



February 8, 2010

Sheriffs join forces with RCMP to improve safety on Alberta's highways

New model integrates resources for traffic enforcement

Edmonton... RCMP and traffic sheriffs are combining forces to improve traffic safety in Alberta. The new traffic units will be integrated in 19 locations throughout the province.

"Our goal is to create the safest roads possible for Albertans and our sheriffs have been a valued component of our traffic safety efforts," said Frank Oberle, Solicitor General and Minister of Public Security. "We tested four pilot projects last year and each had elements of success, and provided valuable information. We are using the best model for moving forward."

"The RCMP is always looking for ways to improve our service to Albertans," said RCMP Deputy Commissioner Rod Knecht. "We are confident that working more closely with the Alberta Sheriffs will help us reduce serious injuries and deaths on Alberta's roadways."

The new model is based on four pilot projects conducted on highways near Whitecourt, Airdrie, Wetaskiwin and Olds. The pilots took place over six months in 2009. The evaluation of the pilots showed the best way to improve safety on our highway is to integrate the Sheriffs Highway Patrol with RCMP. The integration process will be phased in and completed within two years.

-30-

Background: Frequently Asked Questions attached

Media inquiries may be directed to:

Eilish Lemieux
Communications
Solicitor General and Public Security
*Phone: 780-427-6171

Cpl. Wayne Oakes
Media Relations Officer
RCMP "K" Division
Phone: 780-412-5260

To call toll free within Alberta dial 310-0000.

February 8, 2010

Questions and Answers: Integrated Traffic Units

1) Which of the four pilots was selected?

Of the four pilots, the one conducted in Wetaskiwin was found to be the best way to enforce traffic safety.

The four pilots were:

- **Whitecourt** tested giving sheriffs and RCMP equal responsibilities.
- **Wetaskiwin** had traffic operations overseen by an RCMP supervisor.
- **Airdrie** had sergeants report to managers in their respective agencies.
- **Olds** model used only traffic sheriffs to enforce traffic safety.

2) Why was the Wetaskiwin model chosen?

Evaluation showed that the Wetaskiwin pilot worked best to improve traffic enforcement on Alberta's highways. It found:

- Integrating traffic resources improved the efficiency and effectiveness of traffic services units.
- RCMP and traffic sheriffs worked well together in integrated units.
- Integrated RCMP and traffic sheriffs:
 - improved the quality of traffic investigations and enforcement coverage,
 - increased enforcement visibility on highways, which brought speeds down, and
 - made it easier to handoff *Criminal Code* investigations to the RCMP.

3) Is this a move away from sheriffs?

No. Integration means that both RCMP traffic service and traffic sheriffs will work together. Each organization will maintain its own identity.

4) Will some communities will lose traffic services?

No. Traffic enforcement will not decrease, and it may be enhanced.

5) Will traffic sheriffs see their authorities increased?

Traffic sheriffs will continue to enforce provincial statutes only. As peace officers, sheriffs do not have the authority to conduct *Criminal Code* investigations unless assisting at the request of police.

6) How will integration work?

Traffic operations in Alberta will be directed by an RCMP officer in consultation with a dedicated management team from the sheriffs. Traffic sheriffs will continue to report to Solicitor General management on administrative matters (labour relations, training, hiring, discipline, performance reviews, etc.)

7) How can having integrated traffic units in fewer locations provide enhanced service?

Integrating traffic resources ensures there will always be enough officers to field a reasonable enforcement team for programs such as Checkstops, vehicle equipment safety checks, and aggressive driving operations. Over the long term, driver behaviour will begin to improve as law enforcement vehicles are more visible and more prevalent on Alberta's highways.

8) Are there extra costs associated with integration?

Initial start-up costs include IT and equipment. Long-term efficiencies will come through reducing duplication of infrastructure.

9) Where will the integrated traffic service detachments be located?

Traffic enforcement will be integrated in the following 19 locations:

Grande Prairie	Westlock	Lethbridge
Whitecourt	Vermillion	Medicine Hat
Boyle	Edmonton region	Airdrie
Fort McMurray	Red Deer	Innisfail
St Paul	Calgary region	Leduc
Hinton	Banff	Ponoka
Peace River		

-30-

Media inquiries may be directed to:

Eilish Lemieux	Cpl. Wayne Oakes
Communications	Media Relations Officer
Solicitor General and Public Security	RCMP "K" Division
*Phone: 780-427-6171	Phone: 780-412-5260

To call toll free within Alberta dial 310-0000.

[Alberta Government](#) | [Newsroom](#) | [Ministries Listing](#) | [Solicitor General and Public Security Home Page](#) | [News Releases](#) | [Top of Page](#) |

[Send us your comments or questions](#)

Copyright(©) 2010 Government of Alberta

