

Nova Scotia Association of Police Governance Fall Conference

Bridgewater, NS September 13-15, 2023

Report submitted by Lisa Blackburn, NSAPG representative from the Halifax B of PC.

I attended the fall conference from September 13 to 14 and made it to five presentations.

**1.....Candace Thomas: Deputy Minister Department of Justice.**

Ms. Thomas presented a comprehensive overview of recent DOJ initiatives. The following is some of the topics covered.

**-MCC Report:**

The DOJ is taking an all government approach to the recommendations. Weekly meeting take place for updates. Gender based violence is currently a key part of their work. They are also working on becoming “alert ready” as a province. Some of the progress includes the Police Identity Management Act” of 2022 which bans the use of police vehicles/decals/uniforms by civilians. A MCC Report progress committee is currently being struck.

**-Policing Review:**

Nothing formal to announce now. The department is currently staffing up to move on the Police Standards work.

**-Wortley Report:**

Research committee has been struck to advance development and implementation of a data collection model. This started in April of 2023.

**-Equity/Diversity/Inclusion:**

The ANS Justice Action Plan is being drafted now. A total of 32 engagement sessions have been held in African NS communities. The “What We Heard” report is currently on the DOJ website. The goals of the action plan are to create a more fair/equitable system. Work on an Indigenous Justice Action Strategy has started and the DOJ has secured the services of a Mi’kmaw consultant to partner with community. The DOJ is committed to “nothing about us, without us.”

**-Atlantic Police Academy Training Institute:**

Recruiting is tough province wide. The DOJ is working to fund 11 positions to increase diversity at the APA. The scholarships include all tuition/housing/meals.

**-Police Training:**

The DOJ does provide supplemental training in areas like conflict management for leaders, arson investigation, driver training. DOJ also has guidelines for frequency of Use of Force training.

**-Police Board Training:**

The DOJ has a program for board training but it is currently being reviewed in light of the MCC report and will be revamped/relaunched. No timeline for this.

**2.....Inspector Pierre Bergeron: CN Police.**

Discussed safety issues with CN and how to reach them in an emergency. Presented several videos with real-world experiences faced by train engineers.

**3.....Jeff Minten: Executive Director Atlantic Police Academy.**

Recruits are now being issued and trained on AXON body worn cameras, the first in the region. Training also includes new firearms being phased in at many departments. The APA is producing 48 cadets a year but after changes coming to the course component, that number will rise to 72 a year. There is a waiting list for the next cohort and the next graduation is in December.

An extra class of officers is coming in August 2024 but the course will be three weeks shorter due to removing some training (winter driving and field sobriety courses trimmed). This is a short term change to get cadets on the street faster.

The push is on now to get federal government to support an expansion of the APA facility (bigger gun range/more beds in the housing unit). Mr. Minten encouraged all officers to consider coming to help with training.

The APA is nearing 50% representation from under represented communities.

**4.....Chief Gary Forward and CO DeAnna Hill: NB Integrated Enforcement Unit.**

The NB model started in 2008 but folded in 2016 after funding dried up. Reborn in 2022 as the IEU with many changes. The main issue with the original model was its members only gathered intelligence then handed it off to other agencies. It meant little payoff for the \$1.6 million in provincial funding which ended up getting cut in the provincial budget.

The new version is in seven NB cities with a \$3.32 million budget and full powers of enforcement. The unit reports to government bi-weekly so the political arm knows the benefits of the unit. There are also rigorous performance tracking measures in place.

This unit has been very successful in pulling guns and drugs off the streets in NB. Human trafficking is not part of their mandate but could go in that direction if the need is there. The unit has made 624 arrests since April of 2022.

**5.....Chris Taylor: Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF).**

Chris presented a very entertaining talk on the services the American ATF can provide police agencies in Canada. Chris is one of two agents stationed in Ottawa. He discussed the need for Canadian Firearm Marking regulations. This would force all imported guns to be marked with a Canadian registration number for better tracking/tracing. He also discussed crime in Canada vs the USA and stated we are at a similar level of crime experienced in the States in the 1970's.

Chris is also known as The Bullet Guy and discussed the benefits of departments having direct access to the Canadian Integrated Ballistics Identification Network (CIBIN). It is now common in many departments, including Edmonton (<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/edmonton/eps-firearms-examination-unit-brings-gun-lab-in-house-1.6684756>)

, I would be remiss if I did not recognize our new Chief Don MacLean was on the winning conference golf team. Teams played in a Texas Scramble format on the first day of the conference. I had no idea how deadly serious this golf match was with bragging rights and a trophy the winning team keeps for the year!

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Blackburn