



Looking Forward



VANCOUVER POLICE BOARD

2005
annual report



Message from Mayor Sam Sullivan

CHAIR, VANCOUVER POLICE BOARD

On behalf of the Vancouver Police Board I am pleased to introduce the Board's first annual report. We hope that this will provide Vancouver citizens and other stakeholders with information on what the Board does, highlight some of the Board's successes in 2005, and provide a companion document to the annual report of the Vancouver Police Department.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank my fellow Board members, past and current, for their hard work and wise counsel. I would also like to thank the Executive, officers and staff of the Vancouver Police Department for their dedication and professionalism.

Looking forward, in 2006 the Board intends to build on its work in the areas of strategic planning, policy oversight and development, and increasing public accessibility and disclosure. The Board will continue to work on securing the resources required for the Vancouver Police Department, and increasing its efficiency and accountability.

Together with the Vancouver Police Department we work towards our shared vision of:

Canada's leader in policing – public safety for all.

Board Roles and Responsibilities

The Vancouver Police Board is the governing body for the Vancouver Police Department (VPD). It provides civilian governance and oversight of policing. The Board performs four main governance functions:

- it sets policy and direction for the Vancouver Police Department, including strategic planning
- it provides oversight of the Department's finances
- it employs the Department's sworn and civilian staff
- it is the authority for complaints made about the Department's services and policies

Highlights of the Board's governance work in 2005 include:

STRATEGIC PLANNING

In 2004 the Board approved a Strategic Plan to establish goals and direction for the Vancouver Police Department for the next five years. In 2005, the Board returned to the Strategic Plan for implementation updates in January, September and December. The Board's Governance Committee began work with the VPD on the creation of benchmarks and key performance indicators to reflect organizational performance. In 2005 the Board reviewed a report from independent consultants on the staffing requirements of the VPD. The review recommended increases in the authorized strength of the Department. The Board approved an addition of 92 sworn officers and 55 civilian positions to be created in 2005 and early 2006. This request for additional personnel was agreed by Vancouver City Council in March 2005.

The Board also considered independent studies of the VPD's information technology and information management sections and approved those studies' recommendations for an additional four positions in IT and 26 positions in information management. These requests were also agreed by City Council in March.

The independent consultants recommended a process to ensure that VPD operational planning is in line with the Strategic Plan, and to accurately identify the VPD's staffing needs for 2006 and beyond. This process is ongoing and the Board will monitor it throughout 2006.

POLICY OVERSIGHT

The Police Board approves all amendments to the VPD's *Regulations and Procedures Manual*. In 2005 the Board agreed changes to departmental policies in such diverse areas as: sponsorship and conflict of interest policy; arrests of intoxicated persons; seizure of firearms; property office procedures; processing of warrants; statements of duty reports; breach of the peace; and missing persons investigations.

The *Regulations and Procedures Manual* is published at www.vpd.ca.

The Board also received briefings on topics including: the policing challenges of the four policing districts in Vancouver; police/Aboriginal community relations; police officer recruitment; secondments to other agencies; and emergency planning and disaster preparedness.

ACCOUNTABILITY AND DISCLOSURE

The Board continued to publish its meeting agendas and minutes online. In 2005 the Police Board published information about the work of its committees on its website, including their terms of reference and membership. The Board also agreed to publish committee minutes online from the start of 2006. The Board started to publish information on decisions taken at its in camera (private) meetings in June 2005, and published its *Policy and Procedures Manual* in December.

Board Membership in 2005

CHAIR

Mayor Larry Campbell (until December 5, 2005)
Mayor Sam Sullivan (from December 5, 2005)



Larry Campbell

Sam Sullivan

MEMBERS

Lynne Kennedy
Terry La Liberté (appointed March 16, 2005)
Mary McNeil
Dale Parker (appointed February 24, 2005)
Janet Pau
Peter Webster



MEMBERS: (Top) Lynne Kennedy; Terry La Liberté; Mary McNeil;
(Bottom) Dale Parker; Janet Pau; Peter Webster.

STAFF

Shona McGlashan, Executive Director
Kylie Monan Sabo, Administrative Assistant

For 2006 Board membership and Board member biographies please see www.vancouverpoliceboard.ca.

Board Meetings

In 2005 the Vancouver Police Board met each month except for August. Under the *Police Act*, the Board must meet in public except when it considers certain matters, including public security where public disclosure could impair law enforcement, individuals' financial or personal affairs or labour issues.

Full Board meetings typically last 4 to 5 hours and require several hours of advance reading and preparation by Board members.

The agendas and minutes of Board meetings are posted on the Board's website. The minutes are also available to the public at the Vancouver Public Library. In

June 2005 the Board began publishing information online about decisions taken at its in camera (private) meetings.

In 2005 the Board met at Coal Harbour Community Centre, the Dr Sun Yat-Sen Classical Chinese Garden, the Van Dusen Botanical Garden and at police buildings at 312 Main Street and 2120 Cambie Street.

Members of the public may attend Board meetings and address the Board as a delegation. In 2005, the Board heard 27 delegations from 22 different individuals.

Board Committees

The Vancouver Police Board can set up committees to assist it in its work. The Board decides the mandate of each committee. Each year the Board reviews the committees' mandates and decides on their membership. A Board member may be appointed to a committee because of their professional or other expertise, or because they are interested in the committee's area of work. Although most committees have three members, any Board member can attend any committee meeting. Committees make recommendations to the Board, and do not take decisions on the Board's behalf.

Further information on Board committees, including their terms of reference and minutes of their meetings, can be found at www.vancouverpoliceboard.ca.

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Chair: Janet Pau

Members: Dale Parker, Peter Webster

The Finance Committee met 13 times in 2005. It scrutinized the Vancouver Police Department's financial variance reports on a monthly basis and worked on the Department's 2006 Operating Budget for submission to City Council. It made recommendations to the Board on financial matters such as the fees charged to members of the public for police record clearances, and funding for Community Policing Centres. The Committee also provided oversight for the Department's equipment management project and overtime recording project.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION COMMITTEE

Chair: Mary McNeil

Members: Terry La Liberté

The Freedom of Information Committee met four times in 2005 to deal with requests made of the Police Board under the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. In 2005 the Board received and responded to eleven Freedom of Information requests.

GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

Chair: Lynne Kennedy

Members: Dale Parker, Terry La Liberté

The Governance Committee met six times in 2005. Among other issues it worked on the Board's *Policy and Procedures Manual*; the Board's annual program; the Board's communications and public relations policy; and orientation and ongoing training for Board members. The Committee began work on the Canadian Association of Police Board's governance project, *Best practices: a framework for professionalism and success*.

HUMAN RESOURCES AND COMPENSATION COMMITTEE

Chair: Mary McNeil

Members: Lynne Kennedy, Peter Webster

The Human Resources and Compensation Committee met three times in 2005. It provided performance appraisals for the Chief Constable and the Board Executive Director. It also considered other personnel issues and provided advice to the Board as a whole.

Service and Policy Complaints

The Vancouver Police Board is the discipline authority for service and policy complaints made about the Vancouver Police Department. As set out in s .46 of the *Police Act*, service or policy complaints are complaints to the effect that one or more of the following are inadequate or inappropriate for or in relation to the conduct of a municipal police department:

- (a) its policies
- (b) its procedures
- (c) its standing orders
- (d) its supervision and management controls
- (e) its training programs and resources
- (f) its staffing
- (g) its resource allocation
- (h) its procedures or resources that are available to permit it to respond to requests for assistance
- (i) any other internal operational or procedural matter.

The Board does not have authority to oversee complaints about the actions of individual police officers (called conduct complaints) except for complaints about the actions of the Chief Constable or Deputy Chief Constables.

In 2005, the Board received five service and policy complaints, and concluded three of them (two were received in December and will be concluded in 2006). In 2005 the Board also concluded six service and policy complaints received in 2004. Highlights of the Board's work include:

- A citizen complained about the circumstances surrounding his receipt of a 24- hour driving prohibition. In early 2005, the provincial government enacted changes to the *Motor Vehicle Act* which provided new provisions for the administration of Roadside Screening Device testing. The Police Board then approved amendments to the VPD's *Regulations and Procedures Manual* which reflected the legislative changes and provided clear direction to police officers dealing with roadside prohibitions. These changes eliminated the possibility of the actions detailed in the complaint from occurring in future.
- citizens complained about the seizure of their property when VPD officers broke up a squat in 2003. The Board directed the VPD's Planning and Research Section to review existing policies and procedures surrounding the seizure and safe-keeping of property. This review resulted in substantial amendments being made to the VPD's *Regulations and Procedures Manual* with regard to property handling. The revised policies outlined the difference between seized and relinquished property; gave specific direction on how property was to be seized; detailed the reporting requirements when property is seized; and articulated the processes associated to the return of lawfully seized property.

- Two citizens made conduct complaints of excessive force by VPD officers. The Office of the Police Complaint Commissioner asked the Police Board to look at the issue of the use of “knee strikes” as a force application during an arrest. The Board carefully reviewed VPD policy with input from use of force experts. The Board concluded that the VPD’s use of force policy was adequate; that the knee strike was an acceptable force option; and that specific policy instructions on the use of knee strikes were not necessary.

However to reduce the risk of unintentional injuries the Board took the following steps:

- required the VPD Force Options Training Unit to ensure that the lesson plan for knee strike application procedure:
 - reminded officers that the target zone for knee strikes is a large muscle group such as the thigh, unless the torso is the only target present or a strike to the torso is dictated by a situational assessment
 - included the fact that knee strikes could potentially crack or break the ribs if delivered to a subject in the prone position
- required the VPD Force Options Training Unit to include knee strike training scenarios in the next scheduled in-service training cycle.

Contact Information

If you would like to know more about the Vancouver Police Board and its work, or would like to have input into policing policy in Vancouver, you have a number of options.

You can write to, telephone or e-mail the Board at:

Vancouver Police Board
c/o 312 Main Street
Vancouver BC V6A 2T2

Tel: 604-717-3170
604-717-3280
Fax: 604-257-3878
e-mail: office@vancouverpoliceboard.ca

You can attend a Board meeting. Meeting dates and venues are published online, and meeting agendas and background papers are posted on the Friday before each meeting. You may request to speak to the Board at one of its meetings; please contact the Board Office about this. Members of the public may also have the opportunity to ask questions about the business discussed at the end of each Board meeting.

For more information, visit the Board’s website at www.vancouverpoliceboard.ca



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