



# ANNUAL REPORT 2022/23

## GREATER VICTORIA POLICE INTEGRATED UNITS



# A MESSAGE FROM THE GREATER VICTORIA POLICE CHIEFS AND DETACHMENT COMMANDERS

The Greater Victoria policing landscape is unique. Several municipal police agencies and RCMP detachments provide community-focused services to meet the needs of individual municipalities. Working together in cooperation is critical to ensure quality police service within each jurisdiction. Key examples of formal cooperation are the individual integrated policing units, each designed to meet specific needs in a cost effective and service focused way. In each case, the participating police chiefs and detachment commanders believe that the specified service is best provided using a shared service model.

Please take a few minutes to read the summaries of the services provided by the integrated units, in addition to the priorities for the coming year and the efficiencies and highlights from 2023/24.

As always, we want to thank the dedicated officers working within the integrated policing units for their professionalism and continued commitment to our communities.

Proudly,

The Greater Victoria Police Chiefs and Detachment Commanders:

- » Chief Del Manak – Victoria Police
- » Chief Dean Duthie – Saanich Police
- » Chief Ian Lawson – Central Saanich Police
- » Chief Mark Fisher – Oak Bay Police
- » Superintendent Todd Preston – Westshore RCMP Detachment
- » S/Sgt Wayne Conley – Sidney/North Saanich RCMP Detachment
- » S/Sgt Kevin Shaw – Sooke RCMP Detachment

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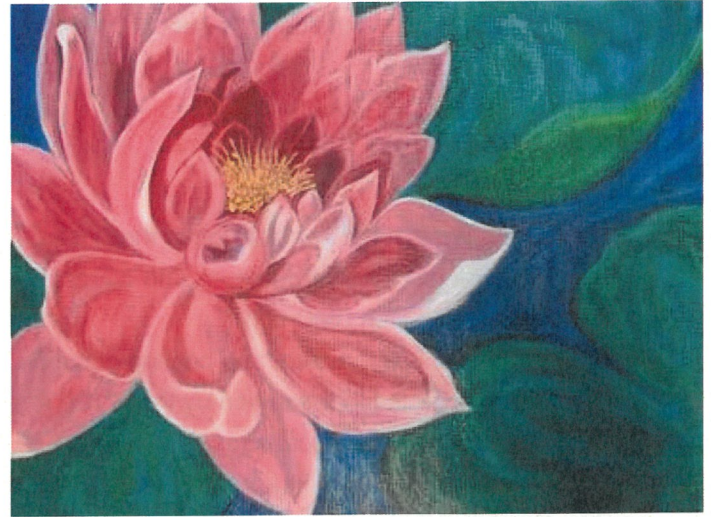
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# 01. Greater Victoria Emergency Response Team

The Greater Victoria Emergency Response Team (GVERT) was established in 1976 to assist in the resolution of high-risk critical incidents. In 1983, the Area Chiefs of Police of Victoria, Saanich, Esquimalt, Central Saanich, and Oak Bay signed an agreement concerning the general operations of the unit.

The GVERT remains the longest-standing integrated unit in the region, serving the citizens of the five core municipalities. The GVERT consists of five cadres of key personnel: Critical Incident Commanders, Critical Incident Scribes, Crisis Negotiators, Tactical Liaison Officers, and Tactical Team members. Critical Incident Commanders are senior officers who have successfully completed specialized training at the Canadian Police College. Commanders, assisted by scribes, oversee tactical operations and manage critical incidents. Negotiators are experts in crisis intervention and de-escalation and often work in collaboration with mental health professionals to safely resolve critical incidents. The Tactical Unit, supported by liaison officers, are a group of highly-trained police officers, with specialized skills and equipment to resolve incidents and fall outside of the scope of front-line officers. The deployment of the team provides a greater margin of safety for the public, police, and suspects alike.

The Tactical Unit also provides explosives detection and disposal services for regional operations and major public events. The members of the GVERT report to an Officer in Charge who oversees the administration of the team. The OIC chairs and reports to the Joint Management Team which is comprised of Senior Officer representation from each contributing agency.



**Just like the lotus flower we too have  
the ability to rise from the mud,  
bloom out of the darkness,  
and radiate into the world.**

## EFFICIENCIES

- Implimented a modified GVERT Basic Tactical Operator's Course to get the unit back up to operational strength in the wake of the BMO call
- Created 'Tactical Support Teams' in VicPD & SPD to better support the front-line when GVERT members are not engaged in operations or training
- Secured a more permanent (local) training venue for the Tactical Unit which supports basic, maintenance, & advanced training
- Developed a partnership with the RCMP specific to Crisis Negotiator courses, training, and instruction
- Realized the implementation of a second, full-time position to the Tactical Unit which significantly improved training and administration

## HIGHLIGHTS

- The performance of the Tactical Unit at the Bank of Montreal (BMO) hostage-taking and subsequent confrontation
- The love, compassion, camaraderie, and incredible resiliency demonstrated amongst the GVERT members in light of the trauma created by the BMO call
- The remarkable improvement and healing of the GVERT members who were severely injured in the BMO call
- The service provided to the region by the GVERT in light of the frenetic pace of 122 operational deployments
- Providing training to our local agencies in the areas of medical, firearms skills, and critical incident response
- The instruction delivered by our CNT Team Leader and the training received by three new CNT members at the National CPC Course

## PRIORITIES FOR 2023/24

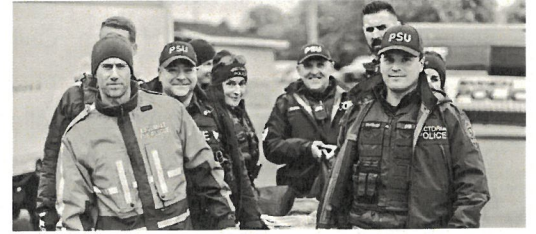
- Focusing on the mental and physical wellbeing of all members of the GVERT and the reintegration of injured members
- Continuing to explore a new deployment model for the Tactical Unit which best compliments the operational pace and training demands
- Succesion-planning for specialist portfolios within the unit in light of anticipated retirements next year
- Continuing to source protective equipment enhancements in light of the BMO call
- Ongoing focus on the development of our new negotiators, scribes, and tactical members
- Procuring a 'tech van' to appropriately store and transport mission-essential equipment to operations in the field



# 02.

## Greater Victoria Public Safety Unit

The Greater Victoria Public Safety Unit (PSU) is an integrated unit consisting of members from all municipal police agencies in the Capital Regional District. PSU also consists of an integrated fire medic program supported by the Saanich, Esquimalt, Central Saanich and Oak Bay Fire Departments. PSU provides specialized services, advice, equipment, training and emergency response to ensure public safety, public order and investigative assistance. This includes attendance at public gatherings in support of the right to peaceful protest and to mitigate the potential for violence.



### /// EFFICIENCIES

- Division Liaison Team increased by five newly trained officers with self sustaining internal training program
- Transitioned from trailer to cube truck for PSU Search Team for increased mobility and versatility
- Expanded PSU Search Program by implementing Team Supervisor and 2i/c for efficiency and coordinated training
- Successful qualification of seven PSU Search Instructor Coordinators for self sustaining search program
- Utilization of Team Leader for establishment of, and ongoing monitoring of, after-action reports and PRIME documentation

### /// HIGHLIGHTS

- Implementation of full-time Team Leader / NCO and On-call Public Order Commanders
- Development and implementation of Division Liaison Team Course
- Re-Certification of PSU Tactical officers, Obstacle Removal Team, Search Coordinators
- Numerous successful operations related to Save Old Growth, Anti-police demonstrations, BC Legislature deployments
- Identification of Team Leader and program implementation for the PSU-Evidence Gathering Team
- Saanich Fire-Medic members successful team integration following their medical certification and PSU training

### /// PRIORITIES FOR 2023/2024

- Implementation of Evidence Gathering Team into 2023-24 deployments
- Focus on Succession Planning for PSU Leadership Team
- Successful selection and acquisition of new Fire Resistant PSU Team Uniforms
- Updated 2023 PSU MOU and Team Activation Guide formalization
- Overall PSU Team SOP's finalized and approved by the JMT in 2023
- Specialized training and qualifications for specialized units with PSU outside traditional Fall and Spring Training
- Continued PSU Team budget formalization for increased team budgetary accountability and professionalism
- Train additional Public Order Commanders

## 03. Integrated Mobile Crisis Response Team

IMCRT is a mobile multi-discipline team composed of Psychiatric Social Workers, Psychiatric Nurses, Child and Youth Workers and Police. They collaborate with mental health workers in order to provide high quality service to clients, improve the front-line police response, and conduct follow-ups with persons in crisis. This position is integrated and serves the municipalities throughout the Capital Region.



### /// EFFICIENCIES

- Response time to incoming requests for service, either immediate or within 30 minutes during high call volume
- Prompt direct response to police calls involving mental health components
- Providing relief for patrol officers when called for check wellbeing
- Co-responding with patrol officers to provide integrated team response
- Providing clinical consultation for field officers

### /// HIGHLIGHTS

- Preventing inappropriate section 28 apprehensions
- Preventing unnecessary emergency room visitations by redirecting to other mental health resources
- Directing patrol officers on section 28 apprehensions when clinically indicated, thus providing timely access to care
- Involvement in community care planning with individuals who have high call volumes to police
- Providing an integrated response to individuals resistant to receiving integral healthcare
- Providing continuing education for police managing mental health calls in the community

### /// PRIORITIES FOR 2023/24

- Providing timely integrated support to vulnerable persons and their families in the Capital Region
- Reducing visitations to acute care facilities by redirecting to more cost efficient community resources
- Direct response to check wellbeing calls to free up community policing resources
- Providing consultation to police and other professionals on best practice approaches for individuals suffering with a mental health condition
- Acting as liaison for police to healthcare professionals and vice versa
- Supporting inter-agency care planning with individuals who have complex needs
- Providing consultation to healthcare professionals
- Community liaison with institutions such as schools to provide awareness of team and its purpose

## 04. Integrated Canine Service

The Integrated Canine Service is made up of six members, one NCO and five Constables, from both the Saanich Police Department and the Victoria Police Department. ICS has eight canines providing our stakeholders with variety of canine profiles which include tracking, evidence searching, and building/compound searching. In addition five of our canine teams also specialize in drug/firearm detection. ICS has two single purpose explosive detection canines. These canines support our explosive technicians attached to the Greater Victoria Emergency Response Team and are utilized at major events across the Region.



### /// EFFICIENCIES

- ICS has introduced a new schedule which enhances our frontline day coverage, while mainlining our commitment to night shift coverage.
- 24/7 on call coverage, 365.
- Attended more than 2700 non- canine calls in support of front-line members in both Saanich and Victoria.

### /// HIGHLIGHTS

- Hosted 30 Canine Teams from across Canada for a four day seminar, utilizing expert canine trainers who instructed a variety of different profiles.
- Engaged in a selection process and identified a new member of ICS that will replace a team that is set to retire at the end of 2023.
- Community engagement, with more that 20 in person demos.
- Advanced training with Calgary Police Service, Vancouver Police Department, Canadian Police Canine Association, Seattle Police Department and the FBI.

### /// PRIORITIES FOR 2023/24

- Engage in a selection process to identify a new trainer within the Integrated Canine Service.
- Engage in a selection process to identify next handler of the Integrated Canine Service.
- Purchase and train two new canines.

## 05. Mobile Youth Services Team

Exploitation knows no bounds and has the potential to impact youth across our region, regardless of class or background. The Mobile Youth Services Team (MYST) is a critical multi-disciplinary unit that has served the CRD for more than 20 years. Consisting of a partnership between a police officer and a youth & family counselor, MYST aims to reduce trauma and the scope of the sexual exploitation of youth in our community. MYST pro-actively engages with youth and their families to provide guidance, support, expertise, and key referrals. MYST also works closely with other front-line and investigative police units in the region to identify and target offenders.

### EFFICIENCIES

- Continuing to bridge the gap created by lack of SLO's and assisting local schools with Violent Threat Risk Assessments (VTRA's)
- Participation in Intensive Case Management planning that involves a multi-disciplinary approach to managing at-risk, vulnerable youth
- Ongoing relationship-building with external partners like Youth Empowerment, School Districts, Sanctuary, and VGH
- Close monitoring of youth trends and balancing time spent supporting youth and identifying/targeting predators and offenders
- Enhanced collaboration with community resource officers from across the region on files of mutual importance

### HIGHLIGHTS

- Development and delivery of a number of presentations on trauma response, consent and healthy relationships to students across the CRD
- Ongoing use of music instruction in the 'School of Rock' as a pathway to engage at-risk youth
- Continued provision of expertise and support to School District 61's Police Liaison Committee
- Advocating and securing funding for the counselor position within the MYST partnership
- The national broadcast of the "Parents without Power" documentary which prominently featured the work of MYST
- Identifying a concern with respect to repeat offenders and becoming part of the national conversation

### PRIORITIES FOR 2023/24

- Ongoing work with school districts to curb the increase in regional gang activity and recruitment
- Working with VicPD's new 'General Investigation Section' to become more efficient and effective
- Participating in monthly meetings with police intelligence sections to better monitor concerning trends in the community
- Hosting a conference with youth service providers to clearly identify roles and expectations





# 06. Regional Domestic Violence Unit

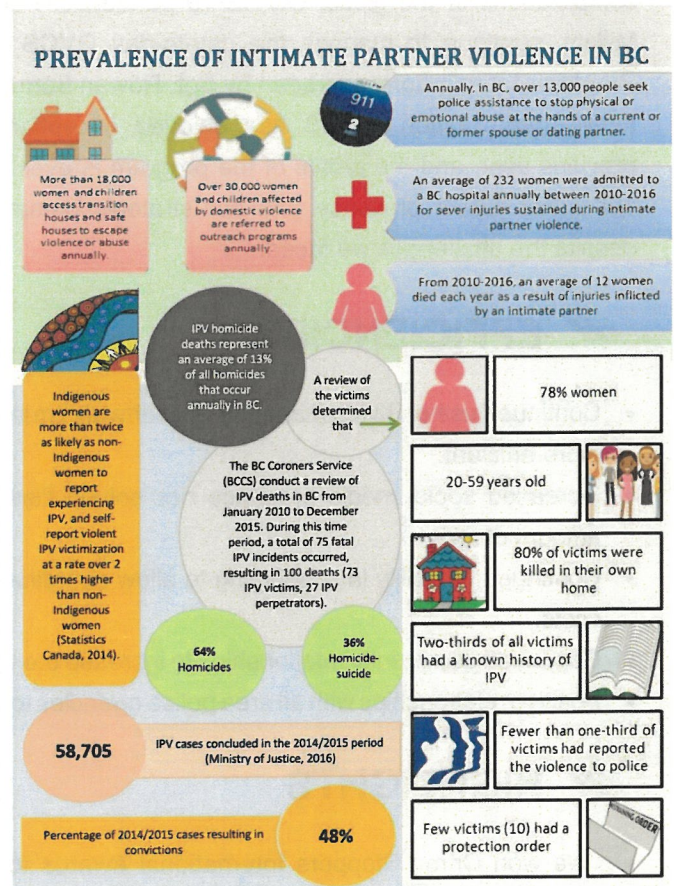
The RDVU has gone through significant staffing changes over this past year. All three police positions have been rotated with new members, Victim Services has a new employee after Reena SRAN resigned for a position with Saanich Community Corrections, and MCFD has a current temporary SW Kellie VINK, who took over for Devon CRAIG as she took a position with Representing Children and Youth. The RDVU remains connected with all of our community partners and is receiving several referrals for high risk files every week. Currently, the RDVU is managing over 50 offenders while supporting the victims and their families.

## EFFICIENCIES

- Training staff with support tasks, creating efficiencies and becoming more independent.
- Meeting with community stakeholder groups to introduce members, build relationships, and identify areas for improvement.

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Supporting Sooke / Westshore RCMP with a significant IPV file by taking over all interviews of victim and her children who witnessed the violence.
- Building a relationship with a reluctant victim, gaining her trust to where she provided a statement against her violent boyfriend.
- Highest risk IPV Offender convicted of 7 charges in BC Supreme Court and is facing several years of custodial time.
- RDVU represented at Provincial forum for Brain Injury and the nexus with IPV. A previous victim spoke on the panel about RDVU's crucial work.



## PRIORITIES FOR 2023/24

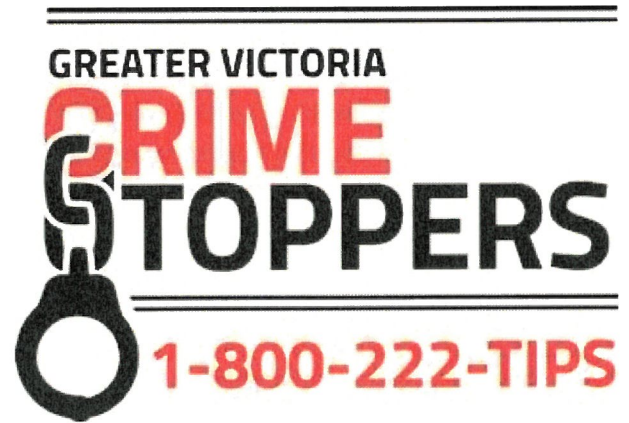
- Creating list of core courses / training for members of the RDVU.
- Presenting the current RDVU model at an International Conference, showcasing the efforts and benefits of having the multi-disciplinary unit.
- Completing the updated Operations Manual

# 07.

## Greater Victoria Crime Stoppers

Greater Victoria Crime Stoppers (GVCS) encourages members of the community to assist local law enforcement agencies in the fight against crime. We strive to overcome issues that inhibit people from sharing information with the police such as: fear of reprisal, apathy, and a reluctance to get involved.

The past year saw continued advancement for GVCS despite the complications of the global COVID-19 pandemic. Phil Downie and Gill Millam, continue to manage the day-to-day GVCS operations as the Program Coordinators, overseen by Sgt. Rowan from the Saanich Police Intelligence Section. GVCS has enjoyed exceptional growth in this previous year, and the profile of the program is ever increasing through our social media presence and our strategic community partnerships despite the challenges we faced.



### /// EFFICIENCIES

- Continued use of P3 (tip management software) making tip collecting, documentation, statistical collection and tip dissemination more efficient.
- Increased social media presence has solved files quicker for police members; suspects are being identified in a shorter amount of time.
- Continued flexibility in scheduling to allow coordinators to attend community events and meetings without incurring overtime costs.
- Continued community relationships to increase the Crime Stoppers profile through local advertising at zero cost to the program.
- Positive relationships with all area police agencies to increase the awareness of our services and ability to assist in investigations

### /// HIGHLIGHTS

- We won Crime Stoppers International Awards for: Property, for our 634% increase in total property recovered over the previous year.
- We won Crime Stoppers International Awards for: Print Media, for our weekly 'Crime of the Week' feature in the Times Colonist
- Both Coordinators were recognized by BC Crime Stoppers as 'Coordinators of the Year' in the entire province.
- We were able to once again attend local high schools to educate students about anonymous crime reporting and the role of Crime Stoppers.
- Increased social media presence & online growth. Increased Facebook followers by 929 from year before. Twelve specific posts reached 458,999 people.
- Increased our presence at the Inter-Cultural Association and at the numerous post-secondary institutions in Greater Victoria.

## /// PRIORITIES 2023/24

- To continue to promote and connect with Greater Victoria's diverse communities.
- Promote the program amongst all Greater Victoria Schools and bring awareness to the youth of our program and reporting crime anonymously.
- Continue to work with post-secondary institutions based within the Greater Victoria Area to bring awareness of anonymous crim reporting.



# 08.

## Greater Victoria Police Diversity Advisory Committee

The GVPDAC is an advisory committee comprised of police and community members; bringing together representatives of Greater Victoria's diverse communities with members from municipal police agencies and RCMP detachments. The purpose is to build trust and improve communication and understanding around issues of mutual concern. The GVPDAC seeks to build positive relationships between police and community and to share information about the diverse cultures in Greater Victoria. We act as a consultative and advisory body to the Chiefs of Greater Victoria's police agencies.

The current structure of the GVPDAC includes diverse community representatives and police representation from all area police departments. The GVPDAC is co-chaired by a police officer and a community member.

### Participating Community Groups:

Victoria Native Friendship Centre, Intercultural Association of Greater Victoria, African Heritage Association of Vancouver Island, India Canada Cultural Association, Jewish Federation of Victoria and Vancouver Island, BC Muslim Association, Issamba Centre: African Arts and Cultural Centre, the Ukrainian Cultural Society, and Vancouver Island Counselling Centre for Immigrants and Refugees.

### Participating Police Agencies:

Victoria Police Department, Saanich Police Department, West Shore RCMP, Sidney/North Saanich RCMP, Central Saanich Police Service, Oak Bay Police Department, Military Police Esquimalt, Sooke RCMP

## EFFICIENCIES

- The Area Chiefs approved funding for a regional civilian Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Coordinator to work with the GVPDAC.
- We have been continuing work on our website ensuring currency and inclusiveness.
- We have invited GVPDAC members to host monthly meetings as an opportunity to share their cultural spaces and create learning opportunities.

## HIGHLIGHTS

- On Family Day, we hosted a cultural event for 170 people. Guest dancers taught a cultural dance for all to learn and participate in, including Chief Manak and Chief Duthie.
- Britt Kohn shared her time and knowledge with the GVPDAC, presenting on why pronouns matter.
- The GVPDAC was honoured to participate in the Victoria Native Friendship Centre Youth Gathering.
- We proudly marched with the Changemakers contingent in this year's Pride Parade and hosted a booth at the Festival.
- We were pleased to welcome the Vancouver Island Counselling Centre for Immigrants and Refugees and the Ukrainian Cultural Association to the GVPDAC.
- GVPDAC members were pleased to meet and welcome many newcomers at the Ecole Victor Brodeur Welcome Day event.

## /// PRIORITIES 2023/24

- With the regional funding now in place, finding and hiring a regional EDI Coordinator is the first priority for the GVPDAC.
- We will be looking to engage at new events and make connections in new communities.
- We continue to work at examining representation gaps on the GVPDAC and working to address them.
- We will continue to collaborate on ways to increase accessibility of police services to diverse communities.



# 09.

## Vancouver Island Integrated Major Crime Unit

The Vancouver Island Integrated Major Crime Unit (VIIMCU) experienced an influx of new files opening 21 new cases in 2020 and five new cases in early 2021. The complexity of each case differs, with one file involving three murder victims at one scene. VIIMCU is also managing a number of active investigations from previous years and staff are providing disclosure of evidence to Crown Counsel for prosecutions related to several other investigations. This process is taxing on resources but remains crucial to successful prosecutions.

In the courts, VIIMCU files resulted in four convictions for manslaughter and one for weapons offences.



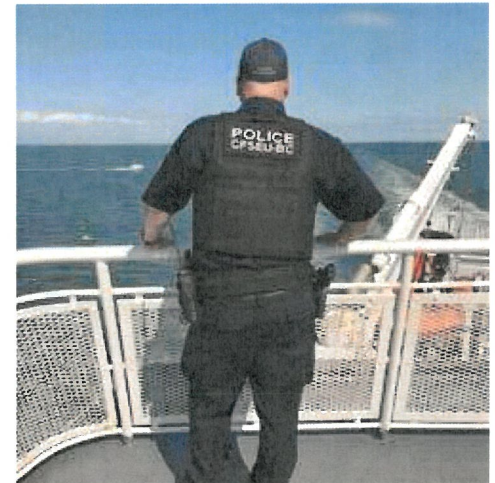
# 10.

## Combined Forces Special Enforcement Unit

The Combined Forces Special Enforcement Unit (CFSEU) is an independent law enforcement agency in BC staffed primarily by seconded police officers from municipal police agencies and the RCMP from throughout the province. CFSEU has a broad mandate that includes contributing to and sharing crime research and intelligence, coordinating long-term crime reduction strategies at the provincial, national and international levels, reducing gang and organized crime violence, and deterring organized crime and related violence. CFSEU uses both uniform and covert investigative techniques and policing units during the pursuit of their mandate

Currently, the Victoria, Saanich, Central Saanich, and Oak Bay police departments, as well as the RCPMP are eligible to second members to the local CFSEU team.

CFSEU supports local agencies related to outlaw motorcycle gang monitoring and enforcement, and conducts investigations related to CFSEU's mandate. More information can be found at [www.cfseu.bc.ca](http://www.cfseu.bc.ca).



# 11.

## Capital Regional District Integrated Road Safety Unit

The Integrated Road Safety Unit (CRD-IRSU) is comprised of seconded police officers from each of the local municipal police agencies and the RCMP. CRD-IRSU's mandate includes harm reduction on BC roadways, strategic traffic enforcement related to high-risk locations and activities, commercial vehicle enforcement, criminal interdictions, and assisting and enhancing local traffic enforcement units with strategic enforcement projects and operations.

CRD-IRSU is operated by the RCMP through funding provided by the Insurance Corporation of British Columbia (ICBC) to the BC Provincial Government's Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General. CRD-IRSU receives local input from a Joint Management Team comprised of representatives from the local police agencies and the RCMP.



# 12.

## Integrated National Security Enforcement Team

Integrated National Security Enforcement Teams (E-INSET) exist throughout Canada under the management of the RCMP. INSETs are intended to increase the capacity for the collection, sharing and analysis of intelligence among partners with respect to individuals or groups that pose a threat to national security in addition to conducting investigations related to these individuals and groups. INSETs include representatives from the RCMP, federal partners such as the Canadian Border Services Agency, and local police agencies.

Locally, representatives from each of the municipal police agencies, as well as the RCMP, are assigned to the local INSET unit on secondment.

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