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# **A University-Led Program Of Research In Alberta: Potential Partnerships And A Framework For University–Police Collaboration**

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**Prepared for:**

**Office of Strategy Management  
RCMP K Division  
Edmonton, Alberta**

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## Executive Summary

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Recent years have witnessed increasing collaboration between police services and universities in conducting research and providing learning opportunities for students. These partnerships provide police services with access to analytic and substantive content expertise, and also grant faculty and students the opportunity to work with police members on collaborative projects. These partnerships assume even greater importance, given the current fiscal climate and increased governmental focus on strategies to integrate and improve the delivery of policing services.

The current project was undertaken at the request of the Office of Strategy Management (OSM), RCMP K Division, which is interested in exploring the potential for establishing a university-led program of research (POR) in Alberta. This report is designed to provide the basis for discussions between Alberta's colleges, universities, police services, and provincial government. Data for the project were gathered in interviews with college and university-based faculty, in addition to representatives from the provincial government. In the interviews, respondents provided information about their current professional activities and partnerships that focus on police-related research, as well as the capacity of their respective institutions to participate in a POR going forward. Faculty were also queried about their field practicum programs and graduate programs for students. In addition, interviews were conducted with one of the two RCMP Research Chairs at Simon Fraser University (SFU), the RCMP Research Chair at the University of the Fraser Valley (UFV), and with the Deputy Commissioner of RCMP E Division—who was instrumental in establishing the university-based research labs and Research Chair positions in British Columbia.

The results of the interviews indicate that there is considerable capacity and enthusiasm for a POR involving colleges, universities, and the provincial government in Alberta. In designing and implementing the POR, there are a number of important lessons that can be learned from the experience in British Columbia. There also appears to be considerable potential to expand the learning opportunities for undergraduate students via field practicum in police services, facilitate research by graduate students, and establish a Visiting Police Scholar program.

The report also sets out: the issues that would surround the development of a university-based research lab that would house police service data, the creation of one or more Research Chair positions, as well as the requirements and expectations of a POR.

## Acknowledgements

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The authors would like to thank Superintendent Tim Vatamaniuck for his vision and support. Special thanks to the faculty and administrators in Alberta colleges and universities, Ms. Rachael Melnychuk, Acting Manager, Research, Policy, and Planning Unit, Alberta Solicitor General and Dr. Curtis Clarke, for sharing their thoughts (and enthusiasm) for a university-led program of research. Thanks, as well, to Dr. Patricia Brantingham, Dr. Darryl Plecas, and to RCMP Deputy Commissioner Gary Bass for sharing their experiences and perspectives regarding the development and operation of a university-led program of research in British Columbia.

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## Chapter 2. A University-Led Program of Research

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In recent years, a variety of collaborative relationships have developed between police services and universities. These partnerships provide benefits to both parties: police services gain access to analytic and substantive content expertise, while faculty and students have the opportunity to work with police members on collaborative projects. The development of a university-led program of research (POR) in Alberta would build upon existing initiatives in the province. It would also provide a mechanism for: identifying faculty members, in areas other than criminology and criminal justice, who have expertise that could be utilized in police-focused research studies; increasing the capacity of police services to conduct analyses of police service data; and integrating the findings of research into policy and practice.

### The Project

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This project was undertaken at the request of the Office of Strategy Management (OSM), RCMP K Division, and Edmonton, which is interested in exploring the potential for establishing a university-led POR. This document is best viewed as a foundation for discussions between the stakeholders that would be designed to create and extend the relationships that exist between RCMP K Division, municipal police services, colleges, universities, and the provincial government. It also sets out the broad framework within which the various stakeholders in Alberta can proceed to develop a comprehensive, integrated, and inclusive POR. The development and enhancement of police–university–government partnerships has assumed even greater importance given the current and projected fiscal climate in Alberta.

Although this report is not an exhaustive examination of the potential components of a POR, it does attempt to identify core areas for consideration, as well as present the experiences and suggestions of college and university-based faculty/administrators and government personnel. It also includes an examination of the relationships that have developed between RCMP E Division, Simon Fraser University (SFU), and the University of the Fraser Valley (UFV), which may inform the dialogue in Alberta.

While the final model for the POR will be decided upon through discussions among the various stakeholders, a consideration of the various possible program components can guide the discussions. Components of the program could include university-based research labs that have the capacity to analyze police data in a secure setting; the creation of one or more Research Chair positions that may be associated with the labs (or exist on a stand-alone basis); the expansion of field practicum opportunities for undergraduate students; funding to support graduate student research; and the creation of a Visiting Police Scholar program that would attract internationally-recognized scholars to conduct research on police-related issues in Alberta.

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## Project Method

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To determine the interest and capacity of the potential participants in a university-led POR, interviews were conducted with college and university-based faculty across the province, as well as with the Acting Manager of the Research, Policy, and Planning Unit of the provincial Solicitor General and the Director of the Solicitor General Staff College. In addition, interviews<sup>1</sup> were conducted with two of the three RCMP-funded Research Chairs in British Columbia, who are responsible for the crime labs at SFU and UFV, as well as with the RCMP Deputy Commissioner in E Division, who was instrumental in establishing the Research Chair positions and the labs.

The interviews were conducted between December 2009 and February 2010. All but one of the interviews were conducted face-to-face. In many instances, multiple persons from the same institution were interviewed in the same interview session. Significantly, interviewees included not only faculty persons with expertise and interest in justice/police studies, but also college/university administrators whose support would be critical in the development of a POR. With only a few exceptions, all of the interviews were digitally recorded and verbatim typed transcripts were produced. These materials compose a significant portion of the report. For a list of the persons interviewed for the project, see Appendix A.

The interview questions were designed to gather general information about the programs, capacities, and level of interest in a collaborative POR with police agencies. The interviews with the Research Chairs and the Deputy Commissioner of the RCMP in Vancouver focused on the development of the collaborative partnerships and the creation of the Research Chair/Lab model. For a copy of the Informed Consent Form that was signed by all of the interviewees, see Appendix B. Since the project was funded by RCMP K Division, attention was given in the interviews to the current and potential relationships between the RCMP, colleges, and universities. However, the study considers a more wide-reaching POR that would include all police services in Alberta.

## Limitations of the Report

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There are a number of limitations of this report. First, with the exception of discussions with personnel in the Office of Strategy Management at RCMP K Division (the sponsor of the research), no interviews were conducted with representatives of the municipal police services in Alberta, although it is anticipated that these police agencies would be partners in any POR. Second, there is no costing information presented in the report, although some general figures are provided with respect to the costs associated with creating the university-based research labs and Research Chair positions in B.C. It is anticipated that costing information would be gathered as part of the next phase of the initiative.

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<sup>1</sup> Copies of the interview schedules are available from the authors upon request.



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## Objectives of the POR

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A university-led POR would be designed to:

- provide a framework for police services, colleges, universities, and the provincial government to collaborate on a multi-faceted POR that will enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of police services while facilitating research, along with graduate and undergraduate student training;
- enhance and expand opportunities for undergraduate students to participate in police service and provincial government-based field practicums;
- create opportunities for graduate students to conduct police research for theses and dissertations on police-related topics; and
- create opportunities for police officers and college/university researchers to collaborate on police-related projects.

Across the province of Alberta, there is a wealth of expertise in the policing area and a keen interest in participating in the development of a POR. While some programs are more “academic” and others more “applied,” there is considerable potential to involve both sectors in the creation and operation of a world-class program.

More specifically, the POR would be designed to:

### Interface with the Provincial Law Enforcement Framework

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The Alberta *Law Enforcement Framework* highlights the importance of integrating police services to improve service delivery in the province (Alberta Solicitor General and Public Security, 2009). The proposed POR would provide a framework for improving police service delivery by integrating the analytical efforts of police services, colleges, and universities. The initiative would facilitate the advancement of research, and improve police performance through research, evaluation, and joint police–university initiatives.

The *Law Enforcement Framework* Discussion Guide notes that:

*[i]ndividual police services in Alberta have traditionally functioned independently, with each agency making its best effort to combat crime as efficiently as possible within its respective jurisdiction (Alberta Solicitor General and Public Security, 2009:8).*

The same can be said for research on policing issues, by the colleges and universities and among the various police services. However, there are currently no comprehensive, inclusive structures or protocols in place that would facilitate collaboration between the police, colleges, and universities in research, student training, and other areas of mutual interest. The development of a POR would place the province at the leading edge of innovation in these areas, as well as draw upon and build capacities in both police services and colleges/universities. The framework

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that would be developed for the POR would provide an opportunity to tap into the broad police-related expertise across the province. Rather than having police research and policy initiatives conducted and implemented within “silos,” cross-disciplinary and cross-police service initiatives would, potentially, bring together and coalesce expertise that, currently, remains untapped.

The *Law Enforcement Framework Discussion Guide* also calls for the creation of a new law enforcement framework that,

*must reflect and account for the realities of modern policing, facilitate greater coordination among existing law enforcement agencies, and maximize the use of policing resources to address crime in Alberta* (Alberta Solicitor General and Public Security, 2009:10).

One of the “Desired Outcomes” of the framework is “[b]etter coordination amongst all law enforcement agencies through more seamless integration” (Alberta Solicitor General and Public Security, 2009:10). Similarly, one of the guiding principles of the new policing framework is that “[p]ublic safety can be enhanced through better coordination among law enforcement agencies, with policing functions organized to maximize efficiency and effectiveness” (Alberta Solicitor General and Public Security, 2009:11). The proposed POR is designed to contribute to this effort.

A POR would also interface with the provincial government’s focus on safe communities and extend the work of the Alberta Crime Reduction and Safe Communities Task Force (Government of Alberta, 2007). As well, a POR would contribute to the work of the Safe Communities Secretariat, which includes a cross-Ministry initiative called “SafeCom” that is charged with implementing certain recommendations from the Task Force. A number of initiatives have been funded through SafeCom, including crime prevention programs, domestic violence teams, mental health teams in police services, and crime prevention through social development and programs in schools.

A POR would produce research findings that could be utilized in policy development, as well as in operational practice, as research findings can help improve the delivery of policing services, reduce crime, and increase community safety. The POR also has the potential to overcome the proverbial “black hole” into which many studies produced by police services and university-based scholars disappear.

### Build and Enhance Partnerships and Coordination of the Research Effort

A university-led POR has the potential to enhance the collective efforts of the provincial government, police services, and the colleges/universities in the field of police research. As the Acting Manager of the Solicitor General’s Research, Policy, and Planning Unit stated:

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*We just know that we need to do a better job partnering. Police services have a lot of questions and a lot of information available to them to answer those questions, but more often than not, they are lacking the expertise and time to be able to do the research to answer those questions. As a government, we have access to the data, we often have the expertise, but we are limited in the political will to be able to look at some of the issues. Universities have the political freedom to look at anything—they've got the expertise and often do not have access to the information—whether it's police data, or interviews, or 'grey literature'—they are really at a loss there. So, I think that between the three types of agencies, we could really do a lot of good—if we work together in a different way.*

In the words of one university faculty member, a POR would “bring uniformity and standardization.” Another stated, “A long-term research partnership could benefit society and all Albertans, in terms of crime prevention and reduction... It is just a better way to do business.”

### Facilitate Collaboration

The proposed POR would facilitate collaboration between police services, colleges, universities, and the provincial government. It would also maximize the use of resources and provide an opportunity for the stakeholders to develop a world-class, leading-edge initiative. The structure and operation of the POR would function to integrate police services and educational institutions in the area of research and provide unlimited opportunities for police–police/police–university/university–university research collaboration.

Dr. Erin Gibbs Van Brunschot, Vice Dean, Faculty of Arts and Sciences and Professor of Sociology at the University of Calgary, noted the significant potential associated with having academics and practitioners unite to develop projects and analyze data:

*I think that the idea of having front-line officers and academics come together is excellent, because we could both say something to each other about the data.... My vision would be to have that collaboration between practitioners and academics—to create a win-win situation regarding the final research product—because one of the frustrating things is that we do our work, and sometimes no one reads it, because we didn't answer the questions that they find relevant. So, more conversation would be really good... I love the idea of having students have that same experience with practitioners as well.*

### Enhance Opportunities for Undergraduate and Graduate Students

A key component of the POR would be creating opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students. For undergraduates, this would involve increasing the number of field

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practicum positions in police services and government, while working to standardize protocols and procedures for placing students and assessing their performance. At the graduate level, the POR could facilitate student access to police services and police data to conduct research for M.A. theses and Ph.D. dissertations.

As one faculty member stated:

*One of my concerns about the university education [offered] both here and at other institutions in Alberta, is that there are not enough programs that give students practical, tangible skills... I think that we need to actually train people for their careers [and] train people to become criminologists... I would see different dimensions... one is, of course, a strong research component—they would have academics researching relevant issues and social problems using the data on hand.... not only are you conducting leading-edge research, but the fact that you are training individuals to be criminologists is really important.*

The need for an applied component in the POR was also noted, Dr. Rob Wood of the University of Lethbridge stating:

*There are a lot of theoretical criminologists at Alberta institutions, but, there needs to be a stronger practical component... It is important to consider the link between theory, practice, and social policy.*

### The Production of High Quality Research

There is a paucity of high quality police research in Canada. A POR has the potential to facilitate a wide range of research projects on all facets of policing that could inform police policy and practice. As Dr. Curtis Clarke, Director of the Solicitor General Staff College, stated:

*The collaboration should lead to world-class research that balances both basic [academic] and applied research. The problems should be located within the literature, even if they are ‘applied’ research questions. People should not be bound to the simple applied research. Whatever is done needs to be the highest possible standard, internationally.*

### Enhance Police Services as Learning Organizations

A key requirement is that the POR benefit police services in Alberta. This benefit can be accomplished by having research studies conducted on police service data and also by providing an opportunity for police members to participate in collaborative research projects with college and university-based scholars, as well as in provincial government-sponsored research initiatives. A major component of contemporary policing is the notion of the police service as a “learning

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organization”; a thoughtfully designed POR will provide many opportunities for police personnel.

### Enhance the Opportunities for College/University-Based Faculty

The POR will also provide opportunities for faculty members to collaborate with police services and their members. This will function to break down the traditional “silos” that have existed between the worlds of academia and policing.

### Increase Opportunities for Police Officers to Collaborate with College and University-Based Researchers

As many university-based faculty have little opportunity to work with police services, so too is it often difficult for police members to collaborate with university-based faculty on research projects. There is strength in a hybrid model of collaboration, wherein police members can assist in interpreting the research findings obtained through the analyses of police data conducted by university-based faculty. The POR would also provide unlimited opportunities for police officers to collaborate with college and university-based scholars and graduate students on publications and papers presented at conferences.

### Guiding Principles of a POR

Persons interviewed for the project identified a number of principles that should guide the POR. These include:

- preservation of academic freedom;
- research findings should be publicly available;
- research findings should inform police policy and practice;
- a clear recognition of intellectual property;
- close collaboration and collegiality in research partnerships;
- the program must benefit the researchers in reaching the vision of the college and/or university; and
- the research must be of public value.

Any Memorandum of Agreement between the partners should include these principles. In the words of Dr. Curtis Clarke:

*There needs to be broad operational use... The research program needs to be utilized by all the stakeholders across the province, and nationally, if possible. It must benefit universities, law enforcement, and it must be transferable to other sections in the community, for example, corrections. The results of the venture must benefit all Albertans. We should try to break out of the narrowness (limited scope) of the two models in B.C., because the RCMP funds and drives those models. We have to do something wider, and beyond that, and more big picture.*

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*The research program also needs to be aligned to government policy initiatives as well. The research program should avoid duplication of work between B.C. and Alberta, it should avoid cross purposes, and it should be of benefit to government resources. The research program should also align to the strategic plan of government. It should yield good evidence-based research to feed government policy.*

### The Importance of Collaboration

A primary objective of the POR would be to create and enhance collaborative relationships between Alberta-based police services, colleges, and universities. As Dr. Curtis Clarke noted,

*If a research model is established here in Alberta, it would have to be more collaborative here than it is in B.C. The program of research needs to look at: (1) policy development, (2) content areas around operations, (3) quantitative data analysis, and (4) training. The research program should have the capacity to address a broad spectrum of research questions.*

### Sustainability

Effective collaboration among the various partners is necessary to ensure the sustainability of the program. As well, it is important that there be persons in government, police services, colleges, and universities who assume responsibility for participating in the initiative. The development of MOUs will assist in formalizing the relationships among the various parties and set out clear roles and expectations.

### The Development of a Standardized Research Protocol

There is also the opportunity within the framework of a POR to standardize the protocols for research, undergraduate field practicums, and access/use of police data. Currently, it can be anticipated that each police service has a different procedure for considering requests to conduct police research studies from college and university-based faculty and graduate students.

The Vancouver Police Department, for example, has established a protocol for “outside” researchers who wish to conduct police-related studies. This protocol is set out on the VPD website, [www.vpd.ca](http://www.vpd.ca), and a portion of the information is included in Appendix C.

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## Chapter 3. Developing a Program of Research in Alberta: Perspectives of College/University Faculty and the Alberta Solicitor General

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A key objective of the project was to complete a preliminary determination of the levels of interest among colleges, universities, and the provincial government with respect to the development of a POR in Alberta. Criminal justice and criminology programs at colleges/universities represent the full range of approaches, from the “academic” programs, such as the criminal justice area of study within the Department of Sociology at the University of Alberta, to the more “applied” programs, including the Police Studies Diploma program at Lethbridge College.

The materials gathered in the interviews are presented in this section. To capture the essence of the views presented by the faculty members and provincial government personnel interviewed for the project, information about each institution/provincial agency is presented separately, rather than being fused together in a more general discussion.

### Alberta Solicitor General

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#### **Ms. Rachel Melnychuk, Acting Manager, Research, Policy, and Planning Unit**

The Solicitor General is responsible for the legislation that oversees all police services and is involved in developing police policy for the province as well as for providing oversight and governance. The Acting Manager of the Research, Policy, and Planning Unit noted that, in contrast to past years, the relationships between the Ministry and the police have gradually improved, particularly with the RCMP.

The Ministry has established a Research Network to facilitate collaboration and communication among the various units in the Ministry. There is also a Police, Planning, and Research Consortium that is designed to foster research through police partnerships. Another area of focus for the consortium was partnerships with academia,<sup>2</sup> which involved an examination of the models of collaboration in B.C. As of early 2010, this was still in the exploration stage.

The Research, Policy, and Planning Unit of the Alberta Solicitor General has three research positions and one policy analyst. The policy analyst is involved with the legislation relating to policing issues, such as changes to the *Police Act*, changes to police regulations, changes to the complaint/disciplinary process, and large-scale policy documents, among others. There is also a business planning component to the public security function. Of the three research

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<sup>2</sup> Interestingly, none of the college/university-based faculty who were interviewed for this project mentioned the consortium.

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positions, two positions are dedicated to policing and public safety topics, while one is dedicated to topics concerning victims and crime prevention.

According to the Acting Manager, the Unit was established to create the capacity to conduct research and evaluation, rather than having to contract the work out to private firms and universities. The researchers conduct analyses in a number of areas, including crime statistics and police resources, as well as evaluation. The Unit does not conduct research studies for police services *per se*. This “gap” could be filled by a university-led POR.

The current data analysis capabilities of the Unit are, in the words of the Acting Manager, “limited”: “We do a pretty good job with what we have, but we are limited in the type of information that is available for us to analyze.” The Unit has access to Uniform Crime Report information and to all of the Statistics Canada data tables. The Solicitor General serves as a representative of the province on the Statistics Canada Group dealing specifically with justice statistics. The Unit also has access to information that could be quite useful to police services. For example, there is an annual Cost Review of Alberta Municipal Police services which involves an analysis of various cost and business measures in a detachment or a municipal service area. However, the Acting Manager noted that the Unit has never asked police services for “Calls for Service” data, which limits the types of analyses that can be conducted.

To date, the research projects conducted by the Unit have not required the development of MOUs. However, the Acting Manager indicated that there was a need to make the process faster,

*both for ourselves and the people conducting the research—like partnering with academic institutions—just smooth that out, because right now there are all sorts of standards, all sorts of different agreements... the right to review the products, the right to publish—all of that is still very grey and we would like to be able to have something a little more uniform in the province, if possible.*

At present, the partnerships that do exist between the Ministry and the universities are primarily *ad hoc*, on an individual-to-individual basis, rather than institutionally-based.

Strong support for a POR was expressed by the Acting Manager of the Unit: “We will do anything to help increase the capacity of law enforcement agencies for research.” It is anticipated that the Ministry would play a major role in designing the MOU(s) that would establish the partnerships in the POR. In the view of the Acting Manager, one issue that needs to be explored is whether there can be a general agreement that would allow a police service to partner with a local institution, or with government, for research. In the view of the Acting Manager,

*It could just be a standing agreement that says: ‘This is how things will work... This type of a security clearance will be required. This type of right to review the product, publications allowed on these terms. Who owns the information at the*



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*end’... Such an agreement would protect sensitive police data, while at the same time ensure academic freedom. This would also reassure the police that they wouldn’t get burned by being able to respond to what they might consider misinterpretations of information.*

It was the view of the Acting Manager that the greatest need in Alberta was for long-term, strategic research, as opposed to research that is more tactical/operational. The large municipal police services were considered to have a well-established capacity for crime analysis and other research studies to support tactical/operational activities. As well, the creation of a research agenda that included provincial priorities was deemed to be important. However, she did state that the Ministry is open to considering a variety of approaches within the framework of a POR that could enhance the capacities of police services to conduct research and evaluation studies.

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### Solicitor General Staff College

#### **Dr. Curtis Clarke, Director**

Dr. Clarke stated that the Staff College is well-suited to participate in a POR, as there are established relationships with the RCMP, municipal police services, and other stakeholders. The work of the college is more applied and focuses on the operational aspects of training and service delivery.

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### University of Alberta

#### **Dr. George Pavlich**

#### **Associate Vice President (Research), Professor of Law & Sociology**

The University of Alberta has a Criminology program within the Department of Sociology. There is no police studies program, *per se*, nor a cohort of faculty with expertise in criminal justice and policing. The University of Alberta has several Research Chairs and strong IT services (there is a Vice-Provost who is dedicated to IT). The university is not currently involved in any partnerships with the police and has no MOUs with police services. However, Dr. Pavlich noted:

*We are one of Canada’s leading universities—we are in the top three. As a result, we have outstanding researchers and graduate students, and the highest scholarly approbation [approval]. Plus, the University of Alberta has strengths in various areas/disciplines that could be of value to the potential research program—they [the disciplines that could be of interest] are spread across the institution. And, the University of Alberta has marvelous facilities—the infrastructure here is outstanding.*

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In the view of Dr. Pavlich, the POR would “help to provide an impetus to bring together interdisciplinary research that is spread across the University.” And, in his view, while the university emphasizes academic research and writing, many projects have an applied focus.

### The Potential for a Research Lab and Research Chairs

During the interview, Dr. Pavlich expressed a preference for the Research Chair/Lab model. The university has several precedents for establishing Research Chairs and Dr. Pavlich noted that “The University of Alberta is likely to look favourably upon the prospective professor who may serve as the RCMP Research Chair.” The Department of Sociology has a strong connection with Statistics Canada and the university is a regional centre for Statistics Canada. Dr. Pavlich noted that the University would be supportive of extending the labs’ facilities.

### Lethbridge College

**Mr. Martin Thomsen, Chair, School of Justice Studies**

**Ms. Jane Friesen, Dean, Health, Justice & Human Services**

Lethbridge College has had a policing program for 40 years and currently offers a Policing Diploma. Annual intake into the policing program is approximately 200 students. The policing program is currently a two-year program, although consideration is being given to expanding it into a four-year degree program. The program at Lethbridge College is described by the Chair of the School of Justice Studies as “very hands-on and application-based,” and is designed to meet the needs of police services. Efforts are made to ensure that the faculty is strong academically and also that they have ample field experience. Many of the faculty are former police officers (primarily RCMP) who hold Masters degrees. The program attempts to hire faculty with both academic credentials and field experience.

The policing program was designed to train and educate aspiring police officers. The program at Lethbridge College has an Advisory Committee composed of the Chiefs of police departments across Alberta, as well as RCMP officers. The Chair also noted that:

*The program curriculum is vetted through the Advisory Committee, to ensure that it is current, relevant, and high-quality, and to ensure that we are meeting the needs of our clients, which are the police agencies.*

The college does not currently have any Research Chairs. It does have a skilled and well-resourced IT department. In the policing program, there is a courtroom and a mock apartment that are used to deliver programming. There is a keen interest at Lethbridge College to involve their students in any POR that is developed. Among the ideas put forth by the Chair of the School of Justice Studies would be that students participate in a research project as part of the

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requirements to obtain their diploma in police studies. There is also the expectation that participation in a POR would benefit both the faculty and students.

### Partnerships and Relationships

Lethbridge College is involved in a number of MOU-based partnerships with local, provincial, and federal agencies, including the Commercial Vehicle Enforcement Branch, Lethbridge Police, Medicine Hat Police, CP Police, the RCMP, and the Saskatchewan Highway and Transport Patrol. As the program Chair noted, “We combine subject matter experts with our infrastructure to be more efficient, to save money, educate, train, research, you name it.”

The major question that drives the program is “What can we do better?” As an example, the program introduced courses that would assist the recruitment and training for the Saskatchewan Highway and Transport Patrol. Recently, the College has been very heavily involved with the research, development, and design of a Police Recruit Training Program. The program also has a project to develop, design, and deliver the recruit training program for the Alberta Commercial Vehicle Enforcement Branch. There are close ties between the University of Alberta and the University of Lethbridge. Dr. Curtis Clarke, Director of the Solicitor General Staff College, sits as a member of the Law Enforcement Advisory Board at the college. There are also established relationships with police services involving field practicums for students, recruit training courses, and professional development courses.

The relationship between Lethbridge College and police services was described as “excellent” by the Chair of the policing program:

*I think it is excellent. For example, I met with virtually every agency in Central/Southern Saskatchewan last week—the Moose Jaw Police, Regina Police, Saskatoon Police, the RCMP at Depot, the Saskatchewan Highway and Transport Patrol—and I said, ‘How are we doing [in terms of the education that we provide to students who go on to work with your agency], what can we do better?’ It was a great whirlwind set of meetings. We initiated some very exciting projects. For example, with Saskatchewan Highway and Transport Patrol, they asked us to incorporate some things into our recruit training and diploma program that can help them to recruit and train. They actually made one of our courses in our program a requirement to be hired on at their department.*

### The Potential for Research

Applied police research would fit into the mandate of Lethbridge College and, in the Chair’s view, there is the capacity to support a POR going forward:

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*The timing is right, because if you are going to engage in such a partnership, now is the time to start planning. And, I agree, the capacity is here, 100%. And, the philosophy and will are here—absolutely. Our senior leadership team is big on applied research—it’s been a significant initiative. They have given it a big push over the last three years. Keep in mind, we are a college. The University of the Fraser Valley started as a college. As a college we recognize and support it, and are now strategically moving forward in the area of applied research. I think it is a great fit, because as a college, our mandate is to educate and train the future workforce. And, what a great partnership. We have a 40-year history of partnership with the police. Now, we are working very closely with them on a number of partnerships. To move that to the next level, of dealing with in-service strategic initiatives... we have the foundation for it. Yes, we have to increase our capacity, but any institution will have to do that. But, you have 40 years of history/foundation of dealing with the police here.*

Lethbridge College would be well-positioned to host an “applied” Research Chair position and/or to be a partner in police research. The Chair described a research project that was underway:

*We have a research project going on right now where we are trying to develop a psychological assessment tool to identify risk-taking tendencies in drivers. And, that research can then be transferred to other things/fields—any job that requires a safety element. We are doing this through the Applied Research Department at Lethbridge College. We have been very aggressively pursuing research projects. It is about benefiting society and helping students learn. The goal of the Applied Research Department is to involve the students whenever possible, because it is a great learning experience, because the best way to learn is by doing it.*

Reflecting on the potential role of Lethbridge College in a POR, the Chair of the School of Justice Studies stated:

*Lethbridge College is not trying to pretend that we are something that we are not. There are stronger and bigger universities out there for academic research. What is neat about Lethbridge College is that we have one foot in the field, and one foot in the applied research realm, and that is where we are moving toward: focusing on applied research and determining how we can do things better... It’s an actual mandate for the college to move into the applied research area. We have the room—the facilities, physical space, capacity—to grow.*

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## University of Lethbridge

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### **Dr. Rob Wood, Associate Professor, Department of Sociology**

The Department of Sociology at the University of Lethbridge has a B.A. and an M.A. program. There are also Fellows and Visiting Professors, although there is no research lab and no criminal justice, criminology, or police studies program. Although the Department of Sociology has no criminal justice-related field practice program, there would be strong support for establishing a research lab at the university. Many students transfer to the university from Lethbridge College to complete their undergraduate degree, and many of these students continue on to a career in policing.

Although the department is not currently working with the RCMP or other police services, there is interest in developing collaborative relationships within the framework of a POR. There is a very supportive institutional environment for research. The view of Dr. Rob Wood is that the University of Lethbridge is best-suited for long-term, academic projects.

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## Norquest College

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### **Mr. James Cardinal, Team Lead/Instructor, Health & Human Service Careers**

### **Mr. Mike Straiton, Instructor, Health & Human Service Careers**

### **Ms. Dorothy Jacques, Coordinator, Human Service Careers**

### **Ms. Norma Schneider, Dean, Business & Industry Careers**

Norquest College offers a police studies program, with an Aboriginal component, which focuses on the history, culture, and traditions of Aboriginal peoples. The program has students working toward a certificate in police studies and intends to offer a law enforcement diploma. These programs are offered within the larger Health and Human Service Careers program. Norquest College has nine off-site campuses. The Policing and Security Program is offered at the Edmonton and Wetaskiwin campuses. A faculty member in the Health and Human Services Career program described the Norquest College program as being “geared toward operational activities. It’s academic, but it is very applied.”

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## Partnerships and Relationships

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The Team Lead/Instructor, Mr. James Cardinal, is a former RCMP officer from K Division who retains extensive contacts in the field. Norquest College currently has working arrangements with the RCMP, Edmonton Police Service (EPS), Sheriffs, and Corrections. A major focus of the relationship with the RCMP is preparing students for recruit training in Regina, with a focus on First Nations students. As the Dean of Business and Industry Careers, Ms. Norma Schneider, stated: “Our reputation is that we are a good partner, and we work to keep that reputation.”

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## The Potential For Research

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The faculty who were interviewed at Norquest College view their strengths as being in the realm of small, short-term projects. Their mandate is applied research. For more academic studies, Norquest College often partners with the University of Alberta and/or the University of Calgary School of Social Work, with whom they share a collaborative project. There is interest in building a research requirement into their diploma program. As the Dean of Business and Industry Careers, Ms. Norma Schneider, stated: “Norquest College can add value in working with multicultural communities and First Nations communities and reserves.” With respect to their involvement in the POR, faculty at Norquest College would like to “start small and work with [their] strengths.”

### Grant MacEwan University

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**Mr. David Patterson, Chair, Police & Investigations Program**

**Ms. Sharon Hobden, Associate Dean, Faculty of Health & Community Studies**

**Dr. Shahram Manouchehri, Associate Dean, Faculty of Arts & Science**

**Dr. Michael Gulayets, Faculty Member, Department of Sociology**

Grant MacEwan currently offers a two-year Police and Investigations Program that has approximately 50 students entering each year on the police side, and 50 students on the investigative side. There are also about 50 students on each side in the second year of the program. In addition, there is an off-campus program which offers the full two-year police program that can be completed in 16 months and a part-time evening program, which offers part-time studies for both police and investigations. The police program focuses on federal and municipal policing, while the investigative side focuses on bylaws, provincial enforcement, Sheriff’s office, Alberta Liquor, and Gaming, etc.

There is also a collaborative degree with Athabasca University, where the first two years of the Grant MacEwan diploma program are completed and serve as the first two years of a four-year degree offered at Athabasca University. As well, there is an eight-month Emergency Certificate Program that is basically education for aspiring 911 operators. It is designed to develop skills for police, fire, ambulance, dispatch, and call evaluation. While there is a B.A. and an Honours program at Grant MacEwan, there are no graduate programs.

### Partnerships and Relationships

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At Grant MacEwan, all of the programs have a clinical or field practicum component which provides the basis for partnerships with many agencies across the province. In addition, the Department of Sociology has connections with crime analysts from the EPS, as well as with the RCMP and the EIIU in conjunction with the undergraduate field practicum program. Dr.

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Michael Gulayets of the Department of Sociology described the relations with the police involved in the field practicum program as a “win-win” situation.

The collaborative efforts of the program include working with the Solicitor General to develop a Property Crime Investigator Training Course for Community Peace Officers, which is offered in a workshop format. There is a “Recognition of Prior Learning Agreement” with EPS that gives credit toward their diploma program for active members. The faculty has also worked closely with the University of Calgary and the University of Alberta.

### The Potential For Research

It was the view of the faculty who were interviewed for the project that Grant MacEwan could do longitudinal and small semester-long projects. Although there are long-standing relationships with the police—particularly with the RCMP—these have not involved research.

There is a crime lab at the South Campus for fingerprinting, photography, crime scene analysis, sketching, diagramming, and note-taking. There is also a Scenario Training Room, which is basically a large classroom with movable walls. A variety of scenes can be created, including an apartment, bar, bank, grocery store, and various outdoor scenes. The university has been very supportive of having the same type of equipment that is used in field operations in terms of digital photography. This allows students to learn from experts in the field, which includes instructors from RCMP forensics, EPS, as well as a world-renowned blood splatter expert. The Chair of the program offered that:

*If partners want to come in and use the Scenario Training Room for their members, they are welcome to do so. That is a standing offer to our partners.*

As Ms. Sharon Hobden, Associate Dean, Faculty of Health and Community Studies stated:

*We are very much community-focused at Grant MacEwan. We try to work very collaboratively with our partners, and look at ways to explore new opportunities and new possibilities for students.*

David Patterson, Chair of the Police and Investigations Program, added:

*We are a new university. We are looking for growth in a variety of areas, and research is one of the major areas that Grant MacEwan is looking to expand, so the timing [of creating a POR] could be very good in that regard.*

### Athabasca University

#### **Dr. Marc Nesca, Chair and Associate Professor, Criminal Justice Program**

The criminal justice program at Athabasca University has undergraduate students pursuing a Bachelor of Arts degree. Historically, the program has been centered on police

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studies, although it has been expanding to cover other facets of the justice system. The university does not have a field practice program, or a criminal justice research lab. At this time, there are no formal links to police services. A key focus of the program is on distance delivery of programs.

Dr. Nesca noted that Athabasca is organized differently than most universities:

*We work in centres that then come together to comprise a faculty. Our centre is the Centre for State and Legal Studies. So, we have opportunities for multidisciplinary collaboration and the cross-fertilization of ideas. My chair right now is a lawyer who heads up legal studies, the previous chair was a historian—a specialist in Canadian history. So, there are collaborative opportunities there... The program in criminal justice is embedded in a multidisciplinary centre.*

Dr. Nesca indicated that there would be strong support for the POR from the university. Their interest would be more in the applied side of police research.

### University of Calgary

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#### **Dr. Erin Gibbs Van Brunschot, Vice Dean, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, and Professor of Sociology**

The Department of Sociology program has B.A., M.A., and Ph.D. students. At the time of the interview in early 2010, there were no research fellows or visiting professors. There is a crime/deviance/social control concentration that involves undergraduate students taking six defined courses in sociology on the subject of criminology. The other concentrations are family, gender, work, and organizations.

### Partnerships and Relationships

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The University of Calgary currently does not have any working relationships with the RCMP, but there is an “excellent” working relationship between the university and the Calgary Police Service (CPS). Graduate students have been able to access data for their theses, and the studies are made available to the CPS upon completion. There is no MOU between the university and the CPS, and work is done on a project-by-project basis. Dr. Brunschot noted that there is the potential for collaboration between the University of Calgary and Mount Royal University (MRU), as MRU has a criminal justice program. This would ensure a critical mass of students is interested in criminology and criminal justice.

### The Potential for Research

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The University of Calgary has considerable resources that could be mobilized in support of a POR. The university has a number of Research Chairs that are located in various social science departments across the university, including Economics, Political Science, and Sociology



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(a focus on family issues). There are no Research Chairs that focus on criminal justice or policing, but there is strong IT support and the capacity to anonymize data.

In addition, there is a School of Public Policy, and the Prairie Regional Research Data Centre. There is crime mapping expertise, economists, health researchers, psychology, and faculty with expertise in epidemiology. In the view of Dr. Gibbs Van Brunschot:

*There is lots of untapped potential here. One of the things that we are encouraging all the time at this institution is interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary collaboration.*

In her view, the university could manage all types of studies, conducting either applied or academic research, and there would be graduate student interest in conducting thesis projects on police-related topics.

### Mount Royal University

**Dr. John Winterdyk, Director, Department of Justice Studies**

**Dr. Chad London, Associate Dean, Faculty of Health & Community Studies**

**Dr. Trevor Davis, Acting Vice President (Research)**

Recently designated as a university, Mount Royal University (MRU) has only B.A. students at this point in time. There are nine full-time faculty members in the Department of Justice Studies.

### Partnerships and Relationships

The criminal justice faculty are amenable to collaborative partnerships, and the university is willing and able to make a financial contribution to the POR effort. MRU has a lab that is physically and electronically secure, and is capable of housing highly sensitive data. The research lab has a dedicated IT line, which prevents the computers in the lab from being accessed externally. To date, projects in the lab have included studies of human trafficking, mass marketing, fraud, identity theft, and risk/protective factors of crime.

The original intent of the Department of Justice Studies at MRU was to affiliate with the ICURS lab at SFU, and an MOU was signed to facilitate collaboration, to share the work that they were doing, and to explore future collaborations on specific research projects. However, creating the lab took longer than anticipated due to the need to meet security standards to work with police and other justice system data.

The Director of the research lab at MRU, Dr. John Winterdyk, is very familiar with the research labs in B.C. and commented:

*We are trying to emulate the more applied model, like what's at the University of the Fraser Valley, because we do not have a graduate program, and we can*

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*utilize practicum students and honors degree students. We could also employ students from other faculties/ departments. All of our projects would be supervised by a faculty member, because our students are not doctoral students, so they require a degree of supervision.*

The Acting Vice President of Research, Dr. Trevor Davis, noted that the Justice Studies Program was one of the strongest programs at MRU, adding:

*A lot of our research is academic applied research. We have really strong foci in areas such as policy studies, which can be very interdepartmental. As we go forward, the development of the criminal justice and forensics program is a big focus. In fact, it is the institutional priority; it is actually a part of the strategic research plan.*

The Department of Justice Studies is very interested in exploring the development of a long-term relationship with the RCMP and other police services in the province, and building upon existing relations with Calgary Police Service. Dr. Winterdyk stated:

*Recognizing that criminal justice is interdisciplinary, we would welcome collaboration with anybody within the university that could bring something to the table where we may not have a particular skill set, for example, with respect to business models. That is one thing that I think is relatively unique about Mount Royal—it is still a relatively small community.*

### [The Potential for Research](#)

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There is keen interest at MRU in participating in the POR and to conduct research on various facets of policing. Dr. Winterdyk noted:

*We are very supportive of an applied model of research, as opposed to a ‘pure’ model of research. So, our interest to collaborate with partners is very much related to that aspect of being applied in our orientation. A lot of the projects that we have already done have an applied component to them.*

There is considerable internal support for MRU to participate in a collaborative program of research. The university is raising a minimum of \$5 million for the Criminal Justice Centre. Support was indicated for the Research Chair/lab model and the Department of Justice Studies is receptive to having police officers seconded to work on projects in the lab. The Acting Vice-President of MRU stated,

*It is an extremely good climate to get applied research work done here, and generally, it is a very, very good time to be partnering with us. We are new, so we*

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*are more malleable than some labs/institutes that have been established for 20 years. We can respond quicker in many ways, and we have a number of young faculty coming on board, so we don't have a whole whack of really established research programs, which means that there is a lot of room for latitude, with respect to people who are hungry and looking for projects.*

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## Chapter 4. University-Based Research Labs and Research Chairs: The British Columbia Experience

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The development of a POR in Alberta can be informed by the origins and evolution of the two university-based research labs and three Research Chairs in B.C., along with the collaborative relationships that exist between the labs at SFU, UFV, and RCMP E Division. The priorities for each research program are decided on a collaborative basis. Issues related to budgets, additional funding, and other day-to-day issues are managed by Dr. Alan Castle, Officer in Charge of Criminal Analysis, RCMP E Division.

### The Research Chairs

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The research labs and Research Chairs were developed through a collaboration involving the RCMP, Provincial Policing Services, SFU, and UFV. Approvals for university involvement were given by Faculty Senate and the Board of Governors. The Research Chair positions are similar to endowed professorships, with the exception that the positions have fixed, five-year terms and the chairs are exempted from teaching responsibilities. Within the framework of the MOU, the RCMP pays the \$150,000 salary per year,<sup>3</sup> per Research Chair (a total of three Chairs, two at SFU and one at UFV), while the respective universities cover benefits, estimated to be \$30,000 per year. Additional monies are used for the payment of lab employees. With respect to the Research Chair positions, an agreement was set up between SFU, UFV, and the RCMP, and completed through Public Safety and Solicitor General (PSSG).

The University pays for all the overhead and benefits of the Research Chair, provides office space, and space to house the lab. There are also offices for police officers who are involved in collaboration on various projects (although these are rarely, if ever, used). The expectation is that the chairs get supplemental funding from other sources to pay the employees and maintain the lab, so they fund-raise additional money (about \$5–7 million) from the government, SSHRC, NSRC, health, and partnering corporations (e.g., IBM).

### The University-Based Research Labs

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The research labs at SFU and UFV are the only two of their kind in the world. A key distinguishing attribute of the labs is that police data are stored and analyzed outside of “in-house” police service databases. A primary objective of establishing the two centres in B.C. was to provide academics with access to police data, so that they may conduct research analyses to help inform police policy and practice.

The development of the research labs in British Columbia grew out of long-standing professional relationships between Drs. Patricia and Paul Brantingham of the School of

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<sup>3</sup> The Research Chairs’ salary is at the upper end of the pay-scale for senior university professors in British Columbia.

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Criminology at SFU, Dr. Darryl Plecas of UFV, and Gary Bass who, at the time, was Deputy Commissioner for the RCMP Pacific Region.<sup>4</sup>

The research priorities for the research labs are established collaboratively between the centres and the RCMP. Among other projects, the research labs have been involved in the crime reduction strategy in B.C. The labs have also emerged as a major training ground for undergraduate and graduate students who have unprecedented access to police services and police data in a secure setting. There were a number of senior-level officers at RCMP E Division who were instrumental in creating the research labs, and who continue to have ongoing contact and involvement with the labs. While there was a full-time RCMP member presence in the lab on a seconded basis for the first two years, officers do not currently work in the labs.

It is estimated that it cost \$3–5 million to build a lab. In addition, it costs approximately \$100,000 for IT services of the universities to maintain the lab and ensure the security of the data. These costs are assumed by the university. The MOUs had to accommodate both the federal and provincial Access to Information legislation, as the RCMP operates as both a federal and provincial entity. The research labs may also be involved in conducting research projects for specific government agencies.

Deputy Commissioner Bass provided insights about the origins of the two research labs and the three Research Chair positions:

*We actually started thinking about the concept five years ago. It was apparent to me that there were huge gaps between what was going on in policing and in academia, in terms of neither group really understanding each other's business very well. We'd been doing a lot of work with UFV and SFU—particularly with the Brantinghams and Darryl Plecas—so we started talking about ways to share our data better, so that they could understand our business better and do their work better. So, we came up with the idea of setting up three university chairs. We signed the first MOU—it will be five years coming up (in 2010; since renewed for an additional five years). We essentially just security-cleared them—we gave them pretty much carte blanche access. That's how it started, and it has been evolving ever since.*

*From what I've seen since (since the labs were established), the processes that we have developed here are probably as far advanced as anywhere, in terms of it being like core business. What I see at other universities is still kind of piecemeal projects, where people will be brought in for specific projects, and then be sent away.*

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<sup>4</sup> In September 2010, as part of the re-organization of the RCMP, Deputy Commissioner Bass was appointed as the Deputy Commissioner, West for the RCMP; in November 2010, it was announced that Deputy Commissioner Bass would retire from the RCMP in early 2011.

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*We were already doing quite a few projects, with both UFV and SFU, so it was really a matter of formalizing that into a full-time project/arrangement. I guess, essentially, we had been working toward the current state probably a year or two before the signing of the MOU. Getting the MOU formalized, and getting the chairs in place, were I guess, just taking it [the working relationships with Darryl Plecas and the Brantinghams] to another level.*

### The Institute for Canadian Urban Studies (ICURS) at Simon Fraser University

The ICURS lab work is directed by two RCMP Research Chairs, Drs. Paul and Patricia Brantingham, in the School of Criminology at SFU. Dr. Patricia Brantingham is the RCMP University Research Chair in Computational Criminology and Dr. Paul Brantingham is the RCMP University Research Chair in Crime Analysis. The lab employs M.A. students, Ph.D. students, Postdoctoral students, fellows, and visiting scholars (sabbatical professors). ICURS was established prior to the creation of the Research Chair positions and the MOU with RCMP E Division and the provincial government. The Board of Directors at ICURS is composed of the RCMP Deputy Commissioner for RCMP E Division, the director of provincial police services, and the Vice-President of Research at SFU. There are also regular meetings with the Officer-in-Charge of the Criminal Analysis Section, RCMP E Division. See Appendix D for the “Memorandum of Understanding between SFU and RCMP E Division relating to Research Chair positions in the School of Criminology and Operation of the ICURS lab.” The estimated cost of the lab was approximately \$7 million, which includes the \$3–5 million to build the lab. IBM donated the computer equipment.

A detailed protocol has been established to ensure the security and anonymity of the RCMP data that are transferred to the ICURS lab. The data are brought to SFU by security-cleared IT Services staff. Then, the data are stored on the university’s main secure computer. The data are then transferred to ICURS through a metal wire. IT staff assist by parsing the data. The identifying information is stripped from the data prior to being analyzed in the research lab.

There are a myriad of security provisions that surround the operation of the ICURS lab, including a prohibition against cameras and cell phones, and the requirement that persons entering the lab must sign in and out. Inside the lab, none of the computers has a CPU. Rather, the work stations are composed of a computer monitor and a keyboard. The CPU is located in a separate room on “blade” technology (donated by IBM) that cannot be accessed by persons working in the lab.

The research focus of the lab is strategic/academic with an emphasis on “big picture” issues and longitudinal, multi-year studies. Faculty and students in the lab work within a multi-disciplinary framework and utilize large databases. The research program is oriented toward M.A. students, Ph.D. students, Postdoctoral fellows, fellowships, and visiting scholars. The ICURS lab at SFU has hosted police scholars from a number of Canadian and international

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universities and government agencies. Many of the visiting scholars have been on sabbatical leave from their home university, or are on-leave from their home agency. In 2010, for example, the Director of Crime Reduction and Communities for the North East of England, UK Civil Service, was in residence at ICURS. ICURS also has a number of Postdoctoral Fellows and Researchers. The ICURS lab has received funding to support two professors on sabbatical, which included covering living expenses. Faculty involved in the ICURS lab have produced over 40 journal articles and conference papers over the past several years. ICURS also produces “fact sheets”—one-page analyses for the police. The ICURS lab has MOUs for collaboration with a number of other university labs internationally. For a list of ICURS publications, see Appendix E.

### [The Centre for Criminal Justice Research \(CCJR\) at the University of the Fraser Valley](#)

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The University of the Fraser Valley (UFV) Centre for Criminal Justice Research (CCJR) is under the direction of Dr. Darryl Plecas, who is the RCMP University Research Chair in Crime Reduction in the School of Criminology and Criminal Justice. The research lab at the Centre is security-cleared to a level below “Top Secret.” The Centre employs undergraduate practicum students and other undergraduate students to work on various, short-term projects. The focus of the Centre is on operational/tactical research. All of the written reports that the CCJR completes for the RCMP are posted on the RCMP website.

The CCJR is involved in an initiative called “university-led research” which is facilitated through the Operations Strategy Branch at RCMP E Division. The ICURS lab is not participating in this initiative. A primary objective of the CCJR is to have an “operational collaboration” with the RCMP, the Director stating: “The RCMP collaborate with us nonstop, like, there’s police here all the time.” The CCJR does not have access to data from the independent municipal police services in the region.

The Centre has ongoing, operational collaboration with the RCMP. During the time period 2005–2010, the Centre completed 67 projects, which averages 12–15 projects a year. At the time of the interview, the Centre was working on a number of projects, including quality of RCMP response for domestic assault and a study of patrol officer time and tasks. A list of Centre publications appears in Appendix F.

The Director provided an example of the type of studies that the CCJR undertakes:

*The Surrey RCMP, for example, phone me up and say that they would like to do a time management study—‘We would like to know what police officers do every minute of every day, how much time is spent on various files, all of that’—so we designed this study to do this, and over the summer we do it, but in setting up, they [RCMP] are with us all the way—they are working to make sure that the*

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*methodology is as good as it can be. And then after we get rolling, all the students do ride-alongs this summer—they rode-along with general duty members, detectives, and supervisors.*

*But after that, we have a series of meetings with management, where we say ‘This is our first run of data.’ We put it up on a big-screen, and we ask ‘What do you think? Is this going to be useful for you? Should we analyze this, should we analyze that, how would you like us to analyze the data?’ The management team and detachment are with us right up until we are delivering the report, and what they get is something they are going to use, because we did our analysis in a manner that is useful to them. And here is where our model is fundamentally different from SFU’s model: we say to ourselves ‘Our first responsibility is to that detachment.’ That’s where academics need to wake up to the fact: look, somebody is giving you access to data, you’ve got a responsibility to deliver to them. And then if you can get an academic paper out of it, good for you, that’s secondary. So, but what I am thinking all along is, ‘I know I’m going to get an academic paper out of it, because it is so easy to do.’ So there is a good example of a win-win situation. It created research and learning opportunities for 22 different students. It gave the students an idea about whether or not they would like to go into the field. We developed a course around that—around police patrol. So, the students not only gathered all the data, they coded it, they entered it into SPSS in the lab, and then we developed a course around that as well.*

The focus of the Centre at UFV is applied research and responding to requests from the field. As the Director noted, “The RCMP decides the work. They help inform the research priorities... The type of research that we do in the Centre is operational, and of practical importance to the RCMP.”

The Director of the Centre elaborated on the nature of the relationships that have, historically, existed between universities and the police:

*The field is so distrustful, because they ask ‘What are you doing for us?’ The organizations that provide opportunities for access to the data are holding up their end in giving access to the data, but academia is not holding up its end. It’s a completely selfish orientation which is driven in part by the nature of professorships. Like, ‘I am a professor, I have a very narrow research focus, and the only reason why I am making contact with you as an agency, is so that I can build my vita because it is publish or perish.’ But it’s not like ‘The reason why I am doing it is because it provides learning opportunities for students or is serving a need for the agency.’*



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*I have been to so many meetings and I've been there for five minutes with an academic, thinking to myself, 'My God, this isn't going anywhere.' I think the only way to describe it is a 'selfish orientation'—namely, 'It is all about me as an academic and how I can do this in a way which is going to satisfy my publication needs'—without thinking 'No, the first exercise is to 'answer the question'/'meet the request'—and do that in as scientifically rigorous manner possible.*

The Director's objective is "to produce stuff that is useful... that's going to impact policy and the way they do business... With my model, I accommodate both students and the RCMP—it is whatever [project] comes through the door."

### The Evolution of SFU ICURS and UFV CCJR

The research labs at SFU and UFV have evolved into two different models since their inception: the UFV program is, by the admission of Dr. Plecas, more "applied" than the SFU lab. UFV makes extensive use of undergraduate students in conducting operationally-focused field projects, whereas the SFU lab examines more global issues and involves graduate students, although some undergraduates participate in lab activities as part of the School of Criminology field practice program. There is currently no permanent on-site RCMP or municipal police presence in either of the research labs. This is an issue that has been identified by staff in both labs and should be addressed in discussions surrounding the development of a university-based research lab in Alberta.

In comparing the SFU-based ICURS lab with the UFV-based CCJR, Dr. Plecas stated:

*Mine is completely different. My program of research is driven by what comes to me as requests from students, from government, from criminal justice agencies in general, and from community agencies [it's wide in scope]. It's whatever comes to me. So my job as Research Chair is to service the needs of the criminal justice system, like requests for research. And I mix that with student interests, and I put it together to make sure that it's methodologically sound research. It's clearly an evidence-based approach to the research, and translate that in a fashion so that it's of benefit to the discipline overall. So it's very student-centered, community-centered—I think that's fundamentally different from the (SFU ICURS) model—it's absolutely critical in the whole business in setting up a chair for Alberta or anywhere else for the system. And why there is such dissatisfaction historically with academia is because professors normally research along a very narrow path to say that they are an expert in one single thing—and if an agency comes to you for data, or whoever, it's all about the professor—that's the normal trend. And our model just flips that around—it's more about, 'How can we serve agencies?' We are partners with the RCMP in every sense of the word.*

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The two models are reflective of the orientations and academic perspective of the Research Chairs who are involved in operating the labs. This would be one potential benefit of establishing two university-based research labs in Alberta, as this model would tap into the vast expertise that exists in both realms and would also ensure that none of the colleges/universities would be, or feel, excluded from the POR.

### Perspectives on the Research Labs

The comments of Deputy Commissioner Gary Bass suggest that the RCMP in the Pacific Region are very satisfied with the performance of the research labs and that key issues have been successfully addressed. In his words:

*The experience and impact of the research labs has been hugely positive. We just have not had any single major issue. And, of course, it is not just the three chairs, as I indicated. I think, on the marijuana grow-op study, we had 150 students at one point, and we sent them out to every detachment in the province—we gave them access to the files—so it is a connection between the RCMP and the broader community, as much as it is a connection between the RCMP and the chairs. It's been a positive experience that we had with the students; it's just been a good experience all the way around. It's been a good experience in terms of the work, the output, as well as the relationships.*

In comparing the work of the two research labs, the Deputy Commissioner stated:

*In terms of the number of projects, UFV is probably doing more projects. SFU is working on different types of projects—like data management, data warehousing, that kind of thing, where they can bring to bear the various types of skills that they have there, you know, sciences, with respect to math, and what not. But UFV does a bit more smaller projects—a higher volume.*

*The University of the Fraser Valley does more tactical projects and SFU more strategic. They are both valuable in different ways—and I think it's good to have that kind of capacity, to be able to go out and be able to do very quick, targeted studies that someone wants done, for some reason, fairly quickly. And then obviously, the longer-term, more difficult issues we have to deal with. You need both.*

Deputy Commissioner Bass offered his assessment on a number of more specific issues:

#### On the issue of academic freedom:

*One of the key underlying principles of the arrangement is that they have complete academic freedom. So, for that very reason, we don't give them any*

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*direction. We give them our data, and of course we tell them what kind of research we would like to have done, but we do not tell them how to do it or suggest how to do it, and of course they are free to initiate projects of their own, which they do. But as it turns out, there is a high degree of commonality in terms of what our interests are, so it's never been an issue.*

*Quite often, one of the chairs will come up to us and point out something that would be of value to research, and generally, we agree on it. And as I said, this kind of hands off approach ensures academic independence. There's not much debate about what the research is. I'm not aware of any disagreement that we've had on a project, in terms of whether it should be done, or how it should be done.*

*With a few exceptions, for example highly classified material that's classified above 'Secret' like international security data and data that would disclose the identity of informants, they have everything that comes out of our records management system, so they can use it as they see fit. They have PRIME and CAD data.*

On the synergies between the RCMP and the universities that have emerged since the creation of the research labs:

- We're getting a lot of recruits—it is phenomenal the number of students that we end up recruiting, and that has been a huge benefit for us.
- They did a 30-year police costing study, which has been used extensively to this day—it has been used by other police departments, it's been used by the last two or three Solicitors General. The kind of research that they are doing is very useful.
- I think many times in the past, the types of research that we were seeing, were, I think that there were a lot of criminologists who thought they understood policing, but were not close enough to it [policing] to actually understand it. And they [criminologists] thought that it worked and that what they were doing was useful to the police, but in many cases, it [their research] was not useful. The bigger value of the synergy of the process is that you have this strong mutual respect and it just produces better work.

On the challenges that were encountered in setting up the research labs:

Among the issues that required attention in setting up the labs were security clearances, meeting the physical requirements for security, and understanding the access to information issues and the *Freedom of Information Act*. Further,

*What we found in the process of setting up the labs and getting the MOUs signed is that there was not anything in policy that said we could not do it, which is the way that we approached it. You know, all too often, you have people trying to find*

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*ways to make things difficult, and we had a little bit of that early on, but, it's primarily just those main areas—data security, and security clearances, and the Access to Information Act.*

Yvon Dandurand, Associate Vice President, Research and Graduate Studies at UFV observed that there have been advantages and disadvantages associated with the RCMP Research Chair/Lab model in B.C. Among the advantages are the development of good channels of communication between the university and the police, plus great relationships with community organizations. Plus, such ventures offer opportunities to understand crime better, and for the university to be of service to the communities, and be involved in crime reduction strategies. Disadvantages of the current arrangement in B.C. is that police services other than the RCMP have, generally, not been involved in collaborative research projects and the participation of faculty from other colleges and universities in the province has been limited.

Dandurand identified a number of issues that would have to be addressed in Alberta, including whether one lab would be established for use by multiple colleges and universities. In such a case, access and usage protocols would have to be established. As well, there is the issue of whether there would be “value added” by having police data transferred to an off-site location at a college or university, Dandurand noting,

*If you house the data in an off-site lab, then you enter the big world of security/ethics/‘freedom of information’ concerns, etc. You need data to do the research, but how you satisfy all the requirements is another question.*

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### Summary of the Two Research Labs

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#### **The ICURS Lab at Simon Fraser University**

- 2 Research Chairs—Dr. Paul Brantingham and Dr. Patricia Brantingham;
- Employs/hosts M.A. students, Ph.D. students, Postdoctoral students, fellows, and visiting scholars (sabbatical professors);
- strategic/academic research, much of it longitudinal, on “big picture” issues;
- state-of-the-art lab with RCMP data, and some VPD data;
- focus on long-term, strategic/academic projects; and
- estimated cost to construct and equip the lab was approximately \$7 million (\$3–5 million to build the lab, plus IBM-donated computer equipment).

#### **The Centre for Criminal Justice Research at the University of the Fraser Valley**

- 1 Research Chair—Dr. Darryl Plecas;
- employs undergraduate practicum students and other undergraduate students

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- research is operational/tactical—shorter projects that utilize undergraduate students;
  - state-of-the-art lab with RCMP data;
  - focus on short-term, operational projects; and
  - estimated cost of the lab was \$7 million, including a \$5.2 million donation for software from IBM.

**For both research labs:**

- an MOU sets out the details of the relationships between the universities and the RCMP;
- the RCMP/PSSG pay the salaries of the Research Chairs (\$150,000 year each, for 5 years);
- the RCMP/PSSG pays the Research Chairs an additional \$50,000 a year to pay the lab employees (students);
- the Research Chairs are Full Professors; and
- the Research Chairs are absolved from teaching responsibilities while serving as a chair.

**Contributions of the universities:**

- The University pays for all the overhead and the benefits for each Research Chair (approximately \$30,000 per year), provides office space, and a room large enough for a lab and offices;
- The university pays for each chair's benefits, which amounts to about \$30,000 per year;
- The expectation is that the Research Chairs will secure supplemental funding from other sources, including SSHRC, NSRC, and the private sector to pay the employees and maintain the lab, so they fund-raise additional money (about \$5–7 million) from the government, SSHRC, NSRC, health, and partnering corporations (e.g., IBM);
- Everyone with access to the lab needs a security clearance, which can take up to 8 months to obtain; and
- It costs \$100,000 for IT services to maintain the lab, which is paid for by the university to provide the security.

During the interviews, the two Research Chairs indicated a willingness to share their experiences and expertise with parties involved in the development of a POR in Alberta. Although the experience in B.C. will be invaluable as the stakeholders in Alberta move forward

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in developing a program for the province, the POR in Alberta could be designed to be more inclusive of colleges, universities, and police services than in the case of B.C.

### Lessons from the B.C. Experience

The experience of the research labs in British Columbia provides important lessons that can be considered by the stakeholder groups in Alberta.

### The Academic Independence of the Research Chairs

In discussing the issue of academic independence of the Research Chairs, Deputy Commissioner Bass stated:

*It has to be a fairly loose process with not a lot of rules and guidelines. The big mistake you could make is that if you try ‘over’ rule and put in too many policies and procedures. One of the main things we have learned: you have to keep it as informal as possible. And, it has worked well for us that way. You know, a lot of people would say, ‘that’s reckless’, but I do not think it is—I think it’s a big part of the success—keeping it to the basics.*

In the view of the Deputy Commissioner, it would be a mistake for those setting up a similar program in another jurisdiction to set certain standards with respect to how much research is going to be produced and how it’s going to be produced.

### Ensuring that the “Right” Faculty are Involved in the Research Lab and/or as Research Chairs

Again, in the words of Deputy Commissioner Bass:

*You have to have people that can interact well with police officers, and sometimes that can be difficult. The police can be fairly skeptical. You have to be able to show them that you know what you are doing, and there is benefit to what you are doing... Although criminologists may want to wipe out crime in 20 years, there are practical things we have to deal with every day, and you need that mixture. The university chairs here come to our leadership conference every year. The chairs are well-known to most of the organization—they come and go freely to any of our buildings, and they have a huge amount of respect from people they’ve been dealing with just because they are adding value. So, that is the key—having it structured in such a way that they get that respect and trust.*

### Not Under-Estimating the Length of Time Required to Establish the Research Lab

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A major challenge was the length of time that it took to set up the labs, due in large measure to the requirements for physical security and, according to Deputy Commissioner Bass, certain persons,

*just wanting to put up barriers, not thinking it was a very good idea. You're going to get resistance to change; if you're expecting that resistance, you are probably better able to deal with it.*

In British Columbia, the creation of the program was facilitated by the fact that there were pre-existing relationships between the RCMP and the three faculty who were appointed to the Research Chair positions. There is also the issue of ensuring that the procedures that are set in place comply with college/university policies.

### The Role of IT Services

There has to be a direct tie between multiple academic departments, the lab, and IT services. The IT staff have top-secret clearances, run the programs, anonymize the data, and prepare the data for analysis.

### The Importance of Bona Fide Partnerships

The Director of the CCJR at UFV stated, “The key players on both sides [the police and the university] need to have the perspective that ‘We can make anything happen—we just need to find a way to make it happen.’”

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## Chapter 5. Creating a University-Based Research Lab in Alberta: Perspectives from the Colleges, Universities, and Provincial Government

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A key component of the project was determining the interest and ideas of faculty members in Alberta colleges, universities, and representatives from the provincial government regarding the creation of one or more university-based research labs. Among the persons interviewed, there were various suggestions offered with respect to creating a university-based research lab. A number of the respondents expressed an interest in visiting the labs in B.C., and in speaking with the Research Chairs, as well as with the RCMP and other police services. Some interviewees expressed an interest in exploring the potential for Alberta police data to be housed in the research labs at SFU and/or UFV, so as not to incur the expense involved in setting up a research lab in Alberta. Others, however, thought that Alberta should have its own lab.

A number of the college/university faculty felt that the most cost-effective approach would be to make arrangements to house Alberta police data at one, or both, of the labs in B.C. This would, in one respondent's opinion, avoid "re-inventing the wheel" and would not require the large financial outlay to establish a lab. From this perspective, an MOU could be developed between SFU, ICURS and/or the UFV Centre, and the respective police services and universities in Alberta. Arrangements could be made for police personnel and college/university personnel to work on projects in the two labs. As well, individual colleges/universities could contribute to funding ICURS and/or the CCJR.

There was the widespread view, however, that an Alberta-based research lab would facilitate the development of relationships among the colleges and universities as well as with, and among, Alberta police services. This perspective is reflected in the comments of Dr. Erin Gibbs Van Brunschot of the University of Calgary who conceded that, while there might be advantages in an arrangement with the research labs in British Columbia:

*The establishment of a lab, or the establishment of a Research Chair, and access to the data, would be a draw for students. The chance of working in a lab like that, and working on projects using RCMP data, would be a huge draw for both undergrad and graduate students.*

*I think that a centre does bring people together. It would be great for both students and faculty to have a centre. Despite the data being the same potentially, in terms of variables, the context of Alberta is different than in British Columbia. There is validation in the creation of an individual Alberta-based centre/institute.*



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A similar view was expressed by Dr. Marc Nesca, Chair and Associate Professor of the Criminal Justice program at Athabasca University:

*I'm not sure what my institution would prefer. I would prefer to have an independent lab here (as opposed to collaborating with the labs in BC), but having said that, I don't have a problem with sharing data/collaborating with other labs, such as ICURS [if that was built into the agreement]. We all want as much autonomy as possible, so that would be the preference. I would not have a problem working in collaboration with others.*

The results of the interviews indicate that the predominant view is that one or more university-based research labs should be created in Alberta. Regardless of their particular perspective, there was interest expressed in visiting the ICURS and CCJR research labs in British Columbia, so as to speak with the Research Chairs, the RCMP, and other police services.

Should the decision be made to create one or more university-based research labs in Alberta, there are a number of issues that would have to be addressed, including location, funding, access, MOUs/protocols, anonymity/confidentiality of police data, identifying the security requirements for the labs, research priorities of the labs, governance/management structure, timely security clearances, and IT/computer services support.

### Location

As to where an Alberta-based research lab should be located, the faculty members who were interviewed were generally open to considering a variety of locations. As one faculty member stated:

*There are politics... I think that there has been this belief that Edmonton tends to be... It may be the favored location, because the provincial government and RCMP headquarters are in Edmonton... One could assume by default that the program would be located in Edmonton... The location is not really a big deal, but it would be nice if other institutions would be able to contribute, regardless of where the centre might be.*

### Funding

A key factor is determining the costs required to create, and sustain, the lab. The experience in British Columbia with respect to the costs associated with creating and operating the two research labs provides a guide for the Alberta initiative.

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## Access

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An issue mentioned by many of the persons interviewed for the project was that it would be important to develop protocols to facilitate access to the research lab by faculty and graduate students from all of the colleges and universities.

## MOUs and Protocols

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The MOUs signed between SFU, UFV, and the RCMP can serve as a guide for Alberta.

## The Anonymity and Confidentiality of the Police Data

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The research labs in B.C. have established a protocol that can serve as a guide for Alberta. This would include a procedure for transferring police data to the lab and the provisions for storing data in the lab.

## Security Requirements for the Lab

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The security requirements for persons working in the lab and for the data that are stored in the lab are paramount. The necessary arrangements must be put into place to ensure the security of the police data. The research labs in British Columbia have security arrangements that can be used as a guide for the Alberta lab.

## Research Priorities of the Lab

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A decision will have to be made among the stakeholders as to whether the analyses in the lab will focus on strategic projects and/or tactical/operational projects.

## Governance and Management Structure

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Any structure must accommodate the requirements of the university, as well as provide for police involvement. Although the research lab would operate under the protocols of the university, nevertheless the police will have a role to play in determining the activities and focus of the research lab. Within the framework of reference of the MOU between SFU and RCMP E Division, for example, the information/data remains the property of the RCMP. To this end, the research data are “non-accessible.” This means that the data cannot be requested through the *Freedom of Information Act*. Rather, the police data are intended for research purposes only within the university. As previously noted, the data must be “anonymized,” that is, all identifiers are removed from the data files when the data are transferred to the research lab.

## Timely Security Clearances

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Attention must be given as to how security clearances can be expedited, especially for visiting scholars. This has been a problem for ICURS, Dr. Patricia Brantingham noting:

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*One thing that we had to change, though, is that it takes too long to get sabbatical professors security-cleared. The sabbatical professors would come, but weren't security cleared, so they couldn't work on the projects like the other employees. Now, the sabbatical professors work more at a distance, and they also come for shorter periods, like two or three weeks. The sabbatical professors now give lectures, work with research assistants, and we set up joint research with them, which they do at a distance. It takes up to eight months to get an enhanced security clearance.*

### IT and Computer Services Support

The British Columbia experience indicates that a critical ingredient for the success of the research labs is strong IT and Computer Services Support. Fiscal support for these services must be included in any POR budget.

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## Chapter 6. A Research Chair in Police Studies and a Visiting Police Scholar Program

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Two potential components of a POR are the creation of one or more Research Chair positions and the establishment of a Visiting Police Scholar program.

### A Research Chair in Police Studies

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Most commonly, Research Chairs are attached to specific university departments, as is the case with the RCMP Research Chairs in British Columbia. Research Chairs have the potential to be a key anchor in a program of research and to raise the profile of the program both within the academic and police worlds. In addition to the Research Chair positions in British Columbia, St. Thomas University in Fredericton, New Brunswick has an Endowed Chair in Criminology and Criminal Justice, and the University of Regina has a Research Chair in Police Studies, supported by the Saskatchewan Law Foundation.

There are a number of issues that surround the creation of a Research Chair position. These should be addressed to ensure that maximum benefit is gained from the position(s).

### Funding for the Research Chair

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There are a number of possible funding sources that could be explored, including the provincial government, the Alberta Law Foundation, and the college/universities involved in the research partnership. A major issue is the expense associated with the Research Chair position. Yvon Dandurand states that the economic argument must be considered: “How much research would you get if you took the same amount of money and put it toward a different model, let’s say a research program that does not involve chairs or a lab?”

### Selection of the Research Chair

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A key issue in the selection of the Research Chair is the skill set that is required: a police scholar with a strong theoretical/conceptual background and lengthy publication record, or a person who is more applied in their background/approach to police studies. College and university faculty interviewed for the project offered differing opinions on this issue. While some respondents felt that the person should have strong connections to police services and have a record of applied research, others focused on more “academic” credentials.

It is unlikely that any one candidate for the Research Chair position would adequately fill both roles. This would require that a decision be made as to which orientation would be emphasized. The ideal candidate would be a person with strong academic credentials who also has experience in working with police agencies and with government.

The challenge of identifying a suitable candidate for the Research Chair position and ensuring that the person fulfills the expectations of the position should not be under-estimated. In

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Canada, there is a very small pool from which potential candidates could be drawn, likely necessitating an international search. The University of Regina, for example, secured a \$2.5 million grant from the Saskatchewan Law Foundation to support an Endowed Chair in Police Studies. A faculty member at the university was subsequently identified and assumed the position, only to be subsequently dismissed for professional misconduct. This left the program without a Chair and, as of Fall 2010, the position had not been filled.

In British Columbia, the three faculty persons selected as RCMP Research Chairs had long-standing relationships with the RCMP and, more specifically, with the Deputy Commissioner for the Pacific Region. It appears that, due to this and other factors, the availability of the positions was not advertised, nor was there a job competition among qualified candidates for the positions.

The reliance on one person and their expertise for the Research Chair position is not without challenges. When the Research Chair in police studies at the University of Regina was dismissed, for example, an extensive search was required for a replacement. This set the program back several years. A key feature of the POR is continuity, and this may be compromised by having one person fill the Research Chair position. There is also the issue of changing research interests on the part of the Research Chair, which may undermine the intent of the program. In B.C., having the Research Chairs associated with the research labs for five-year, renewable terms, ensures stability and continuity of the program.

A variety of opinions were offered by the college and university faculty members who were interviewed for the project with respect to the criteria that should guide the selection of a Research Chair. Some respondents felt that the person should have an “applied” orientation, as reflected in the following comment:

*They need someone who is very applied and a university that supports an applied orientation... Their research interests cannot be narrow and strictly academic. They need to be engaged in the community.*

Other respondents felt that the person appointed to the Research Chair position should be an established academic with a lengthy publication record. Ideally, the Research Chair position would be filled by a person with strong academic credentials who also has experience in the policy realm and experience working in, or with, governments and police services. Reflecting the model in B.C., consideration could be given to having two Research Chairs in Alberta, one of which is attached to a more “theoretical” and the other to a more “applied” program of research.

Yvon Dandurand, Associate Vice President, Research and Graduate Studies at the University of the Fraser Valley, offered a suggestion to address this issue:

*With a Research Chair position, it is all built around one person. Plus, you always have the quote unquote bias that comes from one person—one point-of-*

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*view. One suggestion is for a model that would involve identifying three to five senior researchers who'd be there on behalf of one or more universities to develop a research agenda. The strength of scientific research rests on the peer review process. So, they should establish a committee of professors—that would increase the quality and strength of the research project. Then, let them establish a research agenda. The research agenda would include the tasks of data gathering, and the monitoring of existing programs/initiatives. Then, they should agree on who does what (after the professors determine the research agenda in consultation with the police agency, then the professors can task out the work to one another and beyond—such as contractors). Then, the group can meet with senior police officials and representatives from the provincial government to discuss. That model would be compatible with a visiting scholar idea, plus with this model, relationships and trust can still be built.*

#### Location of the Research Chair

A key question surrounding the creation of one or more Research Chair positions is location. Given the strong expressions of interest from the college and university faculty interviewed for the project, selecting one or more locations will present a not insurmountable challenge. Not surprisingly, a number of the respondents felt that their college/university would be the location best-suited for the Research Chair position, as there were existing Research Chair positions and supportive resources available. Some respondents also self-identified as being viable candidates for the Research Chair position.

#### Interface Between the Research Chair and the Research Lab

In British Columbia, the Research Chair is viewed as an essential component of the ICURS lab at SFU and the CCJR at UFV. This is due, in part, to historical circumstance (e.g. the professors' prior work and relationships with the police, particularly the RCMP). This may or may not be the model for Alberta. A Chair in Police Studies in Alberta would not have to be associated with a university-based research lab.

#### Setting a Research Agenda

A key issue is the research agenda that will be pursued by the Research Chair, and the extent to which the police services will have input into this agenda and resulting activities. Dr. George Pavlich, Associate Vice-President (Research) and Professor of Law and Psychology at the University of Alberta, stated:

*One of the possible points of discussion will be the University's requirement that Research Chairs, once established, have degrees of autonomy regarding what*

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*they want to study and how the research findings are disseminated. A tenured professor has the autonomy, so that would have to be respected.*

### A Visiting Police Scholar Program

There was support for considering the development of a Visiting Police Scholar program as one component of the POR. This would involve having police scholars come to Alberta and spend a specified period of time in residence at a college/university, police service, or the provincial government. Among the potential benefits of such an arrangement would be exposure to internationally-recognized scholars who conduct research studies on policing; the opportunity for collaborative research with the visiting scholar; and access to research and police scholar networks. Having visiting scholars in Alberta would provide a variety of opportunities for multi-disciplinary work and collaboration. The position could be attached to the provincial Solicitor General or to a university.

There are a number of issues that would require attention in discussions with respect to establishing a visiting scholar program. These include:

- program funding and continuity of funding support;
- selection criteria;
- terms and conditions of appointment;
- expectations with respect to research, consultation with stakeholders, teaching, and accessibility; and
- affiliation of the visiting scholar (i.e., college/university, police service, or the provincial government).

One option would be for the province to issue a “Call for Interest” internationally and solicit interest and proposals from police scholars or senior police leaders who are interested in conducting police-related research. A committee would then vet the proposals and make a selection.

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## Chapter 7. Learning and Research Opportunities for Students

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The proposed POR will provide a framework for enhancing and expanding learning opportunities for undergraduate students. There was considerable enthusiasm among the college/university faculty, university administration, and provincial government officials for exploring the development of learning/research opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students. A number of the schools currently operate field practicum and co-op programs for undergraduate students who are placed in police services and other justice-related agencies. It would be beneficial to the colleges, universities, police services, and provincial government if there were some degree of standardization in the programs.

Many of the colleges and universities in Alberta operate field practicum programs for undergraduate students. These programs provide the opportunity for selected students to participate in a variety of criminal justice agency and police service settings.

Increasing undergraduate and graduate student involvement in research on policing is a “win-win” arrangement: students have an opportunity to participate in the operations of a police service and become familiar with the organization, while at the same time, the police service benefits from the enthusiasm and expertise that students bring to their work. Field practicum programs are also a valuable recruiting tool for police services, as there is the opportunity to become familiar with the student and to make a preliminary assessment as to whether they would be a suitable candidate for the service.

The interviews provided some preliminary information on the learning opportunities that would be available for students within the framework of a program of research.

### Research, Policy, and Planning Unit, Solicitor General

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The Research, Policy, and Planning Unit of the Solicitor General in Alberta has been involved in the field practicum program at the University of Alberta, which has worked out well for both the students and the Unit. In the view of the Acting Manager:

*There is considerable potential to expand the involvement of the Ministry. It is a win-win situation: the agency or police service secures the services of highly motivated students and the placements also provide a potential source of recruiting new police officers, crime analysts, and other positions, while the student gains hands-on experience and has the opportunity to begin networking in the justice system.*

The Solicitor General is involved in a recruiting initiative with universities through “Ed Ventures”. The initiative involves students working on an advertisement campaign for the



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various police services in Alberta as part of their coursework. The project is to be implemented by the end of the term on campus to recruit for Alberta police. The objective is to focus on policing as a career option and to rationalize the recruitment efforts of the police. The Ministry has provided fiscal support for a three-year term and the initiative involves a number of colleges/universities. The RCMP are also a partner in the Alberta police recruitment initiative.

There also appears to be the potential to establish internships for graduate students, the Acting Manager stating, “When we have larger-scale projects, it would be nice to be able to have the relationships—to be able to call up certain departments and ask “do you have any graduate students who would be interested? This would expand the research capacity of the Unit considerably.”

### Solicitor General Staff College

There is interest in having the Solicitor General Staff College as a participant in a POR. The Director indicated that his organization was best-suited for short, semester-long projects:

*I can give students exposure to the operational training environment, which features short projects, shorts secondments, etc., and also doing projects. My (current) practicum student is doing a training template for use of force for corrections—at the provincial and national levels.<sup>5</sup>*

### Norquest College

There is a full semester field practicum program for students at Norquest College. It was the view of the faculty representatives from Norquest College that participation in a POR would be a great opportunity for their students. Mike Staiton, an Instructor in the Health and Human Service Careers program, stated:

*The certificate and diploma students are not involved in that level (of research) with the profession, and I think that it would be very good for them to get a glimpse of that, even if it is just for a short time. I think it would be great for faculty, in terms of professional development and growth, and they can contribute to the profession in a different way. It would be great in terms of the college. It would certainly put us into a different playing field, in terms of where we are situated.*

### University of Alberta

There is the potential to create semester-long projects through the Community Service Learning Program, which is similar to a co-op program.

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<sup>5</sup> This student was from the University of Alberta Community Service Learning Program.

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### University of Calgary

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The University of Calgary offers co-op placements for students and, on occasion, undergraduates from the Department of Sociology have been placed in police-related placements. There is the potential for co-op students to work on research projects, should a research lab be established, or with individual police services. The university also operates “field schools” for criminology students that take place during block week. The schools center on visiting various criminal justice agencies, including police services.

### Lethbridge College

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The field component of the program at Lethbridge College is practicum-based. This might involve an undergraduate student completing coursework and then being in the field with an RCMP officer. Students at Lethbridge College who participate in the field practicum program must complete an interview with the agency in question and then secure a security clearance. Within the framework of a POR, the college would structure it so that when the students first get into the program, they would be introduced to the opportunity, and they would start the security clearance process immediately. It would be made part of their orientation.

### Grant MacEwan University

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The Department of Sociology at Grant MacEwan has a field practicum program that partners with RCMP detachments, Alberta Liquor and Gaming, EPS, the John Howard Society, parole, the drug treatment court, and other agencies in the justice system. The field practice program at Grant MacEwan is designed specifically for students to conduct research with partnering agencies. The field practicum program is hosted by the Sociology department, and it is a year-long program. Specifically, students spend their first term of the field practicum program planning the research project, and then they carry out the research project in the second term. The field practicum program is called “The Community-Based Criminology Project.” Research topics are chosen in collaboration between the student, a university faculty member, and the field practicum supervisor.

All of the students in the Grant MacEwan program have security clearances, ranging from basic to enhanced, depending upon the requirements of the field practicum. The security clearance is a requirement for entry into the program and is renewed prior to students entering their field placements.

### Mount Royal University

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MRU has a very active field practicum program and a coordinator who oversees the program. The practicum coordinator helps facilitate the locating of practicum placements, or the students help identify where they would like to be placed. There is potential for field practicum students to be involved in projects in the research centre as well as in police services. Students at

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MRU can either opt for the practicum, or they can opt for the honors stream, for which they have to meet the minimum 3.25 cumulative grade point average criteria. These students may apply for the honors stream and usually work in the research lab.

### Developing a Standardized Protocol for Undergraduate Field Practicums

At present, there are a variety of field practicum programs and co-op placements offered to undergraduate students by the colleges and universities. There is also considerable variation in the qualifications for students, the process by which students are selected for placements, and the criteria by which students are assessed. The POR would provide an opportunity to bring a degree of standardization to the protocols surrounding the placement of students in Alberta police services and the provincial government. This would include identifying mandatory courses, including courses in professional ethics and interpersonal skills, that students must complete prior to being eligible for a field practicum.

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## Chapter 8. Requirements and Expectations of a Program of Research

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The following is a discussion of the requirements and expectations that will have to be addressed as the plan to develop a university-led POR moves forward.

### Requirements of a Program of Research

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The college/university faculty and provincial government personnel interviewed for this project set out a number of baseline requirements for the successful development of a POR. Among the identified attributes were:

- collaborative;
- inclusive;
- viable and sustainable;
- beneficial to the province, colleges/universities, police, and community; and
- informed by best practices.

More specifically, among the issues that will have to be addressed by the partners include:

### Funding

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There are a variety of funding sources that could be considered, including Public Safety Canada, which has a broad mandate for research on criminal justice by the provincial government, police agencies, the colleges and universities, and private foundations such as the Alberta Law Foundation. It is also likely that faculty members will be able to access additional funding sources for specific research projects from the provincial and federal governments, the Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC), private foundations, and from the private sector.

### Creating a Framework for Collaboration

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The importance of developing collaborative partnerships was also highlighted. The Dean of Business and Industry Careers at Norquest College, Ms. Norma Schneider, stated that:

*Collaboration, to me, means that there has to be a benefit to both parties, there has to be something that is produced that is better than what could have been produced by either party on their own.*

Yvon Dandurand of the University of the Fraser Valley observed that, in his experience,

*There is high value in a model where police service personnel work with college/university-based faculty on projects. Police officers can assist the*

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*researchers in understanding and interpreting the data... The officers bring a different set of eyes.*

The Director of the Department of Justice Studies at MRU noted the importance of collaboration and cooperation:

*The idea is that we would provide a service to the agency, and the agency would provide a vehicle for us, and we would work together in concert toward a common outcome. Also, that partnership would allow the necessary degree of autonomy, and also be ethical and objective.*

Ms. Dorothy Jacques, Coordinator of Human Service careers at Norquest College, offered a broader perspective on the term “collaboration”:

*Norquest College has always been interested in collaborative projects. So, the expectation would be true collaboration. To be true to this kind of research, we would need to include not just the police agencies, but also the nongovernmental agencies, and businesses that are directly affected. So, trying to bring together a group that could do the work, so that the product is something that we could share, and also reflective of the total community.*

The Acting Manager of the Solicitor General Research, Policy, and Planning Unit cautioned, “If we have the wrong type of partnerships, or the expertise is not what was needed, the whole thing will crumble.”

## Trust

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Any POR will require the development of collaborative relationships based on trust. As one faculty member stated:

*Trust among the parties is essential—the notion that the various partners are working not just in their own interest, but for the collective interest as well. This relates to the requirement that there be transparency in the agreements, partnerships, and in specific projects. It is natural that there will be competition among the colleges/universities with respect to securing funding within the framework of the program of research. However, for the program to have a chance of success, efforts must be made for the common good and in pursuit of the goals and objectives of the program.*

Of course, one aspect of developing trust is that faculty at the colleges and universities must *earn* the trust of police services. As the Dean of Business and Industry Careers at Norquest College, Ms. Norma Schneider, noted with respect to working with the police:

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*In terms of the institution, we need to understand what it means to work with the RCMP, and the RCMP need to understand what it means to work with an educational institution. Each organization has different norms, etc.*

Another faculty member commented, “Openness and mutual trust is the critical ingredient for success, which obviously has been achieved in British Columbia.”

### Inclusivity

The framework that is developed for the POR should ensure that faculty and students of the participating colleges and universities have access to, and benefit from, participation in the various components of the program.

### Transparency

It is important that, in the creation and operation of the POR, there be transparency in the decision-making process. As Yvon Dandurand stated, “Transparency is also very important, and needed. The working group of college/university-based faculty, senior police personnel, and provincial government officials cannot be a ‘closed club.’ It must be public.”

### Clear Expectations

There must be, among the stakeholder groups, a shared vision for the POR as well as clearly-stated expectations surrounding the involvement of faculty and students, police services, and the provincial government (see discussion below).

### Respect for Academic Freedom

The concern over the principle of academic freedom is reflected in the following comments from university faculty:

- *Police services must understand the meaning of this concept and how it applies to research. This does not preclude developing protocols to protect the integrity of the data and to ensure anonymity of data in published materials;*
- *It is important that the police recognize and respect academic freedom of the universities;*
- *They [the police] would need to appreciate that, in academia, the collaborative research arrangement would have to allow for a certain degree of latitude. They can't just shop out things, and everything would remain confidential;*
- *Sometimes the police and academics see things differently. So, the police would have to be open to that as well;*
- *There is a delicate balance that must be maintained between academic freedom and the interest of the police service in being involved in the project and, potentially, controlling the dissemination of research findings.*

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More than one respondent noted that the “culture” of the university is different than the “culture” of a police service, one administrator from Norquest College stating that it was important to “understand the differences between the two cultures—education and policing—and the effects.” For example, policing is more regimented/hierarchical. Another university faculty member commented on the importance of the police and universities understanding the frameworks within which each sector worked:

*Universities work with different prerequisites, such as academic freedom, and research ethics, than police services... Researchers also need to understand the contingencies within which the police work, such as data security. So, both sides need to develop a relationship of trust and respect—and a nice synergy develops out of it.*

Similarly, Dr. Rob Wood, Associate Professor in the Department of Sociology at the University of Lethbridge, stated:

*When any organization has a vested interest in the research institute, sometimes, the research can become very directed, and that can be a challenge for academics—to be subjected to directed research initiatives. As well, the challenges of collaborating with police services that may not have had exposure to university-based researchers, or a tradition of research in their agency.*

Prior agreement would have to be reached on a number of issues, including the extent to which police services can “interfere” in the publication of research findings and, in which situations (e.g., sensitive data) the police could “vet” research findings.

#### Ensuring the Integrity of the Police Data

A key issue that will have to be addressed in developing the POR is how to make police data widely accessible, while at the same time ensuring that security is maintained. To develop a model that extends the availability of opportunities to a broader range of faculty and students will present a challenge, but one that is not insurmountable.

#### Developing the Capacity for Research to Inform Police Policy and Practice

As one faculty member stated, “The research should inform practice, not just justify practice.” The Acting Manager of the Solicitor General Research, Policy, and Planning Unit agreed, noting:

*It is important that the initiative produce ongoing results that can be used to inform policy and practice. This will establish the legitimacy of the program and make it an indispensable component of the delivery of policing services in Alberta.*

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*A mix of smaller, short-term projects and larger, longer-term projects would be beneficial to this effort.*

The POR would increase the capacity for research among all of the partners. With respect to police agencies, Dr. Erin Gibbs Van Brunschot of the University of Calgary stated: “There is often, among police services, a lack of time and resources for them to undertake this [research] themselves. Research units in police services can only be so big, so that’s where we can assist.”

Yvon Dandurand of the University of the Fraser Valley stated, “The police cannot be selective about which data are published... The police need to know that this venture is not just to serve the police.” He further offered:

*Police agencies have a number of options with respect to how they are informed by their data: (1) develop an analytical capacity within the police service; (2) hire outside consultants; or, (3) enter into collaborative partnerships with one or more universities. The ideal model would be a mix of all three options.*

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### Securing “Buy In” from the Police Services

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“Buy in” for a POR must be secured not only from senior police management, but also from the operational level as well. As one faculty member stated:

*You may get the philosophical view from the Chief, ‘This is good, we are going to do this.’ They understand, they know what the goals are. But, when that filters down to the rank-and-file—to the staff sergeants and the sergeants and the constables, they haven’t been part of that initial process—they are simply told through the chain of command: ‘Go do this.’ And, there is resistance. So, it has been a struggle sometimes to work with the police agencies because of that resistance to share information, to give up information—there is a trust issue. It is the ‘me against them’ mentality.*

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### Ensuring Compliance with University Research and Ethics Policies

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The POR must be developed with a recognition that colleges and universities have policies related to the conduct of research and a consideration of ethics.

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### Ensuring Continuity and Sustainability

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A POR can only provide benefits to the stakeholder groups if procedures can be put into place to ensure continuity and sustainability. Dr. Rob Wood of the University of Lethbridge, stated:

*There are different ways of sustaining a research program—both from the aspect of resources, time, effort, and energy, but it is the conceptual level that sustains the research program. For the program to be sustainable, it has to be guided by*



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*the right kinds of concepts—asking the right sorts of questions, addressing the right sorts of issues, being attuned to the issues as they emerge, and analyzing the appropriate data accordingly, to answer those questions.*

There are a number of dimensions to the issue of continuity and sustainability, including leadership and commitment in the police services, colleges, universities, and the provincial government. In the words of one university faculty member:

*I think a big part of doing this is that you need somebody who understands how organizations work, and that is going to be very important to the success of it—at least the long-term success. I think that, a lot of these things are implemented and sustained initially through... charismatic efforts... people with an intense interest in these things. But, eventually, it needs to have its own self-sustaining momentum, so, you need formal ties, formal procedures, formal bridges, etc.*

There was an identified need for all of the partners to identify a “point” person who will serve as the liaison between the college/university/agency and the program. This will ensure continuity in organizational commitment and participation.

An important consideration is that the POR should not become too closely identified with specific police leaders, college and university faculty, and provincial officials. One university faculty member interviewed for the project raised the following question in reflecting on the arrangements between RCMP E Division and the Research Chairs/labs in British Columbia:

*I would be curious to see how they [the police] feel these models will evolve over time. What happens when the [current Research Chairs] retire? Will the directorship change? If you do set something up like this, what are the commitments of the partners?*

The POR must have a “critical mass” of faculty and police involvement to survive retirements, RCMP transfers, and the changing research interests/needs of the partners.

### Balancing the Interests of the Stakeholders

There was general agreement that any program of research must provide benefits for all of the parties. The Acting Manager of the Research, Policy, and Planning Unit noted that one objective of the program,

*should be to benefit all of the police services in the province, to the greatest extent possible. In particular, the smaller municipal police services in Camrose, Taber, and Lacombe that do not have the capacity to conduct research would benefit*

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*from a POR. It may also be possible to involve these smaller departments in projects.*

As well, Dr. George Pavlich, Associate Vice President (Research) and Professor of Law and Sociology at the University of Alberta stated, “The biggest challenge is trying to ensure that the interests of both organizations are being met. So, it will be important to find an area of common ground.”

### Establishing a Standardized Research Protocol

It will be necessary to create a protocol for college/university-based researchers who wish to gain access to police data that are held in the police service. Alberta police services may have protocols in place, in which case an effort could be made to harmonize existing policies.

### Roles and Relationships

In creating the agreement for a POR, a key question, identified by the Acting Manager of Research, Policy, and Planning in the Solicitor General Ministry is: “Who has access to what and when, and who drives it?”

### Expectations of a POR

College and university faculty interviewed for the project, as well as provincial personnel, offered a number of expectations that would be associated with their involvement in developing a POR. Expectations centered on cost-effectiveness, ensuring that the program provided a net benefit to the participants, including students, and the extent to which the program fit within the mandate and mission of the university, police, and provincial government.

The Acting Manager indicated that the Ministry would expect to be involved in the initiative and that, while the province’s current fiscal situation would present a challenge with respect to funding, this would not preclude beginning work on the initiative. Additional expectations mentioned by the interviewees concerned maintaining the integrity of the research, and publication/dissemination of the research findings.

### Maintaining the Integrity of the Research

As Ms. Norma Schneider, a Dean at Norquest College, stated:

*Part of it is our belief in the integrity of the research. There may be times when the police may resist the method by which we propose to get the research done [the research design]—it may not be the way that they would like to see it happen. But, common ground should be found and agreed upon.*

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## Publication and Dissemination of Research Findings

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There was support for the development of protocols that would ensure that, whenever possible (and, depending upon the specific topic of the research), the findings from the projects completed within the framework of the POR be published and widely disseminated, not only to police services, but also to the community. As Mike Straiton, Instructor in the Health and Human Service Careers program at Norquest College, stated:

*Any data/research projects produced in Alberta should be distributed to everyone [all the police services], because it would assist everyone. That would be my number one expectation—sharing the data across the board, like a ‘full disclosure package.’ The reports should not just go to the agency for whom the research was done for specifically, unless the research is specific to a specific force or area.*

## Next Steps

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The stakeholders in Alberta will determine the framework and process that will be created to facilitate the development of a university-led program of research. Dialogue among the colleges, universities, police services, and the provincial government can result in the development of a comprehensive framework within which the plan to develop a university-led program of research can be implemented.

Deputy Commissioner Gary Bass, who was instrumental in establishing the RCMP Research Chairs and the research labs at SFU and UFV, offered a number of recommendations to guide these discussions which the parties may find helpful, going forward:

- Try to identify the institutions that have good working relationships with the police or wish to develop such relationships;
- Keep it simple in terms of the rulebook and stress academic independence;
- Consider using the BC MOU as a guide for developing the MOU in Alberta;
- Try to create the capacity to conduct both tactical/operational and strategic research;
- Identify a person with at least an MA who is research-literate and who can serve as the link between the universities and the police service;
- If university-based research labs are created, ensure that relationships are developed between the research lab and other universities;
- Link the program at as high of a level as possible in the police organizations and not to a person in a junior level position to ensure that there is good cooperation and access;
- Consider the extent to which K Division and other police services can leverage off of RCMP E Division and the research labs in B.C., as there is no need to

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replicate this model in every province, and it would save Alberta money to utilize the labs in B.C.; and

- Avoid duplication of research efforts whenever possible.

Decisions on how to proceed with exploring the potential for establishing a university-led program of research will be made by the various stakeholders. A number of suggestions regarding a process for moving forward follow below.

### Convene a POR Workshop

This workshop would provide an opportunity for the various parties to come together to discuss a general framework for a POR. This document was designed to provide a foundation for the initial discussions among the stakeholders, although it is likely that not all of the issues that would surround the development of a POR in Alberta have been identified. The workshop would be designed to sketch out a blueprint for moving forward and to establish a communication network.

### Establish a Steering Committee

One of the initiatives that may emerge from the workshop discussions would be the creation of a Steering Committee that would be composed of senior representatives from the colleges, universities, police services, and the provincial government. Among the tasks of the Steering Committee would be to address the institutional capacities that could contribute to the POR. The Steering Committee would begin to consider the potential components of a POR and the requirements and expectations of a POR, some of which have been identified in this report. The Steering Committee would be the primary champion of the POR.

### Establish a Working Committee

The Working Committee, composed of representatives from the stakeholders, would work to operationalize the components of the POR as set out in the framework developed by the Steering Committee. This would include:

- developing the POR and its various components;
- exploring the potential for college/university-based research labs;
- identifying potential funding sources for the components of the POR including, potentially, university-based research labs, Research Chair positions, a Visiting Police Scholar program, as well as graduate student research;
- preparing a comprehensive proposal that can be used to identify revenue sources from the provincial government, foundations, police services, and the colleges/universities; and
- creating a process by which police services can identify research needs.

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### Creating Topical Sub-Committees

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Consideration might be given to creating a number of sub-committees that would focus on specific components of the POR. This might include developing standardized protocols for undergraduate field practicums in police services, and the exploration of the potential for creating a Visiting Police Scholar program. The sub-committee on field practicums, for example, might focus on:

- identifying existing field practice practicum positions as well as new placement possibilities, in conjunction with police services and the provincial government;
- standardizing the qualifications required of undergraduate field practicum students and establishing a standard protocol for student selection and placement; and
- convening a workshop of college and university field practicum coordinators to discuss field practicum program requirements and operations.

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## Chapter 9. Concluding Remarks

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A university-led POR in Alberta—developed as a partnership involving the provincial government, police services, colleges, and universities—has the potential to enhance the delivery of policing services in Alberta, contribute to public safety, and create a world-class research program that would make a major contribution to the published literature on policing. Whether this potential is realized, and maximum benefit is gained from the arrangement, will depend upon a number of factors, including the relationships that are established between the stakeholders and the development and implementation of a shared vision. A number of faculty members identified the importance of police services having the “political will” to “buy in” to a program of research. Conversely, it is important that the colleges and universities understand that the development of mutually-beneficial relationships—based on trust, transparency, and open communication—will require an equal effort on their part.

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## **Appendix A. Persons Interviewed for the Project**

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### **ALBERTA**

#### **Alberta Solicitor General**

##### **Edmonton, Alberta**

Ms. Rachel Melnychuk, Acting Manager, Research, Policy, & Planning Unit

Dr. Curtis Clarke, Director, Solicitor General Staff College

#### **Athabasca University**

##### **Calgary, Alberta**

Dr. Marc Nesca, Chair & Associate Professor, Criminal Justice Program, and

Adjunct Assistant Professor, Clinical Psychology, University of Calgary, and

Consultant in Forensic and Neuropsychology

#### **Grant MacEwan University**

##### **Edmonton, Alberta**

Mr. David Patterson, Chair, Police & Investigations Program

Ms. Sharon Hobden, Associate Dean, Faculty of Health & Community Studies

Dr. Shahram Manouchehri, Associate Dean, Faculty of Arts & Science

Dr. Michael Gulayets, Faculty Member, Department of Sociology

#### **Lethbridge College**

##### **Lethbridge, Alberta**

Mr. Martin Thomsen, Chair, School of Justice Studies

Ms. Jane Friesen, Dean, Health, Justice & Human Services

#### **Mount Royal University**

##### **Calgary, Alberta**

Dr. John Winterdyk, Director, Department of Justice Studies

Dr. Chad London, Associate Dean, Faculty of Health & Community Studies

Dr. Trevor Davis, Acting Vice President (Research)

#### **University of Alberta**

##### **Edmonton, Alberta**

Dr. George Pavlich, Associate Vice President (Research), Professor of Law & Sociology

#### **University of Calgary**



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**Calgary, Alberta**

Dr. Erin Gibbs Van Brunschot, Vice Dean, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, and Professor of Sociology

**University of Lethbridge**

**Lethbridge, Alberta**

Dr. Rob Wood, Associate Professor, Department of Sociology

**Norquest College**

**Edmonton, Alberta**

Mr. James Cardinal, Team Lead/Instructor, Health & Human Service Careers

Mr. Mike Straiton, Instructor, Health & Human Service Careers

Ms. Dorothy Jacques, Coordinator, Human Service Careers

Ms. Norma Schneider, Dean, Business & Industry Careers

**BRITISH COLUMBIA**

**RCMP E Division**

Gary Bass

Deputy Commissioner, West

Vancouver

**Simon Fraser University**

**Burnaby, BC**

Dr. Patricia Brantingham, RCMP Research Chair in Computational Criminology

**University of the Fraser Valley**

**Abbotsford**

Dr. Darryl Plecas, Professor, RCMP Chair in Crime Reduction, School of Criminology & Criminal Justice

Mr. Yvon Dandurand, Associate Vice President, Research & Graduate Studies

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## Appendix B. Informed Consent Form

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**Principal Investigator:** Dr. Curt T. Griffiths, Private Independent Contract Research Consultant, Surrey, BC, Canada.

**Interviewer:** Ms. Tamie H. Fennig, Ph.D. Candidate, Private Independent Contract Research Consultant, Port Moody, BC, Canada.

**Title of the Research Study:** “A University-Led Program of Research in Alberta: Potential Partnerships and a Framework for University–Police Collaboration.”

**Support:** This study is being conducted privately by the principal investigator in response to a “Request for Proposals” posted by RCMP K Division.

**Introduction:** You are invited to participate in the principal investigator’s study designed to explore the possibility of establishing a collaborative Police–University Research Program for RCMP K Division at a post-secondary institution in Alberta.

**Study Background:** The principal investigator is conducting a multi-faceted study for RCMP K Division on the subject of police data analysis capacities. One component of this study explores the possible development of a collaborative Police–University Research Program in RCMP K Division. Accordingly, this study is examining the various Police–University collaboration models in British Columbia, to determine the best practices and “lessons learned,” and to offer RCMP K Division guidance with respect to the possible establishment of a Research Program in Alberta. A particular focus of the investigation will be a determination of the interest/willingness and capacity of Alberta colleges and universities to: (1) enter into collaborative partnerships with RCMP K Division, and (2) establish Research Chairs/labs. This analysis provides the opportunity to develop a unique program that will enhance the capacities of RCMP K Division, while forging long-term relationships with colleges and universities.

**Research Goals/Objectives:** To conduct descriptive research into the best practices and “lessons learned” of established collaborative Police–University Research Programs, and to determine the feasibility of establishing a new Police–University Research Program in Alberta.

**Possible Implications for Individuals and Communities:** The findings of this study will help RCMP K Division determine whether a Police–University Research Program should be established in Alberta, and how/where such a research program could be established.

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**What is Required of Research Participants:** Research participants will each participate in an in-depth personal interview with the interviewer that will last for about two hours. A list of interview questions will guide the interview. For interviews conducted in BC: the interview questions will focus on the precursors to the establishment of the Police–University Research Program, best practices, lessons learned, and recommendations. For interviews conducted in Alberta: the interview questions will focus on the interest/willingness and capacity of the post-secondary institution with respect to entering into a collaborative research partnership with RCMP K Division.

**Statement of Voluntary Participation:** Participation in this study is voluntary.

**Rights of Refusal:** Participants may refuse to answer any question(s) and/or end the interview (“withdraw”) at any time for any reason, without any prejudice or negative consequences, by simply informing the interviewer. If you withdraw from the study, your interview data will be destroyed immediately.

**Risks:** There are no foreseeable risks of this study (e.g., physical stress, physical harm, psychological stress) to research participants, third parties, or society.

**Benefits:** The research findings may help RCMP K Division determine whether they should establish a collaborative Police–University Research Program in Alberta, and the best ways of going about such a venture.

**Statement of Anonymity/Confidentiality:** This is a multi-site case study; the report will list the names of the institutions/agencies/research programs/Research Chairs/police officials under study, so that RCMP K Division may become aware of the Police–University Research Programs in existence, best practices, lessons learned, recommendations, and the potential sites of a future research program in RCMP K Division. **Accordingly, the identity of the research participants, along with their interview responses, will not be anonymous.**

**Data Security:** The data will exist in a maximum of two formats to ensure they are preserved in their truest form for the purpose of producing typed interview transcripts for analysis. Specifically, the data will first take the form of handwritten notes on paper. If participants agree to have their interview taped, a digital voice file will also be created.

The interviewer will produce a **typed interview transcript** for each interview using the handwritten notes and digital voice file (if applicable). Upon production of each typed interview

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transcript, the interviewer will destroy the corresponding handwritten notes and digital voice file by shredding and/or digital erasure, as appropriate.

An electronic copy of each typed interview transcript will be given to the principal investigator for analysis. Back-up copies of each electronic file will be maintained by the interviewer. The data will be maintained securely in locked and private facilities, namely the principal investigator's and the interviewer's respective personal residences in British Columbia. Only the principal investigator and the interviewer will have access to the data.

The typed interview transcripts will be produced in both hardcopy and softcopy formats to facilitate qualitative analysis by the principal investigator. No other soft or hard copies of the raw data will be made. The raw data will be destroyed, by way of shredding and/or digital erasure, as appropriate, seven years after the interview.

**Funding:** This research is being funded by RCMP K Division.

**Contact Information:**

<b>Principal Investigator</b>	<b>Interviewer</b>
Dr. Curt T. Griffiths, Professor School of Criminology Simon Fraser University 8888 University Drive Burnaby, BC, Canada V5A 1S6 griffith@sfu.ca +1.778.782.4158	Tamie H. Fennig, Ph.D. Candidate School of Criminology Simon Fraser University 8888 University Drive Burnaby, BC, Canada V5A 1S6 thfennig@sfu.ca

**Concerns or Complaints:** Any concerns or complaints about this research may be directed to the principal investigator: Dr. Curt T. Griffiths.

**Final Report:** The final report is being prepared for RCMP K Division. It is **unknown** whether the final report will be kept confidential by RCMP K Division; the final report may be distributed among RCMP officials in K Division, and members of Alberta's provincial government, as the client deems necessary.

**Research Participant Consent:** By signing below, you indicate that you understand the nature of this research study, and that you agree to participate voluntarily.

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Name of the Research Participant (*Please print*): \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of the Research Participant: \_\_\_\_\_

Place: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of the Interviewer: \_\_\_\_\_

*Thank you very much for agreeing to participate in this study.*

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## **Appendix C. Vancouver Police Department Research Protocol**

### **Research with the VPD**

As an organization, the Vancouver Police Department (VPD) appreciates the value of research for policy, planning and strategic operations, and how it can contribute to best practices in the policing realm. In support of that strategic goal, the VPD is continually involved in numerous internal research projects. The VPD also supports the work of academics and graduate students from a variety of universities across North America by providing access to data and other information sources.

### **Submit a Proposal**

Researchers from an accredited college or university wishing to access VPD data must provide a written proposal to the office of the Chief Constable for approval (see [Research Requests – Information Management](#) (PDF) for research policy information).

The proposal should include the following information:

- title of the study
- copies of ethics approval from any appropriate Review Boards
- any consent forms that will be used (if applicable)
- goal of the study
- research methodology
- details of data requested
- researcher(s) contact information (title/position, phone, fax, email and address)
- supervisor(s) contact information (if applicable)
- timeline of study/expected completion date
- type of final product

Those interested in pursuing research with the VPD should submit their proposal and an [Application for Research](#) (PDF) form to the Office of the Chief Constable.

### **Proposal Assessment**

The VPD will assess the proposal for relevance and feasibility in terms of privacy issues. In complicated cases, formal approval for the research may take between six months to one year. This is due to the necessity of conducting privacy and legal risk assessments in accordance with the *Freedom of Information Act*. Depending on the nature of the information requested,

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researchers may require an enhanced reliability security clearance in order to access particular information from VPD. This process, if required, often takes several months to complete.

If approved, the researcher is expected to provide bound copies of the research paper to the VPD's Planning, Research and Audit section upon completion. Furthermore, if the report (in any form) is to be released publicly, the researcher agrees to provide the VPD with a copy of the report 48 hours prior to such release, as well as the location and date of the release. This is intended only to allow the VPD adequate time to review the results and prepare comments if necessary. The VPD would not seek to modify the research in any way.

All research projects that are approved will require the researcher(s) to sign a confidentiality agreement. For more information, please contact \_\_\_\_\_, Research and Policy Advisor.

<http://vancouver.ca/police/organization/planning-research-audit/index.html>

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**Appendix D. Memorandum of Understanding Between SFU  
and 'E' Division Relating to Research Chair Positions in the  
School of Criminology and Operation of the ICURS Lab**

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## Appendix E. List of ICURS Laboratory Publications (as of January 2010)

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## **Appendix F. List of CCJR Publications (September 01, 2005 – March 31, 2010)**

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