

# GREATER VICTORIA POLICE INTEGRATED UNITS

ANNUAL REPORT  
**2019/20**



# A MESSAGE FROM THE GREATER VICTORIA POLICE CHIEFS AND DETACHMENT COMMANDERS

The Greater Victoria Police Chiefs and Detachment Commanders are pleased to present the third annual Greater Victoria Police Integrated Units Annual Report for 2019/2020.

As a collective, we have reflected on the status of our shared integrated units and their daily successes throughout the past year. We have begun to make further progress on future improvements to existing integrated unit models while actively assessing other integration opportunities. Our objective continues to be providing high-quality police services in an efficient and effective way, particularly in areas of high specialization. As we enter the latter part of 2020, the experience of the past many months has further solidified our need for innovation and cost control wherever possible while ensuring public safety in the process.

Please take a few moments to read the report which highlights the mandate and ongoing work of each integrated policing unit.

We wish to thank the dedicated officers working within the integrated policing units for their professionalism and continued commitment to our communities.

Proudly,

The Greater Victoria Police Chiefs and Detachment Commanders:

- » Chief Del Manak – Victoria Police
- » Chief Scott Green – Saanich Police
- » Chief Ian Lawson – Central Saanich Police
- » Chief Andy Brinton – Oak Bay Police
- » Inspector Todd Preston – Westshore RCMP Detachment
- » S/Sgt Wayne Conley – Sidney/North Saanich RCMP Detachment
- » S/Sgt Brett Sinden – Sooke RCMP Detachment

## Table of Contents

<b>01.</b>	<b>Greater Victoria Emergency Response Team.....</b>	<b>p.03</b>
<b>02.</b>	<b>Greater Victoria Crowd Management Unit.....</b>	<b>p.05</b>
<b>03.</b>	<b>Integrated Mobile Crisis Response Team.....</b>	<b>p.07</b>
<b>04.</b>	<b>Mobile Youth Services Team.....</b>	<b>p.09</b>
<b>05.</b>	<b>Regional Domestic Violence Unit.....</b>	<b>p.10</b>
<b>06.</b>	<b>Greater Victoria Crime Stoppers.....</b>	<b>p.12</b>
<b>07.</b>	<b>Greater Victoria Police Diversity Advisory Committee.....</b>	<b>p.14</b>
<b>08.</b>	<b>Vancouver Island Integrated Major Crime Unit.....</b>	<b>p.16</b>
<b>09.</b>	<b>Combined Forces Special Enforcement Unit.....</b>	<b>p.16</b>
<b>10.</b>	<b>Capital Regional District Integrated Road Safety Unit.....</b>	<b>p.17</b>
<b>11.</b>	<b>Integrated National Security Enforcement Team.....</b>	<b>p.17</b>

# 01. Greater Victoria Emergency Response Team

The Greater Victoria Emergency Response Team (GVERT) has supported police operations in the region since 1976. The GVERT, which includes Incident Commanders, Crisis Negotiators, and Tactical Officers is activated to resolve critical incidents when specialized skills and equipment are required. Members of the GVERT are on call 24 hours a day, 7 days per week. Incident Commanders are senior officers with extensive experience in critical management and specialized training from the Canadian Police College.

They oversee every GVERT operation and coordinate the deployment of negotiators and members of the Tactical Unit in order to achieve a successful resolution. The Incident Commanders are supported by a group of liaison officers and scribes who are responsible for logistics and reporting. Negotiators are experts in crisis intervention and de-escalation, and are advised by a team of mental health professionals. The majority of critical incidents are resolved peacefully through containment and negotiations. The Tactical Unit is a group of highly trained police officers, equipped to safely resolve situations that exceed the capabilities of front-line police. Intervention by this team provides a greater margin of safety for the public, police members, and suspects alike.

The Tactical Unit also provides explosives detection and disposal services for regional operations and major public events. The GVERT works under the direction of an Officer-In-Charge, who is responsible for the administration of training and operations. The GVERT is overseen by a Joint Management Team comprised of representatives from each agency. All 56 members of the GVERT perform these roles as a collateral duty to their primary assignments.



## EFFICIENCIES

- The GVERT has made increased use of its Scribe Program to better support operations in the Command Post
- The GVERT continues to explore a modern deployment model for the Tactical Unit to better support front-line operations

## HIGHLIGHTS

- The infusion of Tactical Emergency Medical Support into the GVERT Program
- The increased use of technology to promote more efficient communication during operations

## PRIORITIES FOR 2020/21

- Continuing to deliver critical incident response training to front-line officers and supervisors across the Region
- Pursuing a long-term local training facility in partnership with other agencies
- Completing the basic training program for new tactical officers to ensure the Unit is fully staffed



# 02.

## Greater Victoria Crowd Management Unit

The Greater Victoria Crowd Management Unit (CMU) has gone through significant changes and growth in 2019-20 including a fundamental change in structure and name change to the Public Safety Unit (PSU). PSU is now the umbrella for the Crowd Management Unit (CMU), Obstruction Removal Team (ORT), Division Liaison Team (DLT), Search and Canvass Team (SCT), and Fire-Medics. The restructuring better reflects the areas of expertise of the team as well as provides appropriate governance over the participating fire departments involved with public safety within Greater Victoria.



This past year has seen a significant increase in public gatherings and protests requiring the expertise of PSU. The skills and training of PSU members across the region have ensured these events are peaceful and safe for the public.

Due to COVID-19 emergency orders the planned spring training for PSU was canceled. This provided an opportunity to re-purpose this funding for an improved less-lethal weapons platform. Training and qualifications on this new weapons platform will be conducted in the fall of 2020.

The Joint Management Team (JMT) has transitioned into responsibility for the entire PSU; adding representation from the participating Fire Departments. PSU looks forward to its continued service and timely response to Saanich, Oak Bay, Victoria, and Central Saanich.

### EFFICIENCIES

- Utilization of fund received from a civil forfeiture grant to increase training and obtain protective equipment for team outside of traditional revenue streams
- Streamline training days and integration of the “basic training” course into full team training for increased overall cohesiveness
- Transition from two less lethal platforms to a single one to allow for increased expertise

### HIGHLIGHTS

- Authorization and agreement with participating Fire Departments to expand the Fire Medic Program to 8 members
- Restructuring of overall program to have Public Safety Unit as over arching program name encompassing CMU, Fire Medic, DLT, Search, and ORT
- CMU was successfully called out and utilized in Central Saanich, Saanich, and Victoria jurisdictions in the same calendar year
- CMU’s reputation and expertise continue to grow at an exponential rate with team call outs doubling between 2017 to 2019
- Completed advanced criminal search training for all members to enhance Search and Canvass Team’s offensive and defensive search capabilities

## PRIORITIES FOR 2020/21

- Completion of tactical less lethal weapons platform transition and qualification for Tac members
- Replacement of CMU vehicle in 2020 and setting the foundation for purchase of vehicle in 2021 to increase CMU's capabilities
- Increasing team complement by 10 members to bring membership back up to necessary staffing levels
- Continue to provide essential decision making training for supervisors to enhance their overall team supervision capabilities



## 03.

## Integrated Mobile Crisis Response Team

The Integrated Mobile Crisis Response Team (IMCRT) is an agile, quick response team comprised of Island Health nurses, counselors, child & youth mental health clinicians, and police officers from Saanich and Victoria. IMCRT provides service to people in psychiatric or situational crisis throughout the CRD and Salt Spring Island. The team offers consultation, mobile crisis response & assessment, and short-term follow-up and referral services as required. IMCRT has been developed as a multi-disciplinary crisis response team that can assist police agencies through critical mental health support, thereby better facilitating rapid consultation, assessment, and linkage to community programs.



IMCRT assists front-line police officers in directing individuals who require psychological assessment and treatment, when necessary, to Emergency Room / Psychiatric Services. In most cases, IMCRT is able to explore alternatives for less intrusive treatment options and community-based care. The sharing of information between Island Health professionals and police about individuals who are potentially at risk of harming themselves (or others) allows for improved risk assessments, decision-making, and mitigation-of-risk strategies.

Police officers assigned to IMCRT have a tenure of three years on the team. Upon returning to their respective police agencies, they bring with them advanced skills and education related to mental health and substance use issues, along with comprehensive knowledge of the breadth of services available to those in need.

Since its inception in 2008, IMCRT calls for service have more than doubled.

### EFFICIENCIES

- Enhanced information-sharing between Island Health and local police
- Creation of collaborative safety plans to reduce the impact on Island Health and police resources
- Increased collaboration with local Assertive Community Treatment team to better serve high-risk clients
- Improved data collection through the addition of new categories, particularly in the area of referral sources

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Participation in the weekly meeting to collaborate on strategies for individuals who are decompensating in the community
- Increased support role during critical incidents where mental health is a significant factor
- Increased training delivered by our IMCRT officers to front-line members across the region

## PRIORITIES FOR 2020/21

- Securing enhanced training opportunities for police officers assigned to IMCRT to increase their subject-matter knowledge
- Identifying the next police officer to move into the unit upon an anticipated departure in early 2021
- Continuing to collaborate with other teams who provide services for those suffering from mental health and substance issues

## 04. Mobile Youth Services Team

The Mobile Youth Services Team (MYST) is an integrated unit that has been in existence for over 20 years. MYST is comprised of one Police Officer and two Youth/Family Counselors. The primary mandate for MYST but not limited to provide support and develop relationships with high-risk youth between the ages of 12-18 years who have been subjected or have the potential to be exposed to sexual exploitation throughout the CRD.

### EFFICIENCIES

- Establishing and creating supportive relationships with high-risk youth
- Providing proper services to high-risk Youth being sexually exploited
- Conducting criminal investigations when incidents of sexual exploitation have been reported
- Collection of Criminal Intelligence pertaining to activities involving human trafficking and the supply illegal drugs to youth
- Educating on the severity that exists with high-risk youth and sexual exploitation in the entire region

### HIGHLIGHTS

- Monitoring of two male and one female adults involved in human trafficking. As well as providing ongoing support for two of their victims
- Assistance provided to a local Police Agency with a Human Trafficking investigation
- Delivering presentations with the focus on sexual exploitation and high-risk youth to students/staff and parent groups
- Collaboration with school districts and provincial agencies (Ministry for Children and Families, Youth Probation) regarding concerns with high-risk youth
- Assisting Crown Counsel with strong evidence to ensure positive outcomes in the prosecution of exploiters

### PRIORITIES FOR 2020/21

- Ensuring high-risk youth are provided essential services to ensure their safety from exploiters in the CRD
- Effecting strong collaboration with provincial agencies and community groups
- Establishing sound direction to groups to help identify possible exploiters
- Providing ongoing criminal intelligence to assist police agencies in the CRD with their investigations
- Building strong relationships with high-risk youth to remove the negative stigma of police
- Educating community with the focus on the perils of sexual exploitation and substance abuse through open lectures

# 05.

## Regional Domestic Violence Unit

The Regional Domestic Violence Unit (RDVU) provides timely follow-up services in select domestic violence cases where high-risk factors are present. The RDVU increases victim safety and offender accountability by providing a cross-jurisdictional response across the CRD.

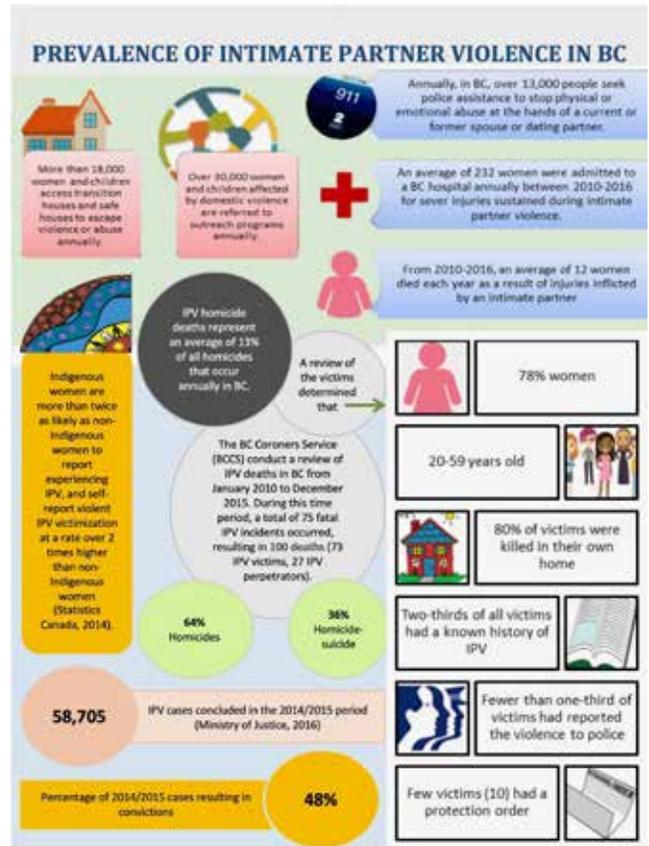
The RDVU is a partnership between the Victoria Police, Saanich Police, West Shore RCMP, Victoria Women’s Transition House Society, and the Ministry of Children and Family Development. The RDVU includes two police investigators, one police supervisor, one administrative assistant, two victim service workers, and one child protection social worker. The RDVU also has a courtesy agreement with Community Corrections, where one bail supervisor/probation officer manages all RDVU offenders.

The RDVU has established and sustained relationships with Crown Counsel, Community Corrections, Vancouver Island Regional Correctional Centre, Emergency Mental Health, Transition House Societies, the Ministry of Children and Family Development, local police agencies, and numerous other community partners.

The RDVU accepts referrals from any agency involved with Intimate Partner Violence, where high-risk factors are present. The RDVU also initiates referrals after determining that high-risk factors are present. The RDVU provides follow-up investigation, risk assessment, offender management, safety planning for victims and their children, and intensive victim support through the court process, and in some cases, beyond.

In 2019, the RDVU received 100 new referrals and triaged all of the files except five, where high-risk factors were not present. The RDVU assisted on 73 files, consulted on 42 files, submitted 29 files for additional charges, and opened 35 monitor files to document ongoing victim support and offender management. The RDVU is currently providing long-term support and management in 28 of the referrals in 2019.

This year saw considerable personnel changes with retirement, end of tenure, and maternity leaves. RDVU members have taken these changes in stride and continue to build upon past successes. The RDVU looks forward to continuing to realize efficiencies to increase capacity.



 **EFFICIENCIES**

- Audited and restructured the electronic file management tree to reduce the time spent on researching repeated offenders
- Implemented Major Case Management principles of file coordination to increase accountability and improve disclosure processes
- Streamlined the existing disclosure processes in consultation with Crown Counsel to increase responsiveness and capacity
- Developed and implemented an offender case management system through the existing police database
- Enhanced the data captured in the existing master case log to reduce the time spent on administrative reporting

 **HIGHLIGHTS**

- Follow-up investigation and collaboration with outside police agencies resulted in additional charges and offender accountability
- New team members received subject matter expert training in violence risk assessment and management and strangulation investigation
- Strangulation investigation training delivered to front-line police officers, victim service workers, social workers, and Crown Counsel
- RDVU members were regularly consulted as subject matter experts by other agencies conducting challenging investigations
- RDVU files continued to see a high rate of guilty pleas, which reduced court resources and did not require the victim to testify
- RDVU assisted with a provincial-level initiative to revise existing domestic violence risk factors and mandatory training for police

 **PRIORITIES FOR 2020/21**

- Continue to provide services to diverse populations in our community while adapting to changing trends
- Strengthen existing community partnerships to improve collaboration and information sharing
- Continue to deliver front-line Strangulation Prevention training in order to increase awareness and reporting
- Develop new community partnerships in mental health and addictions in order to better support victims and offenders
- Apply specialized threat assessment training and tools (SARA, SAM and B-SAFER) in high-risk domestic violence investigations
- Develop business rules that are applicable to a multi-jurisdictional unit serving seven police agencies
- Establish sustainable funding for future training initiatives
- Explore new offender management strategies to increase victim safety and offender accountability

# 06.

## Greater Victoria Crime Stoppers

Greater Victoria Crime Stoppers (GVCS) encourages members of the community to assist local law enforcement agencies in the fight against crime. We strive to overcome issues that inhibit people from sharing information with the police such as: fear of reprisal, apathy, and a reluctance to get involved.

The past year saw continued advancement for the Greater Victoria Crime Stoppers Program. Program coordinators, Phil Downie and Gill Millam, continue to oversee the day-to-day GVCS operations. GVCS has enjoyed unprecedented growth in this previous year, and the profile of the program is ever increasing through our social media presence and our strategic community partnerships.

### EFFICIENCIES

- Continued use of P3 (tip management software) makes tip collecting, documentation & dissemination more efficient
- Increased social media presence has solved cases more quickly. Suspects are often being identified in 5-15 minutes
- Continued flexibility in scheduling to allow coordinators to attend community events & meetings without incurring overtime costs
- Continued community relationships to increase the Crime Stoppers profile through local advertising at no cost to the program
- Positive relationships with all area police agencies to increase awareness of our services and ability to assist in investigations

### HIGHLIGHTS

- Received recognition and an award from Crime Stoppers International for our partnership with CHEK News (Best Public Service Announcement)
- Increased Social Media & online growth. Increased Facebook followers by 2650 from year before. Nine specific posts reached 386,831 people
- Increased growth of tips from 2014. This year tips increased 13.7%, our best measure of success and community impact. (2014: 818 - 2018: 930)
- Continued involvement in schools to connect with youth(400+ students)about how they can anonymously report crime using Crime Stoppers
- Continued partnership with Camosun College to create new material to highlight the overdose crisis and other issues in our communities
- Attending community events and parades. The Santa and Pride parades allow us to directly promote the program along with successful mall days displays



## PRIORITIES 2020/21

- Social Media: increase social media presence and increase followers (= higher tips submission & crimes being solved quicker)
- Youth: continue to proactively engage and interact with youth to raise awareness of Crime Stoppers
- Community Relations: build on existing and new relationships to help trust, which will increase crime reporting
- Partner Relationships: work with police partners and regulatory agencies to identify areas of concern and help address them
- Community Awareness: educate the public regarding to shifting community concerns, such as the vulnerable persons sector and the opioid crisis
- Proactive Response: seeking long-term/reoccurring issues that we can highlight and help prevent/encourage reporting (graffiti)




**GREATER VICTORIA  
CRIME  
STOPPERS**

**ELDER ABUSE - IT'S MORE COMMON THAN YOU THINK.**

**We want your information - not your name!**

 **1-800-222-TIPS (8477)**

 [facebook.com/GreaterVictoriaCrimeStoppers](https://facebook.com/GreaterVictoriaCrimeStoppers)

 [twitter.com/VicCrimeStop](https://twitter.com/VicCrimeStop)

or online at [victoriacrimestoppers.ca](https://victoriacrimestoppers.ca)

# 07.

## Greater Victoria Police Diversity Advisory Committee

The mandate of the Greater Victoria Police Diversity Advisory Committee (GVPDAC) is to build community relationships and help police officers better understand the diverse cultures, value systems, unique perspectives, conditions and religious beliefs of our diverse communities, and to act as a consultative and advisory body to the Chiefs of Greater Victoria’s police agencies.

The current structure of the GVPDAC includes community representatives from ten separate community groups or agencies along with police representatives from the individual police departments and RCMP detachments. The GVPDAC is co-chaired by a police officer and a community member.



### Participating community groups:

- » Victoria Native Friendship Centre
- » Inter-Cultural Association of Greater Victoria (ICA)
- » Victoria Pride Society
- » African Heritage Association of Vancouver Island (AHAVI)
- » Victoria Immigrant and Refugee Centre Society (VIRCS)
- » India Canada Cultural Association (ICCA)
- » Ismaili Faith Community
- » Francophone Society of Victoria
- » Rainbow Health Cooperative
- » Jewish Federation of Victoria and Vancouver Island

### Participating police agencies:

- » Victoria Police Department
- » West Shore RCMP Detachment
- » Saanich Police Department
- » Sidney/North Saanich RCMP Detachment
- » Oak Bay Police Department
- » Central Saanich Police Service
- » Military Police Unit Esquimalt

## EFFICIENCIES

- Replacement of several valuable, long-contributing committee members transitioned as per new terms of membership and succession
- Responsibility for specific community engagement initiatives like Open Houses, station tours assumed by individual police agencies
- Budget efficiencies resulted in a proposed 7% decrease for 2020 budget
- Area chiefs of police decided a local department or detachment other than Saanich PD or Vic PD would provide next co-chair officer
- Constable Michelle Joyce, Central Saanich Police Service appointed as police co-chair, replacing Staff Sgt. Scott Treble of Saanich PD

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Key roles in The Inclusion Project dialogue at Royal Roads University, with focus on gender equity, racial inclusion and youth engagement
- William Head Institution staff and inmates welcomed police and community representatives to penitentiary for their first Ethno-cultural Fair
- The Pathways to Professions & Trades (P2PT) Program at VIRCS recognized the committee's welcoming of young newcomers to our communities
- Vic PD representatives led an outpouring of community reassurance & support to the Masjid Al-Iman community after the New Zealand tragedy
- Participation in the Racism, Hate Crimes & Islamophobia forum delivered by ICA, with support from Organizing Against Racism & Hate (OARH)
- Pilot project held with a representative from Sikh Youth of Victoria joining the Committee for a ninety day orientation period

## PRIORITIES 2020/21

- Continue to seek innovative opportunities for trust and relationship building through dialogue with LGBTQ2 community members
- Expand membership to include a representative from the Muslim communities and from other under-represented diverse groups
- Reconciliation partnership efforts with Indigenous community members, arising from MMIWG Final Report's Calls for Justice
- Ensure transition of knowledge and seek opportunities for growth with the addition of several new committee representatives
- Renewed focus on shared sports activities as a bridge to bring diverse community members together with police officers
- Increased utilization of social media platforms as a means of increasing public awareness and community engagement
- Continue using police Open House events and police station tour opportunities as opportunities for community engagement
- Transition administrative support, finance & budget services from Saanich Police Department to Central Saanich Police Service



# 08.

## Vancouver Island Integrated Major Crime Unit (VIIMCU)

The Vancouver Island Integrated Major Crime Unit was created in 2007 as a partnership between the RCMP and the Victoria Police Department. Today, VIIMCU is comprised of police officers from the RCMP, Victoria Police and the Saanich Police and, in lieu of police officer positions, receives funding from the Oak Bay Police Department and Central Saanich Police Service. VIIMCU's mandate is to investigate serious crime specific to homicides, missing persons where foul play is suspected, and select unsolved homicides. VIIMCU provides these investigative services to the entire Greater Victoria area in addition to the provincial areas on Vancouver Island policed by the RCMP.



Serious crimes such as homicides are complex and time consuming to investigate. VIIMCU enhances the ability of partner agencies to effectively respond to these serious crimes by leveraging the benefits of integration, cooperation, communication and sharing of information and expertise.

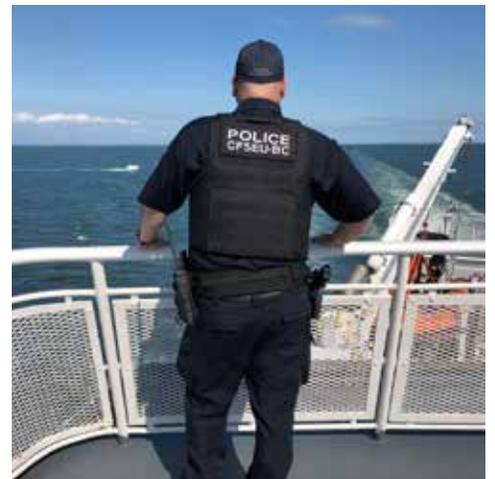
VIIMCU remained busy through 2019. VIIMCU opened 27 investigative files, which is 8 more than 2018, but several were quite complex and continue to be a heavy draw on resources. These files were added to open files from previous years that also remain under investigation. Also in 2019, two convictions were registered on investigations in Oak Bay and Salt Spring Island. Furthermore, accused in Homicides in Powell River and Salt Spring Island were found not criminally responsible due to Mental Disorder. Charges were approved in two others. Disclosure demands and ongoing trials continue to add to the draw on civilian and sworn resources.

# 09.

## Combined Forces Special Enforcement Unit (CFSEU)

The Combined Forces Special Enforcement Unit is an independent law enforcement agency in British Columbia staffed primarily by seconded police officers from municipal police agencies and the RCMP from throughout the province. CFSEU has a broad mandate that includes contributing to and sharing crime research and intelligence, coordinating long term crime reduction strategies at the provincial, national and international levels reducing gang and organized crime violence, and deterring organized crime and related violence. CFSEU uses both uniform and covert investigative techniques and policing units during the pursuit of their mandate

Currently, the Victoria, Saanich, Central Saanich and Oak Bay police departments, as well as the RCMP, have officers seconded to the local CFSEU team.



CFSEU supports local agencies related to Outlaw Motorcycle Gang monitoring and enforcement, and conducts investigations related to CFSEU's mandate. More information can be found at [www.cfseu.bc.ca](http://www.cfseu.bc.ca)

## 10.

## Capital Regional District Integrated Road Safety Unit (CRD-IRSU)

The Integrated Road Safety Unit is comprised of seconded police officers from each of the local municipal police agencies and the RCMP. CRD-IRSU's mandate includes harm reduction on BC roadways, strategic traffic enforcement related to high-risk locations and activities, commercial vehicle enforcement, criminal interdictions, and assisting and enhancing local traffic enforcement units with strategic enforcement projects and operations.

CRD-IRSU is operated by the RCMP through funding provided by the Insurance Corporation of British Columbia to the BC Provincial Government's Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General. CRD-IRSU receives local input from a Joint Management Team comprised of representatives from the local police agencies and the RCMP.



## 11.

## Integrated National Security Enforcement Team (E-INSET)

Integrated National Security Enforcement Teams exist throughout Canada under the management of the RCMP. INSET's are intended to increase the capacity for the collection, sharing and analysis of intelligence among partners with respect to individuals or groups that pose a threat to national security in addition to conducting investigations related to these individuals and groups. INSET's include representatives from the RCMP, federal partners such as the Canadian Border Services Agency, and local police agencies.

Locally, representatives from each of the municipal police agencies as well as the RCMP are assigned to the local INSET unit on secondment.

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