

# 2003 POLICE PLAN

The 2003 Police Plan is being prepared in a new simplified format. The most up to date statistical information available to include work load, crime trends and staff numbers is included. The plan follows the guidelines set out in the 10 year planning process completed in 2002 following verification from council that the Police Service maintain the status quo in regard to future policing priorities.

## LEVEL OF SERVICE PROVIDED

Lacombe Police Service provides 24 hour shift coverage. Many municipalities of similar size with RCMP policing do not provide 24 hour coverage and place members on call for vacant hours. This is an option we do not consider and have evidence of the increase in criminal activity during the early morning hours, probably due the belief by the criminal element that there is less or no police coverage during those hours.

DEC 7th 4AM vehicle check in Lacombe – 2 males from Edmonton apprehended in a stolen vehicle.

MAR 3rd 5 AM check of male from Blackfalds – lengthy record – foiled in attempt to steal tools from new homes under construction in Lacombe.

APR 21st 4 AM vehicle check – 3 Calgary males apprehended in a stolen vehicle – stolen property recovered from 3 recent Break and Enters in Lacombe.

May 26<sup>th</sup> 4:30 AM vehicle check results in a large cocaine seizure resulting in trafficking charges against an adult male from Red Deer.

July 30<sup>th</sup> 5:00 AM Adult male from Red Deer is apprehended attempting to steal a pickup truck and trailer with two seadoos from a residential area of Lacombe.

August 16<sup>th</sup> 5AM vehicle check – adult male from Rimbey apprehended in a stolen truck from Edmonton.

In 2002, we dedicated one member to plain clothes duties in an effort to combat the increased volume of crimes involving multi-agencies and increase in the use and trafficking of cocaine. Due to a recent manpower vacancy caused by long term sick leave by one of our members, we have had to return the plain clothes member to regular uniform duty. The present plan is to dedicate different members to such duty as and when required for short periods of time so they may work on serious or complicated crimes without having to contend with shifts that interfere with their ability to continue with investigations of this nature.

## CRIME PREVENTION INITIATIVES

The School Resource Officer program continues to be a major success. Although it is difficult to determine the amount of crime prevented through this program, the positive impact our officer has had on such a large number of students is most impressive. The close rapport gained at the grade 6 level through the DARE program continues with the students through their high school grades.

A major bicycle rodeo was held in the spring of 2002. The program promoted safety including the wearing of helmets. Fifty helmets were given out as prizes, paid for from a Provincial grant. The Rotary Club and Lions Club assisted at this event in providing lunch and providing free registration of bicycles.

Lacombe Police Service provides or supports 8 other recognized crime prevention initiatives in the community which include Citizens on patrol, Victim services, Youth Justice Committee, Alberta Checkstop, Cop Card Program, Bicycle ID Program, Bike Patrol and the Child ID Program. Members over the past year have conducted numerous presentations to businesses and service clubs regarding counterfeit currency and business security. In 2003, each business is to be visited by a uniform member to update key holder files and to address security concerns. Victim Services volunteers are being trained to keep cashiers educated in regard to counterfeit currency. Office tours are conducted on a regular basis. Bicycle patrols of the recently opened bike and jogging trails will be given priority in 2003. Other patrol priorities will be areas prone of willful damage and theft, notably the auto dealer sales lots and Mitchner Park.

## POLICE PERSONNEL

Lacombe Police Service has 12 sworn members. The number of sworn members required by a municipality to provide adequate policing is dependant upon several factors. The main indicator relied upon is the police to population ratio. Another factor may be criminal code caseload and geographical location. Lacombe was a 9 member Police Service when our present Police Chief was hired in 1994. The Service employed 9 sworn members 14 years prior to that date. Our population has doubled since that time, however we have hired only 2 additional general duty members and a School Resource Officer. Our Police to Population ratio has significantly increased. Lacombe maintains the lowest number of officers per population of all municipal Police Services in the Province and maintains the lowest cost per capita for policing of all municipal departments. Several RCMP policed municipalities maintain a lower cost due to the fact they do not provide 24 hour coverage, are compensated 30% by the Federal Government and may rely upon members under rural or provincial contract to cover calls.

The following figures from Statistics Canada are from 2001 figures:

Police Service	Police	Population	Per Capita cost	Police/Population Ratio
Lacombe	11	9,374	\$105.00	1:937
Taber	12	8,111	\$127.00	1:737
Camrose	22	14,264	\$149.00	1:679
Coaldale	8	6,408	\$113.00	1:801
2002 Figures with est. of population and costs	12	9500	\$113.00	1:791

Per capita cost represents expenditures divided by the population. It does not account for revenues generated by the Police Service. The per capita cost for policing in Lacombe when revenues are considered will be \$83.00 in 2003. This is the lowest cost for all Municipal Police Services in the Province.

Increased population, training requirements and the increasing complexity of crime trends indicate that there is a need to increase our strength by one sworn member in 2004. We are experiencing an increase in violent crime and transient criminal property crimes.

## CIVILIAN STAFF

There has been an increasing volume of emergency and routine calls into our dispatch office. We average 300 emergency 911 calls per month with approximately 30 calls per month of the code one variety which require our dispatchers to provide callers with first aid advice for periods of up to 20 minutes, awaiting arrival of the first ambulance on scene. This combined with increased traffic stops by police members, front counter traffic and daily file work makes the dispatcher position extremely busy. For the sake of safety and civil liability issues involving prisoners in our custody, we must employ guards. This will commence in 2003. There will also be an increase in the number of hours in which we have double dispatcher coverage so that by year 2012, all day and evening shifts will be so staffed.

Lacombe Police Service now has two volunteers assisting with dispatch and front counter duties. A retired businessman and a university student presently volunteer on a daily basis.

Our night dispatchers are able to assist with administrative duties which can not be completed during day time hours. It is for this reason that we are able to contend with the workload with only one administrative position, that of the office manager. She also acts as a dispatcher on a regular basis. During 2002, one of our dispatchers has been off duty in recovery following major surgery. This has increased our projected dispatching budget for 2002 due to having to replace her full time position with other dispatchers.

#### CRIME AND CASELOAD

The main indicator for member workload is measured by comparing Criminal Code caseload per member. This is obtained by dividing the number of reported and self generated criminal offences by the number of officers in total. Several factors are not accounted for using this criteria due to the fact that criminal code traffic, including impaired driving, and traffic enforcement is not included. It does not account for crime prevention projects. It also does not account for the length of time spent on investigations, giving an offence concluded in the first instance the same marks as an offence that is under investigation for months or years. Year 2001 statistics from Statistics Canada for area municipalities are as follows:

Municipality	Population	Police Officers	C.C. Offences	Cases per Officer
Lacombe	9374	11	818	74
Taber	8111	12	888	74
Coaldale	6408	8	311	39
Camrose	14,264	21	1911	91
Ponoka (RCMP)	6633	8	784	98
Stettler (RCMP)	5422	6	609	101
Innisfail (RCMP)	6725	7	664	95
Sylvan Lake (RCMP)	6379	8	762	95
Red Deer City (RCMP)	64,531	86	15,329	178

Crime prevention and successful solve rates are high priorities within the Lacombe Police Service. It is of greater importance to prevent crime through education and to deter crime by maintaining high solve rates than to attempt to boost staffing levels by presenting statistics portraying high rates of crime. The Lacombe Police Service and Lacombe Police Commission have also expressed this to the MLA Policing Review Committee due to a suggestion in the report that funding assistance from the Province could be tied in with the community crime rate. Although the population of Lacombe has increased significantly, the crime rate has not increased at the same rate and Lacombe maintains the reputation as a peaceful community to raise a family.

During the past year, several arrests and successful prosecutions resulted following arrests of transient criminals by Lacombe Police Service members. Those involved in criminal activity will not usually return to a community which lead to their demise. Some of the examples are as follows:

A 55 year old male from Calgary was apprehended stealing parts in an RV sales yard. He was also charged with several thefts from RV's a month prior to these offences. He has a lengthy record and is actively involved in property crime in the Calgary area.

Two local males were arrested and charged with 15 business break and enters. Following their release, they are arrested again within three weeks and charged with three more recently committed break and enters. Once in custody, our break and entries were significantly reduced.

One of our members has been working in partnership with Calgary Police Service and the RCMP in an investigation named Operation Free Wheel. The members involved have to date recovered stolen property and drugs valued at about a million dollars and involves approximately 12 individuals. Part of the recovery involves a \$60,000.00 Zoom Boom stolen from Lacombe two years ago as well as all terrain vehicles stolen from Lacombe over the past years. The individuals involved in this crime knew they were entered under the observation category by Lacombe Police Service, thus ceased their criminal activity in our community but continued in neighboring communities.

Over the past year, Lacombe Police Service members have been successful in solving a large volume of crime throughout the Province for other agencies following extended investigations following the apprehension of transient criminals in our community. Some of the crimes include an armed robbery from the City of Edmonton, numerous break and enter offences in Edmonton, Leduc, Ponoka and Lacombe rural areas, major frauds in Red Deer by a subject utilizing fraudulent credit card information, use of a stolen credit card in a dozen other Alberta and Saskatchewan locations and recovery of stolen property.

The following statistics give an indication of the positive impact of crime prevention and education combined with successful solve rates. Property crime has remained relatively consistent since 1990. Traffic enforcement has increased consistent with increased traffic volumes. An active traffic plan also contributes to reduced property crime. Several of our arrests for property crime by transients in our community were as a result of a traffic stop. Failing the apprehension of only some of the active criminals in year 2002, our crime rates would be significantly higher. A visible police presence also detracts criminals from visiting or taking up residency in a community.

	1990	1995	2000	2001	2002 (estimate)
Violent Crime	48	59	75	72	80
Property Crime	454	395	357	422	450
Total Criminal Code	798	638	754	818	900
Traffic Charges	1579	2177	2649	2317	2900

#### GOALS – 2003

The following Goals have been set for 2003

1. Increased investigations regarding drug trafficking within the community.
2. Increased bicycle patrols – including patrols of the newly opened jogging/hiking trails.
3. A visit to each business in Lacombe by a uniformed/and or victim services volunteer, for the purpose of education regarding counterfeit money and security of their business.
4. Full compliance with all proposed or mandated standards for policing as set down by the Solicitor General.
5. A high visible presence in the community.