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Chair

Mr. Kevin Sorenson

Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security

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● (0845)

[*English*]

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Randall Garrison (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, NDP)): Good morning. This is meeting number 91 of the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security. It is Tuesday, June 18, 2013.

We'll begin this morning, pursuant to Standing Order 108(2), with our study of the economics of policing, and then at the end of the second hour we'll take 10 minutes for committee business.

I'd like to welcome those who are substituting on the committee. Of course, once again we'll wish Kevin well, and we look forward to seeing him back in the chair after today.

This morning we have a first panel of witnesses, which will consist of Chief Matthew Torigian from the Waterloo Regional Police Service, and by video conference from Halifax, Professor Christopher Murphy from the Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology at Dalhousie University. My thanks to both witnesses for being here this morning.

I'll just check with Mr. Murphy as to whether he can hear and see us. It looks good from this end.

Dr. Christopher Murphy (Professor, Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology, Dalhousie University, As an Individual): Yes, everything's fine here.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Randall Garrison): Okay, great.

We'll begin with opening statements from the witnesses and then we'll go to rounds of questions. Because of my lack of trust in technology, we'll go first to Professor Murphy at Dalhousie before we lose him. We'll ask you to make a ten-minute presentation.

Dr. Christopher Murphy: Thank you very much.

Good morning, and thank you all for this opportunity to present to you some of my ideas based on my experience of looking at Canadian policing and policing in general for over 25 years. I've been a student of Canadian policing as an academic, but I also spent eight years in the old solicitor general department as a policing policy researcher when in fact the ministry had a capacity and an interest in national policing and police research. I'll come back to that later.

First let me say that Canada has a well-earned reputation and the Canadian police have earned a reputation as having a stable, publicly supported, and modern professional police force, one that I think has an excellent record when compared to our comparator nations—Australia, England, the United States, etc.—relatively free of corruption and the excessive violence that has characterized at least some aspects of policing in those countries.

Canadians have invested heavily in good government, and as a result have invested in good policing. We also invest in health care, education, etc. We've been willing to pay taxes and invest in public policing in order to have a high degree of public safety and personal security. Indeed, Canadians may invest more in their public police than almost any comparable country in the world, as measured by per capita spending, and we probably have the best-paid public police in the world. We have developed a good and professional, but very expensive, model of public policing, one that has grown significantly, as you're all aware, in police numbers and policing costs over the last 10 to 20 years.

However, the capacity and willingness of the public to continue to pay for more policing without at least more evidence of the value and efficiency of that model is at a tipping point in Canada. It certainly is in other countries, such as England and the United States. Municipal governments find it increasingly difficult to sustain their current policing costs, let alone meet rising policing costs.

In short, it's my belief, and that of many municipal police leaders and municipal government people responsible for policing, that the current model of public policing, as is, without change, is simply not financially sustainable, and that without significant change to the current model there will be an inevitable decline in both the number of police officers and the quality and range of police services that will result.

There are some possible, and not very attractive, policing scenarios that are out there already, and I'll just run through them quickly. One is to simply continue the growth scenario we've had for the last 10 years. You've seen the data—increases of about 5% a year. These are not sustainable without increases in municipal or provincial taxes, or simply cannibalizing other municipal services to pay for this increase.

In 2011 we see this increase suddenly stop, and we're moving to what I would call a static growth model. That is, we try to maintain the current number of police officers and the service levels with more moderate increases in annual funding. It's about 3% now, which means, to some extent, no increases in the number of police officers, but because of salaries and benefit increases, it remains about 3% on an annual basis. That means we'll have flat growth despite increases in population, so the police per population ratio will decrease. This is actually very similar...and we may be in a period like the 1990s, when between the years 1990 and 2000, Canada saw an actual decrease in the total number of police officers —not much, but there was virtually no growth—and a significant decline in the per capita ratios.

I did a study at that time to see what police were doing and how they were managing this period of fiscal restraint. Basically, they cut services that were considered not essential, non-crisis, and they had to reprioritize their limited resources to meet the demand they had. It wasn't necessarily a period of innovation or change, simply a reduction in the quantity and to some extent the focus of police services.

We have a negative growth option, which is simply to cut the number of police officers and cut the budgets, and that will of course lead to a decline in the level of police service and public safety. It's not a desirable one, but it's one we see in the U.S., where simply to meet financial crises in municipal budgets, they've cut the number of police officers. I don't think we're there yet, but a number of municipalities may be facing that kind of scenario in the near future, and that worries me.

● (0850)

Finally, the good news is that I think there is a change in the development model that is currently being explored in a variety of places. It's an attempt to manage the growth in police spending, but somehow without diminishing the quality and quantity of policing services, and to some extent even improving and expanding those services, primarily through significant forms of change, reform, and innovation.

You have no doubt had some witnesses from the English experience and have heard about the changes there, as well as witnesses from the United States and some municipalities. It's an attempt to change the current model of public policing in ways that make it perhaps more cost efficient and in some ways more cost effective. This can mean a rethinking of the fundamental policing model and the police role and their relationship to the community; the privatization of some police services, etc.; new organizational and occupational career models that allow for lateral entry; different kinds of recruiting and education strategies; new ways to deliver more cost-efficient services, such as civilianization, tiered policing, various forms of community service officers—there are experiments that address that issue—and more effective use of new information and communication technologies; and finally, a better educated and more diverse police profession and a commitment to evidence-based models of strategies in public policing.

We can watch and to some extent learn from the British experience. It's not entirely positive, and it's mixed, but at least they are documenting, researching, and evaluating what they're doing, and I think their ideas are having a significant influence on what Canadian police are at least looking at now.

I believe we're faced with the same situation as the British police and the American police. It's perhaps less dramatic, but I think it still is a situation that calls for some degree of change, reflection, and analysis. What's different about England is that they actually have an information base, a research capacity, to kind of underlie or at least stimulate these kinds of examinations and innovations.

This brings me to my last point. If we are going to adapt to the current challenges facing Canadian policing, and the more complex and sophisticated policing and crime issues, we don't have the kind of research and information base that other countries have. Compared to countries such as Britain and Australia, we invest very little and do very little either in-house police research—that is, police doing their own work—or applied academic police research. We even lack the basic information to assess whether in fact in some cases we're doing the kind of work that we think we're doing and being as efficient or as effective as I think the public and the police would like it to be.

The good news is that I think Canadian police are ready and interested in research information, knowledge development, and evidence-based strategies in a way that I haven't seen over the last 25 years, no doubt occasioned by this fiscal restraint or this crisis, depending on how you look at it. I think they're eager to become involved in a new kind of evidence-based, research-based enterprise that they see as going along with reform and change.

The Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police has reinvigorated its research foundation. The Canadian Police College is developing a series. Even the Canadian Police Association recognizes that research and evidence-based policing will have to develop more effectively in Canada.

The second piece of good news is that we do have the research capacity in this country to do that kind of work. There are growing centres of police research and an increasing number of academics who do applied police research of interest both to academics and to police. We have the interest and the capacity to develop this infrastructure. What we lack is an infrastructure that funds, coordinates, and facilitates research, knowledge, information, and innovation in this country.

In a sense, because of this, we are forced to import policies and practices from other countries, often without assessing whether they're viable or feasible here. We don't tend to evaluate whether they are appropriate or effective.

● (0855)

We need national leadership from Public Safety Canada, from the federal government, to coordinate these centres of regional and municipal interests and expertise, to facilitate development of a national research agenda to underline the reforms and changes that are coming in policing, and to make them as effective and efficient as possible.

I can close on that. I could certainly say more, and I will be pleased to answer any questions you may have on anything I've said.

Thank you.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Randall Garrison): Thank you very much, Professor Murphy.

We'll now turn to Chief Torigian for a 10-minute opening statement.

Chief Matthew Torigian (Chief of Police, Waterloo Regional Police Service): Thank you very much. Good morning, ladies and gentlemen, Mr. Chair. Thank you for the invitation to speak with you today.

By way of beginning my comments—and I look forward to the discussion that will take place afterwards—I'll try to walk you through a description of where we see all of this coming together. Professor Murphy touched on a lot of the points that I think are very important when we look at where policing is headed in Canada.

This morning I hope to share with you some of our on-the-ground experiences on some of the work we've done and the initiatives we've undertaken to determine the best approach to delivering public safety and security for our community. At the same time, I hope to connect this to the overall direction of policing in Canada. In Waterloo we are beginning to develop what we would refer to as an economic model of policing.

We've talked about the economics of policing, and we've spoken at length about expenditures and revenues and trying to drive down costs and doing things more efficiently. We often get too far ahead of ourselves at times. We don't ask ourselves why. How does this all fit together?

I would take it back to one of the reasons why I got into policing in the first place. The purpose of policing is to protect the weak from the strong. Gangs are strong. So is addiction to a substance. The strong can prey on the disenfranchised or the marginalized in our communities. What can we do as a community and in policing to protect the weak from the strong? We often come in contact with the weak. Those are the people we serve, who we need to pay attention to.

So when we're looking at the economics of policing and when we think about our clients, the people we come in contact with the most—people living with mental illness, the homeless, the disenfranchised, the marginalized people in our communities, the students—none of them pay property taxes. That is the base from which we get our budgets. So it's very important not to silence our clients and not to look just at the cost of policing.

We can get ahead of ourselves by looking at other models. We can look at some of the one-off efficiencies, try to grab the low-hanging fruit, but that won't serve the sustainability of policing in the future. When we look at this committee, we see the great work that can be done at the national level in providing leadership for the overall direction and the sustainability of policing in Canada. If there's one area that I might disagree with Professor Murphy on, it's public policing. There's no such thing as public or private policing; it's policing. There's private security; there isn't public policing.

One of the initiatives we're probably proudest of in Waterloo would be our domestic violence project. It's a wraparound approach. We've taken our domestic violence investigators and collocated them with 14 other community partners outside the traditional police service building. We have them housed with sexual assault treatment centres, women's crisis shelters, crown attorneys, counselling services. We anticipated and realized a 20% increase in calls for service on domestic incidents alone in the initial stages of this initiative.

We also noticed...and the impetus for us to do this was that about three and a half murders a year were related to domestic violence. We began this project in January 2006 after extensive research. We went all over the world and took the best practices from many different areas: San Diego, Calgary, the U.K., Ottawa. We pulled them all together and created the family violence project. We are now averaging less than one homicide per year related to domestic violence—a significant reduction. We look at it as homicide prevention.

● (0900)

To do this, we had to look at data. We had to look at the evidence in front of us before we could make a decision on what we needed for our community. Right now, we're starting to see the beginnings of a national initiative to have more research, more evidence, more data in front of us. We look at outcome evaluations of some of the projects and initiatives that were undertaken, and as a result of that, we're starting to inform our business decisions in policing.

Some of that evidence-based decision-making comes in the form of weekly or monthly reports that we, as police leaders, receive. We use these to analyze the work that's being done. Currently in Waterloo, we're developing an impaired driving dashboard. We're working with a software company to put technology in the hands of our front-line officers. When they log on to their mobile workstation, the map of their zone comes up and through a pick list they can actually see where all of the hotspots are, where most of the collisions have occurred because of impaired driving. We can then deploy properly.

We also have another software program we are putting all of our data into. It's a queuing model, and as a result of it we now deploy based on where we're needed, so that we have the right number of people in the right place at the right time.

All of this is to ensure optimum efficiency, but none of it comes together unless we have all of the evaluation pieces, the investment in some of the tools, and an analysis of the work being done. This is what it takes to determine the value of policing. What we're trying to do is demonstrate a return on investment for our community. It's the last piece that I want to touch on now, the community.

At the core of all of this, be it a new model for policing, a new governance model, different oversight, mileposts, measurements, community or provincial or national direction—all of this speaks to creating the lighthouse, a beacon for us to move towards. We want to look at this ecosystem of work, which is a very comprehensive business. We take the research, apply it to some of the tools, and build capacity within our organizations. We develop leaders. We make sure that we can demonstrate a return on investment. We do this by assessing what we have. We need strong plans to build the data sets that inform the decisions we make on investments. This ongoing process really is an ecosystem. It ensures the sustainability of this profession, and it ensures that we are addressing public safety concerns in our community.

I have the good fortune of sitting on a number of committees. One of these is the Police Executive Research Forum of the Canadian Association Chiefs of Police. You've heard from Deputy Minister Dale McFee, and I'm fortunate enough to be sitting on his expert advisory council in Saskatchewan. In Ontario, we have a Future of Policing Advisory Committee, and as the immediate past president of the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police, I sit on that committee. I also co-chair the National Police Services Advisory Committee and the Police Information and Statistics, POLIS, committee with the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics. It's the last one that's really important. We have to start challenging some of the stats and ask ourselves if we are capturing these statistics in the proper way.

We hear a lot of discussion and debate about whether crime is up or down. What we've endeavoured to do at the POLIS committee is to index crime. What we know is that the complexity and severity of crime is increasing in some communities across Canada. It's very important for us to drill down and see if we need to capture more statistics on the crimes that are occurring.

● (0905)

I'd be happy to answer some of your questions afterwards. I hope I've enabled you to have some sort of picture of what we're trying to develop in Waterloo with respect to the economics of policing.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Randall Garrison): Thank you very much for your statement.

We'll now begin with an opening round of questions of seven minutes, starting on the government side with Ms. Bergen.

Ms. Candice Bergen (Portage—Lisgar, CPC): Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Good morning to the witnesses. Thank you both for being here this morning.

We've been engaged in this study for several months. We've had a lot of very good information provided to us on best practices by different police organizations that are doing fantastic work and by academics. We have heard from provinces like the Yukon, which has laid out a common ground plan, and we've heard some really good ideas.

Some of the committee travelled to the U.K., some to California and parts of Canada. I was one who went to the U.K.

It was an interesting exercise. The federal government in the U.K. provides the majority of the funding and provides an overall direction for the police departments. I think there are 43 different districts in the U.K. Each of them has been policing as a little individual unit, so when the federal government said to them that they had to cut 20% from their budget....

Then there were some political changes, whereby they now have commissioners who are elected, possibly to help carry the heat and also to provide ideas. We saw that the federal Home Office has, as you said, Professor Murphy, a small research department in which they determine value for money in policing. Also, there seems to be quite a large involvement of KPMG with various police districts with respect to efficiencies.

So we have seen a lot of interesting things here at home and abroad. What I'm looking at, and we are all, I think, starting to notice and wonder about, is how the federal government in Canada can bring all of this together and what we can do to provide something that is within our mandate as the federal government, because policing is not a federal issue. Add to this that we have municipalities and cities—Chief Torigian is here representing Waterloo—and we also have first nations. What we're seeing is that first nations policing is over the top, in terms of policing cost per person.

I want to ask you, with all of that—first of all, Professor Murphy—what realistic role you see the federal government in Canada playing. I'd like to ask you to keep in mind the fact that, for example, in the U.K., where it seems that they're pretty effectively cutting 20% off, they are doing it with almost a very professional business model, bringing in the professionals—the KPMGs of this world—and asking, just as any business would, how do we make cuts and still run a solid business?

With that in mind, Professor Murphy—I'm going to ask you first, and then go to the chief from Waterloo—what role do you see the federal government playing in bringing this all together?

I'll leave that with you.

● (0910)

Dr. Christopher Murphy: I think most people in the Canadian police community recognize that while there are institutions and provinces and capacities and innovations going on across the country, there is no central research policy centre that coordinates, that communicates, that doesn't necessarily dictate but in a sense simply allows the decentred nature of Canadian policing to flourish without being parochial and local and failing to learn, while duplicating each other's efforts.

Some kind of national policy research centre that would provide information, perhaps research support, is needed. I think there is a victims' centre in Public Safety Canada that took this initiative. I worked in a unit within the federal government at one stage that had four or five people whose job it was to facilitate and communicate research and fund research nationally. That was the research unit of the Solicitor General. I was responsible in those days for community policing. We were very successful simply by supporting and spreading information and knowledge to the Canadian police community, which the Canadian police community took up.

They also funded, by the way, centres of criminology to fund police-related research initiatives.

So there is a central leadership role, which doesn't have to dictate —it's more a networking and communications and best practices model, which I think could be created—and there are a number of models out there that could be looked at.

But I'll hand this over to the chief, because I'm sure he has some significant ideas about this himself.

Chief Matthew Torigian: Thank you. I'm not sure they're significant, but I certainly do have ideas.

I think one of the areas would be continuing to provide leadership in the area of perhaps some guiding principles and a framework for sustaining policing in Canada, not necessarily having to throw dollars at it, but in fact ensuring that we're all speaking the same language, that we have the right common visions and values for what we're looking for with respect to providing policing in all of our communities, regardless of whether it's a first nations community up in the territories or a strong urban centre in one of the more populated areas in Canada.

So it's those guiding principles, that framework, and perhaps a model, and an economic model, on how this all comes together and how it all works. I would resist the urge to try to grab some low-hanging fruit or hear what's happening in another area of the world and look at that as the panacea to finding a solution to whatever may be the cause.

I was fortunate enough to be part of a study group with Mark Potters—who's here today as well—from Public Safety Canada, when 12 or 13 of us went across to the U.K. and took a long, hard look at all of the reforms that were and are going on over there. We had an opportunity to speak with a number of people involved in those reforms.

I would hesitate to look at the U.K. as a solution by cutting 20%, because I can tell you that they're spending an awful lot of money where we cut many, many years ago. They're staffed at levels that we haven't seen in Canada for decades.

There are so many different approaches and models out there. I think from a national level, it's providing that leadership in the form of a beacon, of guiding principles for what we expect policing to deliver in every community for every Canadian, and ensuring that there is a framework of some sort in place. If that framework were an economic model, I think it would help lead us as police leaders.

I hear what Professor Murphy is saying about research. I think it's critically important. I'm not sure it needs to be in a central location. There are many advantages to having this free market of research out there that can be generated from a number of different areas, with perhaps different and maybe even competing interests but allowing police leaders the capacity to look at that research and make some informed decisions.

● (0915)

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Randall Garrison): Thank you very much.

Unfortunately, there is no more time for this round.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Michaud, you have the floor.

Ms. Élaine Michaud (Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier, NDP): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I thank our two witnesses for appearing before us today.

My first question is for Mr. Murphy.

During your presentation, you suggested it was time for Canada to start rethinking its current policing model. This has been mentioned during the committee's travels. We had the opportunity to go and see what is being done in Great Britain and in the United States. Moreover, we were able to see what is happening here in Calgary and in Prince Albert, among other places. We were able to see the HUB and COR models in action, which you must be familiar with.

Are these the kinds of models you are thinking of when you talk about controlling costs better and using resources more efficiently while providing effective services to the population?

[*English*]

Dr. Christopher Murphy: Absolutely, but I think the notion is that we have limited police resources under the current model, and that there may be ways to use them more effectively and efficiently by rethinking some of the assumptions that underlie that model, such as the notion that we need uniformed and empowered police officers to deliver the full range of police services out there, when in fact there are many aspects to what police do: either some variation of a fully sworn, fully empowered police officer could do it, as in the community service office model in the U.K., or increased civilianization—in some cases, some limited cases, perhaps even privatization.

That's one model, then: a new way of rethinking the various police functions instead of a generalist model. Some more specialized views of policing and the skill requirements would allow police to recruit more broadly, etc.

I don't think there's any one answer to the question. I'm not sure the English model is central or even relevant, but what I don't think we have is.... We have various places trying different things, and we have no sense of coordination or national purpose.

I wasn't actually suggesting that we create a centre that then does all the research and assessment of these innovations and new ideas, but that we develop some connected capacity in Canada with some kind of leadership role. Then we can look at these innovations and say, yes, these are really effective, they do work, and maybe it should be part of some national agenda, as opposed to an individual police department or a local jurisdiction.

I'm not sure if that answers your question.

● (0920)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Élaine Michaud: Yes, thank you very much.

Chief Torigian, you touched on the same issue during your presentation. Would you like to add something to what Mr. Murphy has said?

[*English*]

Chief Matthew Torigian: I'm sorry, the translation wasn't working, but I caught some of what you were asking.

Ms. Élaine Michaud: I was asking if you wanted to comment or add anything to what Mr. Murphy said, because you did talk about that a bit in your own presentation.

Chief Matthew Torigian: I would agree with Professor Murphy. I understand and agree with his vision of where and how that research could get developed and the connection that needs to occur right across Canada to ensure that all police leaders have access to it.

One of the areas that I think is very important when we're talking about the sustainability of policing, and looking at different models or methods by which we deliver our services, what is going to be key to all of this is the new recruit: the training, the education, and the recruitment of the new generation of police officers.

Again, Public Safety Canada has looked at this as a fallout from the summit in January, and it is looking at new ways to train this new cohort, this new generation of police officers who someday will be the leaders of the future. We have to ask ourselves, are we recruiting the right people, and are we doing it the right way? And how are we training and what are the qualifications?

I sit on the Ontario Police College General Investigation Training Advisory Committee, and we are looking at the training period. Is it time for there to be a professional designation for policing? If that's the case, what do we need to get there? Is it a degree? Is it a diploma? Right now the minimum requirement is still grade 12 and you go down to the police college for 12 weeks after you get hired by a police service. I'm not sure that's the right model for what our expectations are for police officers today.

In fact, it's not reality either. We're hiring those with any type of post-secondary education, and very often we're hiring new recruits with master's degrees. The complexity of this job has grown. Thankfully, it didn't work when I was going through that you had to be six foot four and come off a farm and be able to fight your way out of a bar. That's not today's recruit; it's not what is necessary for today's police officer.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Élaine Michaud: You told us about a project that is more focused on the problem of domestic violence.

Do you have any projects or programs that are more focused on youth at risk of becoming involved with gangs or criminal activities?

[*English*]

Chief Matthew Torigian: Yes, we have partnered with our local crime prevention council. It's a crime prevention council that is extremely successful; it is really a table that has been set with a number of community stakeholders and representatives from a cross-section of disciplines right throughout our entire community.

As a result of the work they've done, and in partnering with us, what they're trying to do is generate programming where they can get out in front of, and identify, at-risk youth. Perhaps somebody who has a sibling who's been involved in a gang...get to them and create opportunities to direct them in a different direction. It's called inREACH, and it's an anti-gang program that's going on in Waterloo right now.

But to speak to Professor Murphy's earlier point, the evaluation of these programs is difficult. Even with this particular program, inREACH, there are differing views as to whether it's successful. What we really need is some very sound academically based research or outcomes evaluation that would inform us as to whether or not these in fact work.

What we're doing in Waterloo as well is we've partnered with a number of other agencies and police services in putting into place a Saskatchewan HUB model. It's a focus on health, because we know the social determinants of health overlap with the determinants of crime, and we're seeing an overlap there. We're focusing in on health, and again our goal is to get upstream and intervene upstream with a number of people before they come into contact with us, because we know that if they're coming into contact with us, they're coming into contact with emergency wards and other social services.

● (0925)

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Randall Garrison): Thank you very much.

Now we return to the government side.

Mr. Hawn, for seven minutes.

Hon. Laurie Hawn (Edmonton Centre, CPC): Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Thank you to both of our witnesses for being here.

We've heard a lot over the last several months, but I think, as with a lot of things, it comes down to time. Theoretically you can always get more money, you can always get more people, but what you can't ever do, of course, is get more time. If it's difficult to get money and people, then we'd better make the best use of our time. That goes back to doing the research, where are we applying our focus and effort, and so on.

Chief, you talked about challenging stats, because obviously we could be going down the wrong road if we don't understand the stats we're faced with, that we're basing our decisions on. Can you give me an example of some of the statistics that we should be challenging, or that you're challenging?

Chief Matthew Torigian: Right now we're exploring the manner in which we collect some of the data. As an example, whenever an incident in a community occurs and there are elements of crime to it, it gets coded. It's a code. It's called a UCR, uniform crime reporting.

If there is more than one criminal act that took place within that one incident, we assign corresponding codes, only to a maximum of four. Yet we have had incidences where 30 crimes have occurred. It's important to look at changing the manner in which we capture this, so that we can get a true appreciation of not only the volume but also the complexity of crime—because volume is only one aspect and not the only one—and track this over the years. Right now we're seeing 20 crimes that occur within one incident. Many years ago that wouldn't have taken place.

This all connects, because it informs us of what we're starting to understand and what we've understood for some time. But research can bear this out as well. Criminals don't specialize. We do, but they don't. There may be more than one criminal act within one particular incident, so we need to be certain that when we're looking at crime stats, we are in fact capturing the data the right way.

Another way we are challenging ourselves and educating ourselves as police leaders around this, going back to an earlier question around what can happen nationally—auditing is something that perhaps we need a little bit more of at CCJS. Right now, we currently see a bunch of different approaches to responding to criminal acts right across Canada.

I'll do this quickly. You could stagger out of a bar in New Brunswick and get into a fight, then drive to Alberta and graffiti a building, and then get to British Columbia and smash your car because you're impaired, and you might not ever generate a criminal occurrence that gets coded. If you do it in reverse, you would then get three. We need to ensure that we are consistent in the way we're capturing data and statistics right across the country. That's part of the work that I'm part of, that we are all part of, with the Police Information and Statistics Committee.

Hon. Laurie Hawn: Thank you.

Professor, could you give me a brief answer? You talked a little bit about importing policies from the U.K., or wherever, and obviously some are good and some are bad. Can you give me just a quick example of a good policy that we've imported and an example of a bad policy that we've imported?

Dr. Christopher Murphy: I think we're experimenting with the community service officer model. I understand B.C. is recruiting officers who will be in uniform but not have powers of arrest. They will be visible, in terms of walking the public streets, etc. I don't know yet if that's a good model or not, and I think one of the things that we need to develop is the capacity to assess these when we put them in place, so that we can say it worked or it didn't work. To me, that has potential, but I don't actually know whether it's going to be an effective model in Canada.

If I could, I'll just say something about the last point. I think we sometimes focus way too much on crime. The issue of public safety is something that crime stats don't measure very well. I was thinking about the initiative that we're involved in, in downtown Halifax, which is about bars, assaults, and disorder in the public downtown. It's a huge issue. There are very few crime stats generated by this, but it's a policing problem. There are very few crime-related issues with anti-terrorism, but it is a new and demanding area for police. Public order policing.... None of these things actually have any actual crimes attached to them.

So I think we need to go beyond crime data and say that police actually have a variety of other areas of demand, which we can also develop metrics for. But I think sometimes crime is way too narrow a focus.

● (0930)

Hon. Laurie Hawn: I'd question the assessment that terrorism doesn't include crimes.

Anyway, I'd like to get brief comments from both of you, if I can, because I don't have too much time left.

We have a lot of police bodies across the country. Professor, you've been involved with some of them from a more academic point of view, and Chief, it sounds like you've been involved with most of them from a practical, hands-on point of view.

Do we have too many? Are we lacking focus? Is there something we can do between those bodies to bring some of this focus together for things like a national vision about policing and training and so on?

Chief, I'll start with you.

Chief Matthew Torigian: I was hoping the professor would answer first.

Do you want to go, Chris, or do you want me to?

Dr. Christopher Murphy: Sure.

I think we have a variety of groups that represent different interests in policing, from police boards, police associations, and the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police. I don't know that we're going to be able to get rid of them, in a sense, but I think they have to develop partnerships and recognize that they're all in this enterprise together. I think that's beginning to happen. To some extent, I think these were not coordinated, and they were often in conflict with one another.

If Canada is to pull this together and maintain the kind of reputation we have for policing, we will have to see more working partnerships between these different interest groups. Maybe the government can provide some leadership in that.

I'll leave it at that.

Chief Matthew Torigian: I think your question is very poignant because right now this is what police leaders struggle with: How many police officers do I need, and do I have too many or too few?

Again, because I'm proud of the work we've done, and not because I'm trying to suggest we're further ahead than anyone else, in the last five years we've re-engineered our entire organization and introduced a queueing model that enables us to determine exactly.... I can answer that question, and I can tell you exactly how many police officers I need and what I'm doing with them. But the question that needs to be answered is, what do you want us to do? It's not enough to say we have too many or too few, unless we know exactly what our mission is. That's where, in the core of this economic model, rests the community, the governance, the oversight, the values, the principles, and the direction in which we're headed.

To Professor Murphy's earlier point, he is absolutely right that 75% of our patrol response is to non-criminal offences. What we're doing at the national level right now is toying with the idea that while we have uniform crime reporting, maybe we need uniform calls for service reporting as well, so we can really capture exactly the work that's being done.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Randall Garrison): Thank you very much. You're now out of time.

We'll turn to Mr. Scarpaleggia for seven minutes.

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia (Lac-Saint-Louis, Lib.): I will continue with that uniform call for service. I'm not quite sure what that means, as opposed to uniform crime statistics. Can you elaborate on that before I go to my round of questioning?

Chief Matthew Torigian: Sure.

Where we would go to a social disorder call for service is a situation in which somebody living with mental illness is walking down the street in the middle of summer, shirt off, waving their arms, and scaring people in the downtown area. No crime has been committed. We're responding to that call. It's a call for service, as opposed to somebody being assaulted.

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia: Right.

I didn't quite get your point about three incidents happening across the country, and then you said something about if you were doing it in reverse it would capture a different conclusion.

Could you elaborate on that as well?

Chief Matthew Torigian: Yes. What we have right now in some jurisdictions.... Using New Brunswick as an example, there is a municipality in New Brunswick where they've created a bylaw to avoid having, perhaps, young people who are in university ending up with a criminal record because they ended up fighting in public when they came out of a bar. They created a bylaw to address that.

There is nothing wrong with addressing that through a bylaw, but it still needs to be captured as a criminal offence.

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia: Oh, it still needs to be captured.

Chief Matthew Torigian: It's a criminal offence.

Or, for example, in British Columbia provincial law enables an officer to suspend a driver's licence at the side of the road after a person blows “fail” on a roadside device. Instead of charging them with a criminal offence of impaired driving, they're handled through a provincial statute that suspends their licence for 90 days or longer and impounds their vehicle. It's a provincial statute. It's still a criminal offence, and we need to capture that and code it as a criminal offence, but it can be dealt with by way of another statute.

● (0935)

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia: We're not capturing it as a criminal....

Chief Matthew Torigian: We are missing some of these crimes because they are not being captured consistently across Canada.

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia: You mentioned you're hiring police officers with postgraduate degrees. This must be putting upward pressure on costs. As you recruit people with more advanced education, presumably you must pay more, or no?

Chief Matthew Torigian: No. There are set grids that are established through collective agreements and they are consistent.

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia: I thought you brought some really new ideas to the table here that I don't recall hearing, though we have, of course, heard from the Calgary police force and the Prince Albert police force.

Contrasting and comparing, are you doing what they are doing? Are you doing certain things differently? Are you doing some things that they are not doing? How would you contrast and compare what you're doing, which seems to be very leading-edge, with what they are doing, which is leading-edge? Are you all doing the same thing in a leading-edge way, or are you...? Can you learn from each other because you're doing different things?

Chief Matthew Torigian: Yes. It's really the cadence of moving forward and being progressive. What Dale McFee did in Prince Albert was leading-edge, and it was necessary for Prince Albert, given what they were dealing with on the ground there.

We build on that, and in the true spirit of community policing—community-based or community-focused policing—you customize it to what your needs are at the local level. We develop and initiate or innovate, and then we share, because that is what we do. The Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police and all of the provincial associations of chiefs of police work very closely together to share innovative ideas and initiatives, so that we can learn from each other and then take that back to our home town and ensure it's responsive to whatever our local needs are.

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia: Do you have some kind of hub and spoke model as well?

Chief Matthew Torigian: We have it with respect to our family violence project, and now we are incorporating some of the recidivist offender profiles that have been developed as a result of some technology through programming, what we've learned from Saskatchewan, and at the same time building on what we're seeing locally.

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia: In your view, can innovative approaches to policing reduce recidivism rates?

Chief Matthew Torigian: Absolutely.

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia: Which reduces the demand for police services and all the way down the line.

You're also doing some economic modelling, which I hadn't heard in our testimony. I don't recall hearing other police forces saying they are doing some pretty advanced economic modelling. Maybe they did and I missed it.

Are you sort of out in the lead in that particular aspect?

Chief Matthew Torigian: I think what's happening is that we're all doing parts of it. One of the initiatives we're undertaking in our organization is to try to put some framework to it, try to create almost a visioning model or document, a communication tool. Again, it speaks to the capacity building that's necessary within our own police services.

Some day I'm going to leave this position, and I want to ensure that whoever is coming up can continue and carry that ball forward.

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia: Do you use your economic or cost-benefit analyses when you negotiate with the town council, if that's the way it works when you negotiate your budget with the city? You bring all this and say, "Look, we've put more money in here, but murder rates are down and so on." You use that, of course.

I was reading something very interesting a little while ago about how cities now, governments in general, are just overflowing with data, which they can't even really analyze and so on.

In the U.S., and I'll just read a little quote, if I may—

● (0940)

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Randall Garrison): Briefly, Mr. Scarpaleggia.

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia: It says:

> As cities also start to look back at historical data, fascinating discoveries are being made. Mike Flowers, the chief analytics officer in New York, says that if a property has a tax lien on it there is a ninefold increase in the chance of a catastrophic fire there. And businesses that have broken licensing rules are far more likely to be selling cigarettes smuggled into the city in order to avoid paying local taxes. Over in Chicago, the city knows with mathematical precision that when it gets calls complaining about rubbish bins in certain areas, a rat problem will follow a week later.

Is this sort of the direction you're going in?

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Randall Garrison): Unfortunately, Mr. Scarpaleggia, you've taken all your time with the question.

[*Translation*]

I will now give the floor to Mr. Rousseau, for five minutes.

Mr. Jean Rousseau (Compton—Stanstead, NDP): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I thank both of our witnesses for being with us here this morning.

My first question is for Mr. Murphy.

As a professor of anthropology, you must have done an analysis of our police forces that takes the demographic aspect and the resistance to change into account. What we are discussing is improving the effectiveness and efficiency of our front-line resources without endangering public and national safety.

Given the culture of resistance to change within the police forces, how should we make changes with a view to moving to a new model, while being sensitive to this culture and not harming it? Despite this resistance to change, people want to serve. They are still very proud of their police force.

How, in your opinion, could we make these changes?

[*English*]

Dr. Christopher Murphy: That's a challenging question.

I think we're at a stage now where all police, whether they're managers, front-line police officers, or union members, have begun to realize that their organization is, to some extent, under siege both financially and in the expansion of demand. I think some police departments work more collaboratively than others. Others are not, in a sense, working together towards the same goals. But I think the involvement of the rank and file and the police associations will be central to any significant change in the way police work is done. Without their involvement, without persuading them that it's in their interests and in the interests of policing in general and the services they provide, they'll simply diminish in importance and effectiveness, and that change is actually going to sustain policing and make it healthier. I believe all of those things, but it does take a while.

There is a new openness now to discussing issues about change, and doing things differently, that didn't exist before. I don't really have any magic strategy or solution, other than let's open up a discussion and conversation and inform it with information. I believe people will make changes.

Perhaps the chief has some thoughts on this.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Jean Rousseau: Thank you very much.

Mr. Torigian, despite all of that, are intergenerational conflicts and the assignment of duties not the main obstacles? We need police officers who have 35 years of experience in the field, to exercise leadership with younger officers, among other things. The young recruits have a very different mentality, regarding information technologies alone.

In that context, how should assignments be distributed, in your opinion?

[*English*]

Chief Matthew Torigian: The actual work a police officer is engaged in over the years hasn't necessarily changed to any great extent. Some of the tools and what we're doing have changed. The way I describe it in my own organization is, the raw material for policing is still the same: it's information. That's the business we're in. We cannot do anything without information. Then we need to process it, mine it, and change it, and turn it into something.

The skills required to take information and do something with it, and some of the tools we use in doing that, have changed over the years, but the actual task is the same. So it's very important, in some respects in certain positions within an organization, to still start in front-line policing and patrol, and generate the necessary skills that will eventually let you take information in a more sophisticated way and do something more with it.

There is the thought that we can start civilianizing specialized tasks a little bit differently in policing. For example, in forensic identification, do you necessarily need to be a front-line police officer and work your way through for 10 or 15 years before you go into forensic identification? Again, I think there are many models out there, some in the United States, some in the U.K., where they're experimenting with that.

On your point around the multi-generational workforce we have, and the different people who come in, and how you lead that change in organization, I think it boils down to leadership. That leadership exists at many different levels.

My personal leadership style is to lead from the middle, to build the capacity at the middle of the organization. I can have all the greatest ideas and directives in the world, but if I don't have a cohort of people who are engaged and who want to do the same thing, it gets clogged in the middle.

● (0945)

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Randall Garrison): Unfortunately, Chief Torigian, I'm going to have to stop you there.

This concludes the time for our first panel. I'd like to thank both of our witnesses for being with us this morning and for their very valuable testimony.

We will suspend for three minutes to allow our next panel of witnesses to take their seats.

Thank you.

● (0945)

(Pause)

● (0945)

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Randall Garrison): We are coming back to order here for our second panel of witnesses this morning.

From the Department of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, we have Mark Potter, director general of the policing policy directorate, law enforcement and policing branch; and Rachel Huggins, the acting director of RCMP policy.

Good morning, and thank you for being here. I know we call on Public Safety quite often, but it is the public safety committee. We always appreciate having you here and your contributions.

I'm not sure if you each have a 10-minute opening statement or how you wish to proceed....

Mr. Mark Potter (Director General, Policing Policy Directorate, Law Enforcement and Policing Branch, Department of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness): We'll be making one 10-minute opening statement.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Randall Garrison): Please go ahead.

Mr. Mark Potter: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Good morning to everyone. It's a great pleasure to appear before this committee again and to speak with you about the economics of policing. As mentioned, I am joined this morning by my colleague, Rachel Huggins.

We've been following your work very closely and are pleased at the engagement of parliamentarians on this important issue and the wide range of impressive witnesses you have heard from during the course of your deliberations. We look forward to your report and believe that it will make a significant contribution to the work under way on the economics of policing and, most importantly, towards the future of policing in Canada.

Since we last met, there have been a number of developments. I'd like to take this opportunity to update you on those developments, as well as talk about the way forward.

First, however, I'd like to provide some brief background. The Minister of Public Safety has been providing strong leadership on the economics of policing. He has been engaged with all of his federal, provincial, and territorial colleagues through recent meetings of FPT ministers of justice and public safety to collectively advance this issue.

The work under way on the economics of policing is based on the following three commitments agreed to by all FPT ministers: first, to convene a summit on the economics of policing; second, to promote information sharing on policies and practices that improve the efficiency and effectiveness of policing; and third, to develop a shared forward agenda or strategy for policing in Canada.

The development of a shared forward agenda is a unique opportunity for governments to continue to demonstrate collective leadership. Such leadership can help contribute to the evolution of policing in Canada at a time of fiscal constraints and heightened public expectations.

As you know, the summit took place in January 2013. The summit was hosted by the Minister of Public Safety on behalf of all FPT justice and public safety ministers. The summit set out to meet three objectives: first, increase awareness of the economics of policing; second, provide practical information on how to improve efficiency and effectiveness; and third, get ahead of the issue so that we can take well-considered actions and avoid the drastic policing cuts being faced in some jurisdictions.

The summit was attended by over 250 participants from across Canada, the U.S., the U.K., and several other countries. Both formal and informal feedback on the summit was very positive. It achieved the objectives of awareness, practical information, and getting ahead of the issue. It also conveyed strong collective government leadership. A report on the summit is available on the Public Safety Canada website.

In fact, the summit and other developments, including the work of this committee, appear to have accelerated interest both in the issue of the economics of policing and, most fundamentally, the pace of police reform. The development of a shared forward agenda is intended to continue that momentum of change.

The closing session of the summit laid out a framework for advancing the issue of the economics of policing that is oriented around the three pillars of transformation. These are: one, efficiencies within police services; two, new models of community safety; and three, efficiencies within the justice system.

These pillars are underpinned by evaluation and validation of best practices, strengthened research, and of course engagement. The goal of the strategy is increasingly efficient and effective policing.

For the strategy to be successful, it must respect jurisdictional responsibilities for policing and it must be inclusive of the entire policing community and other key stakeholders. The goal, put simply, is to identify those areas where it makes sense to cooperate collectively. Engagement and consultation on the shared forward agenda are intended to flesh out this framework with proposed short- and medium-term actions.

The consultation plan is rolling out over spring and summer 2013. This process is being driven by all governments, notably through deputy minister and assistant deputy minister level policing and public safety committees. A core group composed of Public Safety Canada and the three champion provinces—Ontario, Saskatchewan, and British Columbia—will be taking the lead in identifying and developing specific actions for consideration by ministers.

In order to ensure that we get a broad base of input toward the shared forward agenda, we have put together a steering committee comprising this core group of federal and provincial government officials, along with key representatives of the policing community. The heads of the three national policing associations, representing front-line officers, chiefs, and boards, are on this steering committee, as well as an academic expert in policing, Professor Curt Griffiths of Simon Fraser University.

In addition to the development of the shared forward agenda, as directed by ministers, an index of police initiatives is being finalized as a tool to facilitate information sharing and learning from one another. The index is truly a collaborative effort by governments and police services across the country. We believe it is the first of its kind in Canada. The index brings together over 150 innovative initiatives, activities, and best practices in one database and will make them broadly accessible through a user-friendly search engine and on-line interface. I think many Canadians will be surprised at the many innovative policing reforms that are already under way in Canada and from which we can all learn. A number of the witnesses before this committee have referred to such innovative practices, such as the use of integrated teams to assist in responding to calls that involve individuals with mental health challenges, among many others.

● (0950)

In addition to such information sharing, policing transformation and innovation must be founded upon a solid base of evidence and research if it is to be successful. However, as noted earlier this morning, currently in Canada there is a limited policing-related research capacity, no central repository of accessible research information, and no agreement within the policing community on research priorities. A key aspect of the shared forward agenda will be to address such shortcomings.

In order to begin that process, Public Safety Canada has commissioned certain baseline research projects. Projects under way are reviewing policing research in Canada, use of performance measures, international comparisons of policing strategies, and the costs of police training in Canada.

Moreover, there is a major long-term research project under way on the future of Canadian policing. This project is being led by the Council of Canadian Academies and is assessing how policing is organized and delivered in Canada. The project is being undertaken by a number of eminent Canadian and international researchers. This independent study is expected to be released in late 2014 or early 2015.

In addition to strengthening research, another early focus of the work currently under way is on improving police training. A lot of money, as you know, is spent on police training, and the focus tends to be on costly and time-consuming traditional in-class approaches. Such approaches, as you have heard, are not always well-suited to the technology-based learning styles familiar to most new police recruits. Therefore, another short-term action will be to convene a two-day training summit with the Canadian Police Knowledge Network in September 2013. The workshop will bring together a wide range of participants to explore issues and approaches and help set priorities related to police training going forward.

Building on the index of innovative policing initiatives, Public Safety Canada will continue to advance information sharing through its economics of policing website. The website will act as a key portal to broadly disseminate policing information and research and to provide updates on activities related to the economics of policing.

To recap, in terms of next steps, we will soon finalize the index. There will be a training summit in P.E.I. in September, and based on the ongoing consultations, we will present the shared forward agenda to ministers in fall 2013 for their consideration.

The outcome of this committee's deliberations will, I understand, also be released this fall. Such timing would allow all governments to benefit from and draw upon your findings as we collectively shape the way forward.

That concludes the presentation. Your questions and comments would be most welcome.

Thank you very much.

● (0955)

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Randall Garrison): Thank you very much.

Ms. Bergen.

Ms. Candice Bergen: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I'm going to begin, but I think I'm going to share my time with Mr. Wilks. I think he had some questions.

Thank you very much for being here.

Mr. Potter, I'm sorry, did you say there were three different things that have come out of the report? One is the index that you referred to, the second is the training summit, and was there a third?

Mr. Mark Potter: Yes, the third is the development of a shared forward agenda or strategy for policing.

Ms. Candice Bergen: Thank you.

Can you talk a little more about the index? I think that's something we've heard a lot of recommendations on and something that is a very concrete thing the federal government can do. Can you talk a little more about the information, the index, as well as the website and where you're at with that? Just describe it a little more. Then I'm going to pass it on to Mr. Wilks.

Thank you.

Mr. Mark Potter: The purpose of the index is basically to recognize that there are a lot of interesting and innovative activities happening across Canada. Of course, we're looking at the U.K., at Australia, and at the U.S., but there's a lot going on in Canada, so why not take the opportunity to learn from what we're doing right here and what works?

A number of provinces and police services have been pulling together information on things that have been happening at the local level over the past seven to eight months to improve policing to better serve their communities. They've compiled these into 150 different examples, and a number of these have actually been validated by researchers as best practices. That information is also related to these initiatives.

So if police services are thinking they want to improve in a certain area, this allows them to go into this database, enter search criteria, and find out what's happening in other parts of the country in those areas that they can learn from. There'll be contact and detailed information on the project or the initiative, so they can get more information, dig more deeply, and essentially learn from what's going on right across Canada.

● (1000)

Ms. Candice Bergen: Is it up and running already?

Mr. Mark Potter: The data has all been pulled together. Right now, we're at the stage of working with our IT folks to make it as user-friendly as possible. We're hopeful. We'll be going through our internal departmental processes to get approval to release this, but we're hopeful that towards the end of the summer it will be ready to be released. We want to put a product out there that's as user-friendly as possible. That's the goal.

Ms. Candice Bergen: It would be through the Public Safety website? Or would it be absolutely its own website, as I know they have in the States?

Mr. Mark Potter: With our IT people, we're still working through exactly how that will line up. We're hoping that the economics of policing website would be the key portal for that. As to whether it has the capacity to handle that, we're still sorting that out, but there will definitely be links through that website to this index.

Ms. Candice Bergen: Thank you very much.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Randall Garrison): Mr. Wilks, you have about five minutes.

Mr. David Wilks (Kootenay—Columbia, CPC): Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Thanks to the panel for their presentations today.

You mentioned in your speech that with regard to the closing session, the summit laid out a framework, as you said, with regard to efficiencies within policing, new models of community safety, and efficiencies within the justice system.

That's one thing I want to target today. I wonder if you could explain a bit about the efficiencies in the justice system. I certainly have mine. I would like to hear yours.

Mr. Mark Potter: There are a few dimensions to this. There is what's happening federally, through the Department of Justice, to look at procedures and the use of technology in the federal courts system and how they can be made more efficient.

There are provincial initiatives. In fact, B.C. has been I think at the forefront in this. They've undertaken a couple of reviews. They now have a white paper. They're implementing change. To the extent that I understand it, they're bringing common management to the justice system to break down some of the silos and allow for efficiencies to be realized.

There are things happening on the ground at both the national and the provincial levels. There's also the issue.... I know you've heard about this from the Canadian Police Association, among others, which says quite rightly that the nature of the justice system has imposed certain costs. It has imposed certain requirements on policing, and that has a direct impact on the cost and the time associated with processing crimes, processing offenders, and so on.

Another dimension of this is to recognize that things are happening federally and provincially, but also to ensure that those police voices, from front-line officers or from chiefs, are heard and are factored into those ongoing federal and provincial reforms, so that they do not lose sight of ensuring that what they're reforming, what they're changing, also responds to the views, needs, and perspectives of the policing community itself. We're pulling together through this steering committee—and B.C. is actually leading this component—what are those views of the policing community on areas that could be improved.

Mr. David Wilks: Certainly in my years of policing, I felt that efficiency versus effectiveness was paramount. The police need to get the job done as quickly as they can, they need to do it as efficiently as they can, and they can't have roadblocks put in front of them. Personally, I think we've researched a lot of things to death. We come up with the same answers, but we don't come up with the efficiency model.

I'll give you a good example. In 1973, the RCMP came up with a community policing program. In 1999, they came up with a reinvented community policing program. If you were to put the two together, they would be exactly the same. So we research and we research, but we don't do anything with it.

I do like your idea with regard to one database system. A good example is that a lot of police departments in Canada are on PROS, while some are on PRIME. Why do we have two? Why don't we just have one?

Could you talk to that a bit, with regard to having one data system? With respect to the perspective of the police, they need to be consistent. They can't have one piece of data here and one piece of data there and think it's going to work, because it doesn't.

Mr. Mark Potter: I think the challenge is that the policing community and other public services face a way of focusing the mind right now, focusing on how you deliver your operations more effectively. IT is a very good example of that.

We saw an example in the U.K.—I think this was mentioned earlier—where there had been these 43 police services. All of them had their own IT systems that didn't always match up. When faced with 20% cuts, they realized that while they didn't necessarily want to have a national IT system—although that may be the direction they ultimately head towards—they certainly said they would look at neighbouring counties and align their IT systems with them, because they're often involved in joint operations with them. They felt they could realize cost savings by having one administrator of their IT system, which would be a shared service between those two counties.

I think we're going to see more of that in Canada as we go forward, where there's a recognition of potential cost savings associated with cooperating on certain administrative areas like IT.

● (1005)

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Randall Garrison): Thank you very much, Mr. Potter.

We'll now go to the opposition for seven minutes. Mr. Rafferty.

Mr. John Rafferty (Thunder Bay—Rainy River, NDP): Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Mr. Potter, it's nice to see you again, and Ms. Huggins, it's nice to see you also.

My first question is for Mr. Potter.

One of the things that was missing in your preamble that is not often talked about, although I try to talk about it as much as I can here, is first nations policing, which is a joint federal-provincial responsibility. It's almost half and half.

As you are probably aware, on this committee we're sort of at loggerheads, the government side and the opposition side. The government side can correct me if I'm wrong, but generally speaking, the government side is concerned about the cost per capita of first nations policing and it being considerably more than the regular per capita cost of policing. We've heard it a number of times today; we've heard Ms. Bergen talk about that.

As you're aware, of course, there are many variables. I don't think there are non-native police services in Canada that have to deal with communities with an 80% addiction rate, for example—those kinds of variables—or flying in, or whatever the case may be.

So we're sort of at loggerheads. That's the government's side.

I see them shaking their heads, so I must be right in what your main concern is.

Voices: Oh, oh!

A voice: They're more than shaking their heads.

Mr. John Rafferty: Oh, they're shaking their heads the wrong way. Well, we'll straighten that out in a minute.

But on this side, and I've said it a number of times, we know there are investments that need to be made to make first nations policing effective, to make it efficient, and to bring it in line with adjacent police services.

I'm aware that now some first nations police chiefs are attacking the main costs they have, which are salaries and benefits, and reducing those in a number of instances. Treaty Three is a good example of where that's happening. Of course, that's a self-defeating thing, because you have to keep up with adjacent municipalities and adjacent police services; otherwise you get all your people poached. They get many of their officers poached already, and that's a serious problem.

I wonder if you could give us your thoughts on both of those positions, and let us know where the government sits on this.

Mr. Mark Potter: I think it's important, as I mentioned, to respect jurisdictional responsibilities, so in the development of the strategy we're ultimately trying to strike a balance between recognizing that provinces are responsible for the administration of justice. That is often delegated to particular communities. Most fundamentally, it's the communities themselves, the clients, the people who pay for the services, who should be setting the priorities and setting the directions for their police services. No two communities are exactly alike. So whether it's a first nations community or any other community across Canada, they have unique needs and unique challenges. It is their role to define those priorities and establish the sorts of police services that they believe will best serve their communities.

Having said that, I think the goal of the strategy is to say, “Yes, let's recognize that that's an absolutely core element of the way forward”. But at the same time, you also want to strive to find areas where it makes sense to cooperate, where it makes sense to share services, look at new models of community safety, try different innovations, and improve the efficiency of your operations through applying certain tools, different performance metrics to assess how you're doing. So there are areas where it makes sense to cooperate collectively and there areas where you're going to be acting independently in response to the needs and priorities of your community.

Mr. John Rafferty: There's a reason, Mr. Potter, that in northern Ontario the OPP were happy to get rid of first nations policing in the far north: they just couldn't keep up with the costs.

While I know we're studying the economics of policing, I think we need to also look on the other side and recognize that we have to bring all police services under federal responsibility—that is first nations policing—to the same level as everybody else. Everybody deserves to get the same public safety that everybody else gets in this country.

I wonder if the government has done any scientific studies, any proper studies, on first nations, specifically in first nations police service areas—work analytics, workload analytics, that sort of thing—just to see exactly what some of the issues concerning police services are. Or is that something that might happen in the near future?

● (1010)

Mr. Mark Potter: My colleague, Shawn Tupper, who has previously appeared before this committee, is the ADM responsible for the first nations policing program at Public Safety. He'd be best placed to speak to that.

I'm actually appearing this afternoon in Maniwaki at a meeting of the first nations policing panel to talk about this exact topic, the economics of policing. That meeting and those series of meetings with first nations communities is an opportunity to not only allow them to help shape the evolution of the first nations policing program in Canada, but to participate very directly, as they did in the summit and as they do through the national associations, in the evolution of the shared framework of the strategy for policing in Canada.

We're looking at finding ways to engage with all participants in the policing community in shaping the way forward. Their often unique needs and unique challenges.... You've certainly heard in this committee, from the RCMP and others, about the challenges and the costs of providing services in the north to first nations communities. They're much higher than elsewhere in Canada. There are a lot of very valid reasons why that's the case. That's why you have the FNPP, to provide that additional funding and support to those communities to ensure that they have a level of policing that's generally comparable to what exists in other parts of the country.

That objective is not always achieved. Shawn Tupper would be in a better position to speak to this, but there is a process under way to look at the FNPP to ensure that it is indeed meeting the needs of first nations communities, and to look at how it might need to evolve to better meet those needs. That's the one track. Then there's the whole economics of policing track, and where we go with this strategy. There will clearly be first nations elements of that, and how we better service those communities.

Mr. John Rafferty: I wonder if Mr. Potter—

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Randall Garrison): Sorry, you're out of time.

I'll turn to the government side again.

Ms. Ambler.

Mrs. Stella Ambler (Mississauga South, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you very much, Mr. Potter and Ms. Huggins, for being here today.

I noted with interest the index. I was wondering if that is anything like the United States website, crimesolutions.gov. Is it similar, or will ours be more comprehensive, or less, or completely different? I'm just curious.

Mr. Mark Potter: It's similar. Imagine a precursor of crimesolutions.gov, which has been evolving over a number of years. It has an administration around it. It has a number of academics who feed into it, who review the operational experiences that are put on crimesolutions.gov. Part of the advantage of crimesolutions.gov is that if you take, for example, a broken window strategy in Boston, it will be implemented, it will be assessed by one or multiple academics over time, and they will put their findings on that website. It's continually evolving, continually refining the analysis around the various initiatives that are under way. If you, as a community, are looking at moving in that direction, you'll know how the program started, you'll know how it's been evaluated, and you'll know probably how it's evolved over time, so that you can implement what is truly the best practice in that particular area going forward.

I would see our index as an early version of crimesolutions.gov. You have to walk before you run, and this is the first step in that process.

Mrs. Stella Ambler: I'm glad to hear that. I suspect that with crimesolutions.gov already existing, ours will probably be able to develop faster than theirs, because we'll be able to use what they've already accomplished and move forward more quickly.

I also want to talk about training. You mentioned that sometimes the traditional methods of training are not only costly but are simply not the best way to train a police officer—sitting in a classroom with a lecturer at the front.

Can you tell us a bit more about the summit that's happening this September in P.E.I.?

● (1015)

Mr. Mark Potter: We're calling it a training summit, but it will essentially build on work of the Canadian Police Knowledge Network. I know you've heard from Mr. Sandy Sweet about that organization and the good work they do across Canada to support police services with online training.

They've been holding an annual event in Stanhope, P.E.I., over quite a long period of time. We're going to work with them to take that event and make it broader. It's not just about online learning, although that will be a key element of it. It's about training generally. How do we train? Are those approaches working? What have we learned about new training models and about the styles of learning of new recruits? How do we move forward, and what's the balance we want to find?

Clearly, you do need some of the traditional in-class type of training, but there are other parts of that training or other types of training where an online approach is often much more effective.

Mrs. Stella Ambler: And it can reach many more people.

Mr. Mark Potter: Exactly.

Mrs. Stella Ambler: In the discussions at the summit, did anyone present a reasonable estimate of how much money could potentially be saved through this increased use of technology?

We've heard estimates as high as $1 billion. After considering some of the indirect costs, do you think that's a fair estimate?

Mr. Mark Potter: That's certainly the number that I'm familiar with, that around $1 billion of the $12 billion we spend on policing is for training.

Policing, as you know, is a pretty training-intensive type of occupation, so you're going to continue to spend a lot of money on policing. But as I think you mentioned, it's some of the indirect costs, your travel and your accommodation in terms of bringing people together in traditional in-class approaches, whether it's at Depot or at the Pacific regional training centre for the RCMP, and similarly for Ontario and Quebec, that are often the biggest costs associated with policing. It's indirect, in terms of their travel and their accommodation, but also their time away from work, the backfilling of positions. There are a whole bunch of follow-on effects.

To answer your question very directly, I don't know the answer. Of that $1 billion, are we going to be saving an amount of...? It's hard to say. It's much too early in the process now, but that's clearly one of the objectives of the summit.

Mrs. Stella Ambler: Wonderful.

In a situation like training, which is costly but absolutely essential, how do we as a government measure success? How do we take the value of that and decide whether it's actually working or not?

Mr. Mark Potter: These are excellent questions.

I know you've heard from Mr. Gruson from the Police Sector Council. They've done some very good work with academies, looking at the training they provide to recruits and whether there can be greater coordination and commonality in the type of training provided to recruits and linking this to competency profiles and standards related to occupations. The sense is that there's a great deal of scope for improvement in that regard.

In terms of training, just looking at the perishability of skills, for example, do you need, every year, to be recertified on first aid and other skills? Frankly, there's not enough research to tell you how rapidly those skills diminish. We just don't have the research foundation to say, okay, of the 25 courses you would normally need to take in a year, these ten are the highest priorities, because your skills in those areas tend to diminish the most rapidly for a variety of reasons.

We just don't have the research foundation around training. Coming out of the summit, we're hopeful that there will be some sense of what is the research plan, what is the research that we need to do, to build a better approach to training in Canada.

Mrs. Stella Ambler: Thank you.

You mentioned that you've been following this study carefully. I'm wondering if there are one or two things that stand out in your mind that you've heard and that you think would help most that we should absolutely implement as quickly as possible.

Mr. Mark Potter: Well, you've heard a lot of things certainly this morning on the research, and that being the foundation for evidence-based approaches to reform police services. I think when we look at the three pillars that the FPT community is building around, at what is happening within police services in terms of performance measurements, these are the foundational elements to any sort of transformation. Do you have the right measurement tools? What are you measuring? Are they the right things to measure? How do you, if you wish to do so, reform your police services? What services are out there?

KPMG in the U.K. was mentioned, for example. Companies like that provide certain assistance and support to police, who often don't have the skills or background to look at organizational efficiency, and make operational changes that will allow them to be more efficient, better serve the communities, and then reinvest those moneys into new models of community safety—more proactive policing. There are some activities happening in Saskatchewan, Waterloo, right across the country, to better serve Canadians and get to the roots of crime.

I think that's the kind of transformation we're looking at.

● (1020)

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Randall Garrison): Mr. Scarpaleggia, you have seven minutes.

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia: Just to recap, you're producing your report in the fall, did you say? You're producing a report out of this summit. Is that what I understood you to say?

Mr. Mark Potter: The summit report was released very recently. It's on our website.

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia: Okay.

What is the next step for your department? You've done what you had to do on this. Or are you putting out more...?

Mr. Mark Potter: Absolutely. Right now we're in the midst of finalizing the index of policing initiatives. That will hopefully be later this summer. We're going to be organizing the training summit with the CPKN, and, most fundamentally, we're working with the steering committee on developing a strategy for policing in Canada that will go to all FPT ministers in the fall.

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia: So that strategy will be released in the fall. Will it be released after our report is released? In other words, will you be taking account of what we've learned? No doubt you have been following the study through the testimony and so on. Will some of the ideas that have come up in this committee be factored into your strategy?

Mr. Mark Potter: To be frank, I think there has actually been great alignment between the schedule and the deliberations of this committee, the work on the summit, and the sorts of speakers there as well as here. I understand your report is likely to appear in early fall, which would feed in very well.

We don't know when FPT ministers are meeting. It hasn't been scheduled yet, but it's usually around the end of October, and I can't get ahead of ministers in presuming what they'll ultimately approve. We will certainly continue to draw upon your transcripts and discussions, and certainly your report, and feed that into the process in developing the strategy.

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia: Right.

In terms of economic modelling, are you going to delve into this in some detail in your strategy, other than to say we need to do economic modelling? Are you going to be looking at models of economic modelling, if you will? Are you going to be making more detailed suggestions than simply saying each police force should do more analysis of its costs, benefits, and so on? Is this something the federal government—Public Safety Canada—will try to explore in more depth?

Mr. Mark Potter: Once again, I can't get too far ahead, certainly, of my own minister and collectively all FPT ministers in talking about the way forward. When you look at the Public Safety Act and the Minister of Public Safety's role to provide leadership for public safety, including policing in Canada, I think he's been doing that very much through the summit and other actions.

What is the federal role? Well, there's a leadership and a coordination role. Certainly there are accountabilities for the RCMP, and the minister has taken actions in that regard. Beyond that, there's the constitutional administration of justice residing with provinces. So we're being very respectful and working with the provinces. Through the steering committee developing the strategy, we have three champion provinces, who, in those three pillars, are actually taking the lead in identifying actions that will be brought to ministers for their consideration. So it's very much a collective undertaking of the governments.

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia: Ms. Huggins, is the RCMP involved in this kind of economic modelling, this kind of analysis that Chief Torigian and others have mentioned, this kind of "embedded in the force" capacity for analyzing and getting a handle on what works, on what doesn't, on what is cost-effective, and what brings quantifiable benefits, and so on?

Is this something the RCMP does, or is the RCMP sort of at the same stage as many police forces, where this is something it's going to have to look at and build up within its organization? Is there a lot of quantitative analysis done on the cost-benefit ratios of certain policing practices, and so on?

● (1025)

Mrs. Rachel Huggins (Acting Director, RCMP Policy, Department of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness): I think the RCMP, like many of the police services across the country, are working very hard and diligently to look for cost benefits. Doing the right kind of analysis, they are involved in many of the committees that Chief Torigian talked about, such as POLIS. They're there at the forefront looking for better ways to analyze and to determine the best type of policing to do in Canada.

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia: Can we say that the RCMP then is assuming a rightful leadership role in this area of economic modelling and analysis of policing? Is the RCMP leading the pack, or is part of those leading the pack, on this? Is the RCMP involved?

Mrs. Rachel Huggins: I think they are leading the pack. I think they're very much involved. They're part of our steering committee on the shared forward agenda. They have the capacity to do that research, and they are out there doing it.

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia: Mr. Potter, I don't know if you were here when I read something from the May issue of *The Economist* magazine about the volume of data that governments produce but typically don't analyze. They don't have the capacity to analyze it, but others are taking this data and using it.

Is this something that was discussed at the summit, this idea that...? It was brought up a bit, when we were in the U.K., by Lord Wasserman. He said you have to predict crime, where it's going to occur, in order to prevent it, and thereby diminish the demand for police services.

We've talked a lot about the cost of police services, but only recently have we started to discuss the notion of.... If you want to get the costs down, get the demand down. And that's very important. A lot of police forces are working on that.

But there's all this data out there that can.... As I was referencing before, if you know there are properties with liens on them, you can almost predict that fires will occur there at some point. If you have—

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Randall Garrison): Unfortunately, Mr. Scarpaleggia, you've run out your time once again.

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia: That's fine. Thanks very much.

[*Translation*]

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Randall Garrison): We will now come back to Ms. Michaud, who has five minutes.

Ms. Élaine Michaud: I thank our witnesses very much for their presentations.

I would like to talk about what you want to study in terms of training, that is to say new approaches. You want primarily to study the way in which training is offered, in other words, how much time is spent in class compared to using technology, for example? You also want to look at the content of the training and what police officers are taught to see if the community-based approach should be used more, or that sort of thing?

Mr. Mark Potter: It would be both.

[*English*]

The goal is to look at the various approaches, whether it's technology-based or traditional in-class.

The more fundamental question you're asking is, what should police be learning? What are their true training needs?

I'll refer again to the work of the Police Sector Council and its development of competency profiles. It doesn't sound that exciting, but it's actually quite significant in terms of realizing efficiencies in the way you manage your human resources, which is 80% to 90% of the cost of policing.

If you have an agreed standard or competency profile for a certain level, a front-line officer, let's say, you would have certain requirements associated with that standard and certain training to meet those requirements. You could then better orient your training around that.

Right now in Canada there's a great diversity around the skills and the expectations of particular police officers. All police services are working through the Police Sector Council, and have been for some time, to bring greater alignment and take a more rigorous look at the actual skill sets needed to deliver certain services and be an effective police service. This is clearly evolving over time, so it's not going to be a static standard. But it is all about professionalization, more effective management of your human resources, and modernizing the way you manage human resources as an organization.

● (1030)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Élaine Michaud: I presume that the findings or conclusions you will be able to draw during the two-day training, which will take place in September with the Canadian Police Knowledge Network, will allow you to fuel the joint program you intend to present to the minister in the fall?

[*English*]

Mr. Mark Potter: There are considerable expectations that have been raised around this issue, and that's great. It has created a certain momentum. But realistically speaking, most change, if it is to be sustainable, tends to be incremental.

I wouldn't want to create the expectation that there's going to be a training summit in September and it will solve all of the training needs.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Élaine Michaud: In fact, how do you intend to use your evaluations of the training summit to feed into or develop a national program that you want to present during the course of the fall?

If I understand correctly, the training should be geared towards shared national objectives that could be established. You would hold the training summit before publishing the national program. Could you tell me how the two might be interrelated?

[*English*]

Mr. Mark Potter: I'm afraid it's not a simple answer. The nature of change in this sector, as with many others, is happening at multiple levels. There are things where, whether it's the federal government, the provincial governments, or even the local government...they can be directive. They can encourage change in certain directions, let's say in training. That's one dimension of this.

But I think a bigger dimension is the awareness, the information-sharing side, which tends to be more diffuse, a little bit messier in terms of how it actually leads to change. By police services participating in this summit on training, they will hear things, they will learn things, they will take things back to their own police services, which they will begin to look at, apply, and gather more research on. I think when I talk about the nature of change being incremental...you're going to have change happening in a variety of ways.

I don't think we should necessarily assume the strategy and central direction are what's really going to truly drive this. I think that's a part of it, and there will be areas where we can collectively cooperate, and it makes sense to build that into a strategy, but there are a lot of things going to be happening incrementally, in a diffuse way, simply by being aware and learning from others about what works and what doesn't.

It's the ongoing research, the validation of best practices, and communities defining their own needs, their own priorities, and in that context drawing upon these lessons, drawing upon these experiences, to reform and strengthen their own police services in a way that works for them.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Randall Garrison): Thank you very much, Mr. Potter.

We have time for a final question and answer from the government side.

Ms. Bergen.

Ms. Candice Bergen: Thank you very much. I appreciate the opportunity.

I just want to clarify. The number that jumped out at me concerning first nations policing was in regard to Chief Doug Palson, who is the chief of the Dakota Ojibway Police Service, which is located in my riding of Portage—Lisgar. I know this area extremely well. He told us they were policing five communities, about 8,000 people, with a $5 million budget—about $650 per person, per year.

That compared to a small town, again in my riding, Morden, Manitoba—a small city of about 8,000 people. Their cost was under $200 per person, per year. Those numbers jumped out at me. I recognize there's a huge difference. I know these aboriginal communities as well, so I know none of them are fly-in. Certainly, there are more social problems in some of them.

I'm really comparing apples to apples. I think it's incumbent on us as politicians and leaders to not just say we need to send more money into this situation, but to look at why the costs are so high for first nations policing.

The testimony we heard has been frankly rather dismal. When we've heard success stories, it has not been in first nations policing or with the chiefs of police in those organizations.

I'm wondering, Mr. Potter, have we at Public Safety a breakdown of the cost of policing in different jurisdictions? For example, what would it cost, per person, in a major city like Toronto or a small community like Selkirk, Manitoba, or in a first nations community, or a number of them? Do we have a breakdown as far as costs per capita in different jurisdictions are concerned?

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Randall Garrison): There's time for a very brief answer, Mr. Potter.

Mr. Mark Potter: We draw on StatsCan data. The average for Canada is about $370 per person, the average in the provinces is about $300, and the average in the territories is about $1,000 per person.

That is broken down in a more disaggregated fashion through StatsCan data. You can actually get to the level of individual communities in many cases.

● (1035)

Ms. Candice Bergen: But you have that already, so if we wanted it, could you provide it to us?

Mr. Mark Potter: We could provide the StatsCan information to you. It's not something we develop ourselves.

Ms. Candice Bergen: But you just take that and gather it.

Okay. Thank you very much.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Randall Garrison): Thank you very much, Ms. Bergen.

Thank you very much to the two witnesses for being with us today. That concludes this session.

We will take a few seconds to reorganize ourselves to look at committee business in camera.

[*Proceedings continue in camera*]