

Chapter Seven

THE FUNCTIONS OF PROFESSIONAL POLICING

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From the foregoing discussion, two basic themes emerge in the study of non-urban policing. One is the degree to which a convergence has occurred as a consequence of modernization as well as Community-based Policing (CBP) initiatives. The CBP ideology has been adopted, to varying degrees, by the small towns in the Valley as well as by the federal RCMP. The second is the extent to which there are continuing differences between municipal policing and RCMP policing which can be demonstrated in the Valley study. Differences in policing strategies relate to a number of factors, including the relationship between the police and political authority, the organizational style, and the nature of the policed population.

Differences exist among municipal police departments, reflecting the size of the town population and the size of the police organization. The RCMP in the Valley performs rural policing, covering large territories which include scattered villages with small populations. One of the "villages" is New Minas, although it is as large in area and population as Kentville. With respect to social geography, New Minas is developed in "strip" fashion, with malls and retail establishments strung along a central highway and with subdivisions extending from this main axis. The incorporated towns in the Valley are built around a central "downtown" which is relatively compact and is normally a site for foot patrol and night-time property checks ("rattling doors"). Each town also has residential developments extending from the "core" within the town boundaries and has created some modest industrial zones on the peripheries of the towns, necessitating car patrol particularly at night.

One way to discuss policing in these different settings is to classify the varied tasks of the occupation into specific "police functions". During the ethnographic phase of the study of small town and rural policing, interviews were conducted with the RCMP and municipal officers. In part, they were asked to discuss their job in terms of four police functions: response, enforcement, crime solving, and prevention.

Response

RCMP members tended to rate police response as their "highest priority". This attribute was also generally shared by most municipal police officers, largely because it is part of the ideology of police professionalism. However, municipal police officers were more likely to mean responding to the variety of community needs and complaints rather than focusing primarily on responding to criminal code or enforcement matters. During the course of a 24-hour period, the Detachment will receive more calls for service than the towns (except in rare circumstances, such as during annual town celebrations). Despite the larger complement overall, at any one time there will be only

four or five members on watch -- "Detachment duty" -- to respond to public calls. Overall, the population of the Detachment area is greater than any of the towns and, while per capita complaints are lower in the rural areas than in small towns, the larger population and the larger officer/population ratio means that the work-load is heavier.

While response is regarded by the RCMP as a priority, relative to the town police in many cases response time is necessarily longer. The social geography of small towns as opposed to rural policing meant that quick response was primarily a prerogative of the municipal police. The public frequently voiced complaints about the length of time it took RCMP officers to respond to their call for assistance¹. This problem with rural policing arises primarily because of the relatively large Detachment area. As one member put it, response time in the county was doubled "because everyone covers the whole area." When a call comes through, officers will try to judge who is closest judging by who answers. With few officers available, it can take some time before an officer can arrive on a scene. In more difficult situations, such as a gun complaint or potential break and enter in progress, more time passes before sufficient officers can arrive to handle the situation. This difference, however, must be qualified in several ways. First, the Detachment is located in the most populous part of the county in which most of the complaints are generated. Officers on patrol, particularly in the evening when response is the practical priority, tend to remain centrally located. In the smaller towns, on the other hand, while response can be quick for routine complaints, there is often only one officer (or even only the Chief) working at a given time. Escorting prisoners to jail, or attending court (which is usually done during regular hours to avoid overtime), or having papers served or authorized, may take the officer out-of-town. Response time for immediate complaints, then, can be problematic. Public perceptions of response time are also highly subjective. In Kentville, the owner of a business complained about the response time to an alarm which the Chief said had been just under two minutes.

With few town police officers working, in serious situations requiring back-up, the police response must await the arrival of an off-duty, on-call officer. This can be very quick -- in general, officers live in or in close proximity to the town and are encouraged to do so or are so obliged by Town regulations. Some towns put considerable pressure on their employees to live within town limits and, therefore, pay property taxes to the town. In Berwick, for example, attempts to have this policy written into the by-laws have failed. When Kentville hired its most recent Chief (September 1997), one of the issues for candidates for the job was a clause specifying that the new Chief would reside within the town. In general, then, town officers live near their work and, if on call, a second officer can respond quickly. In very serious situations, such as disturbances involving larger numbers of people, the town police must rely on the RCMP for back-up. The majority of RCMP officers buy property in sub-

¹ This observation should be qualified in two ways. Rural citizens often understand the time constraints imposed by distances, and the limited size of the complement in small towns often means that, at busy times, calls are categorized and a long time may elapse before the police arrive.

divisions within or in close proximity to New Minas. Few live in the more rural parts of the county, a decision based more on the need for easy re-sale in the event of a transfer than on the convenience for a quick response.

Response time is also affected by the time of day or night, the season, and by other factors. The nature of the calls is another important variable. Some police calls require a relatively brief response; others generate "files" which demand follow-up investigations. Working as constable generalists, RCMP officers spend their time between working on their files and responding to public complaints. At times, they perceive the job as being driven by the vagaries of public demands -- responding to a call, returning to the Detachment, responding to another call, and so on, as if pulled by a string.

According to the RCMP members interviewed, on a busy shift they will answer, as individuals, between four and ten calls from the public. The average appeared to be six calls on a busy shift. On a slow shift the members may not respond to any calls or as few as two or three. One member said that "you have to remember all the time we're doing our investigations" at the same time they have to respond to new calls. The type of calls handled varies from day to night shifts. Many of the calls received during the day are in regard to incidents that have taken place the previous evening and have been discovered the next morning. The most common day-time calls are break and enters, theft, property damage and shop lifters. One member said that during the day they take a lot of "nuisance calls", not "real police matters".

Respondents in the Valley survey (1989) were asked about the number of police in their area. Most agreed that there were just about the right number of police. More citizens in the three smallest towns thought that there were too many, however, reflecting the small size of the town budget and the relative cost of policing. Thirty-nine percent of county residents in the County, policed by the RCMP, were concerned that there were too few, reflecting the higher police/citizen ratio in rural policing and the large distance to be covered.

Table 7-1 Respondents Judgment about the Number of Police in Their Area (1989)

	Too Many	About Right	Too Few	Missing	TOTAL
RCMP	3	416	269	45	688
	0.40%	60.50%	39.10%		100.00%
Hantsport	8	34	2	3	44
	18.20%	77.30%	4.50%		100.00%
Middleton	9	43	3	2	55
	16.40%	78.20%	5.50%		100.00%
Berwick	3	29	5	0	37
	8.10%	78.40%	13.50%		100.00%
Wolfville	4	58	15	5	77
	5.20%	75.30%	19.50%		100.00%
Kentville	4	87	30	7	121
	3.30%	71.90%	24.80%		100.00%

Policing the Valley

Missing	1	48	13	1	63
TOTAL	31	667	324	63	1022
	3.00%	65.30%	31.70%		

Even if there were about the right number of police officers, the respondents might feel they don't see them frequently enough. Respondents were asked whether they did not see enough of the police in their area. Over two-thirds (71.6%) disagreed – they felt that the police presence was adequate. Predictably, rural policing was, on average, perceived as less adequate than town police, (80.0% vs. 67.6%), a feeling that was particularly true of the smaller towns. In fact, Kentville police was rated the same as the RCMP.

Table 7-2 - Respondent Does Not See the Police Often Enough in His/Her Area (1989)

	Agree	Disagree	Missing	TOTAL
RCMP	114	238	381	352
	32.40%	67.60%		100.00%
Hantsport	2	15	30	17
	11.80%	88.20%		100.00%
Middleton	2	21	34	23
	8.70%	91.30%		100.00%
Berwick	2	13	22	15
	13.30%	86.70%		100.00%
Wolfville	5	35	42	40
	12.50%	87.50%		100.00%
Kentville	22	48	58	70
	31.40%	68.60%		100.00%
Missing	7	22	34	30
TOTAL	147	370	568	517
	28.40%	71.60%		

Virtually identical results were obtained from the question whether police are always available when you need them. Overall the results were very positive, with the smaller towns being rated more positively (88.2%) than either Kentville (78.3%) or the RCMP (77.4%).

Comparable data is not available from the 2000 GPI survey. Respondents in Kings County in 2000 were asked to rate the job done by the police in “promptly responding to calls”. Overall, 51.4% of 1,740 respondents who answered the question said that police did a “good job” of responding; only 5.3% (92) said they did a “poor job”. There was only a slight variation by gender, with women marginally less likely to rate the police highly. Age groups, however, were significantly different: those over 54 were significantly more positive than those who were under 55. Of those who were 24 or younger, 9.5% said the police did a “poor job”.

Considering the nature of the calls, whether at the municipal police department or the Detachment (citizens may call directly or, during the evening, through a dispatcher which, in the case of the RCMP, is in Halifax), the most common calls are answered first by civilians. In some cases, for example involving social agency workers who deal regularly with the police, specific officers are called directly. In the usual situation, the civilian employee screens the calls to determine whether they are police matters and makes an initial decision to refer the matter or hand it over to a police officer.

Many of these calls are determined to be "not police business", with the definition varying between the towns and the RCMP. A civilian employee screens many of these out. From the point of view of the RCMP officers, they still take many "nuisance calls" which are not really police matters. Some members conclude that the policy of the Detachment tends to "pamper" the public in this way. However, despite this perception, municipal police officers in the small towns respond more frequently and directly to a greater variety of service, non-enforcement related, calls. One officer in Middleton responded to a call concerning a pregnant cow which had strayed into the Annapolis River. The officer helped extract the animal from the mud and then assisted the veterinarian in the delivery of the still-born calf. The RCMP response would be determined, in the first instance, by a civilian acting as a dispatcher and such a call would likely be referred to a county animal control officer. The officer's discretion is involved in the decision about what kind of action to take and, consequently, there are cases in which roaming cattle or horses, for example, will get an R.C.M.P response. But these are more arbitrary decisions based on the officer's interest or current work-load, or on whether there appears to be some public danger. When asked whether the police were willing to help with most problems, 95.2% agreed, a number with very little variation in the rural areas or small towns in the Valley.

In the towns, the on-duty officer is more likely to respond in person to calls which would be screened out in a Detachment, such as cases of dog complaints. Other calls sometimes involve civil matters which do not warrant the laying of charges by the police. Rather than suggesting that the citizen can take legal action on his or her own, a small town officer is likely to respond in person, especially if the complainant is personally known. In these cases, there is greater public contact and the officer has an opportunity to explain the legalities of the situation. A Video Store owner in one town had a VCR returned in damaged condition and called the police. The constable attended in person and regarded the matter as civil since there was no indication that the damage was willful or intentional. This conclusion was directly communicated to the owner who understood that, in the absence of charges, no police action was warranted. The personal attention, however, was appreciated.

Store owners in the towns are more likely to call the police if they receive a cheque which is returned because of insufficient funds. In the past, the town police have acted as collection agents. The weight of the authority of the police officer was often sufficient to have the offender pay the bill. Now, however, the police forces in the towns take a more legalistic approach to such frauds, investigating and laying charges if these are warranted, and being less concerned with informal restitution. In

this respect, there has been some convergence of the role of the two police agencies in the handling of smaller potential frauds.

In conclusion, municipal and RCMP response varies with respect to both time and the nature of the complaint. With regard to those complaints which are often regarded as not police business, most importantly, it is the stated policy of small town police departments that all calls from the public will receive a response. This is part of the "service" ethic of policing. In the rural RCMP Detachment, such matters are routinely handled by the civilian staff and officers are bound by a more formalistic procedure distinguishing between matters which are or are not of concern to the police. A similar difference shapes the police response in urban areas where minor matters (stolen bicycles, for example) are recorded over the phone for statistical purposes, but do not warrant a personal response. More practically, the municipal police response reflects their lower work-load as well as the more politically sensitive nature of small town policing. Maintaining the good will of the public is a "preventive" measure in terms of maintaining the image and the security of the department.

Enforcement

Generally speaking, enforcement refers to the maintenance of order and the issuing of Summary Offence Tickets (SOTs). There are three areas in particular that are targets of police enforcement: disturbing the peace (potentially a Criminal Code offence), violations of the Motor Vehicle Act, and breaches of the Liquor Control Act. Much of this work, particularly the areas of provincial jurisdiction (traffic and liquor), is referred to as "self-generated", meaning that the police encounter the violation while on patrol, rather than responding to public complaints (although these occur also). With respect to liquor violations, in both the towns and Detachment area the number of incidents and charges had tended to diminish over the 1980s. Liquor, however, is a factor in many other crimes, including disturbances such as fights in bars, and various forms of assaults. In the past, order maintenance made up the majority of "police business" in the towns and was still a frequently occurring event, particularly during annual town celebrations.

With respect to motor vehicles, the main difference between the MPDs and the RCMP is in the structure of policing. The Detachment has a Highways Unit which specializes in enforcement. In the towns, which run stationary as well as moving radar, constables enforce traffic in the course of routine patrol as part of the work-load. Consistent with their role as constable-generalists, RCMP officers on regular duties have an informal system, a "level of expectations", with respect to issuing warnings and charges. While there was no formal quota system, members described an "unofficial" expectation – one member called it "a quota system through intimidation". Enforcement statistics are part of the assessment so, an officer said, there is "a numbers game". Members complained that a quota system, even an unofficial one, makes it more likely that a motorist will receive an SOT even if a warning would be as effective and create better public relations. It results in more "border-line SOTs." He added that, if a member is behind on his "stats", he could just go out and "get a whole

bunch" on one shift which would "defeat the purpose of the whole process." Traffic enforcement is driven to some extent by public demand, especially in certain areas with heavy traffic, and also by Force policy. As the number of accident-related deaths has grown on the two-lane limited access highway that runs through the Valley, enforcement has become a priority in H Division. Highway Patrol is one of those jobs that many members will be assigned during their career. For most, at first it is a pleasant change since the work is self-generated and there is less pressure than on detachment duty. Some thrive on the work, use it to meet people and even develop informants. For most, however, the interest in the job diminishes and a two-year stint is normal. As one member on highways said, "I like giving out tickets about as much as people like getting them."

Overall, the enforcement level is higher in the Detachment than the towns, although much of this can be attributed to the Highway Unit. In some of the towns, there is a wide discrepancy among officers with respect to the number of tickets issued. This reflects different orientations towards enforcement on the part of some small town officers as well as inconsistent management. One important difference is that fines generated by municipal police officers from enforcement of the provincial statutes provide money for the towns in a direct fashion: a portion of the fine is returned to the town and is, therefore, a means to generate revenue. Tickets issued by the RCMP are paid to the province. Indirectly, this money returns to the community because the province does subsidize the costs of this policing. However, there is a considerable difference in the form of this revenue collection and sharing. The point is that the towns can increase their revenue directly by directing the police department to increase the level of enforcement.

In one case, in which a police department had been successful in expanding its size and resources, part of the justification for the increase was that a higher level of enforcement would ensue which would directly benefit the town. This practice would justify their increased number and offset some of the expanded costs incurred by the town for the new members. For many years, for example, Wolfville had a reputation as being merely a "speed trap" town as the police generated revenue for the municipality. As the history of Valley policing has indicated, political pressure has been exerted on town police with the opposite effect, leading them to enforce traffic and parking violations with discretion. Similarly, Middleton had a reputation among some outsiders as a place to avoid driving through because of the high level of police presence and the fear of being caught in a radar trap. Some business owners claimed that a strict enforcement policy was detrimental to their sales. It is not just private operators who have an interest in a large flow of people into and out of the towns. In efforts to defend or expand their share of the municipal budget, town police departments argue that the number of non-residents who come to the towns, which serve as local service centers, greatly increases the size of the policed population.

The level of enforcement is, in some respects, higher in the towns than in the Detachment area. This is true despite the differences in the style of policing, with the RCMP being more formal and legalistic. Over-riding this consideration is the considerable difference in the police/population ratio in the towns and the county.

Policing the Valley

Besides having proportionately more officers in the towns, the area of patrol is relatively small and the town's population is more closely policed than those living in rural areas. A frequent public complaint about the RCMP outside New Minas and Coldbrook is that you see them too seldom. Citizens in the more affluent suburbs of the small towns may want fast response to complaints, including speeding and squealing tires, but are ambivalent about the strict enforcement of minor traffic laws, which would potentially target local citizens.

It is difficult to say whether people from out of town are more frequently the targets of enforcement by town police officers. Certainly this would be qualified by the tendency among town police officers to enforce differentially between, for example, substantial citizens and members of the town's underclass.

Police departments are also required to enforce municipal by-laws. Over the last few years, the RCMP Detachment has increased the number of municipal by-law complaints it has investigated, as part of the community relations initiative and the desire to open up policing to a greater degree of public influence. It is still true, however, that municipal police departments do more of this work. The most significant example of this occurred in Kentville which established a two-hour parking time limit which the police department enforced. Consequently, officers spent time on each shift making chalk-marks on tires and issuing parking citations. This is not a general rule in the other Valley towns where free parking is deemed an inducement to attract out-of-town customers. In Kentville, by the mid-1990s, a part-time By-Law Enforcement Officer was responsible for parking, a consequence of a decrease in the size of the police department. This eliminated a difference between the MPD and the RCMP. Nevertheless, town police still have a reputation for issuing more border-line tickets. Police officers of either stripe will enforce handicapped parking zones. The R.C.M.P. instituted a publicized campaign to enforce this regulation and, in the process, received support from the public.

The RCMP response to parking violations tends to be less a matter of routine enforcement and to be more sporadic. This reflects the differing nature of town and rural policing. In response to particular problems, the RCMP will enforce parking bans on specific streets, issuing large numbers of tickets at one time. Such actions typically are a response to public complaints. Members assigned this duty have not always found it tasteful and have claimed afterwards that, since the strict enforcement was the supervisor's idea, it will be up to these same supervisors to deal with the resulting public complaints.

One important by-law concerns a prohibition against loitering. Under the direction of town businesses, the municipal police force tries to prevent youth from congregating downtown using mostly informal means but sometimes also laying charges. Similarly, riding bicycles or skateboards on the sidewalk or loitering may be handled informally while on patrol. Generally, such enforcement is not done by the rural RCMP. In New Minas, however, where youth tend to congregate in areas of mass private property such as malls, citizens have complained about "noise pollution" from youths in cars, in the parking lots after hours. The RCMP response was to direct members to patrol on foot and lay charges, although this was a response to a specific

complaint and enforcement was sporadic. A member will occasionally patrol a mall on foot, using the opportunity to deepen ties with the business operators. On one occasion, following complaints of excessive noise from adolescents in a small rural village, the Detachment commander went to the community at night, in civilian clothes, and spoke to the youths. He used the opportunity to make contacts as well as to reinforce a police presence in the village.

Unlike towns such as Kentville (MPD) and Windsor (RCMP), the New Minas Detachment does not have a clearly-defined central "block" in its jurisdiction which can be easily patrolled on foot. The difference, then, reflects the type of area policed more than the policing style.

In the public survey of Valley residents, 88% of respondents wanted to ensure that the police always enforced the law and 75% said the police did a good job of enforcement. Only 3% claimed they did a "poor job". Another method to assess the public's perception of policing is to ask specific questions related to equity and fairness, aspects of policing which were emphasized in the legalistic model and were deemed problematic in traditional small town policing. In the Valley public survey, respondents were asked a number of questions relating to their evaluation of policing. As the following table demonstrates, most respondents were positive about the police performance in the selected areas.

Specifically, citizens were asked whether the police treated blacks as fairly as others, whether police misconduct was rare, whether the police were available to help with community problems, whether police were careful not to arrest innocent persons, and whether police enjoyed hassling people. The results appear in the table below (showing those who agree with the statement with the exception of the last statement,

Table 7-3 - Public Attitudes about Police Enforcement (Agree) (1989)

	Fairness For Blacks	Misconduct Not common	Careful Not Arrest Innocent	Not Enjoy Hassling	Help With Most Problems	Influenced By Rich Powerful
RCMP	492	603	543	506	653	341
	83.50%	87.10%	86.60%	76.40%	94.90%	53.80%
Hantsport	34	41	38	33	46	26
	82.90%	91.10%	92.70%	76.70%	97.90%	59.10%
Middleton	45	45	46	48	54	25
	86.50%	83.30%	93.90%	87.30%	96.40%	45.50%
Berwick	20	30	28	28	37	23
	66.70%	83.30%	84.80%	82.40%	100.00%	69.70%
Wolfville	53	61	58	56	72	34
	81.50%	81.30%	89.20%	77.80%	94.70%	48.60%
Kentville	72	104	93	77	113	69
	66.10%	86.70%	88.60%	65.30%	94.20%	59.50%
Missing	50	55	44	49	58	15
TOTAL	716	884	806	748	975	518
	80.80%	86.50%	87.60%	76.00%	95.20%	54.40%

where the numbers disagreeing are indicated). The results are quite consistent. It should be noted that, demographically, there are few visible minorities in the Valley. There is a small black population and two Mc'maq Reserves, though the question about discriminatory treatment was not framed around First nations peoples. Overall, the Kentville Police Service was rated slightly less positively than the others, particularly in their treatment of blacks and tendency to hassle citizens.

One area where respondents were more evenly divided was whether they felt the police were influenced unfairly by the rich and powerful (see Table 7-3). The majority, almost 60% believed that they were. The RCMP fared slightly better on this variable than three of the five small town police forces. The Berwick police department was seen as the most likely to be influenced followed by Kentville and Hantsport.

Part of the ideology of Community-based Policing is the use of officer discretion, particularly reflected in the utilization of non-arrest options by the police. Valley citizens were asked whether the use of charges and arrests were not always the best way to solve problems and whether they expect the police to use their own judgment rather than always going by the book. Most citizens agreed with the use of non-arrest options (overall 84.5%) and with the police use of discretion (76%); in the latter case, slightly fewer in areas policed by the RCMP (74.8%) than by a Municipal Police Department (78.2%).

In 2000, Kings County residents were asked to rate the job done by the police in "enforcing the laws". Overall, 54.3% agreed they did a good job; only 2.2% rated their work poorly. There were virtually no gender differences and, while there was a marked difference by age (those over 54 were most likely to say the police did a good job of enforcing the laws—57.5%--and least likely to rate them poorly—1.2%), the differences were not significant statistically (chi square = .052).

Prevention, Referral and Public Consultation

If strict enforcement of minor regulations sometimes seems to go against the interests of some citizens of the towns, crime prevention initiatives offer several benefits. There are two main aspects to police crime prevention work. First, the notion of police visibility and presence is, in itself, believed to deter crime. Police patrols, whether on foot or in vehicles, are deemed to be preventive. A high proportion of citizens surveyed (88%) believed that it was important that the police be visible and available. Second, as part of the move towards what is termed Community-based Policing, police departments have organized, usually with civilian assistance or initiative, programs designed to prevent specific kinds of crimes. This second aspect will be discussed in more detail below.

Regardless of the type of policing, officers spend part of their time on patrol. In the Detachment, the majority of the time in the Highways Unit is spent on random patrol, searching for violations and enforcing the provincial statutes. According to one member on Highway patrol, "the basic premise of patrol work is prevention". Among Detachment personnel, random patrol (termed "waving the flag" or "showing the

colours") is infrequent on day-shifts during the week. Most of their patrol work is done during the night and on "slack" dayshifts. Most members say that their patrol work is random: "I try to cover as much of the detachment area as I can", although members do also say they "cruise trouble areas." Police visibility is also increased as officers respond to citizen complaints or conduct investigations in various areas of the county. When members are not responding to direct complaints at night, and on week-ends, more time is spent on random patrol, some of which is "fishing" for impaired drivers.

There is more random patrolling in the towns. Some of this is foot patrol, which tends to be unpopular among the officers and required by the Chiefs (and demanded by powerful citizens). Such patrol is primarily for visibility and for citizen contacts. There is also a great deal of random patrolling in the police vehicle in small towns. In Wolfville, for example, a member of the Municipal Council and Police Commission complained about the number of kilometers the police vehicles covered in the run of a month. The amount of random patrol is partly caused by the lower levels of complaints which require a response and because of the organization of policing in the small towns which, increasingly, are specializing the investigative function within the limits of their resources, leaving uniformed officers with long hours of patrol.

More significantly, in terms of patrol, are the more focused business and property checks. During the quieter hours of the night shift, RCMP members will drive around some business and public properties (such as schools), checking to see if they are secure and whether violations are occurring in these areas. It tends to be random and self-generated, and is interspersed with calls for service. This is related to the dispersed nature of substantial property in the county. Unless they are responding to an alarm, it is unlikely that this random property checking will entail a member actually getting out of the police vehicle.

In the towns this preventive patrolling is often more systematic. In some towns, officers in the police vehicle are required to check specific properties and record the times of these checks, day and night, on a log sheet. In other towns, these "outer checks" (performed while remaining in the vehicle) are done less systematically, although they are still accorded a priority by the police management. In addition, foot patrol is done and, in the process, doors and windows are physically checked. The degree to which this checking is systematized varies from town to town, but it is not as random or self-generated as in the Detachment which, as noted, does not usually expect foot patrol. The difference here is largely a matter of municipal as opposed to rural policing. In towns with RCMP contracts, Detachment members are also expected routinely to patrol on foot in the downtown core.

Much of the day-to-day activity of the municipal officers consisted of routine patrol, creating a visible police presence. Order maintenance activities were often centered on the public bar in the town, or in specific houses -- Berwick, one constable explained, had no particularly notorious areas, "just families where problems tend to recur". The officers dealt with the same people and the same problems repeatedly. With respect to crimes, he described Berwick as "a very slow town". Their day shifts were very routine and it was common for there to be very few calls even on a Friday or Saturday night.

Policing the Valley

It is a departmental policy for the police to remain within town limits, with the exception of a few convenient streets that lead out of and then back into town. In Berwick, even this was not allowed until relatively recently. According to one officer, the Town Council and the Chief made it clear that if the police were out of town, "they had better be on police business". Town residents become enforcers and are quick to point out any perceived violation of this in-town rule. If something happens in town, the first question often asked is: where were the police? Almost 80% of respondents agreed that the police were always available when they were needed, however, a figure that rose to 90.6% in the three smallest towns. The RCMP did not fare badly, however, being perceived as readily available by 77.4% of respondents in their jurisdiction.

Many residents in Berwick were concerned that, with the changeover from the MPD to the federal police, the RCMP would not be visible in the community. At first, there was little foot patrol. The RCMP responded by putting members on bicycle patrol. Another concern with the establishment of the RCMP in the towns was the extent to which the police would be on calls outside the town, leaving the town unpoliced. Berwick is geographically central between two RCMP detachments in New Minas and Kingston. One County resident in the village of South Berwick complained that you never see a cruiser unless there is a call. A resident pointed out that the RCMP frequently runs radar on the highway, outside of town. With the RCMP policing the town, he suspected they would frequently be out of town servicing the near-by county. It should be noted, however, that the municipal police in Berwick had occasionally attended domestic complaints or accidents in the county when the RCMP patrol was too remote to respond quickly.

Another significant difference with respect to patrolling and prevention concerns household property. Citizens can call the RCMP and provide them with notice about their vacant houses, but it is only kept on file in case a problem arises. In the towns, particularly the smaller towns, the police will systematically check vacant residential properties, getting out of their car and checking windows and doors on foot. This task is sometimes denigrated by the officers as "mere security work", but it is very popular among the citizens who believe that their personal property is receiving special police protection.

The second prevention initiative involves the development of strategies designed to reduce the incidence of crime in communities. Initially these programmes were based on urban life experience. Block Parents, Neighbourhood Watch, street-proofing and identifying children (fingerprinting) were all programmes which emerged from the urban experience of substantial anonymity, fear and social dislocation. Arguably, the experience of residents in small towns and rural areas has been different. In situations of long-term community residence, the practices which such prevention programmes were designed to replicate occurred informally as a matter of course.

On the surface, a road sign indicating "This is a Block parent Community" posted along a rural road dotted with farm houses and a few scattered bungalows seems anomalous. In part, however, it also reflects the changing nature of rural life. Changes in communities, shopping, education, living arrangements and employment patterns are slowly transforming rural Nova Scotia. Such changes are particularly apparent in Kings

County which has the third highest population density of any county in the province. In the absence of "real communities", crime prevention programmes provide some degree of organization for the citizens. The actual effectiveness of specific crime prevention initiatives, however, is not generally known.

The other key issue with respect to crime prevention in the County is that these programmes have resulted from initiatives taken by the police, especially the RCMP. In detachment areas with full-time crime prevention officers, considerable effort has gone into mobilizing community resources and heightening awareness of the need for such programmes as Halloween safety, safe graduations, peer counseling of teens, and public education. More significantly, programmes have been developed for rural areas which respond more directly to the perceived needs of the citizens. Rural Watch, for example, expresses the concern with protecting private property and helps to control public access on foot or on motorized vehicles in the summer and winter. Coastal watch, while centrally instituted, has involved some citizens in a strategy which has been linked to some of the major drug seizures on the eastern coast of the province. In Kings County, the RCMP Citizen's Patrol initiative has involved dozens of citizens consciously working as the eyes and ears of the police. In addition, a Victim's Support initiative was undertaken, under Detachment control, but with civilian co-coordinators and volunteers. The New Minas Detachment, then, has a wider variety and greater number of programmes designated under community policing than any of the local towns. In part this is a matter of resources. It also reflects the adoption by the federal Force of the C.B.P philosophy and the establishment of programme guidelines. The RCMP is well-placed to implement established programmes which are more or less needed and effective in the rural, small town milieu.

In addition to the question of the usefulness of specific programmes and the opportunities they present for enhanced police community interaction, there is a difference in the approach to crime prevention work between the RCMP and the Valley towns. Even though the Detachment has a full-time crime prevention co-coordinator, the RCMP constable generalists are expected to give some prevention talks to community groups and to students in the school to which each is assigned. The quantity and quality of this involvement tends to vary according to the inclinations and abilities of the officers, but the expectation of such work is formalized in Force policy and in assessments. As the CBP movement became institutionalized in the 1990s, there was a reversion to former practices. At the height of the movement, each officer was to develop a liaison with a specific school. Some found this work meaningful; most did not, with the upshot that the work devolved to more specialized officers. This example indicates that RCMP policing is affected by national programmes and ideologies and local implementation. The degree to which new undertakings are implemented depends a great deal on the proclivities of local supervisors.

In the early 1990s, at the height of the move to CBP in the RCMP, each officer was expected to involve a community relations component of her or his job. "Files" would be opened reflecting school liaison, public education, participation in various programmes, and other PR initiatives and these would be taken into consideration during an officer's assessment. As one member said "everything helps promotions, and

they are looking for it [community involvement]". Not all members agreed with this aspect of the work or were equally good at it. As one constable said, at least half of the members would not do any community relations work if they were not obliged to. Some found it inconvenient and a distraction from investigations. Others had the attitude that it was a specialization. Only members who wanted to do it and were good at it should be expected to do the PR work. More recently, the PR component has been relaxed. The majority of the work is in the hands of the full-time police community-relations specialist and the amount of PR work done by members varies more by inclination, although it is still regarded as an important component of the job. In fact, strong assessments in community relations are important for promotions and it appears that officers who have made the quickest leaps have excelled in PR.

The high level of dissatisfaction about having public relations "shoved down our throats", as one member put it, is ironic because the Community-based Policing initiative was meant, in part, to increase job variability, reduce the hierarchical authority structure, involve citizens more directly in police policy, and expand the generalist work of the uniformed constables. In urban policing, efforts to meet these varying objectives have been only partially successful. In the RCMP, the story is somewhat different. Despite considerable specialization, regular Detachment duties are still generalist, involving members in a wide variety of policing tasks. Members also transfer regularly through the larger units, such as highway patrol, general investigative services, and Detachment watches, and less frequently to units such as Drugs and Community Relations.

Municipal departments function within an invasive political structure and have histories of struggling for relative autonomy from elite control. In this context, establishing any kind of citizen's control over the police is opposed both by the police, who guard their independence, and by Town Councils who see such a group as usurping their power or as potentially even forming the nucleus of a local political alternative. For the RCMP, political control is not immediate or local and their autonomy has both long roots and a philosophical foundation. They resist any form of independent outside influence. RCMP detachments have formed Community Consultative Committees composed of informal representatives of various citizens' groups. Rather than being actual representatives of any group, committee members are chosen and recruited by the RCMP and primarily work on crime prevention. Their other chief function appears to be to raise money from local businesses in support of crime prevention programmes, thereby maintaining the arm's length relationship between the federal police and the community.

Community-based Policing largely consists of informal contacts between the police and the citizens, on the street, at sporting events, or socially. There are more systematic programmes, such as bicycle registration, Halloween safety, Block parents, and stop-shop-lifting educational programmes. The main obstacle for the implementation of a crime-prevention programme is the shortage of resources, from personnel to funding. It is in the area of community programmes that the residents feel potentially better served by the RCMP. Several high-profile provincial programmes on drug awareness and senior support, for example, have been brought to the town as

the RCMP vies for public approval. The school administration feels quite well served by the new policing arrangement.

In the small towns, where presumably there would be more time to promote and organize programmes, crime prevention work tends to become specialized in the hands of the officer who has the greatest proclivity for the work. The actual involvement of the various departments also tends to vary according to the philosophy of the Chiefs. In the RCMP, policy is centralized and implementation is local. In the small towns, much of the CBP initiative has replicated urban programmes (Block parents, Crime Stoppers) rather than identifying specific needs and devising innovative strategies. On the other hand, to establish better rapport with youths, the Kentville Police Department maintains a police office in the local High School (a policy which has also been implemented by the RCMP) and has helped establish a youth drop-in facility.

In addition, there is not, in any area of the County, a systematic problem-solving approach to policing although, even here, the RCMP is more likely to adopt such an approach. As police training changed in Regina, newer officers assigned to the area appeared more willing to experiment in such crime-prevention tactics as family conferencing.

On the other hand, the formal nature of these programme and the fact that the initiative for establishing them comes from the RCMP as a result of centralized directives, raises the question of the extent to which they actually reflect community needs or genuinely represent community interests. The town police may be behind in adopting the formal aspects of Community-based Policing, but this may be thought to be insignificant in comparison to the genuine community nature of small town policing.

We have argued that the local roots and localized knowledge of small town police officers has, at times, been over-shadowed by parochial biases and subservience to elite authority. Small towns can be uncomfortable places for social and visible minorities. Discriminatory policing may reflect the narrower, more negative attitudes of the majority group in the community. Legalistic policing, as implemented by the RCMP, has the salutary ideal of equal enforcement. On the other hand, the professionalization of policing has removed officers, to an extent, from routine, daily contact with citizens and shaped the expectations of police officers, giving them images of their work which are largely unrealizable in small towns. The convergence of MPD and RCMP styles with respect to increased professionalism and legalistic enforcement was apparent in our study of the Valley.

In short, community policing, particularly in its formal prevention aspect, has been more thoroughly implemented in the area by the RCMP than by the towns. This is generally true both with respect to the standard, text-book programmes, which may not be necessary in small towns and rural villages, as well as more innovative approaches. In fact, the RCMP may be better positioned and have more resources for implementing these kinds of programmes than the small towns. They are, however, primarily add-ons to standard policing, rather than reflecting an effort to transform police-community interactions. They serve public relations purposes more clearly and directly than actual crime prevention.

Crime Solving

If crime prevention tends to be minimized in importance in the police ideology, the essence of police work is considered to be crime investigation. To a member, the RCMP constables preferred crime solving to the other police functions and called it their "highest priority". It was the most enjoyable, the "least boring" part of the job. Like "solving the puzzle", one said, "It keeps the brain going".

Among the RCMP, the priority attached to crime solving tends to vary according to the Unit. The General Investigative Services (plain clothes) unit, for example, would spend the majority of the time on files generated by complaints which come under the Criminal Code. The Highways Unit, on the other hand, would spend only a small proportion of its time on these duties. In between are the Detachment constables, the constable-generalists. The majority of these members hold that crime investigation (from the initial complaint, through the investigation, to the court hearing) is their highest priority. This is certainly consistent with police ideology -- crime solving is what is most often meant by "real police work". Detachment members claimed that between 40% and 80% of their time was spent in such investigative work. Among Detachment members, many indicated that the majority of this work involves "run-of-the-mill" cases which are minor in nature. Similar to their concern about having to do non-police work, some suggested that many of their files were investigated to "coddle" the public; they were important only to the complainants.

In the small towns, however, beyond patrol, there was little specialization either possible or required. In towns such as Berwick and Middleton, for example, with a force of five full-time constables who worked alone except on week-ends, it was inevitable that there would be little formal division of duties. Even here, however, there was a tendency towards some specialization, with one officer designated for firearms training, another performing most crime-prevention work, while another officer spent more of his time patrolling traffic. This rudimentary structure had developed more from the proclivities of individual officers than by design. Follow-up work on open files was performed by the officer who worked the next shift. There was some problem of continuity created by this procedure.

One of the problems associated with the constable generalist role is that investigations opened by an officer get temporarily derailed while the officer is off duty unless the investigation is handed over to another officer. This is one of the reasons that larger departments have tried to implement an investigator's position, with a member who works mostly on day shifts to follow-up investigations. Developing this detective function is largely a matter of manpower and budget and the option is normally not available in very small departments.

Small towns facing the question of adequate standards sometimes have difficulties with investigations. In larger forces, most of this work is done in the day shift. They have the manpower and the resources. The Chief said that a small town department has to stop something before it happens. When a major crime occurs, such as a series of break and enter offences, they receive considerable co-operation from the public. However, the Chief added, "we are missing the ability to pull a man off shifts

and tell him to go investigate". A major crime in the town, such as a murder, would be investigated by the RCMP in any event, but the town would then be given a separate bill for the services, an expense which, we were told, the town would have difficulty paying. This is equally true in Kentville, where the local police do not have the jurisdiction to investigate homicide cases. Under the new RCMP contracts in Wolfville, Middleton, and Berwick, such specialized investigations would now be handled by the RCMP regionally.

One solution for the small MPDs was to appoint an officer to a CID position (the Valley MPDs use the General Investigative Services label). The Middleton Police Department initiated a plain clothes section at the beginning of 1984. According to the Annual Report of the previous year, the officer in plain clothes would handle all investigations, thereby "relieving the uniform members from doing investigations". What was established, then, was a systematic degree of specialization between a (primarily) criminal investigative section and routine patrol officers, reproducing the division of labour of a large, traditional police department. At least with respect to the 1983 Annual Report, this new division was justified on the grounds that patrol officers would be freed from time-consuming investigations and therefore be more visible and available in the town. The main policing need identified in the document was to reduce the number of injuries sustained in motor vehicle accidents. The creation of the plain clothes section meant "allow[ing] these [uniform] members to concentrate more on motor vehicle act and other provincial and municipal statutes. The Chief claimed that the change would "create more efficient and productive work within the force, resulting in better police protection for the citizens of the town" (Middleton Police Department, 1983 Annual Report, 18 January 1984, p. 1).

There is a question whether Middleton requires a full-time plain clothes investigator. The conclusion in Berwick was that the work-load did not warrant such a position. At any rate, the decision to expand the force to six members was predicated on the assumption of 24-hour policing by the force. Accordingly, manpower was allocated to cover the shifts and remains more committed to evening and nights than day shift. In Middleton, departmental policy favoured the investigative position and slightly reduced coverage. Observation suggests that there is sufficient investigative work in Middleton to warrant retention of the investigator. The issue is the determination of departmental priority and the trade-offs that have to be made, principally the more truncated patrol function of the uniformed officers.

In Berwick, no formal GIS position was created. To minimize the discontinuities in investigations caused by the shift schedule, the Corporal performed a limited GIS (Investigative) function. He reviewed all the files and gave them a diary date, performing follow-up work when required. He did not act as a supervisor, however; nor did he assess the work of the other constables. Most of his work was done on his regular shift, as Berwick maintained 24-hour police patrolling. Under that mandate, a day-shift GIS officer could not be spared. Under the RCMP contract, however, the town is able to use the GIS resources found in the Kings Detachment, as well as other specialized services. As regionalization develops over the next few years under an RCMP umbrella, more specialized policing activities will be available locally out of a new

and expanded Detachment building. The public survey revealed that citizens in the smaller towns (Middleton, Hantsport, and Berwick – 81%) were more likely to say that the police did a “good” job in enforcing the law than in Kentville (67%), with RCMP rural policing (75%) in between.

Systematic studies of policing have shown that criminal investigation actually makes up a much smaller proportion of the actual work-load (or time spent) of constables than officers indicate. RCMP officers on detachment duty spend the majority of their 8-hour day-shift working on their files, involving such tasks as telephone calls, filling in forms, preparing crown sheets, swearing information, consulting supervisors or Crown Attorneys, attending court, or interviewing complainants or persons under investigation. This is still defined by the police as “crime-related” work, but it is simultaneously viewed as distracting the officer from “real” police work, which is doing the work rather than writing about it. The more routine patrolling and the answering of public order complaints are more frequently handled at night. Detachment members are more likely to handle Criminal Code complaints than municipal police officers, and they are also more likely to define a public complaint as a matter necessitating a “charge”. In this fashion, they shape both the perception of their work as well as its content as “crime-related”.

Detachment members can carry between 30 and 50 open files; the number of files which a member has is partly a result of her or his own initiative. While open, not all of these are active, that is, under investigation at that time. The number of active files is smaller, between five and twelve. The workload is sufficiently heavy that officers are expected to continue their investigations in the evening. At times, when an officer is known to be involved in a busy investigation, he or she will be free from answering public order or other complaints during an evening shift. Officers still voluntarily put in unpaid overtime and can often be seen in the detachment in the evening on the phone contacting witnesses or victims.

This level of workload and perception of time spent on investigations is considerably higher among RCMP members than among the municipal police officers. While town police would agree that crime solving was a high priority, relatively less of their time is spent in such investigations. This reflects both the actual level of occurrences, which is smaller and, more importantly, the way work is divided in the towns. In those towns with a GIS constable, the bulk of investigative work is handled by one member. In Kentville, the GIS section handles about the same number of files as an average member of the Detachment. The other side of the coin of this tendency in small towns to specialize is that other officers become primarily patrol officers, who respond to situations, investigate as far as they can (the plain clothes officer is not usually available at night), and then hand the case over to the GIS officer in the morning.

This means that, contrary to expectation, the officer more likely to be a Constable Generalist is a member of the RCMP rather than the town force. A constable on Detachment duty is responsible for responding to complaints, investigating and determining charges, and following the case through the courts. This includes the few murder cases which have occurred in the county. GIS is, however, not superfluous. At

times, the logic of assigning a complaint to a Detachment constable or GIS is not apparent, although the specialized unit is more likely to investigate relatively complicated or time-consuming cases.

In sum, when the towns adopt a plain-clothes position, they duplicate to a degree the C.I.D. (detective) and Patrol differentiation found in modern, urban policing. Ironically, as studies of Community-based Policing have shown, reform-minded urban police management has often attempted to break down the specialized division of labour and re-create constable generalists, claiming in the process to be adopting a small-town model. With respect to mutual influences on policing styles, the prevailing wind would appear to be from urban to small town policing.

In Kings County, according to the 2000 GPI survey, 41.1% agreed the police did a "good job" of "investigating and solving crime". This was lower than the proportion who rated the police highly on enforcing the law and responding promptly. Gender differences were negligible; age groups were significantly different, with those under 25 being least positive (37%) and most negative (8.9%). As usual on these variables, while there was no statistically significant difference among the educational groups (high school, community college, university), the community college group tended to be the least positive. While self-declared occupational category did not make a difference, managers and those in business, finance, or administration tended to be the most positive (43.8%).

Response, enforcement, and solving crimes do not represent the only functions of policing. They are, however, the dominant forms under the professional model. The police are also active in crime prevention, supplying information to the public, acting as referrals, and helping in the community. These functions are more consistent with a community-based policing style.