



## CITY OF VANCOUVER

# A6

### ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Date: November 15, 2007  
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RTS No.: 7008  
VanRIMS No.: 05-1000-30  
Meeting Date: November 27, 2007

TO: City Council

FROM: Chief Constable, Vancouver Police Department

SUBJECT: Vancouver Police Department Operational Review - Patrol Deployment Update

#### RECOMMENDATION

- A. THAT Council authorize the release of funding that was approved on February 27, 2007 to increase the sworn strength of the Vancouver Police Department by 17 police officers (which are to be deployed as patrol officers), from 1214 to 1231 as confirmation has been received from the Vancouver Police Union that it agrees to a shifting strategy that meets the operational and financial objectives outlined in the Administrative Report - *Vancouver Police Department Operational Review*, dated February 5, 2007 (RTS No. 6504).
- B. That Council authorize the allocation of \$827,400 from the Truck & Equipment Plant Account to purchase 19 vehicles over the next two years, to be repaid through annual charges as outlined in this report.

#### CITY MANAGER'S COMMENTS

The City Manager supports the above recommendation.

## CHIEF CONSTABLE'S COMMENTS

In early 2007, the joint City/VPD Operational Review Steering Committee presented findings of the *VPD Patrol Deployment Study*. This leading-edge report identified opportunities for internal efficiencies within the Department and the appropriate staffing requirements for patrol operations.

On February 27, 2007 Council approved 17 new officers for the Vancouver Police Department. The funding for these officers was subject to the Vancouver Police Union (VPU) agreeing to a shifting strategy that met the operational and financial objectives outlined in the February 5, 2007 Council Report (RTS No. 6504).

The VPU has recently agreed to a shifting strategy that will allow the Department to implement two new Metro Teams. These teams will be comprised of highly-visible uniformed patrol officers who will be deployed during the busiest hours of the day. This deployment strategy is believed to be the most efficient means of implementing the 17 new officers to achieve the best performance gains.

This agreement with the VPU allows for the previously approved funding, currently being held in General Government, to be released so the VPD may begin recruiting and training the new police officers. The VPD Executive is committed to increasing the presence of uniformed police officers on the streets of Vancouver.

## COUNCIL POLICY

It is Council policy that changes in staffing levels, either increases or reductions, be approved by Council. This includes the creation and deletion of regular positions and the re-allocation of funding from revenues or taxation.

Council approves expenditures from Reserves, including the Truck and Equipment Plant Account.

Council approves all increases in service levels, including the addition of vehicles and equipment to the fleet.

## PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to advise Council of the Vancouver Police Union's agreement to a shifting strategy that will meet the operational and financial objectives outlined in the Administrative Report - *Vancouver Police Department Operational Review*, dated February 5, 2007 (RTS No. 6504). The Vancouver Police Union's agreement allows for the release of previously authorized funding that is currently being held in General Government, subject to Council receiving this report back. The funding will enable the Vancouver Police Department to recruit and train the 17 new sworn officers approved by Council on February 27, 2007.

## BACKGROUND

The Vancouver Police Department (VPD) began a long-term review of its policing operations in 2005. A joint City of Vancouver (COV)/VPD Steering Committee was established to oversee the direction and scope of the project. The Steering Committee previously reported the results of the Operational Review to Council in March, 2006 (RTS No. 5019) and February, 2007 (RTS No. 6504). Another report back to Council is scheduled for December 2007, on the final phase of the project (RTS No. 7054).

As part of the Operational Review, a Patrol Deployment Study was completed in February, 2007. The study was based on historical patrol/Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) data, leading edge theoretical models, information on best practices, and research of the academic literature on policing. This study extended the previously published research and provided a solid empirical basis from which to determine the VPD's patrol requirements. Compared to other methods, the VPD approach to patrol deployment was more comprehensive in the sense that it considered many qualitative operational and managerial issues that are rarely considered elsewhere. The *VPD Patrol Deployment Study* examined the following topics:

- Resource deployment
- Call load
- Response time
- Allocated (reactive policing) and unallocated (proactive policing) time
- Shifting and scheduling
- Deployment of two-officer units and one-officer units
- Minimum staffing levels
- District boundaries and the use of Global Positioning System (GPS) technology

The *VPD Patrol Deployment Study* addressed two interrelated areas of patrol operations:

1. The study recommended changes to the existing deployment model that would lead to more efficient use of patrol resources.
2. The study recommended the appropriate resource requirements for patrol operations.

Some of the key findings of the *VPD Patrol Deployment Study* were as follows:

- The average call load per officer at the VPD is higher than most other comparable Canadian police agencies.
- On Friday and Saturday at midnight, there is an average of 20 calls for service waiting to be dispatched city-wide. Some of the calls waiting to be dispatched are serious and include break & enters in progress, assaults in progress, sexual assaults, robberies, thefts in progress, reports of domestic violence, suspicious circumstances, and motor vehicle accidents with injuries.
- Due to resource limitations, each year the VPD is unable to attend approximately 1,500 noise complaints, 1,400 annoying circumstances, 650 suspicious circumstances, 650 suspicious persons, 600 unwanted persons, 450 disturbing parties, 450 hazardous situations and 6,000 other calls for service. These calls represent quality of life issues that affect the citizens of Vancouver on a regular basis.
- There are not enough patrol resources to handle the current call load particularly during the evenings and on days later in the week.
- The average amount of time that VPD officers spend reacting to calls for service consumes approximately 65% of their shifts. The established best practice in this area

prescribes that officers should be spending 50% of their time reacting to calls for service and 50% of their time engaging in proactive policing activities.

- The VPD's average priority one response time of 11 minutes and 25 seconds was much slower than the best practice and the typical performance target for major North American cities of 7 minutes.

On February 13, 2007 the joint COV/VPD Steering Committee presented the findings of the *VPD Patrol Deployment Study* to Council. This included recommended changes to the current patrol deployment model and the addition of 65 sworn officers for patrol operations. The changes to the current deployment model included:

- Four District Surveillance Teams being reduced to two teams
- The creation of a new team in District 1 that would work straight afternoon shift (known as a fixed Delta shift). This would be created by redeploying existing patrol resources from District 1 that were approved by Council in 2005
- Extended 12-hour Delta Shift experiment to become permanent
- Special Patrol-based projects be reduced
- Minimum patrol staffing levels be adjusted to match the call load
- Deployment of 60% two-officer and 40% one-officer patrol units
- Actual strength in patrol be maintained as closely to authorized strength as possible
- Emergency Response Team to assist with more patrol calls when available

The joint COV/VPD Steering Committee also recommended that the new officers be used in part to create two new Metro Teams and an additional afternoon shift in patrol districts 2, 3 and 4. A Metro Team is a mobile uniform crime suppression patrol team that would be deployed on a straight afternoon shift and would follow a 4-on 4-off schedule. These teams would be a city-wide resource deployed daily, during the busiest hours of the day. The Metro Teams would allow the Duty Officer to deploy officers throughout the city to wherever their presence would have the greatest impact. Having dedicated patrol resources that are able to flow between the four districts is an efficient way of smoothing out variations in the workload in each district. These teams are flexible in that they can be directed to a given district if there is an unforeseen event, such as a demonstration, or the team can be split and sent to all or a combination of districts; this enables the VPD to better ensure reasonable response times and equitable resource allocation across all districts. This concept is based on a successful program that has been in place with the Los Angeles Police Department for many years. Compared to the alternative of adding patrol resources to existing teams in each district, the Metro Teams result in a greater reduction in priority one response times when an equal number of patrol resources are utilized. The Metro Team also allows for increased proactive policing time throughout the city by assisting districts that are particularly busy.

On February 27, 2007 Council approved an increase of 17 new sworn officers, increasing the authorized strength of the VPD from 1,214 to 1,231 officers. The new officers were designated for uniform patrol operations, specifically to implement:

- Internal changes to the current deployment model recommended in the VPD Patrol Deployment Study
- One new Metro Team (instead of two)

Council provided \$900,000 towards this initiative with the condition that funding be allocated to the VPD only after Council received confirmation from the VPD of the Vancouver Police

Union's acceptance of a shifting strategy that met the operational and financial objectives outlined in the Administrative Report - *Vancouver Police Department Operational Review*. The funding is currently being held in General Government pending this report back from the VPD. Decisions Q i and Q iv from the Regular Council Meeting Minutes - February 27, 2007 are noted below.

*Q i) THAT Council approve an increase to the Vancouver Police Department's sworn strength by 17 police officers in order to implement stage A1 and one of the two Metro units as identified in Stage A2, with officers only to be deployed as patrol officers at a net cost of \$900,000 for 2007, including vehicles, radios and patrol laptops based on the principles outlined in the Vancouver Police Department Operational Review.*

*Q iv) THAT the Chief Constable report, in consultation with the Police Board, the confirmation of the Vancouver Police Union's agreement to the recommended shifting strategy or other shifting patterns that meet the operational and financial objectives outlined in the Administrative Report - Vancouver Police Department Operational Review, dated February 5, 2007. Further, THAT funding shall not be allocated for these recommendations until this confirmation is received by Council.*

The Vancouver Police Union has recently agreed to a shifting strategy that will meet the operational and financial objectives outlined in the Administrative Report - *Vancouver Police Department Operational Review, dated February 5, 2007* (RTS No. 6504).

## DISCUSSION

Given that the approval of only 17 new officers was not a situation the joint COV/VPD Steering Committee had planned for, several possible deployment options were considered. It was determined that the implementation of one Metro Team would not be an efficient use of resources as it could not provide seven-day-per-week coverage. In turn, the 17 officers alone were not sufficient to implement two Metro Teams as the team sizes would be too small and therefore ineffective. An examination of possible deployment strategies has determined that positive results could be achieved by introducing another deployment option for the 17 new officers.

A deployment strategy was developed whereby two new Metro Teams could be created by combining the 17 new officers with seven officers from existing patrol resources in District 1. This new deployment strategy meets the original intention of the *VPD Patrol Deployment Study* and the recommendations of the joint COV/VPD Steering Committee to create two Metro Teams, and to also reassign existing District 1 officers to a fixed afternoon shift. The 24 officers would be divided into two teams of 12 officers, each comprised of one Sergeant and 11 Constables. The officers would work a fixed afternoon (Delta) shift from 1545 to 0300 hours. The two new Metro Teams would provide a city-wide benefit to all patrol districts when the demand for service is highest, seven-days-per-week. As such, this deployment strategy is believed to be the most efficient method of implementing the 17 new officers.

This deployment strategy requires the purchase of nineteen (19) vehicles. Ten (10) of these vehicles are unmarked (including five (5) vehicles that are referred to as unapproved in the Administrative Report - *Vancouver Police Department Vehicles Pending Review* dated

November 6, 2007 - RTS No. 6433) and will be used by the District Surveillance teams as described in the Administrative Report - *Vancouver Police Department Operational Review*, dated February 5, 2007 (RTS No. 6504). Additionally, as per the established Key Vehicles Ratios (KVRs), nine (9) marked cars are required to properly equip the newly formed Metro Teams.

District 1 was chosen to provide the additional seven Constables required to implement the Metro Teams for two reasons:

1. District 1 received 33 new officers from the 2005 staffing increases approved by Council. It is the only patrol district to have received a significant increase in resources and is in the best position to afford redeploying some of its officers.
2. The *VPD Patrol Deployment Study* recommended that District 1 redeploy some of its existing resources to create a fixed afternoon (Delta) shift that would benefit District 1. Under this new model District 1 would still redeploy officers to a fixed afternoon shift; however, they would be used to establish a second Metro Team that would provide benefits to District 1 and the rest of the city seven-days-per-week.

The advantages of the Metro Team strategy include:

- Consistent with the recommendations of the *VPD Patrol Deployment Study*
- Conforms to the recommendations of the joint COV/VPD Steering Committee
- Creates two Metro Teams instead of one
- Redeploys seven existing officers from District 1 to a fixed afternoon shift
- Deploys a total of 24 uniformed patrol officers to a new fixed afternoon shift when the demand for police service is the highest
- Provides seven-day-per-week coverage city-wide
- Ensures more patrol officers are deployed during the busiest hours of the day
- Increases the visible presence of uniformed police officers on the streets of Vancouver
- Increases the likelihood that more patrol units will be available later in the evening
- Accounts for daily unanticipated call load fluctuations between Districts
- Can be assigned and re-assigned at the discretion of the Duty Officer
- Can assist with unplanned demonstrations/protests and other events that arise
- Can be moved to a District where a major call has tied up all its resources
- Can assist with the Entertainment District as required on busy nights as outlined in the Granville Entertainment District report (RTS 6889)
- Model was pioneered by the LAPD and has proven to be very successful
- Every District would benefit, on average, when its call load is heavy
- No change to the Metro Team structure would be required if the authorized strength is increased in the future
- Believed to be the most efficient deployment option for implementing the 17 new officers

### Expected Improvements with the Metro Team Deployment Strategy

The *VPD Patrol Deployment Study* determined that, compared to other agencies, the VPD currently employs a very efficient shifting model in terms of matching the deployment of officers to the demands for service. The implementation of two new Metro Teams has several benefits. First, there would be an increase in the correlation between the calls for service and the amount of resources available. This means that more uniformed patrol officers would

be working throughout the city during the busiest hours of the day, thereby further improving an already efficient model. Second, there would be a reduction in the average response time to priority one calls. This reduction in response time has been shown in criminology studies to reduce the risk of injury or death for violent crime victims, improve solvability, increase the apprehension of offenders, and enhance the number of witnesses that are located. The third benefit would be a reduction in the typical utilization rate of each officer, meaning, a reduction in the amount of time officers spend reacting to calls for service. The abnormally high utilization rates that currently exist in patrol result in long response times to all types of calls for service, the need to consistently cancel calls for service because there are not enough units available, and a lack of available police officers to engage in proactive policing activities such as dealing with street disorder issues.

The following table summarizes the expected results from implementing two new Metro Teams. It shows how the VPD could improve the efficiency with which it responds to priority one (P1) calls, provide more time for proactive policing by reducing the utilization rate, and increase the correlation between staffing and call load.

Expected Performance		
	Current Situation	Addition of 2 Metro Teams
Average P1 Response Time (hours:minutes)	11:25	10:52
Decrease in Average P1 Response Time (seconds)	n/a	33
Average Utilization Rate (time dedicated to reactive policing)	65%	62%
Correlation Between Staffing and Call Load	.77	.79

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Release of the approved funding will allow the VPD to start recruiting for these positions in 2007. Due to the training time required, it is expected that the new Metro team would be operational in late 2008.

The estimated operating costs for 2008 are \$1,569,000, including \$1,030,000 for salaries, benefits and recruitment; \$136,000 for Uniforms and Equipment; \$192,000 for Administrative and other expenses (such as E-Comm, PRIME, IT and facilities); and \$211,000 for Fleet expenses. Further to Council's approval on February 27, 2007, funding has been included in the 2008 preliminary budget estimates, subject to Council receiving this report back and the 2008 budget process. Starting in 2009, the ongoing annual estimated costs will be \$2,016,000, subject to budget review.

The nineteen (19) required vehicles based on the VPD Master Schedule are to be funded by the Truck and Equipment Plant Account, at a total cost of \$827,400, and will be repaid through annual fleet charges of \$211,000 in 2008 and \$347,000 in future years, which are included in the above estimates and are subject to budget review.

## PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

Constable Tom Stamatakis, president of the Vancouver Police Union (VPU), is a member of the VPD Operational Review Working Group.

On September 19, 2007 the VPU agreed to the proposed Metro Team shifting strategy outlined in this report.

The working relationship between VPD management and the VPU is healthy and productive, as demonstrated by the agreement reached between both sides on the 19 positions recommended for civilianization in 2006, as well as this agreement to deploy the Metro Teams on a fixed afternoon shift.

## IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Due to the lag time in recruiting and training new officers, it is anticipated that the two new Metro Teams would be operational near the end of 2008. The Metro Teams would be implemented for a two-year trial period and include an evaluation at the end of the second year to determine their success. The evaluation will include an examination of:

- Sick leave usage
- On duty injuries
- The number of complaints to the Professional Standards Section
- The number of Human Resource related issues
- Overtime usage
- Patrol performance indicators
- A survey

Given the extensive research that has taken place and the track record of the Metro Team concept in other agencies, there is no reason to believe that the Metro Teams would not be successful in Vancouver.

## CONCLUSION

On February 27, 2007 Council approved an increase of 17 new sworn officers, increasing the authorized strength of the VPD from 1,214 to 1,231 officers. Council provided \$900,000 towards this initiative with the condition that funding be allocated to the VPD only after Council received confirmation of the Vancouver Police Union's acceptance of a shifting strategy. The VPU has recently agreed to a shifting strategy whereby two new Metro Teams could be created by combining the 17 new officers with seven officers from existing patrol resources. The two new Metro Teams would provide city-wide coverage to all patrol districts during the busiest hours of the day and would increase the visible presence of uniformed police officers on the streets of Vancouver. The VPU's agreement allows for the release of previously authorized funding that is currently being held in General Government, which will enable the Vancouver Police Department to recruit and train the 17 new sworn officers.

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