



NEWS FROM CANADA



Cal Johnston, *Chief of Police*

On January 29, 2002, the Service in partnership with the Department of Justice, Public Prosecutions, and the Department of Social Services, Youth Probation, launched an integrated Auto Theft Strategy. This initiative sought to address Regina's auto theft problem in four critical areas: chronic repeat offenders, emerging chronic offenders, first offenders and youth at risk of offending. Within each of these areas activities, ranging from aggressive enforcement through assessment and programming to education were undertaken to break the cycle. By the end of

2002, the number of autos stolen had been reduced by 28.2% from 2001 (1083 fewer offences). We are pleased with this progress and are continuing with the strategy.

The 2002 strategic plan and budget proposed the addition of 12 police officers to the Service's complement. With the support of City Council (8 officers) and the Provincial Government (4 officers) this was achieved. Upon completion of recruit training, these officers were assigned to augment frontline policing. These additional resources will help the Service address workload, quality of service, professional development and emerging crime trends. At the end of 2002, the Service employed 342 sworn officers (including special constables) and 131 civilian members. Our outreach recruiting initiative, targeting potential police officers within the aboriginal community, continued throughout the year. This year marks the halfway point in our twenty-year Employment Equity Plan filed with the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission, and we are well along the way to meeting our targets by the year 2012.


In August 2002, at the annual Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police (CACP) general meeting and convention, three members of our cultural Relations Unit, Corporal Al Vance, Constable Jerry Sonier and Corporal Jim Pratt received a National Youth Justice Award - Certificate of Distinction from the federal Minister of Justice for their work in developing and delivering cultural camps, in partnership with First Nations communities and the Paul Dojack Youth Centre, for in-custody youth. This is prestigious recognition for an innovative and meaningful program created here in Saskatchewan directed at youth in conflict with the justice system.

In December 2002, we began a significant construction project within our headquarters building. Utilizing plans developed with the participation of our frontline officers, we will construct a new client service area, interview rooms, officer work areas and exhibit handling facilities. When completed in the spring of 2003, these changes will provide our members with a safe and comfortable workspace designed around their daily tasks and work demands.



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The Service continues to participate in surveys and scans to benchmark community satisfaction with our performance and issues of present and future concern. In 2002, 84% of citizens contacted reported being either 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with the service provided. Citizens identified 'auto theft' and 'youth / young offenders' as the most significant current issues and 'youth / young offenders', property crimes and police resources as three most important issues in terms of policing facing our community over the course of the next three years. We utilize this information along with citizen participation in our strategic planning sessions to develop priorities and allocate resources to better meet the needs and expectations of Regina residents. We are a community policing organization, and our mission remains: "dedicated to building a safe and caring community, in co-operation with the citizens of Regina."

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our citizens for a year of commitment and strong performance. 



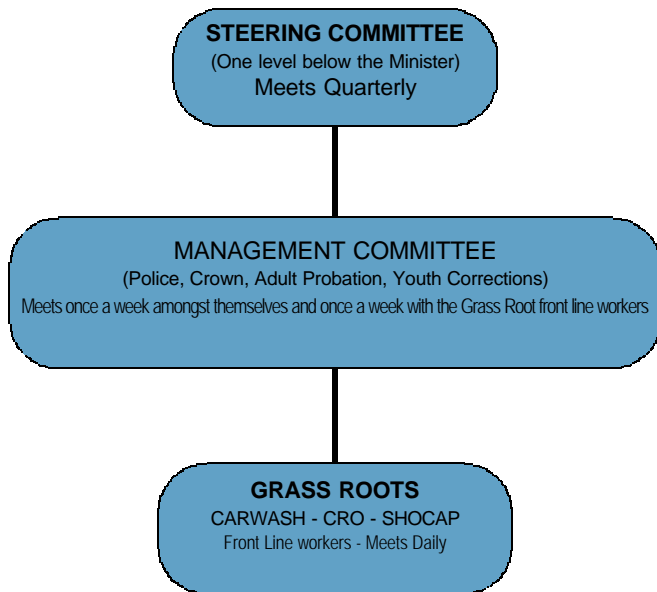
A Comprehensive Strategy to Meet the Needs of Auto Owners and Young Auto Theft Offenders in Regina

A Comprehensive Strategy to meet the needs of auto owners and young auto theft offenders in Regina has been instituted. The strategy involves a multitude of agencies that need to deal with auto theft offenders on a daily basis.

Several of the initiatives employed by the strategic group are very much similar to initiatives in other jurisdictions. The effort in Saskatchewan has been integrated and coordinated by a "Key" Steering Committee. The approach used by Regina group differs from other jurisdictions as the direction came predominately from the Chief of Police and Mayor of the City, owing to auto theft having reached epidemic proportions.

Saskatchewan Government Insurance (SGI) played a significant role and were deemed an important partner in the strategy, but kept at arms length. SGI participated by providing resources to assist with committees. They also provided covert and bait vehicles as required. The bulk of the programs are funded through grants and through the province.

The following chart basically lays out the governance of the program and accountability;



Specifically, the objective of the strategy was to attempt to substantially reduce young offender auto theft through a number of guiding principles including:

1. *Strict supervision and control of youth who are at risk to re-offend.*
2. *An effective combination of enforcement and rehabilitation, and*
3. *Early intervention and education in crime and its consequences.*

The principle strategy is to ensure convicted offenders are closely monitored. The strategic team has established a database. They have identified and categorized each known offender as a candidate in one of the following categories:

- **CARWASH:** Entry level offenders who remain at risk to re-offend.
- **CRO:** Chronic Repeat Offenders with high probability to re-offend.
- **SHOCAP:** Serious Habitual Offenders anticipated to re-offend.

This program has resulted in the following breakdown:

- 137 known offenders are in the Car Wash program
- 46 are categorized as Chronic Repeat Offenders (CRO)
- 27 are categorized as SHOCAP Offenders.

Owing to this program, SHOCAP and CRO offenders predominately remain incarcerated. Auto theft curfews and house arrests of offenders are closely monitored by RPS and Probation Services. In 2003 RPS SAU and SHOCAP members conducted 3,400 curfew checks and street officers conducted 898 checks which resulted in 418 breaches. This curfew activity was mirrored by Saskatchewan's Probation Services.

The Police Service has been given clear direction. Auto theft is to be considered top priority and members are mandated to focus on auto theft offenders. The Chief and the Mayor have clearly identified curfews to be checked routinely.

Police response to auto theft is directly related to the frequency of incidents.

Example:

1. Should the average amount of incidents be experienced; the response would consist of members of the Stolen Auto Unit (SAU) and members dedicated to SHOCAP.
2. Should the rate of incidents increase to a prescribed level, the RPS would deploy all street crime resources to address the issue in addition to SAU and SHOCAP.
3. Should the level of incident increase beyond to epidemic proportions, RPS would deploy all the above resources in addition, all other divisions, including Vice, Street Gang Unit, etc.

The strategy has resulted in key resources being provided to RPS to address this issue. Prior to the program, RPS SAU consisted of 3 members, now they have been provided with financial resources to accommodate the assignment of 11 members. RPS SAU & SHOCAP members work two shifts - 6:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and 2:00 p.m. to 12 midnight. Of these 11 members 5 have been funded by the Province of Saskatchewan to support the SHOCAP program. SHOCAP is a program funded separately from the Police service with a budget of \$400,00 per year.

A bit on strategy:

The membership of Regina Auto Theft Task Force Group includes representatives from:

- Corrections and Public Safety, Adult and Youth Probation Services (Central Office and Regina Region)
- Saskatchewan Justice (Regina Region Crown Prosecutor's Office)
- Regina Police Service
- SGI

Purpose

The general purpose of the Regina Auto Theft Task Force Group is two-fold:

1. To discuss and develop a strategy that addresses the multi-faceted needs of young auto theft-offenders and the public at large who are victims of auto theft.
2. To give consideration and commentary on a broader information and education strategy related to the prevention of auto theft.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Auto Theft Task Group are to:

- Share current data on repeat young auto theft offenders in Regina
- Discuss current system and suggest revised/enhanced system responses to the issue of young offender auto theft.
- Explore links between Justice, Corrections and Public Safety and the Regina Police Service in order to support an integrated approach to preventing and responding to young offender auto theft concerns.
- Give consideration to both intensive and non-traditional care mechanisms and supports working with these youth.
- Recommendation at each point along the continuum of service provision from the point of arrest to the conclusion of a court ordered disposition for young auto theft offenders.
- That the Departments of Justice and Corrections and Public Safety (Regina Regional Offices) and the Regina Police Service approve the reduction of auto theft and enhanced support and service provision for auto theft offenders as a social policy priority.
- Where reasonable and probably grounds exist, police will charge all persons found in a stolen vehicle.
- Police will detain in custody all persons charged with respect to auto theft, unless police are certain that adequate supervision and supports exists in the community to ensure public safety.
- Crown Prosecutors will proceed with maximum allowable charges and will pursue maximum penalties under the circumstances.
- Police and Social Services will ensure that conditions of court orders and/or release are supervised and monitored.
- In all cases where youth fail to comply with conditions of court orders or release conditions, Social Services and/or police will immediately take action on the violation.

REDUCING AUTO THEFT

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In closing, Saskatchewan has adopted an effect program to deal with their specific problem. What we need to learn from our neighbours is that integration and coordination of a multi-agency effort, exchange this information, this type of program really works. This effort was a direct result of Political will giving specific direction to the agencies dealing with auto theft offenders, that they are to work together, share data and information in an effort to control their auto theft epidemic, which ultimately is to reduce auto theft incident rate.

The Committee took upon themselves to reduce 2001 Auto Theft numbers by 50% by 2005. So far they are on track having reduced the auto theft incident rate from 2001 to May 31, 2004 by 38%.

Barry G. Ward, Executive Director
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Juristat Statistics

Alberta, Cities Auto Theft

Year	Canada	Alberta	City
1993	156,685	18,718	Edmonton
			Calgary
1994	159,469	16,071	Edmonton
			Calgary
1995	161,696	12,577	4,957 Edmonton
			5,666 Calgary
1996	180,123	14,321	4,818 Edmonton
			6,581 Calgary
1997	177,130	15,508	4,818 Edmonton
			6,581 Calgary
1998	165,920	15,519	4,441 Edmonton
			6,827 Calgary
1999	161,405	14,847	4,317 Edmonton
			6,201 Calgary
2000	160,268	14,893	5,093 Edmonton
			5,528 Calgary
2001	168,595	17,467	7,208 Edmonton
			5,623 Calgary
2002	161,506	17,948	7,648 Edmonton
			5,334 Calgary
2003	171,017	20,868	9,492 Edmonton
			5,494 Calgary