

From: "PSES.Engagement" <pses.engagement@gov.ab.ca>
Date: January 15, 2024 at 4:08:29 PM MST
To: "PSES.Engagement" <pses.engagement@gov.ab.ca>
Subject: Engagement on improving police governance in Alberta

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello,

The Government of Alberta would like to invite community representatives and stakeholders to share their input into changes to police governance following recent legislative amendments to the *Police Act*. This is a continuation of the government's efforts to modernize policing in the province which began in 2018.

The *Police Amendment Act, 2022* (PAA), which was passed on December 15, 2022, is an important milestone in Alberta's efforts to modernize policing in the province. The PAA was designed to improve police accountability and enhance public confidence by reforming policing practices and strengthening ties to the community. It also responds to a long-standing desire in communities policed by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) to have a more formal role in setting local policing priorities and performance goals through the creation of civilian governance bodies. The government is now in the process of developing regulations to establish these civilian governance bodies, which will include regional and municipal policing committees and a Provincial Police Advisory Board (PABB).

Communities served by the RCMP under the Provincial Police Service Agreement will be represented on the PPAB.

Written submissions

As a community that will be represented by the PPAB, we are inviting you to provide input into the formation of this governance body, including its powers, duties, functions, and composition.

We ask that you submit written responses via [the online questionnaire available through this link](#).

To guide your input, the attached discussion guide outlines the engagement questions and aims to facilitate organizational discussions, offering relevant context for your written submissions. **The deadline for submitting completed questionnaire is March 15, 2024.**

Information sessions

Additionally, the government will hold virtual information sessions with department representatives where there will be an opportunity to ask questions.

Sessions are arranged based on the RCMP district structure. We kindly request stakeholders and communities to register for the session corresponding to the district their community falls under, as indicated on [the district map here](#).

Upon registration, you will receive a link to access the online session.

1. South district – Information session on the Provincial Police Advisory Board
 1. February 2, 2:00-3:30PM
 2. [Register here](#)
2. Central district – Information session on the Provincial Police Advisory Board
 1. February 5, 2:00-3:30PM
 2. [Register here](#)
3. East district – Information session on the Provincial Police Advisory Board
 1. February 6, 10:00-11:30AM
 2. [Register here](#)
4. West district – Information session on the Provincial Police Advisory Board
 1. February 6, 2:00-3:30PM
 2. [Register here](#)

If you have questions, please contact Izabela Witkowska, Director of Engagement, Public Safety and Emergency Services, at PSES.Engagement@gov.ab.ca.

We look forward to your participation in this engagement.

Sincerely,

Public Safety and Emergency Services (PSES) Engagement Team



Engagement on improving police governance

Discussion guide on legislated governance changes in communities served by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) in Alberta

Introduction

The Government of Alberta (GoA) invites stakeholders to inform the development of supporting regulations enabled by *the Police Amendment Act, 2022* (PAA) related to police governance in Alberta.

The PAA mandates the establishment of civilian governance bodies for all communities policed by the RCMP, including regional and municipal policing committees (for communities with a municipal police service agreement) and a provincial police advisory board (PPAB) (for those under the provincial police service agreement). As a next step to the 2022 legislative amendments, the GoA is now developing supporting regulations to clarify the powers, duties, functions, and composition of these new governance bodies, as well as the regional configurations for the regional policing committees. Your input is crucial to help the government gain a comprehensive understanding of the different needs and perspectives of Alberta's diverse communities to develop these regulations.

Input submission

This discussion guide aims to facilitate discussions within your organization by offering pertinent context and assisting in the preparation of written submission. You are invited to provide input through the online questionnaire, which aligns with the questions outlined in this discussion guide.

[To access the online questionnaire, please use this link.](#)

This discussion guide is tailored for communities that fall under the Provincial Police Service Agreement (PPSA) that will be represented by the Provincial Police Advisory Board. The online questionnaire will prompt you to identify your affiliation and automatically direct you to parts of the engagement that are relevant to your community.

Scope

This engagement seeks stakeholder input on establishment of civilian governance bodies, including regional and municipal policing committees and the PPAB in communities policed by the RCMP. This includes the powers, duties, functions, and composition of these new governance bodies, as well as the regional configurations for the regional policing committees.

Overview of *Police Amendment Act, 2022*

Following several years of engagement with stakeholders and the public, the Legislative Assembly passed the PAA in December 2022 to modernize policing in Alberta. The legislation was intended to increase police transparency and enhance public trust to help build safer communities. In addition to other reforms, the legislation created formal civilian governance bodies for all communities policed by the RCMP in Alberta, with the intent for communities to have a role in setting policing priorities and performance goals. Before the amendments, communities did not have this role.

PAA key changes:

- establishes an independent agency, the Police Review Commission, to manage complaints against police and conduct disciplinary proceedings
- mandates the creation of civilian governing bodies for communities policed by the RCMP
- expands the mandate of Alberta Serious Incident Response Team (ASIRT) to investigate cases of serious injury or death and serious and sensitive allegations involving peace officers (for example, Alberta Sheriffs and community peace officers)
- requires police commissions to develop community safety plans and report annually on their progress

- requires police commissions to create diversity and inclusion plans to reflect the communities they serve and better understand their needs
- enables the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Services to set provincial policing priorities to help foster consistency in policing across Alberta
- requires police commissions to create their own policing priorities that consider the provincial priorities and report annually on their progress
- adds 8 guiding principles for Alberta police services to provide a foundation of core beliefs and values
- makes administrative changes to the Law Enforcement Review Board

While some PAA provisions have been proclaimed and are in force, others have not been proclaimed and are not in force yet, including the provisions related to civilian governance bodies.

More information on the PAA can be found on [the Government of Alberta website](#).

Civilian governance bodies

The legislation mandates civilian governance bodies for all communities policed by the RCMP in Alberta, giving them a role in setting policing priorities and performance goals they've never had under the existing governance structure.

Once proclaimed into force, the PAA requires the following governance changes:

- the creation of formal civilian governance bodies in communities policed by the RCMP under Municipal Police Service Agreements (MPSA) that will give these communities a greater role in setting policing priorities and performance goals.
 - Communities with a population of under 15,000 will be represented by regional governance bodies – but will have the option to form their own municipal governance body.
 - Communities with a population over 15,000 that are policed by the RCMP will be required to establish municipal governance bodies.
- the creation of a PPAB that will enable communities served by the RCMP under the Provincial Police Service Agreement (PPSA) to be represented on a provincial board that will make recommendations on province-wide policing priorities.

These governance bodies are generally comprised of community members who are not police officers, and provide guidance and input into policing priorities and performance goals.

These governance bodies are tailored to meet the distinct needs of diverse communities. Regional policing committees for smaller communities will ensure that they can have a say without creating an unreasonable administrative burden on them, while municipal policing committees will help meet the needs of larger communities policed by the RCMP. Communities under the PPSA will be represented by a single provincial board that will make recommendations on province-wide policing priorities.

There are similar governance bodies that are currently in place in Alberta, but the PAA-mandated representation for communities served by the RCMP does not currently exist until the relevant provisions in the PAA are proclaimed. For example, municipal police services are governed by police commissions (i.e. the Edmonton Police Commission is the governance body for the Edmonton Police Service), and a few RCMP-served municipalities in Alberta currently have optional police advisory committees.

Provincial Police Advisory Board

Once implemented, communities served by the RCMP under the PPSA will be represented on a provincial board that will make recommendations on province-wide policing priorities. The provincial board will have one seat designated for a First Nations representative and one seat designated for a representative of Métis communities, as mandated through the legislative amendments.

Powers, duties and functions

The powers, duties and functions of the PPAB are not outlined in the PAA, and will need to be addressed in the new regulations. For example, this could include a more formal role in developing community safety plans.

In comparison, the *Police Act* outlines responsibilities for police commissions. These responsibilities include the allocation of funds that are provided by council, establishing policies providing for efficient and effective policing, issuing instructions as needed to the chief of police, and ensuring the police service has sufficient staffing to carry out their functions.

The PPAB will be subject to the *Alberta Public Agencies Governance Act* (APAGA). APAGA will require the board, once established, to create a Mandate and Roles document that will set out their mandate, roles and responsibilities, and processes.

Community Safety Plans

There is currently no requirement for the PPAB to develop or report on a Community Safety Plan.

In comparison, Section 31 (1) of the *Police Act* requires police commissions to develop a Community Safety Plan in conjunction with the police service that includes a plan for collaboration with community agencies, and to report annually on the implementation of and any updates to the plan.

Community safety plans encourage police to work more closely with civilian partners and put added focus on alternatives to enforcement that target root causes of crime, like addiction treatment, housing and employment supports. The planning process will result in greater coordination between police and civilian partners, helping them identify and close gaps in services for people who need help. Greater collaboration with partners could help prevent crime, while also allowing police to devote more resources toward serious and violent offences.

Policing priorities

While the *Police Act* identifies several parties with a role in setting policing priorities, the responsibilities of the PPAB in setting policing priorities are not outlined in the PAA and may be addressed in the new regulations.

For example, the Minister may set priorities for policing in the province, while municipal police commissions must establish the priorities of their municipal police service, while taking the provincial priorities under consideration.

Discussion questions

- What powers, duties and functions should the PPAB have?
- PPAB should be involved in the creation of a Community Safety Plan.
 - Choose one option: Disagree, Neutral, Agree
 - Why or why not?
- The PPAB should be involved in setting policing priorities.
 - Choose one option: Disagree, Neutral, Agree
 - Why or why not?

Composition of the PPAB

The PAA states that the PPAB will have not more than 15 members, appointed by the Minister in accordance with the regulations, with at minimum one member from a First Nation and one member from a Métis settlement or community.

The composition could include factors such as any other mandated representation and member qualifications.

Discussion questions

- Aside from the requirement for one First Nations and one Métis representative, are there any other specific groups that should have mandated PPAB representation?
- Are there any other considerations the Government could take into account when establishing the PPAB?

Mechanisms for local input

Given the diverse communities that will be represented by the PPAB, it is important to examine mechanisms for community engagement and ways to ensure the board's alignment with the needs of the communities it represents. While formalizing these processes in regulations may not be necessary, input is being gathered to ensure that the regulations can effectively support and align with potential mechanisms.



Discussion questions

- The PPAB should be required to seek feedback from the communities it serves.
 - Choose one option: Disagree, Neutral, Agree
 - Why or why not?
- What requirements could help ensure a consistent feedback loop from the public to inform board activity and police governance?
- What mechanisms for local input could be considered?

Additional input

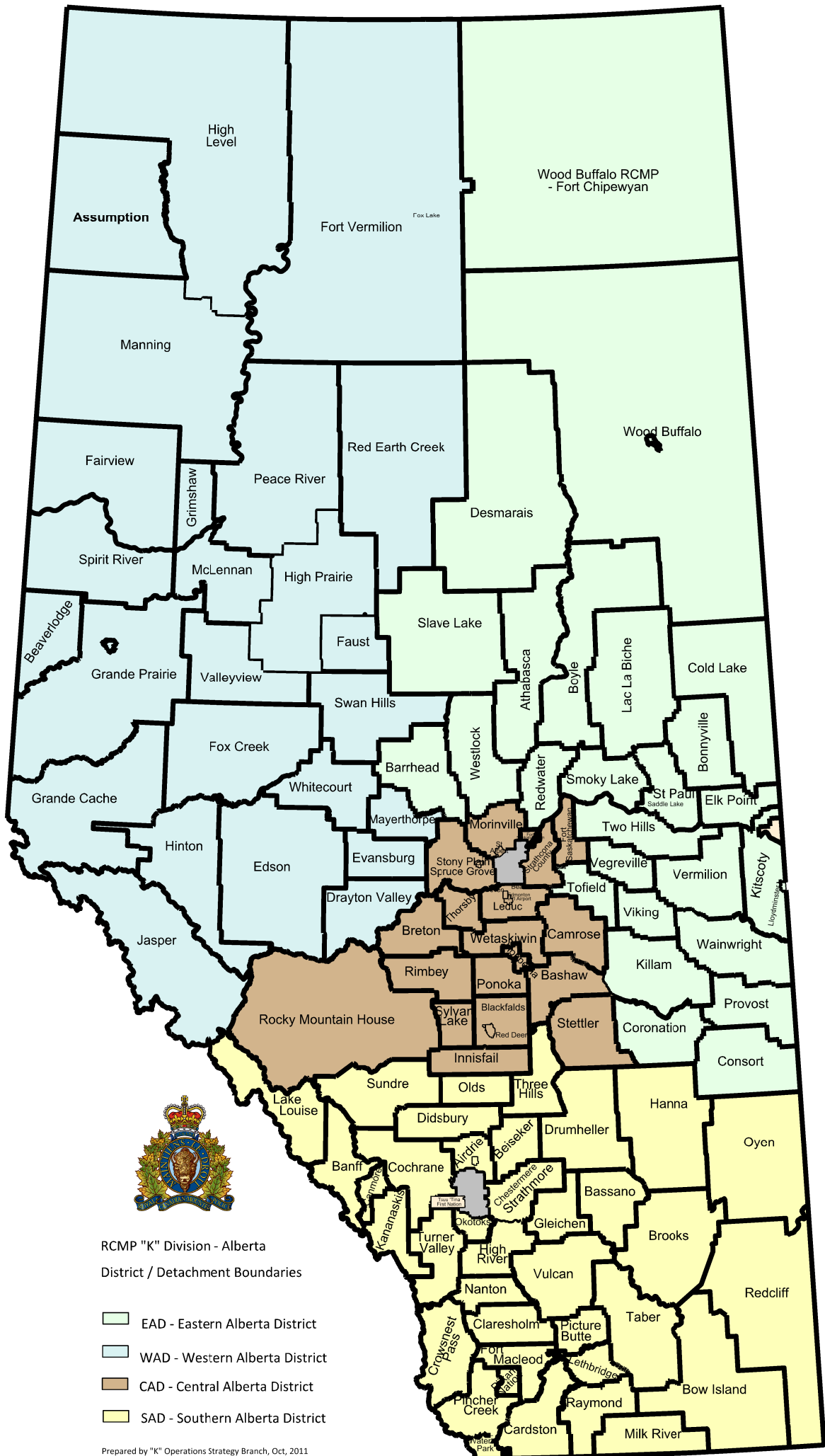
While the questions included in this discussion guide will help inform regulatory development related to police governance in Alberta, stakeholders may also share any other feedback related to these changes that may not have been addressed in the discussion questions.

Next steps

Following stakeholder engagement, the government will develop new regulations in support of the PAA related to police governance in Alberta.

Questions/contact

If you have any questions related to this engagement, please contact the Public Safety and Emergency Services (PSES) Engagement team at: PSES.Engagement@gov.ab.ca.



RCMP "K" Division - Alberta
 District / Detachment Boundaries

- EAD - Eastern Alberta District
- WAD - Western Alberta District
- CAD - Central Alberta District
- SAD - Southern Alberta District