical way of “target hardening” both secondhand merchants, as well as individual property owners and citizens. The solution makes life difficult for thieves, and generates a highly positive response from the public.

## 2.0 Property Crime and Cash Conversion Facilities

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**Police refer to collateral loan and secondhand dealer operations as “the criminal’s ATM”.**

**Criminals know that secondhand merchants are a safe environment for cash conversion.**

**Professional thieves know that the surest way of avoiding police detection is to operate in multiple jurisdictions.**

**Police have become overwhelmed by paper transaction reports.**

**Manual comparison of stolen property records against secondhand transaction records consumes inordinate amounts of investigative time.**

**Property crime is an integral feeder of funds to international organized crime by fueling the narcotics trade.**

**Automated matching processes must run against local police Records Management System data because the comprehensiveness of state-level and national stolen property databases typically lag by 21-45 days, and only contain a small subset of local data.**

Property crime accounts for approximately 75% of all crime. Two thirds of these incidents involve the theft of items valued under \$500. With a low percentage of exceptions, property crime is a regional phenomenon aggravated by the cash flow needs of narcotic addicts. Wittingly and unwittingly, merchants who deal in the purchase and sale of secondhand property are used as points of cash conversion. Thieves know that the easiest way to convert the physical proceeds of crime into cash is to sell the items to a nearby pawnbroker or secondhand dealer. Experienced thieves know that a sure way to avoid the attention of police in the jurisdiction in which they stole is to cross into a neighboring jurisdiction to sell their ill-gotten acquisitions.

Various levels of government have historically required that pawnbrokers provide local police with paper transaction reports. Typically, larger police jurisdictions and cities require such reporting occur within 24 hours; smaller jurisdictions and municipalities may give dealers up to a week or more to file reports. With the growth of collateral loan operations in major centers, and the even greater expansion of merchants who deal in secondhand property, police have become overwhelmed with paper reports, and feel that the general lack of surveillance of non-pawnbroker secondhand operations has provided a safe environment in which thieves can convert stolen property into cash.

Police simply do not have the resources -- and governments do not have the funds to pay for the human effort required -- to scour each secondhand property transaction, and compare these transactions to lists of stolen property. As a result, information crucial to the identification of persons responsible for thefts, as well as the recovery of stolen property, remains unexamined in file storage boxes, and is never comprehensively reviewed except in rare cases where an investigator’s intuition leads her to scour through reams of daily reports looking for a person or item of interest, or when a major crime (e.g., a homicide, or serious assault) involves a theft of something unique.

In 1998, the United States Department of Justice reported gross losses attributable to property crime as exceeding \$15.6 billion. In major urban centers, annual losses can easily approach and exceed \$100 million. The costs of the theft of a \$200 VCR, which is turned into \$20 at cash conversion, include break and enter repairs, insurance deductibles, item replacement, and police investigative time. Victims’ insurance premiums and deductibles rise. Environments that permit easy conversion of the gains of burglaries into cash fuel other types of criminal behavior, including the sale and purchase of narcotics. In turn, the market for narcotics generates violent crime at the street level, funds organized crime and violent transnational political agendas, and creates economic and political instability. In short, it reduces citizens’ quality of life.

In order to improve the efficiency of existing police resources, legislation and bylaws must require submission of electronic transaction records to a police owned, operated and controlled database. Legal coverage must extend from pawnbrokers to a range of merchants dealing in secondhand property, and descriptions of frequently stolen categories of items must be more detailed. Transaction item records must be compared comprehensively to stolen property records, with potential matches brought to police attention automatically. Search capabilities must assist officers in rapid identification of anomalous and unusual transactions. Finally, an electronic solution must be amenable to multi-jurisdictional, regional deployment.

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### 3.0 Four Competing Solution Models

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The market offers four approaches to secondhand transaction law enforcement.

**Pawn software vendor provides copy of system to police for disk-based updates.**

**Pawn Industry Solution 1: Modified Pawnshop Management System.** This solution involves a slightly customized pawnshop management solution deployed on a PC in the Pawn Unit office, updated by disks submitted by pawnbrokers capable of exporting data in a specific format. Since not all pawnbrokers utilize systems capable of generating such exports, this approach is combined with paper-based reporting. In some cases, police staff enter paper-based data to “complete” the database. The system enables searches for specific items and individuals of interest, but has no capacity for automated matching against stolen property databases, or sharing data across regional jurisdictions.

**Pawn software application services provider allows police access to centralized pawn data maintained in private data center.**

**Pawn Industry Solution 2: Pawnshop Management Application Service.** This solution involves offering pawnshop management applications (point of sale, inventory, etc.) as an internet-browser, transaction fee-based solution to the information management needs of pawnshop proprietors. With the agreement of their clients, the application vendor provides free search utilities to police, who can access the centralized transaction data repository with a web-browser. The vendor provides serial-number based matching against CPIC records. Because the data resides in a non-police data center, both the system architecture and police data security rules would prevent comparison against local police stolen item records. Finally, since the vendor operates in a highly competitive environment (pawn shop applications), it would be difficult, if not impossible, to implement bylaws requiring that all secondhand merchants use the solution.

**Pawn industry advocates voluntary submission of limited data to centralized, private data source, and sells access to this data to police.**

**Pawn Industry Solution 3: Centralized Transaction Database.** This solution involves voluntary, free pawnbroker uploads of transaction data to a centralized database. The vendor provides police with subscription-based access, allowing name-based searches and item-based searches, but requiring that each search be submitted with a police incident number. Developed to reflect the reporting policies of the National Pawnbrokers Association, this system transfers ownership and control of secondhand transaction data away from police, and provides only limited tools with which to search the data. The architecture of the system makes automated comparisons with local police practically impossible, and obscures meaningful local data among meaningless non-local data. With its “voluntary” submission policy, low-detail data collection, minimal search tools, and lack of “automation”, this approach cannot offer the comprehensive local and regional coverage required to conduct effective surveillance of secondhand transactions.

**Designed specifically to meet police requirements, Xtract allows departments to maintain ownership and control of pawn data, as well as providing a foundation for regional cooperation with neighboring police agencies.**

**Xtract.** This comprehensive, police-oriented solution is sold on a traditional licensing/support/maintenance model. The software allows police to provide a free web-based Merchant interface (usable by any merchant with a PC, web browser, and internet connectivity), as well as an Application Program Interface that accepts electronic messages generated by point of sale and inventory applications. Automated matching routines compare all secondhand transaction items against multiple police stolen property databases, highlighting confidence-scored potential matches for officer attention. A feature rich police interface provides officers with the means to conduct complicated queries against the transaction database, establish “Agents” that run such queries on every incoming transaction, and provides transactional analysis reports that highlight anomalies, and enable bylaw enforcement. With multi-jurisdictional filtering capabilities, Xtract is designed to be shared by multiple police agencies within a geographic region, thus providing a foundation for comprehensive target-hardening of the secondhand goods industry. Xtract makes life difficult for criminals.



## 4.0 The Vancouver Experience

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**Since local police records are governed by the tightest possible data security rules, comparisons with secondhand transactions may only take place in physical law enforcement environments. This is one reason why it is imperative that police retain ownership and control of secondhand transaction data.**

**Local police stolen property records matching eliminates the 21-45 day lag that typically characterizes updates to the national stolen property database at CPIC, meaning that suspicious transactions can be identified in a timely manner.**

**By automating key aspects of information management, Xtract reduces investigative time, increases identification of chargeable suspects, enables the return of more stolen property, and allows police officers to spend more time on the street, enforcing the law.**

**The promise of personal property registry services lies in improving the descriptions of stolen property, making it easier to make accurate automated matches, and further improving police productivity.**

**Funding options include general fund expenditures, targeted business license fee increases, and small, targeted service-fee based levies associated with property registry services.**

In 2000, the Vancouver Police Department (VPD) began working with City of Vancouver staff to correct secondhand dealer bylaw flaws that allowed thieves to abuse merchants by using them to convert stolen property into cash. Within a two year period, the City tightened its reporting requirements, strongly encouraged electronic reporting, and extended transactional surveillance to six classes of secondhand businesses that had previously not been required to report. VPD partnered with a local software development firm to create a comprehensive information management system reflecting the requirements of policing secondhand transactions. Beginning in 2001, VPD began collecting electronic transaction records and automated comparisons of secondhand items against Canadian Police Information Center (CPIC) stolen property records. By the end of 2002, some 21 pawnshop operators, and over 100 secondhand merchants used the system to submit electronic transaction records to police. With a newly revised bylaw taking effect in 2003, the City and VPD intend to complete their coverage of secondhand property channels by adding some 200 more merchants to the system. At the same time, the software will begin automated comparisons against the regional police records management system, PRIME-BC, thus enabling rapid identification of stolen property making its way through secondhand cash conversion channels.

In its first year, the system helped increase the recovery of stolen property by 300%, an enabled VPD to redeploy three full time equivalent resources that had previously been engaged in examining some 1000 daily secondhand transaction reports and conducting manual stolen property checks. Since the system enables officers to perform in seconds investigative tasks that previously would have taken hours and days, the return on investment lies mainly in freeing police officers from mundane data scouring to engage in actual on-the-street policing. Relating an example in which officers in a neighboring police jurisdiction participating in a pilot program were able to identify a thief and recover significant amounts of property sold to Vancouver secondhand dealers, one officer wrote: *While it is doubtful that the suspects involved would have been identified without the aid of the Xtract (Xtract) program, there is no doubt that its use has been crucial in cutting down valuable investigative time, providing investigators with extra fuel in interviews, and recovering items which would otherwise have been lost.*

Xtract product enhancement plans include the addition of a web-based personal property registry service, which can be provided to citizens at no direct charge to encourage residential and business “target hardening” through the maintenance of accurate descriptions of personal valuables. Plans include allowing citizens to electronically file stolen property reports against police incident numbers, meaning that officers will no longer have to spend valuable time recording vague descriptions of losses. The combination of the availability of better data from citizens, decreased data entry efforts by police, and automated matching against secondhand transaction records will improve police efficiency and reduce per-incident investigation costs.

In Vancouver, City officials funded the initial acquisition of Xtract (Xtract) through general fund expenditure, and the ongoing costs with increased secondhand dealer business license fees. With the addition of a property registry, available at no charge to all citizens, civic governments may also wish to consider \$0.50-\$1.00 property tax or false alarm program levies in order to more equitably share the burden of target hardening among all stakeholders.

ENCOURAGE MEMBERS OF THE UBCM TO ADOPT A SECURITY ALARM SYSTEM BYLAW SIMILAR TO THAT USED IN THE CITY OF VANCOUVER

WHEREAS false alarm rate of most municipalities currently run at or near 99%;

AND WHEREAS false alarms are inherently dangerous to the public as they take away essential police services from other “real emergencies” requiring police attendance”;

AND WHEREAS false alarms are horrifically wasteful of municipal resources in both essential protective/investigative services provided by the police and the unnecessary financial burden that this places on communities as a whole;

AND WHEREAS some police agencies have sought “quick fix solutions” by not attended any unverified alarm calls resulting a withdrawal of police services, a public who feel that the police don’t care and increases in break & enter rates within their respective communities as thieves realize that the police will not likely attend;

AND WHEREAS a properly crafted Security Alarm Bylaw coupled with an effective False Alarm Reduction Program is the best way in which to solve the false alarm epidemic which plagues most communities in North America.;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of BC Municipalities urge its’ membership to adopt a bylaw similar to the Security Alarm System Bylaw currently used by the City of Vancouver, BC.

ENCOURAGE MEMBERS OF THE UBCM TO ADOPT A SECURITY ALARM SYSTEM BYLAW SIMILAR TO THAT USED IN THE CITY OF VANCOUVER

**Commentary:**

Since the most recent amendments to Security Alarm System Bylaw No. 7111 - the City of Vancouver has enjoyed a 65% reduction\* in requests for the Vancouver Police Department to attend false alarm within the City of Vancouver.

An annual Permitting/Reinstatement System realizes revenues of over 1.1 million dollars annually and effectively ensures that:

- Alarm users/alarm companies are accountable for the use and operation of their alarm systems and doing their best to determine whether or not police attendance is required;
- Creates revenue which helps offset related policing costs while ensuring continued attendance at alarm incidents.
- Enhances police service levels by reducing waste and allowing police the time and resources to be more proactive within their communities.
- Maintains the public's expectation of police service (to "serve and protect") while fostering better relationships with both the public and the alarm industry.

The reduction in the incidence of false alarms within the City of Vancouver has been dramatic. From 40,000 in 1992 with 23,000 alarm systems to approximately 14,000 in 2004 with over 58,000 alarm systems gives Vancouver one of the lowest false alarm factors in North America. The Vancouver Police workload went from spending 18% of their time attending alarm calls in 1992 to a mere 6% in 2004! With the recent amendments to Security Alarm System Bylaw No. 7111, 2005 it is estimated that the City will see an additional reduction in false alarms being reported to the police of up to 65%! This has allowed the Police to continue to provide alarm response to the public while allowing them to be more proactive with other policing concerns.

A Permit Holder is allowed two false alarms within a 12-month period. A Permit Holder who has had a second false alarm is sent a warning letter with a view to allow them to resolve their false alarm issued before their permit is cancelled. On the third false alarm, within the 12-month period, the permit is cancelled. The permit holder can appeal the cancellation, in writing, to the Vancouver Police Board or pay a reinstatement fee as follows:

	<u>1<sup>st</sup> Cancellation</u>	<u>2<sup>nd</sup> Cancellation</u>
Residential	\$75.00	\$150.00
Small Commercial (less than 140 sq. metres)	\$125.00	\$250.00
Large Commercial (greater than 140 sq. metres)	\$250.00	\$500.00

It is hoped that these measures, if adopted by your community, will result in the avoidance of wasting expensive police resources while maintaining the expected levels of police service within your community.

\*Statistical estimate comparing Feb 04' with Feb 05' - the first month of full bylaw implementation.