

Vancouver Engagement on the Proposed Elements for Federal First Nations Police Service Legislation

Date: March 20th, 2024

Location: The Westin Bayshore Hotel & Conference Centre

(1601 Bayshore Dr, Vancouver, BC)

In-Attendance: 56 people attended (11 virtual / 45 in-person) representing the following:

- Director, Indigenous Policing Programs
- Research and Policy Analyst, Indigenous Policing Programs
- Director of Operations
- Security and Emergency Manager
- Council Secretariat
- Councillor
- Emergency Program Coordinator
- Band Administrator
- Lands & Stewardship Director
- Legislative Assistant
- Police Representative
- Chief
- Emergency Management Consultant
- Environmental Liaison Officer
- Governing Council
- Director, Safety and Emergency Management
- Legislative Member
- Justice Manager
- Safety Officer
- Community Member
- Chief Police Officer
- Commissioner, Public Safety
- Community Safety Manager
- Region Manager, Public Safety Canada
- First Nations Consultation Coordinator, Indigenous Policing Programs

Welcome and Opening Remarks

Elder Sam introduced himself, thanked everyone and said an Opening Prayer.

Dennis Meeches did an opening prayer song.

Presentation – Chris Moran, Assistant Deputy Minister, Public Safety Canada:

https://ildii.sharepoint.com/sites/ILDIIArchive/Shared%20Documents/EXECUTIVE%20TRAINING/2024/APPROVED%20Proposals/FN%20Policing%20Legislation/FN%20Policing%20Leg%20-%20Documents/IAB_IPTF_PS%20Presentation%20ILDI%20Engagement.pdf

Elements to Inform the Legislation

1. Context

Discussion Question

The context emphasizes that the federal legislation should recognize and support First Nations police services with funding and foster effective partnerships between First Nations, the Government of Canada and the province/territory. Are there other concepts that you feel need to be included in the context to properly set the tone of this envisioned legislation?

Participant Answers

- Participant noted that those who are writing the document are not First Nations personnel. There is a need for First Nations individuals at the table when creating the documents/legislation, so their voices are heard. During colonisation, laws existed which still exist, so it's not about creating new laws, it's about 'breathing life' into the existing policies.
- First Nations always had laws within territory/people/nation. Current first nations laws are the first laws of this land. Colonisers first abided by laws of First Nations communities, until smallpox wiped out communities and colonisers created new laws, but First Nations communities still abide by their own laws in policing/in communities.
- Develop a bylaw that is consistent with the land code.
- Policing at the community level - have their own laws but for relationships to move forward, they need to be built on trust, respect & loyalty. If you take one element away then there's no relationship, therefore, collaboration is key, to integrating laws of First Nation communities with federal legislation. Key principle

will not work without collaboration between First Nations and federal government, First Nations communities need to be at table to voice their concerns.

- There is a need to capture portions of truth & reconciliation, implementing existing agreements and recognising/analysing those that have fallen short. Societal systems were historically dismantled, and colonisers used leverage in negotiating existing treaties, but historical obligations need to be acknowledged alongside fostering future relationships.
- There is an obligation in the existing treaty to provide community safety.
- Referring to the last sentence of 2nd paragraph of Intent of Legislation, "First Nations police services will continue to be subject to provincial/territorial policing legislation, regulations and standards." *Are there problems with the original legislation we are subject to, is the current legislation working for us?*
- Conversation needed on impacts of previous legislation both federal & provincial. Provincial legislation needs to be part of the conversation.
- Alberta, Police Act on reserve is not recognised, therefore there is a struggle to access funding. His community is currently trying to set up a police service in the nation, they get federal funding rather than provincial. Specialised services e.g. forensics, traffic - difficult to set up, laws are very outdated, fines outdated. No funding, hard to lay charges, therefore often won't go to court because it's a provincial issue, but they are federally funded. Provincial acts shouldn't apply to federal land, *money from fines doesn't go to nations - why?* The other issue we have is that if we lay a charge, the Crown prosecutors won't go with it since it's a federal charge. They would not even prosecute our laws under the Indian Act which is frustrating. The laws are there, and we can make our laws, but they are not enforced by the RCMP.
- Establishing authority equals the main goal, current law is hollow and therefore it's hard to enforce charges, it is possible to arrest individuals under the Indian Act, but often you cannot follow through with the charges as it bounces back from the court (federal not provincial).
- Gap between Indian Act and Federal/provincial legislation in enforcing charges. A community safety bylaw includes addressing drugs and violence. Includes an appeal within "x" number of days and then you can enforce it here. Run into situations where their bylaws and federal guidelines do not match and RCMP are forced to go with the federal guidelines. Police forces are not recognized by RCMP, and they must listen to RCMP when a situation is involved with both indigenous police and RCMP. Creating more supporting procedures to go along with the bylaws.
- Make sure to have a place to prosecute first nations bylaws to ensure that it is enforceable.
- Concerns on enforcing on reserve as there are overlaps in the laws as it can fall under different jurisdictions (provincial, community, federal). Some laws are not recognised, therefore not acted upon, making it hard for First Nations police to enforce authority.
- Funding needed to allow authority to establish Indian Act, new legislation needs to apply to reserve so money can go back to the reserve, which it currently does not.
- Establishing a provincial police force by First Nations for First Nations is the main goal, would greatly benefit society as establishing enforcement is often the key issue, because they are not the province, they are federal.
- Parity of provincial police legislation, including portions governed by Indian Act, should be established to allow for the counting of true cost of policing in the First Nations.
- Participants believe the current legislation is culturally insensitive. Discussions with First Nations police and those who create provincial legislation needs to occur.
- Goal is community safety vs incarceration and fines.
- Creating essential services should look at what each nation needs. Making sure police services meet the needs in that region.

- Many variables in terms of region, remoteness (access by road, plane), community needs, governance, infrastructure, etc that must be taken into consideration when calculating funding. A “Formula” is being developed to calculate funding.
- Often people don’t understand the challenges until they experience them, engagement needed with those that are experiencing the challenges.
- Concept not considered is looking at police force as a preventative line, often it’s more about enforcement. Prevention is key in their police services and most community police funding was not enough (Ontario, Manitoba).
- Police not able to spend time in communities building relationships and doing preventative work, helping to support community family healing would help eliminate need for policing in communities, historically didn’t need police due to community help.
- Historically police used to enforce, and not need to recognise the need for apology to First Nations people regarding the way they were treated by the police historically.
- Needs to be more collaboration with other agencies that talk about community safety. Community is a community thing not a policing thing. First line workers can be part of the prevention team, there is often a struggle/issue when a general duty member shows up rather than a member of the First Nations community.
- There is a need for a culturally appropriate de-escalation process.
- Funding as an essential service, *the government will only fund 52% so how can it be considered an essential service?* Concerned that negotiating between Federal, Provincial and Territories and still 48% of funding is not there. *Will the legislation recognise First Nations policing as an essential service?* Currently, many policing services are providing their own revenue/funding to be functional. There are too many unknowns about whether it will be recognised as an essential service and therefore, *will communities be able to run their own police services?* Concerned that funding arrangements and multi-level governments may still not recognise First Nations police services. There is a need to have more conversation with the province on what they view as an essential service.
- *I wonder if we are declared as an essential service, will we still have to adhere to treasury requirements with reporting?*
- Wage security is essential. I’ve been a Mountie for 28 years and 25 of those years were in First Nations policing. I love working on reserves. I had a fight with management to stay on reserve because my funds would go to the office, and they would send me off to work in Sydney or elsewhere else downtown Kelowna or Victoria. I just stayed in the reserves, and I had to fight. The only reason I joined the Mountie, was for the pension so the wage and benefits are paramount. I understand the other services, the marine section. From where I live, there is water around us. So, we have marine section, and you have to pay out. It’s a lot of money. Getting crown council and provincial and federal to be on the same page for charges. When I work in Kelowna, a guy was charged for tax evasion for cigarettes. The province is all over it because they don’t like competition. But trying to get something done under the federal, they didn’t want to involve with it. The wage priority has to got to be there.
- Compare salaries at different regions and come to an agreement at the table to come up with a funding arrangement.
- Discussions often feel like tokenism in that nothing happens, they have been asking for the police to be an essential service for 20 years.
- Policing programme grossly underfunded, not enough members, more officers are needed, this participants community has put in several business cases, but recent tenure didn’t allow for an increase in officers, they signed it knowing there would be a deficit and they are currently at the point where there is not enough officers.
- *If the police are an essential service, will we still have to report to the treasury service? Will the funding be clearly outlined?*

- Participants outlined how funding is often withheld with no reasons given and this is a big cause for concern. Funding arrangements about accountability should be heard. How are you going to hold service providers accountable? We do not have clear routes to hold service providers accountable. If agreement is not being met, they have to engage with public safety, the province, then other people. No accountability. If we do funding, there needs to be a firm process in holding people accountable to provide the funding.
- Participants also outlined that police officers in their community have the same training authority as municipal officers in BC, and that their police force is 100% reactive because that's all they can manage and that they are the lowest paid police force in the province.
- Short falls across the country in training police officers, police officers have no quality of life, and they are often approached to go somewhere else i.e. leave the community. Police forces (first nations) train them (first nations) and lose them after they get their credentials because they cannot afford to pay them according to their pay scale and qualifications. Get funding for the qualifications they have and right now we just have young people coming into the police force. *Who will mentor the young people as the older people (adults) move away once they get their credentials and get paid right?*
- Would advocate for community safety officers, asking for preventative workers (in schools, in recruitment), pilot projects in BC introducing CSO's unknown to this community. Communities have been participating at the provincial table, asking for community safety offers to be added into the DCU's.
- Participant outlined desperation for money and then displayed disgust at the 45 million unspent.
- (Community Tripartite Agreements) CTA's not working. Initial programme developed as an enhancement service e.g. CTAs, but they end up doing everything. Canada offered 900k but not allowed to spend it on wages/benefits only on purchases or training, so it didn't really help.
- Wage parity, escalation model, cannot be decided by government, what's the operating model - needs to be created by community. Better management is needed in the community that's equitable and not governed by somebody outside of the community. Want to create systems based on nations beliefs and values. In a healthy community, you don't need police services and can rely on the local community to reprimand. Focusing on the internal strength of having an enforcement.
- What are the metrics, numbers/required for policing - a conversation needed, how to minimise incidents, stats on incidents often not collected due to lack of personnel - data system managed by community would allow for the implementation of preventative methods rather than complete reactive policing.
- Recognises the need for a metric for equitable funding that defines policing as an essential service. Capacity building and more police officers - mechanism that provides metrics that the ratio of police officers in communities is equitable to provide community safety. Funding, *where do they pull the number to fund and how is it distributed?*
- Concerns on where funding from the government goes and how they are distributing funding as communities need that funding. It was reported that 13M dollars went unspent and their communities need that funding.
- Crown council and how to get the province and federal government to agree on legislation also needs to be considered, question raised, *"what happens when the federal government doesn't want to deal with provincial issues?"*
- The importance of culturally understanding what goes on and the need to explain to non-native co-worker the needs and experiences of the indigenous communities, if they don't understand there is always going to be a fight, this causes a cultural gap between groups.
- Need Community engagement (engagement with RCMP and other police forces). The Current approach is not changing outcomes of their people, what they should be changing for example is how their police officers should approach situations etc.
- A hierarchy of reporting must be established (RCMP, indigenous police force, provincial, municipal etc)
- Have everyone sit at a table and have a discussion on how to go about the funding and delivery.

- Participant responds with regards to pension - their community has managed to implement a pension plan whereby if someone moves to their community force, the pension follows, this has greatly benefited the community.
- Capacity building is vital. I think legislation and policing services should include capacity building with First Nations organizations in partnerships with police services in the community. The challenges that I see are due to colonialism and intergenerational trauma that we are all affected as Indigenous people in Canada.
- There is a need to include colonialism and intergenerational trauma in the discussion.
- Participant outlines the need for continued funding of a youth diversion programme in policing as it has greatly benefited their community, there is also a need for support for members that have been incarcerated - reintegration process, funding needed to help them.
- Legislation needs a holistic approach, to understand what an indigenous person faces in policing. There are benefits to having indigenous police force. They have a cultural sensitivity and a layout of the land and the beliefs. Having its own police force to translate original language speakers (reduce discrimination). What they have today is not working for them. Instil their own indigenous police force as other police forces are not working.
- Recognises the need for minimising administrative work of the police force by minimizing the number of reports and introducing a payment plan to streamline funding.
- Discusses the Land Claims Coalition Model. Recognises the need for modern treaty models to recognise historical legislation.
- Key point = Unification of system needed.
- Wording in question: federal legislation "SHOULD" ...believes the question falls short with the word "should".
- Believes the Federal & provincial government set First Nations communities up for failure i.e. with lack of funding. The money still comes from our land, from our resources. The majority of the funding still comes from our land and resources, and it needs to be fair. Discrimination has to be thrown out the window. People here are talking about their pensions not being fair, wages are not fair until recently. The provinces and federals need to be called out on their crap for this type of discrimination and for treating the program like this! Setting it up for failure! When they know exactly what's required when it comes to the budget.

2. Purpose and Funding Arrangements

Discussion Question 1

What are your views of the roles and responsibilities of the Government of Canada, First Nations and the provinces/ territories as articulated in the Elements?

Discussion Question 2

Do you have any suggestions for how to increase the likelihood that funding arrangements will be successfully concluded?

Participant Answers

- The funding should either go to police services or directly to the community.
- There are many challenges that FNIPP face, one of which is that the federal government has been in the driver seat on what a police budget should be by introducing funding and then expecting a province and territory to match and figure how they allocate to police services thereafter. And it's a complete reverse of the role. This legislation is trying to correct that. So, that police services and First Nations police services should be driving the conversation on what their needs are. If you need to pay officers for a certain amount, that should be in your budget proposal that would come forward to the federal government, provinces, and territories. You prepare a business plan to explain how you expect to use your resources to deliver adequate effective policing based on the requirements under policing legislation.

- Need to be sure preventative measures are the right move before implementing them, not always the right move, what is right for the individual (gives the example that 'taking them home' after an incident is not always the right move).
- *Funding scale needed - what funding covers what and where does it go too?*
- Legislating funding opportunities does not always work for the community.
- Funding needs to be on the scale of individual communities/nations, not just a one size fits all approach.
- Recognises the need for the opportunity to define what kind of police service it will be based on what's needed and what are the things that impact policing in the community.
- Police universe should be considered when defining pay equity. Canada wide, there should be an aim to try to stay in the top ten of the police universe, that would allow for everyone's wages and benefits to be covered.
- The ability to include community safety programmes in the funding model vital, would benefit other communities and nations.
- Legislation to be corrected to allow First Nations to drive the conversation on their needs rather than the government telling the community what their budget should be.
- RCMP/First Nations developed a policing agreement in his community, but the federal government backed out. Consequently, concerned that at some point someone provincially or federally will decide that this is out of their scope and back out of the legislation. The problem is the two levels of government having a say in how the nations run their police service.
- Canada/British Columbia fails to allow First Nations access to their resources to fund their own community/policing e.g. timber/salmon resources but not allowed access to them. Participant believes if his community could use their own resources, they could fund themselves.
- Funding agreement has never fully met needs, desire to be more proactive but BC doesn't allow for special constables in the police force.
- Necessity to achieve goals = province on board i.e. the Canada government not spending money because the province is not on board, all 3 need to be at the table and in agreement.
- Participant believes there has never been any true negotiations, take it or leave it attitude at previous negotiations.
- How to increase funding arrangements: speak to current and retired First Nations police forces, set up a database with members, a police forum for input of what works and what doesn't and how to remedy it.
- The creation of a database of costs so all nations are prepared going forward and a business plan manual that outlines how to move forward based on previous successes/failures would benefit communities.
- It's not just about policing but the resources needed to help the police force after they retire i.e. pensions, dealing with trauma etc.
- Funding to help police separate work from home life paramount and business manuals can help with this. Business manual can help the creation of business cases.
- Development of an information management system that manages police services, community engagement and input from retired police members.
- Never provided with a matrix which outlines providing a fair police service i.e. how much it costs to have a police officer etc. All fighting for the same resources but each service funded differently. Standalone police service funded by programme funding and still expected to do everything.
- Establishment of pension has allowed recruitment to increase in their community.
- Public safety is a basic human right so police services should be considered essential.

- Once we signed an agreement, the federal government backed out. RCMP is too complicated for the box that we put CTA's in and we're not really key on growing the funding for more communities, so, we're out. We will not sign the agreement. This approach of creating this legislation where two levels of government have a say over the nation's ability to run its own police service is the problem.
- There is inequality in terms of the roles. Need to strengthen the roles of first nations and their own governance and bring in stronger first nations involvement and equal partnership. Recognize that first nations have their own policing act.
- People making guidelines should take into consideration the different governance in different nations. Some nations are more ahead of others (more advance in governance etc)
- Mandates need to be looked at to be more aligned to make sure the indigenous police service is successful. Example: Someone had to argue with RCMP to remove someone in their community who was camping on their land. They have land codes and RCMP must serve them equally like they serve Canada.
- Created a watch program for drugs and violence etc. RCMP coming with guns, trucks etc while they don't have the adequate tools/resources to enforce. They want the same resources that the RCMP has.
- They set up a system where they used their own policing system. It was recognized by the province before, but funding was stopped, and they needed the funding to continue. Currently they are struggling to fund it themselves.
- RCMP say they can't access their remote area, and someone had a gun in a situation. RCMP said they will wait till morning and see but RCMP was unable to help as they are more remote. Feels like they cannot rely on RCMP in emergency situations.
- Sisters often go missing, and she wants to put in legislation to have a quicker response time. Have a special unit through the region that has a national crisis response for missing people (sisters). Taking responsibility and establishing a system for missing women. Lack of response from the RCMP as they didn't take it that seriously. Woman was found 100m near her home in the end.
- Autonomy for their own FN government to decide funding and how to allocate it and not having to seek approval from provincial/federal to do that. Shifting their funding to allocate to different regions in their nation instead of having a pause and then waiting for the government to approve. Streamlining the processing and decision making.
- Indigenous police forces will help tremendously in breaking down the barriers on reporting people to the authorities (hard for someone to say "hey joe is selling drugs down the street").

3. Dispute Resolution

Discussion Question

How successful do you think the proposed dispute resolution processes will be in supporting the resolution of disputes? Do you have any suggestions that may help the Government of Canada, First Nations and provinces/territories work together to respectfully resolve disputes?

Participant Answers

- Participant believes there are documents gathered up by the government for other programs that could be utilised in a dispute resolution process. In some cases, however, these documents are used against communities and in these cases, they need to be eliminated.
- *Is dispute resolution an option in the case when a community does not have a police force, but they are trying to build one? Will the dispute resolution process be available to communities that do not have a self-administrative police force?*
 - Dispute resolution process mainly directed at established police force and mainly surrounding the level of funding that the police force receives.
- Groups brought in to mediate are often based on colonial structures.

- Rely on traditional ways/laws/practices for disputes, the government should follow traditional ways of community they are in disputes with.
- Respecting bi-lateral processes is important (First Nation & Federal Government). Bi-lateral process would allow for fair representation for all.
- Federal approach to community can differ by nation based on their needs/laws/traditions.
- Process needs to be fair and equal. Is the playing field the same for all areas? If not and there is a dispute, is there terms of reference set up? Each area is different and this needs to be recognised.
- When we talk about funding, what Canada fails to see in my view, is allow us access to resources so that we can pay for services such as policing and in my community, we have salmon resources, timber and mining resources but we're not allowed to touch this stuff—but only those giant companies are allowed to touch these resources. Yet the government gets all our money from our resources which we don't have access to. Why don't you allow us to have access to these resources and then maybe we can fund our own programs.
- We have developed business plans over the years, and it always indicates what the needs are. We're conservative about it, but it's never met. No matter what each funding agreement comes in, it's never met to meet our needs. Also, in BC, a designated police unit cannot have many safety officers or special constables funded and that's our desire to be a little more proactive. I know Alberta allows for special constables and BC does not.
- What I see is necessary to achieve goals is to have the province on board. In the AG's report, it did indicate that a lot of the time Canada is not spending the money because BC or the province isn't prepared to meet it. So, we need to have all three on the table and to be in agreement as we move forward. Otherwise, we are going to be in the same situation. We played this game for decades where the province has money, but Canada can't meet it, or Canada has money but the province can't meet it. Therefore, no one moves forward.
- There has been no true negotiations when it comes to the program. We sit down and talk about negotiations, but it's always been a "take it or leave it" attitude. We have been told that if you don't want it then it closes the doors. So, I know we're beyond that and we're striving to be even better but definitely need to make sure that all partners are on the table.
- My view is don't set us up for failure. Perhaps we can speak to other First Nations police members retired and members that have worked on First Nations because there's a huge difference. Maybe have another police forum for input on enforcement with the administration on what works and what doesn't work. And how can we come up with a solution to remedy it.
- Let's collaborate and develop a database of cost so that we're all prepared to move forward. It's not just individual nations coming up, let's set up a business plan manual so that each nation has access.
- Funding should be coming from a whole instead of all these pieces that they have to apply for and the amount of admin work to apply for all these programs is taking up too much time.
- Some communities have a huge emphasis on prevention (of drugs etc) and that is one of the considerations for funding arrangement.
- Accountability about the RCMP's reporting and how much money was used for search and rescue etc. Reports to show how much funding has been supporting their reserves. False reporting and put onto the communities' balance sheet when they (RCMP) have not been doing work to help the community. Suggestions on audit or checking as some people are manipulating the books and dipping into communities' funds. 911 calls not being met. How do you report stats if they (RCMP) do not come to the scene and do their work?
- Cannot put a number on the funding unless services are laid out and measured. Hard to talk about funding when it is not clearly defined about what first nations policing is going to work and their responsibilities.
- Transparency on where the funds are going as the government says they are short on money to help fund the first nations.

- Dispute resolution program to capture and review how the funds are being spent and being transparent. Possibly a monthly review.
- Formula is not working, and staff are burning out (ex. 3 staff members). Needs personnel to help out the current staff have long hours and mental health is a big issue as well.

4. Implementation

Discussion Question 1

Do you have any other ideas that could help support the implementation of a First Nations police services legislation?

Discussion Question 2

The Elements envision that First Nations would be significantly involved in the implementation of the legislation. What is needed to support First Nations participation in this implementation?

Participant Answers

- Rollover clause as negotiations are going and agreement has expired and the current agreement will stay in place until a new clause is put in place.
- Empowering our people (first nations) to have the training would make them better understood. Sometimes they need to hire from other areas but if able to train their youth/adults, it would make more people interested.
- Hiring people within the community who know the job well and community. Knows the cultural values and knows how to behave during ceremonies such as funerals and other cultural aspects to be followed.
- Provinces hands are tied based on the current formula. This is something that the legislation needs to look at. There are often certain criteria on what the province can spend extra money on and this needs to change.
- It would be good for the legislation to give the authority for the communities to implement, providing delegated authorities to the communities to implement it.
- The review of legislation every five years is too long, so either shorten reviews or have a document that can be reviewed if needs be at any time.
- Suggestion on meeting yearly instead of every 5 years to ensure that things are being completed and services are being provided.
- *Are you asking for the creation of a document in the dispute resolution that allows for changes within the 5 years?*
 - Participant answers yes, need for the police force to be able to change the document, if need be, participant acknowledges that he thinks that it fits well in the dispute resolution but can also be placed elsewhere.
- Time frame of 5 years to make an adjustment, means the community will be different, so a fluid document would allow for changes as situations arise i.e. something is not working.
 - The 5 year review is related to legislation as a whole so it allows time to decide if it's working and if there are issues? Believes it will take a while for everything to get up and running hence the 5 years.
- First Nations communities are proactive not reactive so the 5-year wait doesn't work. They won't wait that long. The government needs to get on their level and work on their time scale.
 - The 5-year wait is based on the time they want to give communities to transition/negotiate. It is not about waiting until the 5th year; it is just about giving time.
- Having a long timeframe to wait to make an adjustment is not helpful. Each community will be different. So, having a fluid document helps when different situations arise, and then you are able to look at something that is not working. When you lay something out and think it's going to work, and it doesn't, and then you have to wait for a period of time before you can make an adjustment. It should be something that a First Nation policing can rely on and if there's meetings for emergencies, we need to fix it right away, otherwise

it will just continue for the next 5 years until adjustments can be made. In my view, First Nations are a lot different than the federal government. We operate differently. If we got the funding, we're not so reactive but instead proactive. If we wait 5 years, our communities don't work like that. We're not going to sit around and wait 5 years just because there's legislation that says we have to wait for 5 years before you can make that amendment. Traditionally and culturally, we don't work that way. For example, we live in an isolated community, we don't have to wait 5 years in order for things to repeat itself again.

- Regarding services under Indian Act, First Nations have to wait for money to come from INAC. Eliminate different departments so it comes straight from the treasury board to the nation otherwise it gets filtered down along the way. Suggests a direct payment would eliminate some of the shortfalls.
- There is a need to put pressure on Canada (Federal Government) to respond, historically First Nations have had to wait too long, and it is something that needs to be done as soon as the legislation is passed.
- Once legislation is passed, negotiations with communities needs to be instantly triggered.
- Working groups and coming together helps this as communities and nations face similar issues and challenges and outlines a space for working together.
- Possibly a secretary that will receive projects that knows the goals and initiative of the project and oversee the balance to ensure appropriate funds and put them into appropriate places.
- Having indigenous commissioners to oversee police services and having their own system of reporting within the community (want to be more detached and having a first nations sector to report to). Some sort of organization consistent to supporting first nations
- Possibly having a group/community to steer the "ship".

5. Broader Indigenous Policing and Community Safety Programs

Discussion Question

How can the FNIPP and FNIPFP, as well as other Public Safety Canada programming, better respond to broader policing and community safety needs in your communities?

Participant Answers

- Mentions grassroots, recognises the importance of community voices and the voice of those on the ground. Ability to have a voice and communicate needs as a First Nations individual of vital importance.
- Continued discussion is important and takes the communities to make it better.
- Need for a multi-city, across Canada discussion on FNIPP.
- The problem with FNIPP is that the nations sit down with the federal and provincial government, we work on an agreement and sign, and we all think that it means something but really the money goes to RCMP, and they make decisions that may align or may not align with the agreement.
- CSO would eradicate the need to get police involved in all communities' needs, participant believes nations could pull money from FNIPP to get CSO programmes moving.
- Believes funding programs federally are often not expanded to other opportunities. Need to push for other public safety programmes.
- Outlines that the police service in her community were not invited and if she registered under her community's police force her travel costs would not have been covered. Therefore, Inclusion is the key and a good starting point.
- Relationship first has to be built on trust, respect and loyalty. Believes discrimination and racism is still too widespread and nothing can be achieved until that is stopped. Fairness and equality across the board is needed.
- Interagency collaboration between First Nations communities and services such as the administration of justice programmes, health services, land-based healing initiatives is needed.

- Each group of people & generations suffer through different experiences. Important to recognise that safety needs in communities all have root causes, and when decisions are being made provincially/federally this needs to be considered. Decisions made for urban centres impact smaller communities in a different way than it does urban centres.
- The way my community looks at this issue is that our leadership ensures the well-being and safety of our community. Several years ago, we posted on social media our struggle with drugs. We have a remote community; we have no telephones. We can't pick up the phone and call 911. Some of our phones have internet but those are not accepted by 911. So, for us to call emergency services, our members have to contact other members in other communities that have a telephone to call 911 and it gets relayed. We're putting a lot in this legislation on how we move forward.
- Community safety needs to address the root causes of trauma, not just dealing with it at a surface level.
- Collaboration, respect, humility needed, and understanding that First Nations know firsthand how to deal with/help their people based on their experiences.
- Community has a working relation with a town 20 minutes away, but this town is already struggling with capacity, this leads to recruitment issues especially with policing.
- Native liaison officers are often coming and going and therefore it's hard to develop a good relationship, this is not sustainable and often communities are left with a gap waiting for a new person to help them.
- The opportunity to provide feedback would allow others to understand the gaps and how to fill them.
- With regards to FNIPP and FNIPFP, I agree with recruiting. There has to be cultural sensitivity training. Another way we can better respond is for nations to review your CTA agreement if you're under CTA. I believe in ours, there's a clause, we can critique the quality of the service. If the members aren't on the reservation, if your quality of service is not where it's supposed to be, you can review that and bring that up to a supervisor. If it's bad, you can sue the RCMP because you're paying them for essential services.
- Treaty nations: agree to be at the table but they are not invited, rather they are told how to operate, therefore, there is a need for them to have a voice at the legislation table.
- *Collecting feedback is one thing but what will be filtered out, what will be kept and what will be implemented?*
- Their community (Okanagan) has implemented a community safety programme helped by public safety Canada, but it has issues, why? Believes it is down to the pipeline and funding.
- Community safety plans are a great opportunity that puts initiative back into communities' hands.
- In his community, the onus is on leadership to ensure the safety and wellness of the community. So, what they need is the tools to continue doing it and doing it successfully. Outlines how some communities don't have telephones and therefore struggle to contact emergency services. Need to legislate the safety of our people but as a tool, believes it's up to the community to ensure safety but the government should provide the tools/funding.
- Participant believes the title of the discussion session was deceiving and was not able to come here to do what he intended.
- Legislation needs to have an open door for each individual community to share with the local police what their rules/protocols/laws are.
- The legislation should have language that recognizes the consultation with communities on the basis of understanding local protocols.
- Push needed for recruitment once legislation has been developed.
- Nations should review CTA agreements, clauses often implemented that allow for the reviewing/critiquing of agreement.
- Outlines how the funding has dropped in recent years, is there information on how much it costs to develop a First Nations police force? Believes a document outlining this would help.

- Establishing resources to get a police force going is a big challenge, how do we get this service from our CTA agreement?
- *Cultural safety and humility training ongoing but who created it?*
- More programs could be developed in the community i.e. on drugs, on violence, human trafficking. Their community does not always get access to what information the government sent out. Believes education is a key component of this.
- Children's safety is also important. Their community doesn't get enough resources to ensure the safety of their children. Other elements of public safety need to be considered e.g. women's safety, internet scams etc. Issues that are prevalent in their community.
- Outlines other components that are often not taken into consideration i.e. *specialised services, how will they be accounted for?* Their police force has to pay for specialised services and believes there should be a built in mechanism that states they have access to specialised services free of cost.
- Crime rate going up and funding going down so metric needs to be real, need to be estimated on real financial need.
- RCMP officers are sent to First Nations communities and it takes a while to build trust and they are rotated every 3 years just when the trust has been built. Believes they should have a choice of whether a First Nations individual comes into their community or non-First Nations individual.
- Cross-cultural training needed for RCMP officers coming into communities, if not they don't have the cultural knowledge/background to deal with First Nations communities issues.
- Recognises the real realities that communities face and the triggers they have. Cultural awareness is not a standalone/one shoe fits all concept. Key focus on changing the mindset but people need to open to listening. Every community and every nation is uniquely different and when someone comes into their community they need to be educated on that.
- Recognises some of the good work the RCMP does for their community but also recognises that it could be improved.
- Outlines the potential for individuals from their community to be trained up as security/police personnel, currently have a system in place to train individuals in times of busy periods but had to contract that out to a security company and therefore it costs money.
- Believes receiving funding to train their own people to become security/police is highly beneficial because they know each other and each other's experiences.
- Believes the solution in his community is to put money into his own people to be police officers.
- When considering public safety/polices other things need to be considered e.g. bail hearings, court proceedings, if someone has a bail hearing or is being released from custody how do they get home? Often brought to other regions/municipalities and left with no way home or nowhere to go. Funding needed for bail hearings, releases from custody, transfers not just general policing.
- Jurisdictions a key issue, often not sure which jurisdiction certain areas are in and therefore which emergency service to call. Legislating the police service into a recognised service would give more scope and resources to allow for jurisdiction lines to be drawn up so that dispatch/emergency services always know where to go and who should go.
- Key focus of communities is the safety & wellbeing of all its members. Tools communities have to ensure the wellbeing of the community needs to be enhanced, communities seek government support, but they don't rely on them to ensure safety. Expectation now is the enhancement of tools to protect people.
- I think the FNIPP and FNIPFP are intermediary processes that are available. When I look at legislation and what I do, we understand that it becomes a law at some point. Once that law is locked in, it's there. It is what it is. So, I'm aware of these processes that are placed in and how important these forums are – the question is, how is Public Safety Canada's response to broader policing. Certainly, my position as a chief, I remember somebody called RCMP "racist" and called them out in a caucus. It was the commissioner that

responded to that and said that yes, we do have racism in the ranks. We do have a better conversation and opportunity to have our voices heard.

- Have to get all the stakeholders at the table to develop a comprehensive plan. Not easy to get all stakeholders at the table but if all key people pushing in the same directions, it would be helpful.
- Guns and gangs program, can go in and educate. Outreach people to go out and meet with the broader community.
- Programs under public safety: aboriginal safety, builder safety fund, contribution program for organized crime, crime prevention action fund, cyber security, emergency prevention, FNIPP, infrastructure program, policy program, youth gang prevention program. Pathways initiative.
- Community safety plans are a good start. Will help with identifying priorities and then they can allocate resources properly.
- Tie in the government agencies that need to be involved (family services, gov't, etc)
- Coming to the table with a mandate and "wearing a variety of hats". Some people meet just for the sake of meeting. Bringing some substance/mandate into the meetings and actually put something in motion. Moving the agenda up and making progress/strides, feels like some of the meetings are not going anywhere.
- Speaking about banishment system in their community (put someone in an isolated area for them to self-reflect and "discover" themselves and "heal" from within etc. Sending members to traditional alcohol and drug programs isn't working. Programs that understand their roots and their culture have a better effect on people who are going down the wrong path.
- Some people's youth leads them down the wrong path as their childhood wasn't great (child abuse, substance abuse, bad parents, alcohol, etc) and that their background affects who they are becoming today and going down the wrong path because of that. System to change the mindset of these people who were not brought up in a great environment.
- Need their people to recover/receive treatment in their communities instead of sending them off. (halfway house to hold and change people). Taking some of their people who need help to an isolated place for them to heal and detox. Much better than sending their members to Winnipeg or some other place. A grandchild who had anger issues from the substance he was using was put into isolation for a week and came back a different/better man.
- Must tread lightly in terms of the rehab. For example, someone in their community committed a sexual offence and the court said they will not send him to jail if he checks these boxes out. He checks the boxes out and he re-offended. Some people must be incarcerated. Makes an emphasis on how some people can just "tick off the boxes" and they just go back to what they know (committing crimes, drugs, drinking alcohol).
- Recommended trauma informed responses should be implemented in first nations policing. Traumatic situations to individuals are not uncommon and are in homes in their community.
- Suggests proactive approach to any situation and try to stop things before they get into a crisis. Generational trauma exists and each community perhaps will handle it differently.
- Suggests community forums to assist with communication as some people could be uncomfortable sharing in a group setting. People need to have a voice and an avenue to communicate their thoughts and experiences.
- True healing has to come from within (peace from within and coming to peace within yourself).
- Consideration on elders committee/teaching as their youth can lose their identity. Tap into traditional teaching.

Closing.

