
BRIEFING NOTE

Intergovernmental Working Group on Gun Violence

Issue / Background:

At the request of the Prime Minister, Premier of Ontario and the Mayor of Toronto, an Intergovernmental Working Group on Gun Violence comprised of senior level officials was established in early January.

A meeting of senior officials from the City, Provincial and Federal governments and representatives of the Toronto Police Service, the OPP and the RCMP was held January 4, 2005 to better coordinate the fight against guns and gang violence.

All three orders of government discussed the initiatives underway and identified the need for further collaboration and shared solutions. The importance of listening to, and working with communities, was recognized.

The Intergovernmental Working Group on Gun Violence is co-chaired by Tony Dean (provincial Secretary of the Cabinet), Alex Himelfarb (federal Clerk of the Privy Council) and Shirley Hoy (City of Toronto City Manager).

Key Points:

The three orders of government agreed to:

- build on significant programs focused on local communities, particularly neighbourhoods at risk
- build on joint policing operations
- intensify research in support of potential changes to legal policy
- look for greater effectiveness, and focus on direct and positive outcomes
- working groups for both the community development and policing side to support the current initiatives, including community outreach and engagement

Sub-groups have been established to review current initiatives and discuss potential new strategies in each of the following areas:

- More effective deterrence and enforcement strategies (led by Murray Segal, Deputy Attorney General and Deb Newman, Deputy Minister Community Safety and Correctional Services in collaboration with the 3 levels of Police)
- Crime prevention, community development and community access to government resources (led by Sue Corke, Deputy City Manager, City of Toronto)
- Effective laws and policies to maximize public safety (led by Department of Justice).

The Co-chairs have agreed to meet again next week to receive updates from the respective leads of the sub-groups.

Crime prevention, community development and community access to government resources

Deputy City Manager Sue Corke will chair the sub-group on community development and capacity building (one of three work groups). The purpose of the committee is to mobilize and expedite funding for program priorities, develop strategies for collaboration in priority neighbourhoods and to evaluate the effectiveness of neighbourhood investments. The first meeting of this sub-group occurred January 10, 2006.

The federal government has provided \$124,400 from the Youth Justice Renewal Fund to the City of Toronto for a community-based post charge program, called the Youth Action project in Scarborough.

The following two attachments provide additional information on the City of Toronto's Community Safety Plan:

1. Update on the City of Toronto Community Safety Plan and the Intergovernmental Community Safety Initiatives; and
2. Recently Approved Base Budget and 2006 Proposed Enhancements to Initiatives that Support Community Safety.

More effective deterrence and enforcement strategies

The enforcement side appears to be well organized and resourced. As part of the Premier's recent announcement of \$51 million to help police and prosecutors get guns and gangs off the street it is expected that the creation of an Operations Centre for the Guns and Gangs Task Force will ensure integration of policing at all levels.

The Province released \$5 million to Toronto Police Services to implement intervention and anti-violence strategies and to fund a more immediate deployment/hiring of police officers to back fill rapid response teams. These funds could be used for callbacks to back-fill these deployed officers at the divisional level.

The provincial announcement also covered additional Crown Attorneys, including 10 who will provide dedicated expert advice to the Toronto Police Service, and the creation of major crime courts for cases involving large, complex cases.

\$2 million will be announced in future for video surveillance equipment.

Further announcements on prevention initiatives are expected.

Effective laws and policies to maximize public safety

With the federal election campaign underway, the federal government will determine the changes required to relevant laws and the Criminal Code at the appropriate time. In the interim, the federal government is willing to accelerate research and options development.

A tri-level communications working group has been struck and will work to support the Intergovernmental Working Group as well as the three sub-groups that have been established.

Contact: **Shirley Hoy**
 City Manager
 416-392-3551
 shoy@toronto.ca

Sue Corke
Deputy City Manager
416-338-7205
scorke@toronto.ca

Date: January 13, 2006