



NATIONAL  
POLICE  
FEDERATION

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DE LA POLICE  
NATIONALE

**NATIONAL POLICE FEDERATION**  
**2021 FEDERAL PRE-BUDGET**  
**SUBMISSION TO THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON FINANCE**  
**August 2020**



# SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

**Recommendation 1-** Invest \$190 million to increase training capacity at the RCMP Academy.

NPF recommends that the federal government provide additional funding of \$190 million to expand recruiting and training at the RCMP Depot, as well as increased funding in subsequent years to fill vacancies and decrease the backlog at Depot due to the impacts of COVID-19.

**Recommendation 2-** Invest \$40 million to expedite the RCMP Pistol Replacement Program.

NPF recommends that the government invest \$40 million in additional funding for the replacement of unsafe, 25-year-old service pistols before a serious incident occurs.

**Recommendation 3-** Invest \$50 million to implement Body-Worn Cameras and conduct a study to examine implementation needs.

NPF recommends that the federal government provide additional funding of \$50 million, with additional monies year-over-year for annual costs. Additionally, the federal government should purchase 15,000 BWCs in total, to guarantee proper operation and mitigate possible maintenance issues.

We also recommend that, in partnership with NPF, provinces, territories and municipalities, the government conduct a study to examine how BWCs would be implemented, review and address privacy concerns, environmental challenges to operating cameras (internet access, cold weather, battery life), and other additional resources needed.

# INTRODUCTION

## About NPF

The National Police Federation (NPF) is the sole certified bargaining agent representing ~20,000 front-line Members of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) across Canada and internationally. The NPF provides strong, fair, and progressive representation to promote and enhance the rights of RCMP Members. We are committed to negotiating fair and respectful compensation and resources to maximize the safety and security of all our Members and the communities they serve.

The NPF was founded in 2016 and was certified by the Federal Public Sector Labour Relations and Employment Board in July 2019. RCMP Members provide effective and committed policing services to uphold our laws and support safer and more livable communities.

## RCMP Policing in Canada

For nearly 150 years, the RCMP has been Canada's national police service. Our Members have national, federal, provincial, territorial, and municipal mandates. The RCMP polices the vast majority of Canada with more than 20,000 police officers in over 700 detachments in 150 communities, as well as in more than 600 Indigenous communities<sup>1</sup>, responding to almost 3 million calls for service each year<sup>2</sup>.

Over the past few years, the RCMP has experienced new and unforeseen challenges that continue to evolve as RCMP Members face significant cutbacks, including wage freezes, which have impacted staffing levels, recruitment and resources and – importantly – the well-being of Members. At the same time, policing has experienced a significant demand increase that goes beyond crime prevention and law enforcement.

Currently, we are amid a global health pandemic. While the curve of COVID-19 has begun to flatten and Canada is re-opening its economy, much is unknown. The Canadian Chief Public Health Officer is warning of a second, possibly more serious, wave in the coming months. The pandemic has led to an increase in policing demand. While most Canadians went into self-isolation, our Members continued to offer front-line services even under the most stressful and challenging circumstances. Throughout the pandemic, RCMP officers across Canada have been hard at work undertaking emergency management orders from various governments and working to safely police and serve their communities. This includes the monitoring and seizure of unauthorized COVID-19 test kits and other scarce and necessary medical supplies.

Insufficient financial and human resources continue to be a challenge. We believe it is imperative that the government address these shortfalls and increase resources for the RCMP to meet both current and future demand and ensuring ongoing community and public safety.

# RECOMMENDATIONS

## 1. Invest \$190 million to increase training capacity at the RCMP Academy

COVID-19 has had a significant impact across all industries, including within the RCMP. The RCMP Academy (Depot), where all RCMP Members are trained, has had a backlog in demand due to limited resources. In March, Depot suspended all cadet and in-service training, in the interest of protecting the health and safety of cadets and all staff. In March, 16 troops, with up to 32 cadets each had their training interrupted. Limited physically distanced training began in June<sup>3</sup>, leaving many cadets still waiting to resume training. This is further exacerbated by COVID-19 uncertainties this fall and beyond, further delaying and limiting training, which would subsequently impact and expand a 2021 backlog. To date, 14 troops have graduated, and it is anticipated that 9 more troops may be able to graduate by year end. This means that Depot will face about a 512 cadet deficit relative to full capacity.

In 2020, Depot had planned to graduate a total of 1,248 new cadets. Currently, Depot has a maximum training capacity of 2,176 (68 troops with a maximum of 32 cadets per troop).

The demand for RCMP officers across Canada continues to grow as policing services and mandates expand. This demand will continually not be met year-after-year if Depot is not adequately equipped to deal with the ongoing mass backlog of new cadet training.

More than 12 per cent of RCMP Officer positions remain unfilled across Canada. This is due to a lack of new officers, Members on annual leave, parental leave, injured on the job, stress leave or recruitment challenges. Jurisdictions across Canada can and do continue to increase their budgets to hire more RCMP Officers to fill their needs, but without an increase in national resources for training and efforts to counter the COVID-19 backlog, they will remain unfilled. Increasing vacancy rates puts additional stress on those currently working who must shoulder the shortfalls with an ever-increasing workload, stress, and exhaustion. This also creates potential safety issues for Members and their communities.

In order to meet the expansion in recruiting and training, additional funding of \$50 million must be reserved for ancillary costs, including increasing the number of facilitators and staff, building and operation of additional office space, and purchase of more police cars and training materials.

**NPF recommends that the federal government provide additional funding of \$190 million to expand recruiting and training at Depot, as well as increased funding in subsequent years to fill vacancies and decrease the increased backlog at Depot due to the impacts of COVID-19.**

## 2. Invest \$40 million to expedite the RCMP Pistol Replacement Program

The service pistols currently used by the RCMP are more than 25 years old and have been recycled to numerous officers and cadets for infield use. They are beginning to demonstrate increased mechanical failures rendering them unsafe and unpredictable. Additionally, they are also being subject to increased maintenance requirements and associated costs due to service life expiry.

The current service pistol is also the subject of numerous Canada Labour Code (CLC) complaints by Members of the RCMP as “unsafe equipment.” The 2018 CLC Judicial findings in the Moncton trial was highly critical of RCMP organizational failures relating to firearms, equipment, and training. The current pistol has become an occupational health and safety hazard and needs to be addressed quickly.

Replacing RCMP aging pistols will not only enhance both officer safety and public safety but will reduce operating costs by reducing inventoried spare parts and the cost of maintaining older equipment. It also reduces the risk of liability in wrongful death litigation should a service pistol fail resulting in the death of an RCMP Member or member of the public. Further, replacement reduces the risk of prosecution in CLC violations in the nearly identical areas of failure from the 2018 CLC Judicial findings against the RCMP in Moncton.

The NPF has received a professional estimate from one of Canada’s largest Law Enforcement supply businesses for complete outfitting of the total number of RCMP service pistols needing replacement. The request for quotation (RFQ) included service pistols with self illuminating night sights, level 3 security holster, new magazine pouches, three pistol magazines and service pistol mounted light. **Anticipating the purchase of at least 23,000 service pistol kits, as described above, and based on the RFQ response, the current NPF estimate is approximately \$30 million.**

In addition to this cost, transition training for RCMP Members must be factored into current training requirements. All RCMP cadets will be issued the new service pistol at Depot, therefore no new training cost for transition at Depot is required. Current active RCMP Members can receive training for pistol transition during routine block training (every 3-years) at no additional costs for training. This is similar to the model the Ontario Provincial Police used for their pistol replacement program in 2018/19. RCMP Basic Firearms Instructors (400 personnel) will require 4 days of transition and platform training to lead the force wide service pistol transition as the “trainers”. The RCMP armourers’ program will require approximately 5 days’ training (20 personnel) for transition to basic maintenance and tools for the new service pistol platform. **Estimated cost of 1,700 training days x \$850 per day (wage, hotel, meal per diem) is approximately \$1.5 million.**

**NPF recommends that the government move swiftly to invest \$40 million in additional funding for the replacement of unsafe, 25-year-old service pistols before a serious incident occurs. The total estimated costs including the service pistol kits (\$30 million), new training (\$1.5 million) and a 25% overage estimated (\$8.5 million) would be approximately \$40 million.**

### **3. Invest \$50 million to implement Body-Worn Cameras and conduct a study to examine implementation needs**

The Federal Government has announced that it will move forward with equipping 13,000 front-line RCMP officers with body-worn cameras (BWCs). The NPF supports this and other efforts by various levels of government to consider ways to better deliver police services in Canada. However, it is fundamental to highlight that the Federal Government needs to provide additional funding to address this new implementation.

The costs of deploying BWCs is substantial. In 2019, Montreal SPVM (Service de police de la Ville de Montréal) looked at equipping 3,000 officers with cameras. One of the top BWC suppliers estimated this cost to be \$16 million including hardware, software, and storage. In addition to this SPVM estimated an annual cost of \$24 million annually for additional staff, infrastructure needs, training, data management and continued maintenance needs<sup>4</sup>.

In the past five years various BWC camera pilot programs have been undertaken all with varying costs based on individual case factors and needs. In April 2019, the Calgary Police Service implemented cameras to front-line officers. Deploying 1,150 Axon Body 2 cameras with each device costing \$2,700 and \$1,600 to operate annually<sup>5</sup>.

Equipping 13,000 RCMP Members, based on various pilot program numbers, could cost as much as \$50 million, just for the initial capital purchase of the hardware, software, and storage. There would be additional annual costs that could also reach \$100 million.

Our Members are already facing budget restraints. **NPF recommends that the federal government provide additional funding of \$50 million, with additional monies year-over-year for annual costs. Additionally, the federal government should purchase 15,000 BWCs in total, to guarantee proper operation and mitigate possible maintenance issues.**

**We also recommend that, in partnership with NPF, provinces, territories and municipalities, the government conduct a study to examine how BWC would be implemented, review and address privacy concerns, environmental challenges to operating cameras (internet access, cold weather, battery life), and other additional resources needed.**

<sup>1</sup> About the RCMP [online] Available at: <https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/about-rcmp>

<sup>2</sup> 2019. Minister of Public Safety RCMP briefing binder - November 2019 [online]. Available at: <https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/minister-public-safety-rcmp-briefing-binder-november-2019>

<sup>3</sup> 2020. Resumption of training at the RCMP Academy [online]. Available at <https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/resumption-training-the-rcmp-academy>

<sup>4</sup> 2019. Leading maker of body cams disputes Montreal police cost estimates, CBC [online]. Available at : <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/montreal/montreal-police-body-cameras-1.5001814>

<sup>5</sup> 2020. Calgary police eye expanding use of body cameras. Calgary Herald. [online]. Available at : <https://calgaryherald.com/news/local-news/calgary-police-eye-expanding-use-of-body-cameras#:~:text=But%20expanding%20the%20use%20of,and%20%241%2C600%20to%20operate%20annually.>>