

## RESOLUTION

**Adequate Resourcing for the  
Alberta Serious Incident Response Team (ASIRT)**  
Submitted by the Edmonton Police Commission  
To the Alberta Association of Police Governance

The Government of Alberta established ASIRT as an arms-length, independent agency to investigate serious incidents involving police officers.

**WHEREAS** AAPG recognizes the critical need for external oversight and investigation of serious incidents involving police officers.

**WHEREAS** the current state of resourcing at ASIRT and inherent delays creates bottle necks for the whole justice system in slow investigations, protracted time to make a decision on charges, and time needed by the Crown's office to analyze ASIRT recommendations.

**WHEREAS** the current resourcing levels at ASIRT are insufficient to discharge their critical role in a timely and efficient manner, thus impacting public trust and confidence in this system.

**THEREFORE LET IT BE RESOLVED THAT** AAPG urges the Government of Alberta to, at a minimum, double resources at ASIRT with respect to adding lawyers, investigators, and support staff.

### Background

The Government of Alberta established the Alberta Serious Incident Response Team as the civilian oversight agency responsible for the investigation of incidents resulting in serious injury or death to any person, as well as serious or sensitive allegations of police misconduct.

Over the past years, ASIRT workload has been increasing dramatically causing significant delays in ability to perform their roles.

In February 2021, the Edmonton Police Commission heard from Ms. Sue Hughson, then ASIRT Executive Director, that this increased workload has resulted in "unacceptable delays for affected persons, families, subject officers, police services" which "has untold negative impacts not only on those involved but on public confidence in policing, ASIRT and the process."

## RESOLUTION

**Specialized Crown Prosecution Unit for  
Alberta Serious Incident Response Team (ASIRT) Files**  
Submitted by the Edmonton Police Commission  
To the Alberta Association of Police Governance

The Government of Alberta established ASIRT as an arms-length, independent agency to investigate serious incidents involving police officers.

**WHEREAS** AAPG recognizes the critical need for external oversight and investigation of serious incidents involving police officers.

**WHEREAS** AAPG recognizes the significantly high level of expertise and knowledge that the Government of Alberta has established for leading, and working in, ASIRT.

**WHEREAS** the current situation of ASIRT seeking permission from the Crown's office to lay charges against an officer results in a loss of public confidence when the Crown's office contradicts ASIRT's expert advice and declines to lay charges in some cases.

**THEREFORE LET IT BE RESOLVED THAT** AAPG urges the Government of Alberta to establish a specialized unit of the Crown Prosecution Service with the skills and expertise necessary to be the sole decision maker for all charge recommendations made by ASIRT.

### **Background**

The Government of Alberta established the Alberta Serious Incident Response Team as the civilian oversight agency responsible for the investigation of incidents resulting in serious injury or death to any person, as well as serious or sensitive allegations of police misconduct.

In establishing an arms-length independent agency, the Government of Alberta has enhanced public confidence that serious issues involving police officers are dealt with impartially and professionally by an agency with a high degree of skill and expertise in the subject matter.

When ASIRT makes a recommendation to the Crown Prosecution Service to lay a charge against an officer, that recommendation is reviewed by an available Crown Prosecutor. Some decisions made by different Crown Prosecutors appear, without suggesting improper conduct, to be inconsistent in the face of recommendations made by an expert body and difficult to reconcile with public evidence.

This reduces public confidence in ASIRT and the justice system.

AAPG believes that by establishing a specialized unit of the Crown Prosecution Service with the skills and expertise necessary to be the sole decision maker for all charge recommendations made by ASIRT will mitigate perceived inconsistencies and enhance public confidence in this model.

## AMENDMENT TO RESOLUTION

**Specialized Crown Prosecution Unit for  
Alberta Serious Incident Response Team (ASIRT) Files**  
Submitted by the Edmonton Police Commission  
Amendment proposed by the Calgary Police Commission  
To the Alberta Association of Police Governance

**WHEREAS** the units that investigate police conduct within police agencies face the same inconsistencies and delays as the Alberta Serious Incident Response Team (ASIRT) in receiving charge approvals from Alberta's Crown Prosecution Service.

**WHEREAS** the impact this has on internal investigations by police agencies also undermines public trust and confidence in police accountability and subjects officers to unreasonably long internal investigations.

**IT IS MOVED THAT** the resolution proposed be amended to read, "AAPG urges the Government of Alberta to establish and adequately resource a specialized unit of the Crown Prosecution Service with the skills and expertise necessary to be the sole decision maker for all criminal charge recommendations related to police misconduct made by either ASIRT or internal police service investigations.

### **Background**

Police services in Alberta are required to investigate complaints about police conduct and these investigations can find reasonable grounds to believe an offence under the Criminal Code has been committed by a police officer. Not all of these criminal investigations meet the threshold of requiring an ASIRT investigation.

There are regularly months of delay between the conclusion of these investigations and charges being laid while the investigating service waits for charge approval from the Crown Prosecution Service.

These delays not only mean members of the public must wait longer than necessary for officers to be charged when appropriate, but it also means officers have to wait unreasonably long to find out if they will be facing charges.