

# Report to Council



**Date:** October 31, 2016

**File:** 0610-01

**To:** City Manager

**From:** Stacey Jackson, Police Services Manager

**Subject:** Auxiliary Constable Program Consultation Response

Prepared by: Bill Finney, Special Programs Coordinator

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## **Recommendation:**

THAT Council receives, for information, the report from the Police Services Manager dated October 31, 2016 with respect to the Auxiliary Constable Program;

AND THAT Council direct staff to submit a written response selecting Option 3 (Appendix A) to have a Tiered Program to the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) as the City of Kelowna response to the Auxiliary Constable Program.

## **Purpose:**

To consider a submission to the Union of BC Municipalities Auxiliary Constable Program consultation.

## **Background:**

In January 2016, the Federal Government suspended the Auxiliary Constable Program across Canada pending a review of the program. The Union of BC Municipalities is asking local governments to indicate their preferred option and will convey the responses to the RCMP.

The primary focus of the Auxiliary Constable Program is; strengthening Community and Police partnerships by participating in supported Police strategies, designed to prevent and reduce crime. In their role, as a civilian volunteer, the Auxiliary Constable is able to collaborate with the general public, local community groups and business owners on a variety of levels.

In a Community, as diverse as Kelowna, for example, the Auxiliary Constable accepts, and is able to take on many roles;

- **Ambassadors** - The individuals that decide to accept the roles and responsibilities of an Auxiliary Constable represent a broad cross section of the community they serve. They

are business owners, professionals and leaders in their community. Many are experts in their particular field. They have friends, families and business associates. They are seen, by their peers, friends and neighbours, in uniform, working side by side, with their police partner, as they go about their various duties. In their capacity, as Auxiliary Constables, they are often the bridge between these groups, both social and professional, and the RCMP.

- **Facilitators** - Members of the Auxiliary Constable Program participate in a variety of Crime Prevention projects, designed to educate, and empower, the public. Through a variety of avenues and strategies, the Auxiliary Constable is able to provide tools and information that the individual, or group, can employ to reduce crime, thus reducing the fear of crime and the potential of becoming a victim of crime. Their client base includes, but is not limited to; students (all levels), business owners, community and senior citizen groups. The education sessions can take many forms; from formal presentations on such topics as drug awareness education, personal safety and security, to visiting local parks and public venues to discuss theft prevention and awareness.
- **Professional resource** - The Auxiliary Constable also works, hand in hand, with the Regular Members of the RCMP. They are fully trained in all aspects of the job, including; law and legal articulation as well as police defensive tactics, OC spray, handcuffing, police defensive baton and first aid.
  - I. Until recently the Auxiliary Constable worked in a uniformed, unarmed capacity, alongside their RCMP partners, in a "General Duty" deployment, utilising; the marked patrol car, all-terrain vehicle, police bicycle and boat, as well as urban foot patrols, assisting regular members as, and when, required.
  - II. Until recently, the Auxiliary Constables assisted with traffic control duties at special events, such as concerts and sporting events (i.e.: bicycle races and marathons) as well as Remembrance Day and Canada Day ceremonies.
  - III. The members of the Auxiliary Constable Program also play a significant role in civil emergencies, specifically the local forest fires, where they assist with traffic control and evacuations.

Recently, in 2016, two new initiatives have been developed, and implemented, within the Kelowna Auxiliary Constable Program and are unique, only to Kelowna;

- **Auxiliary Constable Video Review Team** - When a homicide occurs, in any police jurisdiction, the impending investigation can take any number of avenues. One of the many tasks, of a homicide investigation, is video review. Depending on the specifics of the crime scene, video surveillance, from surrounding businesses, for example, is gathered and reviewed, with the goal of gleaned any potential evidence or information from that video. This is often a daunting task that, typically, requires many man-hours to complete and can tie up valuable resources indefinitely. With this in mind the Auxiliary Constable Video Review Team was initiated. Early in 2016, when

Kelowna's first homicide occurred, a team of Auxiliary Constables was identified to review the video footage that had been gathered during the subsequent investigation. The members of this team were briefed by the lead investigator, regarding the goals of the video review and specifics of what they hoped to find. Training and equipment was provided. The contribution, made by the Auxiliary Constable team was invaluable. The lead investigator and the investigative team very much appreciated team's commitment to this task. Since then, the Auxiliary Constable Video Review Team has been utilised several times and remain a valuable resource in this type of investigation. To date, in 2016, the video review team has committed 992 volunteer hours to this initiative.

- Urban Patrols - Members of Auxiliary Constable Program act as liaison with the Kelowna Detachment Crime Analysts Unit and plain clothes surveillance teams and, together, identify known high crime areas in the city Kelowna. The areas specified, both business and residential, have been repeatedly victimized by crime, ranging from general thefts to break and enters. Dressed in civilian attire, and in two person teams, the Auxiliary Constables, conduct patrols in these specified areas, using a plain, unmarked vehicle. The focus of the patrols is to collect licence plate numbers, vehicle and person descriptions at, or near, the various "hot spot" locations. This is not a surveillance operation. There is absolutely no contact with the public; this is strictly an "observe and report", data collection, "drive by" function only. The information, collected by the Auxiliary Constable patrols, is then compiled in a "street check" format, which is then entered into the PRIME database where it is accessible to all areas of law enforcement. The value of the street check cannot be overstated. The ability, of an investigator, to place a specific vehicle, or person, at or near, a recent crime scene, via the street check, can often be the missing piece of the investigative puzzle. Having the Auxiliary Constable teams on the street, in this capacity, not only puts extra eyes and ears in these targeted crime areas but dramatically increases the number of street checks submitted during a shift. On average, the regular members of Kelowna Detachment submit a total of 85 street checks per month. Since the inception of this program, on August 12, 2016 the Auxiliary Constable Urban Patrol Teams have completed 327 street checks and committed 432 hours of volunteer time to this initiative. The Kelowna Detachment Senior Management Team fully supports the Urban Patrol Project, they recognise value of this initiative and feel it can contribute to Kelowna Detachment's crime reduction strategy.

Although the members of the Auxiliary Constable Program are encouraged to commit to, and participate in, all aspects of the program, as previously described, the individual Auxiliary Constable will naturally gravitate to specific duties, or tasks, according to his, or her, personal interests, availability and skills. As an example, one Auxiliary Constable will enjoy the education side of the program while another may prefer the more "hands on" aspect of working closely with the regular member.

Essentially, the totality of the information, noted above, describes the 3 tier approach, as defined in Option 3. The only significant difference being; prior to the recent restrictions, there was one training package and an expectation that the Auxiliary Constable would participate in all aspects of the program. With the option three, 3 tier system, the Auxiliary Constable, or program applicant, would, based on their interest and abilities, be assigned a tier, restricted to those duties, and trained appropriately.

The recent changes to the Auxiliary Constable Program have had a significant impact on the program itself as well as Detachment resourcing. Impacts on outdoor events provide a good example. Prior to the recent restrictions being levied, Auxiliary Constables were fully involved with event policing. They were partnered with a Regular Member, in a General Duty capacity, performing many of the tasks previously described. This past summer, those resources were not available for outdoor event policing, and the impact, to Detachment resources was noticeable.

The 3 tier system, as described in Option 3, is the logical choice for many reasons;

- This is not a “shot gun” approach where everyone receives one training package and is expected to perform the same duties as everyone else. This can be customised to the individual
- Participants, and applicants can be assigned duties specific to their abilities, interests and skill sets
- Training packages, and course training standards, can be customized to the specific tier. “Task specific” training can be added, removed or enhanced, as required
- It ensures that the individual participant or applicant is appropriately tasked
- It eliminates the possibility of a participant being placed, or finding themselves, in a situation for which they are unprepared. It also removes the possible, self-induced, pressure of feeling that they must participate in a task that they may, for whatever reason, be unsure of

Currently, the Kelowna Auxiliary Constable Program consists of 55 members. Annually, since 2011 the program has averaged 11,400 hours of volunteer time per year, without incident.

Simply eliminating the general duty profile from the Auxiliary Constable Program is not the answer regardless of the issue, or circumstance. By adopting the option 3, Tier Program approach, you are ensuring the individual is suitably tasked and properly trained, for the parameters of the tier they are working in.

**Internal Circulation:**

Divisional Director, Corporate and Protective Services  
Inspector Brent Mundle, Acting Officer in Charge

**Legal/Statutory Authority:**

**Legal/Statutory Procedural Requirements:**

**Existing Policy:**

**Financial/Budgetary Considerations:**

**Personnel Implications:**

**External Agency/Public Comments:**

**Communications Comments:**

**Alternate Recommendation:**

**Considerations not applicable to this report:**

Submitted by:

S. Jackson, Police Services Manager

**Approved for inclusion:**

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cc:

Divisional Director, Corporate and Protective Services  
Inspector Brent Mundle, Acting Officer in Charge