



Royal Canadian  
Mounted Police

Gendarmerie royale  
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To our municipalities,

West Shore RCMP strives to deliver the best possible policing service to the West Shore. To do this we continuously assess our service delivery against the community needs and aim to do that in a cost-effective manner.

After careful analysis and consideration, West Shore RCMP has made the decision to respectfully exit the following Regional Policing Units:

- Integrated Mobile Crisis Response Team (IMCRT) > Projected exit date: December 31, 2025
- Mobile Youth Service Team (MYST) > Projected exit date: December 31, 2025
- Regional Domestic Violence Unit (RDVU) > Projected exit date: Dec 31, 2026

In the past, these units provided valuable services to the West Shore. Coordinating a regional response in cost sharing arrangement made sense. Now, however, West Shore has reached a point where these services required review and it is important to understand the rationale behind West Shore RCMP's exit from these units.

Other police agencies that fund the regional units are currently reviewing their ongoing support and the feasibility of funding these units as they relate to their own community's policing needs. For example, Central Saanich Police has already withdrawn their financial support and will not provide funding in 2025.

Though we have a planned departure from the above units we are committed to remaining apart of the Greater Victoria Diversity Advisory Committee and Crime Stoppers.



## **Integrated Mobile Crisis Response Team (IMCRT)**

***West Shore RCMP currently contributes \$ 74,345 annually to participate in this regional unit (as per 2025 budget).***

IMCRT consists of eight professionals; including psychiatric nurses, social program officers, youth and child clinicians and police officers.

Our rationale in leaving IMCRT is that West Shore RCMP launched its own Mental Health Unit (MHU) in February 2024, creating a duplication of service. Our MHU consists of Frontline Officers who are paired with Registered Nurses from Island Health who are experienced in mental health and substance use care. Together, they respond to mental health-related calls in the West Shore. We currently have 3 police officers, funded by the West Shore municipalities, and 2 nurses attached to this unit.

The team was partially launched in February 2024 and achieved full staffing in early April. As of July 30, 2024, the MHU has responded to 513 out of 944 mental health related calls for service in the West Shore. The MHU has made 74 out of 135 total apprehensions, with the remainder made by Frontline Officers as the MHU does not have 24-hour availability at this time. West Shore RCMP's goal is to work toward 24-hour service for this unit.

Comparatively, IMCRT has responded to only 35 calls for service in the West Shore from January 2023 to July 2024.

West Shore RCMP Mental Health Unit teams are responding with a timely, supportive and empathetic approach to the individual experiencing a crisis, along with their families and caregivers. MHU provides the right supports at the right time via the best possible response. We believe our West Shore Mental Health Unit has not only met but exceeded the service capacity of IMCRT, therefore we made the decision to exit this regional unit.

## **Mobile Youth Services Team (MYST)**

***West Shore RCMP currently contributes \$ 37,349 annually to participate in this regional unit (as per 2025 budget).***

The MYST was created in 2001 to address sexually exploited youth in the CRD. MYST is enabled by area police departments that support a police officer position that deals with high-risk youth from ages 13 to 18. MYST currently has 1 police officer and 1 social worker that are shared amongst 6 police agencies in the CRD.

MYST, has responded to only 15 calls for service in the West Shore in the last 1.5 year period (from January 2023 to July 2024).



West Shore RCMP recognizes that specialized services with a focus on at-risk youth is a priority, therefore we created the position of Youth Outreach Officer in 2021. The Youth Outreach Officer's mandate is to focus on at-risk youth via a partnership with Pacific Centre Family Services Association (PCFSA). Our Youth Outreach Officer works with a dedicated youth counsellor from PCFSA. Together, they work as a team addressing at-risk youth by being both proactive and referral based. They focus on mentoring and prevention strategies. This team offers more concentrated efforts on the West Shore.

The Community Policing Unit supports the efforts of the Youth Outreach Team. The Community Policing Unit also takes on the role of School Liaison Officers in School District 62 (SD62). These officers continue to visit SD62 schools on a daily basis and maintain a supportive working relationship with both students and staff. These strong relationships allow for prevention and early intervention for at-risk youth. The West Shore Detachment expanded the current 3 officer SLO team by adding another in the Spring of 2024.

### **Regional Domestic Violence Unit (RDVU)**

***West Shore RCMP currently contributes \$121,827 plus \$115,350 (salary of 1 Constable), annually to participate in this regional unit (Approx. \$237,177 as per 2025 budget).***

The RDVU provides follow-up services to select high-risk domestic violence cases where there is a need for intensive victim/family support. The team includes police, community-based victim service providers, and the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD).

West Shore RCMP created its own Domestic Violence Investigator position in Spring, 2024 and will expand that to 2 full time police officers in Spring, 2026 with the return of the RDVU investigator to provide services on the West Shore. These officers will work closely with community and criminal justice partners to fulfill the same mandate RDVU does, but will of course be focused on clients exclusively on the West Shore.

The West Shore IPV Unit will also be supported by the existing Special Victim's Unit (SVU) which is comprised of 4 police officers along with the Investigative Support Team (IST will be comprised of 5 police officers, expected to be operational in November 2024).

SVU/IST officers are highly skilled and specifically trained in critical investigative techniques such as: interviewing children, writing search warrants and monitoring victims who are at risk of being re-victimized. SVU investigators routinely connect with other agencies who are also providing supports to victims as well as hold training sessions with Frontline officers to ensure



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our investigations are conducted from a trauma-informed perspective.

Given the crossover between SVU/IST/IPV and RDVU mandates, West Shore RCMP has elected to withdraw our financial support from RDVU, choosing instead to focus on enhancing our service delivery to the West Shore communities.

In conclusion, a rapidly growing populous in West Shore has created the need for enhanced policing services for the residents of the West Shore. Staying on top of current policing trends and community needs is a top priority for our detachment therefore, re-investing our resources to support existing and new West Shore RCMP units will better serve our communities.

Respectfully,

**ORIGINAL SIGNED**

Superintendent Todd Preston, Officer in Charge of West Shore RCMP