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Proposed OPP Billing Model: Summary of Online Survey Responses

Survey Date: December 1 – 13, 2013

OPP Municipal Policing Bureau
January 2014

Methodology and General Information

Municipalities were provided with an opportunity to provide feedback on the proposed billing model through an online survey from December 1 – 13, 2013.

Respondent information:

- Only 25 municipalities out of the 324 municipalities policed by OPP, completed and submitted the survey
- Five municipalities provided comment but did not complete/submit the survey. These responses were not included in the analysis
- One municipality submitted two responses – only the response noted as approved by Chief Administrative Officer(CAO), Council and Mayor of the township was included
- Most of the survey responders (20) were CAOs/Treasurers, while three were Mayors, one was a Councillor and one a municipal staff member
- All of the 25 responders advised they had reviewed the materials provided online and nearly all (24) had attended one of the engagement sessions

Principles/Design of Proposed Model

- **Municipalities who disagreed or strongly disagreed with the principles of the model advised the following:**
 - The model was weighted toward municipalities not heavily using OPP services
 - Costs would shift from urban municipalities to small / rural municipalities with lower crime rates and policing requirements, and with a smaller tax base to absorb the costs
- **The same municipalities felt the model did not consider the following:**
 - Location of municipality and access to service / response times
 - Individual municipal crime experience and variations in need for policing
 - A municipality's ability to pay or financial circumstances
 - Lack of commercial/ industrial base in rural municipalities
 - Seasonal population which may require policing for a few weeks per year, yet the municipality policing costs are based on year round policing
 - Unorganized areas not paying a portion of policing costs

Base Level Services and Calls for Service

Responding municipalities requested re-examination of the 73%-27% split between base level service and calls for service and indicated:

- A 70% share for base level service was too high
- A need for more information on what is included in base costs

Concerns were expressed with the method of distributing costs for base level services on a per household basis and the following adjustments were proposed:

- Allocating on a per capita basis
- Using weighted assessment to account for a municipality's ability-to-pay
- Considering commercial and industrial units along with the household unit counts
- Using a hybrid model that considers population and weighted assessment
- Taking into account regional variations

Base Level Services and Calls for Service (continued)

Municipalities agreed charging a fee for police usage through calls for service was an equitable method of billing, however the following adjustments were proposed:

- Using a rolling average to smooth out costs
- Accounting for municipalities who are regional centres for health, education and entertainment/recreation as a high portion of policing costs may not be generated by individuals living in the municipality

Implementation

A range of views were submitted on implementation options and time period:

- Some municipalities noted that cost increases should be phased-in over a period of time to help those municipalities whose bills would increase
- The small and rural municipalities noted that longer periods of implementation are required, claiming inability to increase property tax rates and absorb increases in policing bills
- Some municipalities proposed using the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC) model where bill decreases are effective immediately, while increases are phased in over four years
- The time period over which the phase-in could occur ranged from as low as two years to 25 years and “as long as possible”
- Twelve municipalities noted a three to five year range was acceptable

Responses to Satisfaction Scale

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total Responses
1. All municipalities should pay an equitable share of the essential "base level" policing costs	6 (24%)	6 (24%)	3 (12%)	2 (8%)	8 (32%)	25
2. All municipalities should pay the cost of their Calls for Service based on the number and type of call	7 (28%)	14 (56%)	1 (4%)	0 (0%)	3 (12%)	25
3. Proposed model is more transparent and simpler than current model	5 (20%)	8 (32%)	4 (16%)	4 (16%)	4 (16%)	25
4. Proposed model is fairer and more equitable than current model	4 (16%)	4 (16%)	4 (16%)	2 (8%)	11 (44%)	25
5. Enhanced reporting provides an accurate reflection of resources required to handle Calls for Service	3 (12%)	14 (56%)	5 (20%)	2 (8%)	1 (4%)	25
6. Proposed model addresses the issue of cost variances among municipalities	2 (8%)	6 (24%)	3 (12%)	5 (20%)	9 (36%)	25
7. Proposed model will allow greater budgeting certainty for municipalities	2 (8%)	10 (40%)	3 (12%)	4 (16%)	6 (24%)	25
8. Proposed model will allow municipalities to better tailor crime reduction strategies	1 (4%)	9 (36%)	5 (20%)	3 (12%)	7 (28%)	25