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# EDMONTON POLICE SERVICE



## REPORT TO THE EDMONTON POLICE COMMISSION

**DATE:** 2011 NOV 03

**SUBJECT:** Environmental Scan Fall 2011 Update

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### RECOMMENDATION:

That this report be received for information.

### INTRODUCTION:

The EPS began a structured, consistent environmental scanning process in 2010. This report is the third update provided to the initial major Environmental Scan generated in 2010.

### BACKGROUND:

In order to address and plan for the potentially changing environment, the EPS Office of Strategy Management has developed an environmental scanning function to constantly monitor trends in the external environment. These environmental scans provide an explicit picture of external conditions that the EPS can regularly refer to while carrying out various planning and decision making processes.

### COMMENTS/DISCUSSION:

As per the environmental scanning cycle, a major document will be released in conjunction with every Statistics Canada Census or General Social Survey and satellite reports. This would be followed by biannual updates in the fall and spring of every year until the next major document.

The last major scan was released in 2010 based on a framework that specified analysis of the EPS external environment based on ten generic themes or sectors viz., Industry, Infrastructure, Human Resources, Financial Resources, Stakeholders, Science and Technology, Economics, Government, Socio-Cultural and International. Several indicators within these sectors that together created conditions of increased change and complexity were reviewed, the knowledge of which was intended to increase

organizational awareness. Following this, three updates have been produced in fall 2010, spring 2011 and the current update for fall 2011.

**CONCLUSION:**

The Police Sector Council identifies environmental scanning and its impact on policy as a vital issue for police planning. EPS now functions in an environment of increasingly complex operational demands and to be effective, must be institutionally agile, constantly scanning the environment in order to make adjustments that would ensure that we stay in alignment with the community we serve. The 2011 Environmental Scan Fall Update provides information that builds on the 2010 Environmental Scan and subsequent biannual updates.

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ATTACHED:**

- Attachment 1 – Environmental Scan 2011 Fall Update

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**Chief of Police:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** 2011-11-07



# Environmental Scan

## Fall 2011 Update

Office of Strategy Management  
October 31, 2011



## Safe Streets and Communities Act (Bill C-10)

- The federal government has introduced the **Safe Streets and Communities Act** which is an amalgamation of nine bills that were not passed in the previous minority government, fulfilling its June 2011 Speech from the Throne commitment to “move quickly to re-introduce comprehensive law-and-order legislation to combat crime and terrorism.”
- **Protecting Children from Sexual Predators Act** (former Bill C-54) proposes increased penalties for sexual offences against children, as well as creates two new offences aimed at conduct that could facilitate or enable the commission of a sexual offence against a child.
- **Penalties for Organized Drug Crime Act** (former Bill S-10) would target organized crime by imposing tougher sentences for the production and possession of illicit drugs for the purposes of trafficking.
- **Sébastien's Law (Protecting the Public from Violent Young Offenders)** (former Bill C-4) would ensure that violent and repeat young offenders are held accountable for their actions and the protection of society is a paramount consideration in the treatment of young offenders by the justice system.
- **Ending House Arrest for Property and Other Serious Crimes by Serious and Violent Offenders Act** (former Bill C-16) would eliminate the use of conditional sentences, or house arrest, for serious and violent crimes.
- **Increasing Offender Accountability Act** (former Bill C-39) would enshrine a victim's right to participate in parole hearings and address inmate accountability, responsibility, and management under the *Corrections and Conditional Release Act*.
- **Eliminating Pardons for Serious Crimes Act** (former Bill C-23B) would extend the ineligibility periods for applications for a record suspension (currently called a "pardon") to five years for summary conviction offences and to ten years for indictable offences.
- **Keeping Canadians Safe (International Transfer of Offenders) Act** (former Bill C-5) would add additional criteria that the Minister of Public Safety could consider when deciding whether or not to allow the transfer of a Canadian offender back to Canada to serve their sentence.



- **Justice for Victims of Terrorism Act** and related amendments to the *State Immunity Act* (former Bill S-7) would allow victims of terrorism to sue perpetrators and supporters of terrorism, including listed foreign states, for loss or damage that occurred as a result of an act of terrorism committed anywhere in the world.
- **Preventing the Trafficking, Abuse and Exploitation of Vulnerable Immigrants Act** (former Bill C-56) would authorize immigration officers to refuse work permits to vulnerable foreign nationals when it is determined that they are at risk of humiliating or degrading treatment, including sexual exploitation or human trafficking.

### **New provincial cabinet**

- On October 12, 2011, Premier Alison Redford named a new cabinet team with a renewed provincial government structure.
- Premier Redford made a number of commitments during the campaign to strengthen the Safe Communities program. Commitments include:
  - Increase funding to ensure successful programs such as Restorative Justice and Pathways to Housing can grow to accommodate more individuals at risk.
  - Increase funding for Alberta's police forces directly.
  - Ensure strong evaluations of all organizations so funds can be directed to the most successful programs.
- The new **Ministry of Human Services** includes the programs and services consolidating the following former ministries: Children and Youth, Employment and Immigration (except for immigration), Homelessness, and Alberta Supports.
- The Ministry of Aboriginal Relations is now part of the new **Ministry of Intergovernmental, International and Aboriginal Relations**; this ministry also takes over the immigration portfolio.
- Municipal Affairs is now consolidated with Housing and Urban Affairs (except for Homelessness) to include a housing focus and it continues to maintain responsibility for the Alberta Emergency Management Agency.
- A new **Operations Committee** will play a key role in the day-to-day coordination of the government's agenda, including issues management, legislation and house planning, and communications.



- The new government of Alberta will present outstanding policy issues for consideration during the business planning and budget process including the remaining pieces of the Law Enforcement Strategy that have yet to be implemented: API3, Public Safety and Law Enforcement Training Initiative and the expanded use of ALERT.

### Federal government changes

- The government has introduced the **Ending the Long-Gun Registry Act**. The legislation will:
  - Repeal the requirement to register non-restricted firearms (long-guns);
  - Provide for the destruction of all records pertaining to the registration of long-guns currently contained in the Canadian Firearms Registry and under the control of the chief firearms officers; and
  - Maintain controls over restricted and prohibited firearms.
- The federal government has also announced the introduction of the **Fair Representation Act**. This legislation will move every province towards representation by population in the House of Commons. It updates the formula allocating House of Commons seats to provinces. Under the new legislation:
  - Ontario will receive an additional 15 seats
  - British Columbia will receive an additional six seats
  - Alberta will receive an additional six seats
- The federal government is currently in the process of selecting a new RCMP Commissioner, with former successor William Elliott having stepped down to take on a new opportunity with Interpol. The short list includes RCMP deputy commissioners Bob Paulson and Peter German, and Ottawa Police Service Chief Vern White.
  - The new Commissioner is expected to address several issues such as improving public confidence, unionization, oversight, internal discipline, Brown Task Force reforms, retention and recruitment, organizational culture and resource constraints.

### Homicide in Canada

- Following a decade of relative stability, homicides decreased substantially in 2010. There were 554 police-reported homicides in 2010, 56 fewer than the year before. The 2010 homicide rate dropped to 1.62 per 100,000 population, its lowest level since 1966.



- Despite declines, homicide rates were generally higher in western Canada, led by Manitoba and Saskatchewan. The exception to this trend was in Nova Scotia where the rate rose 39% to its highest level since 1998 and the third highest rate among the provinces.
- In 2010, 94 homicides reported by police were considered to be gang-related, representing 17% of all homicides reported to police. This was down from the record high in 2008 when 138 homicides were reported by police as gang-related. Until 2008, rates of gang-related homicides had generally been increasing over the previous two decades.
- Winnipeg and Vancouver reported the highest rates of gang-related homicide among the ten largest CMAs, followed by Montréal, Toronto and Edmonton.
- Between 2000 and 2010, 621 persons accused of homicide were suspected of having a mental or developmental disorder, representing 13% of persons accused over this period. Approximately one-third of accused with a suspected mental or developmental disorder had been previously convicted of a violent offence.
- As in previous years, victims of homicide were most likely to have been killed by someone they knew. Declines in homicide between 2009 and 2010 were reported across all major accused-victim relationship categories. Rates of homicide committed by acquaintances and family members saw decreases of 7% and 9% respectively. Rates fell even further for homicides committed by strangers (-14%) and criminal acquaintances (-21%).

### **Creating Connections: Alberta's Addiction and Mental Health Strategy**

- The Government of Alberta has announced a comprehensive new strategy that will help reduce addiction and mental illness in the province. [Creating Connections: Alberta's Addiction and Mental Health Strategy](#) will create a more seamless system to ensure the best quality assessment, treatment and support services are available to Albertans where and when they need them.
- The strategy has the following key directions:
  - build healthy and resilient communities by focusing on health promotion and illness prevention and improving access to primary health care;
  - foster the development of healthy children, youth and families by improving access to a full continuum of services;





- enhance community-based services, capacity and supports, including addressing housing and rural capacity, to provide Albertans quality care where and when they need it;
  - address complex needs so that Albertans requiring specialized or coordinated care have access to a full range of appropriate addiction and mental health services and supports; and,
  - enhance assurance in the system by developing appropriate oversight policies, structures and initiatives so Albertans can be confident in service quality and client safety.
- Programs and services supporting the strategy that are already underway include adult depression program pilots in primary care networks, Aboriginal youth suicide prevention programs, discharge planning for the homeless, inner city and rural police crisis teams, telehealth psychiatric services, access standards for children's mental health services and many alcohol and drug reduction programs in schools, communities and workplaces.
  - The strategy is accompanied by the [Alberta Addiction and Mental Health 2011-2016 Action Plan](#) that lays out the roles, actions, expected results and performance measures for all ministries, sectors and community-based organizations involved.

### **New Alberta Emergency Alert**

- The new [Alberta Emergency Alert](#) gives authorized users like municipalities the ability to get critical information to their residents in the event of an emergency or disaster.
- The system is operated by the Government of Alberta through the Alberta Emergency Management Agency on behalf of authorized users such as municipalities, police, emergency response organizations and other government partners to enhance public safety.
- Alberta Emergency Alert is based on a digital signal that is distributed through radio and television, and a website with alerts distributed through social media. The new alerting system also has more types of alerts, including critical alerts for imminent, life-threatening danger and information alerts to warn people of developing situations and how to prepare for them.
- A public education campaign supports municipalities and Alberta's public safety partners by letting residents know what to do when they hear an alert and encourages more Albertans to prepare for an emergency.



## Edmonton city trends

- According to the City Economist, the citizens of Edmonton have good reason to be confident of solid economic growth prospects for the city, the region and Alberta in the coming years. However, two risks that arise outside of the city and outside of Canada can derail another boom:
  - **Continued depreciation of the U.S. dollar:** A weak U.S. dollar undercuts all Edmonton firms that are competing locally and internationally against their U.S.-based counterparts. Thus a weaker U.S. dollar could limit local hiring and business investment.
  - **Sovereign debt issues:** For Edmonton this could result in lower operating and capital spending at the federal and provincial levels as governments try to address tighter borrowing conditions. Given the large role of the public sector in Edmonton's economic activity, a sovereign default that has negative implications for provincial and municipal treasuries could affect local debt servicing costs and spending.

## Building a Sustainable Workforce for Edmonton:

- Between 2005 and 2010, immigration to Edmonton expanded by over 41.4%, the highest growth rate of all the major cities in Canada, with Edmonton welcoming over 11,000 new permanent residents in 2010 alone.
- During this same period, the number of Temporary Workers coming to Edmonton from other countries more than tripled from 4,062 to 14,471. Further, each year Edmonton's post-secondary institutions attract Canadian and international students to the city for the excellent educational opportunities afforded here.
  - There are significant opportunities to not only continue attracting these new residents on a temporary basis but also to retain them as citizens over the long term to help build a sustainable workforce and community.
- Both the City of Edmonton and the Province of Alberta have increasingly been recognizing the importance of planning not just for an ageing community, but for an ageing workforce.
  - Government of Alberta's new strategy **Engaging the Mature Worker: An Action Plan for Alberta** is expected to address labour shortages as a result of several trends such as declining birth rates, the aging baby boom generation and increasing life expectancy.



- Edmonton has also undertaken a number of special initiatives to create an age-friendly culture and environment in the city, such as the **Ageing in Place Community Demonstration Projects**.
- In the western provinces, projections indicate that Aboriginal Canadians are to account for between 14.0% and 18.1% of labour force growth and 12.7% and 20.5% of employment growth between 2006 and 2026. The proportion of the labour force made up of Aboriginal people is projected to grow between 162,869 and 221,718 persons and employment by between 139,444 and 246,680 persons.
- The Government of Alberta's MLA Committee on the First Nations, Metis and Inuit Workforce Planning Initiative has recently released "**Connecting the Dots**," which outlines Aboriginal and workforce development strategies for Alberta.
- Edmonton's Aboriginal Relations Office provides key City leadership on implementation of the *Aboriginal Accord* and provides an important bridge to, and ongoing commitment with, Edmonton's Aboriginal communities.

#### **Edmonton's Transit Oriented Development**

- The City's Sustainable Development and Transportation Departments have been working collaboratively on the development of draft Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Guidelines to better plan land use and development around LRT stations. TOD refers to urban development that is planned and integrated with a transit station at its core.
- Over the next 15 months, the City will be completing two station area plans for the existing LRT station at McKernan-Belgravia and for a future station located at the Mill Woods Town Centre.
- Edmonton Transit is making the following service enhancements to accommodate the growing demand this year:
  - Opening of the Eaux Claires and Lewis Farms Transit Centres and Park & Ride lots, with associated bus route changes.
  - Providing new weekday peak period, weekday daytime and evening and weekend daytime bus service in a number of developing residential neighbourhoods.



- Refocusing bus routes in Southeast Edmonton to provide direct access to the Century Park LRT Station.
- Adding trips on heavily utilized bus routes to avoid overload situations.
- Operating more articulated buses in the heavily used corridor between Mill Woods, downtown, NAIT and Abbottsfield.
- Entering into arrangements with developers of new neighbourhoods for the operation of bus routes at the earliest stages of development to promote ridership.

**Sources:**

Public Safety Canada  
Department of Justice Canada  
Government of Canada  
Government of Alberta  
Alberta Health and Wellness  
Statistics Canada  
City of Edmonton – City Trends (First and Second Quarter)  
CBC News