

POLICING IN VANCOUVER: SOME FACTS

Produced by the Coalition Against Police Harassment and Brutality (683-7123)

POLICING LEVELS

The authorized strength for the Vancouver Police Department is 1149 police officers or about one police officer for every 475 people in the city. The ratio of police to population is considerably higher in the Downtown Eastside where 40 additional police officers were deployed as of February 2000.

(Source: Vancouver Police Department)

POLICE BUDGET

1999 \$112,283,200

Source: City of Vancouver 1999 Operating Budget Estimates

In 1999, the Vancouver Police Department budget was 20% of the city's entire operating budget of \$565 million.

The same year, the City of Vancouver spent \$1,193,100 on housing programs--less than 1% of the operating budget.

Source: City of Vancouver 1999 Operating Budget Estimates

Despite the fact that overall reported crime has been declining over the 1990s, the Vancouver Police Department budget has steadily increased.

- The VPD budget increased from \$108 million in 1997 to \$112 million in 1999. The Police Board will be asking for \$118 million for 2000.

(Sources: City of Vancouver 1999 Operating Budget Estimates; Police Board Meeting presentation January 26, 2000).

- Between 1997-1999, overall reported crime fell 10%.
Between 1998-1999, reported violent crimes fell 7.6%.
Reported property crimes fell 9.7%

(Source: Vancouver Police Department, Planning, Research, and Audit Section, October 27, 1999).

The 1999 police budget of \$112 million does not reflect the actual amount of money spent on policing functions in Vancouver. Police and police functions receive additional public and private funding including the following sources:

- City of Vancouver Capital Budget expenditures for police: 1997-1999: \$1,800,000
(Source: City of Vancouver, 1997-1999 Capital Plan)

- Provincial and City subsidies to 23 Community Policing Centres. For example, the Grandview-Woodlands Community Policing Centre receives \$23,000 from the Attorney General's Office, \$40,000 from ICBC, and \$15,000 in casino revenue. All of Vancouver's 23 community policing offices received \$6000 in seed money from the City of Vancouver since 1994-1995. (Sources: Vancouver Echo, GW Community Policing Centre materials).
- \$5 million federal government grant to the Downtown Eastside Crime Prevention Program (2000-2005). (Source: City of Vancouver, News Release, February 25, 1999).
- Additional city funding for 40 more police officers in the Downtown Eastside. The program costs \$7.2 million and is scheduled to last from 1999-2001. (\$3.6 million in new funding raised through increase in property taxes). (Source: City of Vancouver, News Release, October 22, 1998).
- Private funding for police equipment (recent attempts to fundraise for a helicopter), community policing centres, and deployment centres. For example, Jacqui Cohen of the Army and Navy and other Downtown Eastside merchants have provided financing for the Carrall Street Deployment Centre in the Downtown Eastside. (Source: Vancouver Province, December 9, 1999).
- Private funding of private security guards.

POLICE COMPLAINTS

- The Office of the Police Complaints Commissioner covers 12 municipalities in BC. **Complaints against the Vancouver Police Department, one of the 12 municipalities, represents 53% of all their complaints.**
- As of March 31, 1999, (the most recent figures available) the Office of the Police Complaints Commissioner had 93 total active complaint files pending relating to the officers of the Vancouver Police Department.
- Between January 1 to March 31, 1999, the Vancouver Police Department files resulted in the following actions:
 - Verbal reprimands of three police officers
 - A written reprimand of one police officer
 - A 2-day suspension without pay. Source: Office of the Police Complaints Commissioner, 1999 First Quarterly Report