

Strong Communities

October 30, 2008

Province targets repeat offenders***Law enforcement, courts and probation officers coordinate efforts***

Edmonton... As part of its crime reduction plan, the Alberta government is tackling the serious problem of repeat offenders.

Premier Stelmach announced a new initiative that will see greater coordination between law enforcement, courts and probation officers to identify, monitor and share information on the small number of offenders who commit a large percentage of crime in Alberta communities.

“We are sending a clear signal to repeat offenders,” said Premier Ed Stelmach. “We will provide the supervision and support to help them turn their lives around but should they choose to continue with a life of crime they will quickly be back behind bars. Albertans expect and deserve to have safe communities and this initiative is just another example of how we’re delivering on our crime reduction plan.”

In the first year of the program, 60 repeat offenders from Edmonton, Calgary, and other centres in Alberta will be targeted. Police, Alberta sheriffs and probation officers will closely monitor or supervise the offenders while in the community. Information will be provided to a central office which will prepare and continuously update comprehensive bail packages for Crown prosecutors.

“We are putting in place a more effective way to target the 15 per cent of criminals who commit 60 per cent of the crime,” said Fred Lindsay, Solicitor General and Minister of Public Security. “This project provides a more focused and comprehensive approach to the serious problem of repeat offenders while giving offenders a chance to break the cycle of offending and re-victimizing Albertans.”

“This kind of offender takes a serious toll on our police, our courts and our communities,” said Alison Redford, Attorney General and Minister of Justice. “We’ve already involved Crown prosecutors in bail hearings, and introduced a comprehensive bail information package for repeat offenders. This initiative is another example of our commitment to making positive impacts on the system by dedicating Crown resources.”

The project team includes police members from RCMP, Edmonton Police Service and Calgary Police Service as well as three probation officers and nine Alberta sheriffs.

A total of \$10.4 million has been earmarked over the next three years for this project through the Safe Communities Secretariat.

As part of its crime reduction plan, the government has announced the addition of 110 new probation officers, 183 new police officers to target drugs and gangs, 20 new addiction treatment beds and the establishment of two new Safer Communities and Neighbourhoods units that are investigating properties used for illegal activities such as drugs, gangs and prostitution.

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