

YUKON POLICE COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT 2021-22

2021-22 Yukon Police Council members

- **Elodie Dulac**
Haines Junction
- **Maureen Johnstone**
Whitehorse
- **Tracy MacPherson**
Whitehorse
- **Simon Nagano**
Dawson City
- **Rob Schneider**
Marsh Lake
- **Dr. Janet Welch**
Whitehorse
- **John Phelps, Chair**
Whitehorse

In December 2021, the Council said farewell to Dr. Janet Welch. We wish her the best in her future endeavours.

Message from the Chair

Throughout the year, the Yukon Police Council (YPC or the Council) recognized growth in how the RCMP deliver services to Yukoners and how members have adapted to continue to serve communities during the COVID-19 pandemic. Their dedication to keeping Yukoners safe has not gone unnoticed. The RCMP's quarterly reporting is showing how they are addressing the policing priorities from the Minister of Justice and the Council is keen to see the progress in the upcoming year. The 2020 Community Perceptions of the RCMP survey results continue to inform the Council and to support the recommendations that are made to the Minister of Justice.

The Council was able to resume travelling throughout the Yukon to hear directly from communities. In October 2021, we travelled to Faro and Ross River. Two weeks later, on October 26, 2021, we learned of the shootings that occurred in Faro. Our thoughts and condolences are with all community members who continue to grapple with the grief and trauma of the tragic events of that day.

John Phelps
Chair, Yukon Police Council



Your Community Voice
Yukon Police Council

MANDATE

The Yukon Police Council provides a formal structure and ongoing mechanism for community members to have input into the policing services they receive.

The focus is to promote dialogue in order to foster positive relationships between Yukon citizens, the Yukon RCMP (“M” Division) and the Department of Justice. The Minister of Justice identifies policing priorities for the Yukon RCMP on a yearly basis. These are based on the work provided by the Yukon Police Council and the Department of Justice.

YEAR IN REVIEW

This year, the Council had the opportunity to meet with a variety of stakeholders to hear perspectives relating to youth, women, the LGBTQ2S+ population and others. The information that was shared with the Council supports the recommendations made to the Minister of Justice as she prepared the policing priorities for 2022–23. These recommendations are important, as they are formed based on the valued feedback received from Yukoners.

The Minister of Justice's 2022–23 Policing Priorities to “M” Division can be found at: yukon.ca/en/2022-23-policing-priorities-letter-minister-justice-rcmp

Stakeholder engagements

March 2021

Yukon Women's Coalition (YWC) – The Council heard that the YWC and the RCMP are working together on several initiatives and are building a collaborative relationship. A main focus of the YWC is to address the high levels of sexualized violence in the Yukon, which is largely unreported. The YWC is disappointed that the Yukon Advocate Case Review was suspended and by the lack of transparency and engagement surrounding the RCMP's Sexual Assault Investigation Review Committee.

May 2021

Youth Achievement Centre (YAC) – Feedback received indicated there are ample opportunities for RCMP engagement in programming with youth to support positive relationships and indicated there is always room for improvement. The RCMP often make referrals to YAC for community service work and restorative justice.

- More information regarding YAC can be found at: yukon.ca/yac

Integrated Restorative Justice Unit – The Council received an update on the services currently provided, and how the program will meet the needs of youth and adults both pre- and post-charge in collaboration with the RCMP.

- For more information about this program, please contact: RestorativeJustice@yukon.ca

Yukon First Nation Education Directorate (YFNED) – Feedback from the YFNED indicated that First Nations, and particularly youth, are fearful of the RCMP, and that uniformed officers may not be welcome in schools. First Nation students' concerns centered around requiring support to navigate court systems; providing support for victims of violence; addressing drugs and serious crimes; and having the RCMP learn and use restorative practices, including participation in a lateral kindness activity.

- More information about YFNED can be found at: yfned.ca



August 2021

Connective (previously John Howard Society Pacific) – The Council heard that there is a positive working relationship with the RCMP. Connective and the RCMP are actively communicating when there are concerns.

- More information regarding Connective’s programs and services can be found at: connective.ca

Queer Yukon Society – The Council received a presentation regarding the history of the interactions between the LGBTQ2S+ community and the RCMP, in both Canada and the Yukon, to provide context to the current relationship between the community and the RCMP. Due to historical and present-day incidents between the RCMP and the LGBTQ2S+ community in the Yukon there appears to be a strained relationship. It is hoped that through education and genuine conversation efforts can be made toward repairing this relationship.

- More information about Queer Yukon Society can be found at: queryukon.com

Emergency Medical Services (EMS), City of Whitehorse Protective and Bylaw Services

– Representatives from these service providers participated in a panel discussion. There was positive feedback received regarding interactions with the RCMP. One area noted for improvement centred on increasing effective communication, particularly during an incident and on-scene operations. The panel agreed that interagency chief meetings would be beneficial and need to be reinstated. The relationship with the RCMP has improved substantially in recent years.

- More information regarding EMS can be found at: yukon.ca/en/employment/apply-job/learn-about-emergency-medical-services
- More information regarding Protective Services can be found at: whitehorse.ca/departments/fire-department
- More information regarding Bylaw Services can be found at: whitehorse.ca/departments/bylaw-services/contact-bylaw-services

Mayor, City of Whitehorse – Mayor Dan Curtis presented the City of Whitehorse’s perspective and reported a good working relationship with the RCMP. Areas for improvement included a need for increased traffic and taxi safety, as well as the lack of relationship between the City of Whitehorse and the Department of Justice.

- More information regarding the City of Whitehorse, Mayor and Council, can be found at: www.whitehorse.ca/city-council/mayor-and-council

October 2021

Faro – The Council met with Mayor and Council of Faro, held a community hall and met with local EMS and the community coroner. During this visit, the Council heard that the community is seeking increased RCMP presence and coverage, particularly as the population is growing due to the influx of federal funding to remediate the mine. There are ongoing concerns relating to domestic violence, drug trafficking and a lack of communication and engagement between the RCMP and the community.

- More information regarding the Town of Faro can be found at: faro.ca

Ross River – The Council met with Chief and Council of Ross River Dena Council, staff from the school, the Hope Centre, EMS, social services, community members and the community justice worker, and held a community lunch. Engagements in Ross River highlighted concerns that include addressing illicit drugs and bootlegging; improving accessibility and visibility of the RCMP; and requiring members to participate more fully in community activities and events. These needs have been communicated to RCMP “M” Division.

- More information on the Ross River Dena Council and the community of Ross River can be found at: rossriverdenacouncil.com

December 2021

“M” Division’s Community Policing Pilot Project – Last year, the Council recommended reinstating a community liaison, which was realized through this pilot project. The Council has received a tremendous amount of positive feedback regarding the effectiveness of this pilot and celebrates this as a successful community policing story. This pilot project brings the RCMP into positive and proactive contact with the community, with a focus on youth.

Collaboration with Yukon’s RCMP

The Council continues to meet regularly with RCMP’s “M” Division to receive updates on how members are working toward meeting the annual policing priorities, including new and innovative approaches, successes and areas for improvement. These meetings also provide an opportunity for the Council to provide feedback to the RCMP about what stakeholders and community members are sharing regarding their relationships with law enforcement.



LOOKING AHEAD

The Council looks forward to continuing to receive feedback from Yukoners on policing services in the territory. Ongoing discussions with the RCMP to determine how they are meeting the Minister's policing priorities contribute to a collaborative approach to addressing the serious issues and valid concerns that exist. The Council remains committed to promoting dialogue between Yukon citizens, the Yukon RCMP and the Department of Justice, in service of enhancing the perceived level of trust of community members in the RCMP.



Sharing Common Ground

In 2010, *Sharing Common Ground: Review of Yukon's Police Force* was completed and resulted in 33 recommendations relating to justice and policing in the Yukon. The formation of the Yukon Police Council is one of the many recommendations of the original report. Inspire Reconciliation Potential consultants have been contracted to conduct a final review of implementation. The Council, and many other Yukon organizations, will engage and participate in this process to determine if the recommendations were implemented successfully and to identify new and emerging needs.

The Council continues to monitor activities relating to implementing recommendations from *Changing the Story to Upholding Dignity and Justice: Yukon's Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and Two-spirit+ People Strategy*.

Territorial Policing Priorities 2022–23

The Yukon Police Council remains interested in receiving feedback about policing services on an ongoing basis. Feedback must be received by the end of November 2022 to be considered in the development of the policing priorities recommended to the Minister of Justice.



Your Community Voice

Yukon Police Council

**Contact us
through our
secretariat**

☎ 867-456-6758

✉ PO Box 2703 J-10
Whitehorse, YT Y1A 2C6

✉ yukonpolicecouncil@yukon.ca