

Issue Update

First Nations Policing

History

Since 1992, First Nations Police Services have been funded through the federal government's First Nations Policing Policy (FNPP). While the FNPP was intended to contribute to the improvement of social order, public security, and personal safety in First Nations, the FNPP has been chronically underfunded. This chronic underfunding is a key factor in the inequities existing in First Nations policing compared to non-First Nations police systems.

In December 2020, the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness announced that Public Safety Canada (PSC) would create new First Nations policing legislation. The federal government committed to working with First Nations to create a federal framework that recognizes First Nations policing as an essential service. Since the announcement, the AFN has worked closely with First Nations leaders and Chiefs of Police to develop policy options for a legislative framework. This framework would replace the current FNPP, that for the last 30 years, led to inequitable standards and resources for First Nations police services. Following the federal government's announcement on developing a new legislative framework for First Nations Policing, PSC carried out their own virtual engagement sessions to seek input on the development of the First Nations Policing legislation.

AFN's recent advocacy

The AFN continues to work towards meeting the mandates¹ of First Nations-in-Assembly by providing support to regions to conduct engagement processes. This allows First Nations to provide direct input into the policing legislative framework and ensures that First Nations are leading the development of legislation. First Nations-led processes are central to addressing systemic racism against First Nations and enabling First Nations rights to self-determination as outlined in customary laws, historic Treaty processes, and the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*.

The AFN held the third National Policing Forum in May 2023 in Calgary, Alberta. At the forum, participants discussed First Nations Policing as an essential service, and each AFN Region gave updates from their own regional engagement sessions, including concerns expressed with the FNPP. The forum provided an opportunity for First Nations leaders, First Nations police officers and policing experts, among others, to consider options in the development of a legislative framework for First Nations Policing as an essential service.

The AFN First Nations Policing Taskforce continued to meet throughout the year to provide support and guidance for the development of a policing legislative framework. The taskforce

¹ Resolution 07/2021, *Creation and Implementation of Legislation for First Nations Policing as an Essential Service*; Resolution 34/2021, *Support for Regionally Developed First Nations Policing Service*.

includes regional representatives, technical experts, and executive members of the First Nations Chiefs of Police Association. The taskforce's work takes a principled approach to ensuring that the legislative framework fully recognizes and financially supports First Nations policing as part of the Crown's fiduciary duty to First Nations Peoples.

Next Steps

The AFN is dedicated to the full implementation of a First Nations policing legislative framework that both secures the proper funding and resources for First Nations police services and supports non-colonial, community-based models, as required by each community wishing to participate in the framework.