

RESOLUTION #1
Bail Reform to Enhance Community Safety
Submitted by the Edmonton Police Commission
To the Alberta Association of Police Governance

- WHEREAS** the rate of gun-related crime in Canada has increased by 42% since 2013¹, and,
- WHEREAS** in 2021, violent crime increased 5%², with 25,500 more criminal code incidents reported than 2020, and,
- WHEREAS** reducing gun violence and violent crime across the nation will contribute to enhanced community safety.

THEREFORE LET IT BE RESOLVED THAT the AAPG advocates to the Federal government for legislative changes to the Criminal Code of Canada in respect to matters related to serious firearm-related or violent crime offenses in an effort to enhance public safety.

Background

Gun violence continues to be significant public safety concern and leaves communities feeling unsafe and vulnerable. The root causes of gun violence and trauma are complex and no single factor can address all of the community safety and well-being challenges. Efforts require a range of expertise and coordination and collaboration across sectors, including health and social supports, and all levels of government.

Additionally, nearly 20 years of progress on Canadian violent crime have effectively been erased as the country emerged from the COVID-19 pandemic with a homicide rate worse than any time since the mid-2000s. Canada's rising murder rate is the most reliable indicator yet that the country is continuing to experience an across-the-board surge in violent crime. Furthermore, nearly a quarter of those murders in 2021 were gang-related; the highest number of gang homicides since the federal government started tracking it in 2005.

In an effort to address some of these challenges, the provincial premiers submitted a letter to Prime Minister Trudeau as a call to action for changes to the bail system and to look at legislative changes to address firearms related offenses. The goal of this call to action was to prevent violent repeat offenders who pose a threat to society from being released into the community if they are accused of, and/or have been previously charged with, offences involving firearms. They wanted a specific change that would make bail harder for those accused of a charge related to the offense of possession of a loaded prohibited or restricted firearm. The Premiers also called for a review of other firearms-related offenses. Theirs, and other increased calls for more stringent bail reform, have all been linked to the deaths of several police officers across the country.

There are areas in law that could be enhanced to achieve the objective of safer communities by focusing on criminal justice options for individuals for whom other interventions have not proven successful and

¹ <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/89-28-0001/2018001/article/00004-eng.htm>

² <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/85-002-x/2022001/article/00013-eng.htm>

where their ongoing criminal activities continue to cause harm to communities. For example, the pre-charge release conditions should be changed to ensure that the public safety interests of communities are protected while still protecting the Charter Rights of accused individuals.

Locally within the Province of Alberta, the Alberta Municipalities' Safe and Healthy Communities Committee are formulating a joint letter in support and developing an emergent resolution to the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) asking the federal government to review Bill C-75. Specifically, they state that the federal government passed Bill C-75 in 2019 requiring police forces and courts to release detained people at the "earliest reasonable opportunity" and under the "least onerous conditions" based on the circumstances of individual cases. Bill C-75 has in effect codified a "principle of restraint" while favouring release over detention for both violent and non-violent repeat offenders. Consequently, violent and non-violent crime rates have increased across the country following the passage of Bill C-75 as repeat offenders gain bail more quickly and commit more crimes in local communities while awaiting their court date.

Other jurisdictions are also starting to weigh in on this issue such as the Calgary Police Service: https://calgaryherald.com/news/crime/calgary-police-service-joins-calls-for-tougher-bail-reforms?utm_campaign=Quorum&utm_medium=email&utm_source=Quorum 48

Toronto: https://globalnews.ca/news/9450567/toronto-police-bail-reform-ontario-committee-canada/?utm_campaign=Quorum&utm_medium=email&utm_source=Quorum 48

The following is the statement released by Minister Shandro ahead of the March 10th emergency federal, provincial and territorial meeting on bail: <https://www.alberta.ca/release.cfm?xID=86702CBCBE2B5-D46F-A0C7-EB6A9CE12E3E06BA>

The Rural Municipalities of Alberta (RMA) formulated a resolution on reforming the bail system which will be presented at their spring convention: <https://rmalberta.com/resolutions/11-23s-reforming-the-bail-system-to-address-rural-crime/>

RESOLUTION #2
Funding for Body-worn Camera Programs
Submitted by the Calgary Police Commission
To the Alberta Association of Police Governance

- WHEREAS** The Government of Alberta announced its intention to require that all police agencies in Alberta use body-worn cameras to enhance public trust;
- WHEREAS** There is a significant financial cost to municipal governments to start and maintain body-worn camera programs; and
- WHEREAS** Body-worn cameras will greatly assist the province's new Police Review Commission in more efficiently closing investigations into police conduct.

THEREFORE LET IT BE RESOLVED THAT the Alberta Association of Police Governance advocate that the Government of Alberta should fund all of the start up costs and a significant portion of the annual operating costs of body-worn camera programs through a new grant, to prevent the new directive from negatively impacting the other services offered by Alberta's police agencies.

Background

Hon. Mike Ellis, Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Services, announced on March 14, 2023, that the Government of Alberta is working with the Alberta Association of Chiefs of Police to create a new policing standard that would [require the use of body-worn cameras](#).

The Calgary Police Service was one of the first police agencies in Canada to begin using body-worn cameras and currently requires every frontline officer to wear one and use it during interactions with the public. Cameras in Calgary have [cut the average time to investigate](#) police conduct complaints in half and there is evidence they have helped reduce use of force.

Body-worn cameras have proved their value in Calgary, but there is a significant cost to the program. Calgary's initial purchase of 1,100 the cameras in 2016 was budgeted to cost \$1.3 million, and now the Service spends \$5 million annually to operate the program. The annual operation includes a hardware and software subscription from an external vendor, data storage and staffing. There are six full-time employees dedicated just to administering the program and frontline officers now also spend time uploading and managing their own videos.

As the province will be establishing a new Police Review Commission to take over the processing of police conduct complaints under [the new Police Act](#), widespread use of body-worn cameras will significantly benefit the provincial agency and allow it to conduct more efficient investigations. Therefore, the province should bear at least some of the costs of this technology.

RESOLUTION #3
Provincial Mandate to Collect Race-Based Data
Submitted by the Calgary Police Commission
To the Alberta Association of Police Governance

- WHEREAS** Statistics Canada is working towards incorporating race-based data into the Uniform Crime Reporting statistics to track the race of accused persons and victims of crime;
- WHEREAS** Race-based data on police use of force in Toronto identified that force was being used disproportionately on Indigenous, Black and other people of colour by the Toronto Police Service;
- WHEREAS** The provincial government will be taking over the intake of police conduct complaints when the Police Review Commission is established through the new *Police Act*; and
- WHEREAS** The public expects policing to be provided in an equitable, inclusive and unbiased fashion, and race-based data is needed to evaluate if this is occurring.

THEREFORE LET IT BE RESOLVED THAT the Alberta Association of Police Governance advocate with the Government of Alberta that there be province-wide standards established that require police services to collect race-based data on use of force, stops by police officers, and victims of police misconduct to provide a way for systemic issues that are having disproportionately negative impacts on a racial community to be identified.

Background

A key component of addressing inequities in law enforcement is having data on how different racial and cultural groups experience policing. Without strong data, it is impossible to identify where improvements are needed.

The federal government took the step of directing Statistics Canada to [begin collecting racial data](#) on both accused persons and victims of crime. Statistics Canada is now in the process of working with police agencies across the country to develop standardized methods of collecting this information and standard racial terminology.

In 2017, Ontario passed the *Anti-Racism Act* that required the collection of race-based data by specific public organizations, including the police. The Toronto Police Services Board followed suit by requiring their police service to [collect race-based use of force data](#), which revealed in June 2022 that different racial groups [experience more and higher levels of force](#) in police interactions than the average.

However, there are not currently any requirements at the provincial level in Alberta to collect similar data.