*A person sitting at a desk with a computer

Description automatically generated*

**Eli Lawrence Sopow, Ph.D.**

*University Canada West*

*and*

**Curt Taylor Griffiths, Ph.D.**

*Simon Fraser University*

**October 2023**

**The Forgotten Few**

*A research study of the workplace cultures and lived experiences of civilian employees in British Columbia Royal Canadian Mounted Police Detachments and the E-Comm emergency response centres*

**Acknowledgements**

The project team would like to thank the supervisors and managers and civilian personnel in RCMP detachments and in E-COMM centres for participating in the study and sharing their lived experiences in their respective workplaces. In conjunction with materials gathered in previous studies, the findings of the present study can be used to inform efforts to address the challenges and issues that have been identified.

**Table of Contents**

Summary of Findings 4

The 29 questions leading to an Action Plan 5

Workplace Culture and Climate and the Mental Health and Well-Being

of Municipal Employees in Police Services 9

Purpose of the Survey and the Research Method 10

A Comparison with Previous Research on RCMP Organizational Dynamics 10

**Part I: BC RCMP Detachments and Municipal Employees** 11

1.0 A Brief Background on Civilians Working in RCMP Detachments 11

1.1 What the BC-Ottawa Agreement Means to RCMP Municipal Employees 13

1.2 Who Pays for Municipal Employees Working in BC RCMP Detachments? 13

1.3 How the Number of Municipal Employees in RCMP Detachments is Determined:

The 2020 City of Kamloops Business Case 14

1.4 The Funding Formula for Matching RCMP Detachment Policing Needs

with Support Staff: How Much is Enough? 15

1.5 Estimating the Required Number of Municipal Employees in RCMP Detachments 16

1.6 Municipal Responsibilities for Civilian Municipal Employee RCMP Staffing 16

1.7 Provincial Responsibilities for Civilian Employee RCMP Staffing 16

1.8 How Many Municipal Employees Are Enough in an RCMP Detachment? 17

1.9 The Survey Results from 17 RCMP Detachments (September 2023) 16

1.10 A Cautionary Conclusion 16

**1.11 Managing People Not Just Statistics** 18

1.12 Civilian RCMP Detachment Employees Often Operate in Stressful Workplace

Conditions with Poor Employer Attention to their Mental Health and Well-Being 18

1.13 The Overall Detachment Culture 18

1.14 Detachment Structures and Systems 20

1.15 Detachment Workplace Climate (job satisfaction, morale) 22

1.16 Emotional Health 22

1.17 The Causes of Municipal Employees Feeling Emotionally Stressed 25

1.18 In Their Own Words: Stress and RCMP Detachment Municipal Employees 27

1.19 The Myth of Civilian Work-Life Balance in RCMP Detachments 27

1.20 The Different Opinions of the Workplace by Non-Supervisors and Supervisors 29

1.21 The Workplace Culture: Significant Gaps in the Workplace Ratings Between

Civilian Municipal Employees and Their Managers 29

1.22 Managers/Supervisors and Direct Reports: Resistance to Change 33

1.23 Workplace Climate: Gaps in Workplace Ratings Between RCMP Civilian

Municipal Employees and Their Managers in Levels of Job Satisfaction and Morale 35

1.25 Workplace Climate: Significant Gaps Between RCMP Civilian Municipal

Employees and Their Managers with Respect to Organizational Dynamics 36

1.26 Who is Responsible for Improving the Workplace Climate? 37

1.27 The Workplace Culture 37

1.28 The Workplace Structure and Systems 37

1.29 The Workplace Climate 37

1.30 In Their Own Words: What Civilian Employees in BC RCMP Detachments

Have to Say About Their Lived Experiences 39

**PART II: The E-COMM Emergency Response Centre** 45

2.0 Background 45

2.1 Summary of Key Findings 46

2.2 E-COMM Workplace Culture 47

2.3 E-COMM Structure and Systems 47

2.4 E-COMM Workplace Climate

2.5 E-COMM managers vs. non-managers workplace perceptions 52

2.6 Early comparisons of workplace structures and systems/processes:

civilian employees at RCMP detachments and E-COMM 53

2.7 What this all means 53

The research study team 56

References 58

**Tables and Charts**

Table 1. Workplace culture performance gaps 18

Table 2. Employee ratings of detachment structures and systems 20

Table 3. Emotional health ratings of RCMP detachment municipal / civilian employees 23

Table 4. Causes of emotional stress for civilian employees in RCMP detachments 25

Table. 5. The balancing of workplace and personal life 27

Table 6. Difference in ratings of workplace culture 29

Table 7. Managers/supervisors versus direct reports rating of workplace

structures and systems 31

Table 8. Differences in impact on stressors on managers/supervisors 32

Table 9. Attitudes toward and ratings of innovation and change by

managers/supervisors vs. direct reports 34

Graph 1. Differences in morale and job satisfaction by managers / non-managers 35

Table 10. Managers vs. non-managers rating of workplace dynamics 36

Table 11. Responsibility for improving workplace conditions at BC RCMP detachments 38

Table 12. E-COMM employee ratings of workplace culture factors 48

Table 13. E-COMM employee ratings of workplace structure and systems / processes 49

Table 14. E-COMM workplace climate 49

Table 15. E-COMM workplace climate job satisfaction and morale 50

Table 16. E-COMM employee’s emotional health 50

Table 17.RCMP and E-COMM non-manager/supervisor civilian employees’

perceptions of workplace culture performance 54

Table 18. RCMP and E-COMM non-manager/supervisor

civilian employees’ perceptions of workplace structure, systems, 55

**Summary of Findings**

* RCMP civilian and support staff within detachments are an integral part of the efficient and effective operations of police services impacting crime investigations, response to calls, dealing with public complaints, and general administration. Unlike Regular Member police officers who frequently transfer to other detachments or police services, civilian staff are a stable complement of employees with strong local backgrounds and knowledge of their community.
* As reported in Section 1 of the report, the responses of municipal supervisors/managers and civilian employees reveal public safety in British Columbia RCMP detachments may be jeopardized because little or no change has occurred in at least five years for those municipally and provincially paid civilian employees.
* The results reveal shows civilian support personnel have low morale, are not taken seriously, are negatively affected by chronic understaffing in detachments, are subjected to poor leadership, and often work in organizational environments where the workplace culture is resistant to change and innovation. This has a direct impact on the quality of RCMP police services provided to communities and hinders the ability of detachments to effectively respond to the increasing challenges in their operational environment.
* The workplace issues negatively impacting civilian support staff come at a time when RCMP detachments are significantly understaffed with sworn police officers who themselves report low morale, being overworked, and are experiencing significant issues with respect to their mental health and well-being.
* There are significant differences in the perceptions of the civilian managers and the personnel that they manage with respect to the RCMP detachment culture, structure and systems, and the workplace climate and culture. This gap can contribute to the stressors experienced by civilian staff and impact their mental health and well-being. It may also affect their job performance and commitment to the goals of the organization and contribute to workplace conflict and inefficient processes.
* It is unclear what process is used to determine the number of civilian and municipal employees in RCMP detachments. An analysis of BC policing resources and data combined with a review of municipal employees within detachments resulted in mixed results.
* The results from the survey also reveal that civilian employees in the E-COMM emergency response centre in the Greater Vancouver region also produced low ratings with respect to staff morale, lacking sufficient personnel, dissatisfaction with how conflict is managed in the organization, are affected by the lack of sufficient personnel, feel that employees are often not held a accountable, and give low marks for their organization being innovative and facilitative of change.

**The 29 Questions Leading to an Action Plan**

This report and its findings are intended to add value to a conference of municipal and other civilian RCMP detachment employees scheduled for October 17-18, 2023, in Kamloops BC. To that end, a series of questions accompany the data tables provided throughout the report. From an organization development perspective, the collaborative development of answers to the following 29 questions will provide the basis for initiating change in the detachments, in independent municipal police services, and in the communications centres.

**p. 18 Table 1. Workplace culture performance gaps**

1. Why are there significant performance gaps between what employees rate as being very important to a detachment workplace and the actual performance ratings? What are the root causes of these performance gaps? What are the solutions and changes required? Which changes are within the control of employees, and which are not?
2. Can RCMP detachments successfully serve a community with rapidly evolving public safety needs in the absence of innovation and effective change management? What actions are needed to correct this situation?

**p. 20 Table 2. Employee ratings of detachment structures and systems**

1. How many civilian resources including municipal employees are required to fully support the operations of sworn officers? Is there a “formula” for such a number? Is it a question of additional resources or improved management of existing resources?
2. What are the reasons for the significant gaps between what the employees rate as being important structures and systems in a detachment and the performance of those factors? What can be done to close these gaps?
3. How are the list of factors connected to each other, in other words, how does change in one impact others either positively or negatively?

**p. 23 Table 3. Emotional health ratings of RCMP detachment municipal / civilian employees**

1. What process and systems are available in your workplace to address the mental health and well-being needs of civilian employees?
2. Is the mental health and well-being of employees taken seriously in detachments? In what way and to what effect?
3. What do you think are the causes for stress and mental health issues in your detachment?
4. What more can be done to deal with workplace emotional health in detachments?
5. How does the emotional health of civilians and municipal employees in detachments affect the work of sworn police officers?

**p. 25 Table 4. Causes of emotional stress for civilian employees in RCMP detachments**

1. Almost a quarter of civilian employees in detachments stated on the survey that they take their workplace stress home and into their personal life. How does this affect personal relationships and the emotional and physical well-being of employees? How can this issue best be addressed?
2. Will adding more civilian staff to a detachment reduce the workplace pressures or is improved management and leadership required?

**p. 27 Table 5. The Balancing of Workplace and Personal Life.**

1. Why are there different ratings in the extent to which civilian municipal employees take personal stress into the workplace and taking workplace stress into their personal lives?

**p. 29 Table 6. Difference in ratings of workplace culture by those in charge**

1. Why are there different ratings of how good a workplace culture is between those managing / supervising employees and those being managed? Is this an issue of communication, of understanding the workplace needs, of having enough time, and/or other factors?

**p. 31 Table 7. Managers/supervisors versus direct reports rating of workplace structures and systems**

1. Why do employees who are managed by supervisors and those who are workplace managers in RCMP detachments have very different opinions of how well the workplace structures and systems are functioning? Is this due to the quality of communication, management skills, available time, and/or other factors? What can be done to close the gap?
2. Do these survey results show that civilian managers within RCMP detachments are not as connected to those they manage as they should be?

**p. 32 Table 8. Differences in impact on stressors on managers/supervisors**

1. Mangers and supervisors rated the negative impact of harassment and discrimination on their personal work lives six times higher than those civilians they manage in RCMP detachments. What is the reason for this? Is this at least partly a function of managers having more contact with sworn officers? What can be done to effectively address this dynamic?
2. The major stressors for managers are staff under their supervision due to understaffing, interactions with sworn officers, and the challenges of balancing their work and personal lives. What impact do these stressors have on the ability of managers to effectively carry out their roles?
3. Non-managers feel more stress than managers when it comes to having a say in, or control of, decision-making. How does this impact their levels of job satisfaction, morale, and performance?

**p. 34 Table 9. Attitudes and ratings of innovation and change by managers/supervisors vs. direct reports**

1. What can be done to foster greater innovation and the successful management of change in your detachment?
2. What innovations and changes are urgently needed and why? What are the consequences of not effecting change?
3. Only 37% of non-managers agree that their detachment holds all employees accountable for action while 61% of managers agree. Why the discrepancy?

**p. 35 Graph 1. Differences in morale and job satisfaction by managers / non-managers**

1. Why do civilian managers at BC RCMP detachments report higher levels of job satisfaction than the civilians they manage? How can job satisfaction for non-managers be increased?
2. Why do civilian managers at BC RCMP detachments have higher morale than the civilians that they manage? How can morale for non-managers be increased?

**p. 36 Table 10. Managers vs. non-managers rating of workplace climate factors**

1. Why are managers of civilian / municipal employees far more positive than those they manage when asked to rate critical workplace climate factors such as conflict resolution, timely communication, and agreeing that the detachment workplace is “back to normal” following the recent global pandemic? Does this gap between perceptions of the workplace attributable to the attitudes and management/leadership styles of civilian managers, and/or other factors?
2. Non-managers agree that they take home negative events from work almost twice as often as managers / supervisors. Why does this occur and what initiatives can be taken to address this issue?

**p. 38 Table 11. Responsibility for improving workplace conditions at BC RCMP detachments**

1. Why are there such differences between civilian managers and those civilians / municipal employees they manage when it comes to being responsible for the improvements to a detachment’s culture, structure and systems, and the workplace climate?
2. Does the result showing that 43% of managers agree that “Employees themselves have a responsibility to recommend changes without being asked” compared to 15% who agree with that statement.
3. Change and innovation in a workplace cannot happen without successful communication, coordination, collaboration, and trusted relationships between all stakeholders. What do these results in Table 11 suggest about the future state of BC RCMP detachments?
4. What is needed to create successful processes of urgent change?

**p. 48 Table 12. E-COMM employee ratings of workplace culture factors**

1. Why are there significant gaps between E-COMM employees’ ratings of the importance of workplace culture factors and their perceptions of the organization’s performance? What initiatives can be taken to address these rating gaps?

**p. 49 Table 13. E-COMM employee ratings of workplace structure and systems/processes**

1. Why are there significant gaps between E-COMM employees’ ratings of the importance

of workplace systems/processes and their perceptions of the organization’s performance? What initiatives can be taken to address these gaps?

**p. 49 Table 14. E-COMM workplace climate**

1. Why are there gaps between E-COMM employees’ ratings of the importance of

workplace climate factors and their perceptions of the organization’s performance? What initiatives can be taken to address these gaps?

**p. 50 Table 15. “E-COMM workplace climate job satisfaction and morale**

1. What are the factors that contribute to good/very good job satisfaction and morale and how

can these be enhanced in the organization?

2. How is the large gap between the importance of workplace conflict resolution and

employees’ perception of the organization’s performance affecting the job satisfaction and

morale of employees? What initiatives can be taken to address any issues that exist?

**p. 50 Table 16. E-COMM employees’ emotional health**

1. How can the factors that affect E-COMM employees’ emotional health best be addressed?

2. What best practices exist in other public and private sector organizations can inform the

development of a strategy to ensure employees’ emotional health?

**p. 54 Table 17. RCMP and E-COMM non-manager/supervisor civilian employees’ perceptions of workplace culture performance**

1. What are the potential sources and implications of the similarities and differences between

RCMP and E-COMM civilian perceptions of workplace culture performance?

**p. 55 Table 18. RCMP and E-COMM non-manager/supervisor civilian employees’ perceptions of workplace structure, systems, processes performance**

1. What are the potential sources and implications of the similarities and differences between

RCMP and E-COMM civilian perceptions of workplace culture performance?

**Workplace Culture and Climate and the Mental Health and Well-Being of Municipal Employees in Police Services**

In recent years, there has been considerable research and discussion surrounding the mental health and well-being of first responders, including police. These studies have focused primarily on sworn officers. Even though municipal employees are an integral component of all police services, less attention has been given to them.

The present study builds on previous research conducted by Sopow and Griffiths in independent municipal police services and RCMP detachments in the province that included a focus on civilian employees, their workplace culture, stressors, and mental health and well-being (see Griffiths, Sopow and Murphy, 2022a; Griffiths and Sopow, 2022b; Griffiths, Sopow, and Murphy, 2021).

It is important to note that, although the focus of this report is on the experience of municipal employees in RCMP detachments in BC, studies in independent municipal police services in the province have produced similar findings. The systemic organizational issues that impact the emotional, mental health and well-being and performance of municipal employees are prevalent in all police services.

Further, many of the challenges experienced by municipal employees in RCMP detachments may be affected by the extent to which the employees’ unions are actively involved in ensuring their mental health and well-being. A common sentiment among municipal employees in previous studies is that their unions have little understanding of their roles and responsibilities. In many circumstances, municipal employees are paid less than building cleaners and other unionized staff in the municipality, including staff who check out ice skates at the local arena.

The decisions of municipal councils regarding funding for municipal employee positions in detachments may contribute to understaffing and its impacts. These factors are beyond the control of the RCMP as an organization and should be further studied.

A significant body of empirical research provides conclusive evidence that effective, efficient, and healthy workplaces present high levels of job satisfaction and morale, positive internal communication, conflict management, employee involvement, fairness, respect, and an openness to change and innovations, regardless of the organization.

Future research should explore the role of governments, police services, unions, and supervisors/managers in creating positive workplace cultures and climates for municipal employees as well as the effectiveness of current EAP programs and services in addressing the needs of these employees.

**Purpose of the Survey and the Research Method**

The purpose of this research study was to provide comprehensive feedback and analysis of how civilian / municipal employees in RCMP detachments and personnel in E-COMM centres in BC view, experience, and are impacted by their workplace culture. The findings from the study and the questions that are raised by the results are to be discussed during a workshop of civilian managers held on October 17-18, 2023, in Kamloops BC. Key issues include what initiatives can be taken to address the challenges that are identified and the extent to which these challenges impact the ability of police services to ensure the safety of communities.

The survey was designed and administered in Spring, 2023, by Professors Eli Sopow, a faculty member in the MBA program at University Canada West and Curt Taylor Griffiths, School of Criminology, Simon Fraser University working closely Devon Cooper, Manager of Police Support Services, Prince George RCMP detachment.

The survey asked municipal employees and their supervisors/managers in RCMP detachments and in E-COMM communication centres to answer seventy-six scaled-answer questions about the quality of the workplace culture, the effectiveness of reporting lines within the workplace structure, systems of communication, training, systems of human resource management, employee morale, and drivers of employee emotional, physical, and mental health and well-being. Respondents were also provided the opportunity to share their lived experiences in their own verbatim responses to questions.

The final survey sample included 128 civilian / municipal employees from small and large RCMP municipal detachments throughout all regions of B.C. and 51 E-COMM employees, primarily from the Greater Vancouver area.

**A Comparison with Previous Research on RCMP Organizational Dynamics**

The RCMP 2023 municipal employee detachment results were compared to a similar employee survey and questions conducted in November 2018 by the BC-RCMP Headquarters Operations Strategy Branch (Sopow, E.). The full report and statistical data including responses from 2,129 BC-RCMP employees of all categories was obtained through an Access to Information and Protection of Privacy (ATIP) request in 2019, with data received in 2023.

Of the total number of responses in 2018, 662 included all civilian employee categories including Civilian Members, Public Service Employees, and Municipal Employees. ***In most cases, the results showed no change or a worsening of workplace conditions for civilian employees between 2018 and 2023.***

**Part 1:** **BC RCMP Detachments and Municipal Employees**

**1.0 A Brief Background on Civilians Working in RCMP Detachments**

Municipal Employees working in RCMP Detachments are City employees who provide support to the RCMP.

There are currently three major categories of employee within the RCMP:

1. Regular Members (RMs who are sworn police officers).
2. Civilian Members (CM) who are specialized civilians providing a wide range of management, research, analysis, planning, communication, and support services to RMs. Once under the RCMP Act, CM are transitioning to the Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC) union, and
3. Municipal Employees (MEs), the focus of this research, who work in detachments and provide a wide range of support services. The MEs are usually, but not always, members of the Canadian Union of Public Employees, the union representing civilian employees. However, a minority of civilian employees within detachments are members of the PSAC.

There are 144 BC RCMP detachments in British Columbia serving both rural areas, small towns (under 5,000 population), and large municipalities (over 5,000 population).[[1]](#endnote-1) Each detachment employs civilian support staff for a wide range of work including clerks, data processors, telecommunications operators, jail guards, and analysts.[[2]](#endnote-2)

The MEs have varied responsibilities in the detachment. These include:

* The personnel at the front counter, take complaints, complete Police Information Checks, answer the switchboard, and connect clients with the officers.
* Victim services, include meeting with victims of crime either onsite or in the office, offering their support, services, and referrals to assist them through their traumatizing event.
* Community Policing, reaching out to the community and offering crime prevention programs and presentations in schools, workplaces, and neighborhoods.
* Financial clerks to process pay, payables and receivables for the detachment, RCMP members, and City staff.
* Guards who ensure the safety and well-being of the prisoners and the RCMP members in the guardroom, are often being the recipient of verbal abuse, deal with blood and excrement from those lodged in cells and are impacted with cell deaths should they be the ones on duty at the time the death has occurred.
* Exhibit Custodians ensuring that all property evidence is securely and properly maintained for files going to court.
* Records staff ensure that all files generated by the police are completed accurately for statistical reporting purposes, disclosure to the agencies requesting information on police files, ensuring the accuracy of personal information of victims, and accused individuals.
* Crime Analysts collate, analyze data, and provide reports for intelligence lead policing.
* Video Analysts convert CCVE footage into evidence to assist officers to secure convictions in court.
* Data Processors convert all file evidence into electronic format for court purposes on murder files, fraud, sexual assaults, and other more serious crimes.
* Court Unit gathers and submits General Duty files to Court and swear the charges that lead to convictions.
* CPIC operators update the police information database on warrants, prohibitions, undertakings, and stolen items.
* Transcriptionists type all of the verbal statements taken by the officers from both victims of crime and accused.
* Management oversees the health and safety and well-being of the Municipal employees, detachment projects, processes, policies, liaising with senior RCMP management and staff/City Hall senior management, monitoring the budget and leading their teams and division.

All these staff members work alongside the RCMP police members in the detachment and, as such, they see the same atrocities, hear the same statements filled with horror, sadness, and emotion as do the members. They collect visual, verbal, and physical evidence that are linked with homicides, serial killers, sexual assaults, and general everyday crimes to assist officers in their case investigations. Staff members may have these experiences throughout their entire shift but often do not have the same supports nor receive the same recognition as that of the sworn officers.

**1.1 What the BC-Ottawa Agreement Means to RCMP Municipal Employees**

The *Municipal Police Unit Agreement* between the Province of BC and the federal government states:

2.5 The Province will, or any Municipality may, provide, without any cost to Canada, all necessary Support Staff; such staff will meet the job and other related requirements as determined by the Commissioner.[[3]](#endnote-3)

The Agreement, *relevant to this research study* of Municipal Employees in BC RCMP detachments, also states (highlighted for this report):

* 1. **If the Province or a Municipality does not provide the Support Staff required by sub-article 2.5, Canada may provide, upon reasonable notice to the Province or Municipality, resources in place of such Support Staff, and the Province will pay 100 per cent of all the costs incurred by Canada to provide such resources.[[4]](#endnote-4)**

**1.2 Who Pays for Municipal Employees Working in BC RCMP Detachments?**

**Municipalities**

* Under the *Municipal Police Unit Agreement* between the Province of BC and the federal government, the wages, benefits and working conditions of Municipal Employees working in RCMP detachments serving *populations over 5,000* are the responsibility of the municipality. The actual number of MEs required is determined through discussions between the civilian manager and the detachment commander. This budgeted number must then be submitted to the municipal council for approval as part of the overall detachment budget. Notably, there is no standardized formula for determining the number of civilian municipal employees required in detachments.
* **The municipality pays 100% of costs for support staff** while costs of RCMP sworn officers is based on a funding formula wherein a municipality between 5,000 and 14,999 population pay 70% of RCMP costs and municipalities over 15,000 population pay 90%. In 2021, there were 65 RCMP municipal detachments in communities over populations over 5,000, representing an authorized strength of 4,528 sworn officers.[[5]](#endnote-5)

**Rural and Smaller Communities**

* The policing agreements with the federal government also stipulate that for rural and *communities under 5,000 population*, the costs of Municipal Employees must be 100% paid for by the Province. The Provincial Business Line budgeting process requires each detachment to submit an annual business case for additional human and other resources to BC RCMP headquarters where staff review the needs and risks and compile a list of priority requirements to be presented to the Commanding Officer and senior RCMP executive for discussion.

The Commanding Officer uses the data in the overall annual budget submission to the provincial government which makes the final determination for a global BC RCMP Provincial Business Line budget.[[6]](#endnote-6) In 2021 there were approximately 85 detachments in communities *under 5,000 population* in addition to unincorporated rural areas with an authorized strength of 794 sworn police officers.[[7]](#endnote-7)

**1****.3 How the Number of Municipal Employees in RCMP Detachments is Determined: The 2020 City of Kamloops Business Case**

The question of how many support staff paid for by either a municipality or the provincial government are required to effectively serve an RCMP detachment is an important one. One answer can be found in the City of Kamloops business case submission to City Council in February 2020 requesting two additional municipal employees at the RCMP detachment.

The Kamloops report, prepared by the RCMP Municipal Support Services Manager and the City Planning and Procurement Manager, presented a detailed argument for the hiring of two additional municipal employees for the local RCMP detachment, paid for by the City. The positions included an additional Crime Analyst and a Police Accounts Clerk. The rationale given for the additional positions is one that this research study has found to apply to many BC RCMP detachments. It stated:

Over the past several years, policing has seen significant change. An increase in the calls for service, changes in crime trends and the types of crime, and an ever-changing socio-economic environment are some of the pressures facing the Kamloops RCMP Detachment. The investigation of serious/major crimes within BC has evolved in the following areas:

• number of required resources needed to investigate crimes.

• length of investigations.

• complexity of investigations.

• the use of digital evidence and related technical support required.

• Supreme Court of Canada Case Law legal decisions. (*R. v. Jordan*, Criminal Practice Direction for Complex Criminal Cases)

• BC Provincial Policing Standards and Major Case Management principles

With these changes come an increase in administrative duties required by the RCMP. Using municipal support service staff to perform these administrative duties reduces the amount of administrative work required by RCMP members, which allows them to focus on operational police service priorities.[[8]](#endnote-8)

**1.4 The Funding Formula for Matching RCMP Detachment Policing Needs with Support Staff: How Much is Enough?**

The 2020 Kamloops RCMP business case provides insights into the process that is used to determine what complement of civilian employees is required to adequate support police officers within an RCMP detachment. The case presented the following formula[[9]](#endnote-9):

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Municipality** | **Municipal Employees (ME)** | **Funded RCMP Members** | **Ratio (ME to RCMP Members)** |
| Coquitlam | 102.86 | 239 | 1: 2.32 |
| Kelowna | 74 | 191 | 1: 2.58 |
| Prince George | 56 | 133 | 1: 2.37 |
| Kamloops | 53.25 | 136 | 1: 2.55 |

* Rounded out, the average municipal employee ratio to RCMP sworn member within the detachments presented in the business case is 1: 2.5 (1 civilian to 2.5 Regular Members). Anecdotally, this general ratio is often expressed in strategic planning deliberations at BC RCMP Headquarters.[[10]](#endnote-10)
* However, detachments throughout BC vary significantly in terms of calls for service, crime rates, actual versus authorized number of police officers, population demographics, detachment geographic boundaries, and municipal budget strength. These and other variables unique to a detachment result in a range of municipal employee-police officer ratios.

**1.5 Estimating the Required Number of Municipal Employees in RCMP Detachments**

In general, the average ratio of civilian / municipal employee (ME) to RCMP regular member (RM) police officers within BC detachments is 1:2.5 (1 ME / 2.5 RM).

**1.6 Municipal Responsibilities for Civilian Municipal Employee RCMP Staffing**

* The latest publicly available data (2021 BC Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General) shows that there were 31 RCMP detachments in municipalities with a population of 15,000 or over with a combined authorized strength of 3,503 Regular Members (RM) sworn police officers. [[11]](#endnote-11) This means an average strength of 131 RM per detachment. Applying the ratio of 1:2.5 means an average of 52 ME per detachment or 1,401 overall.
* The same BC government data source shows that there were 34 municipalities between 5,000 and 14,999 population with RCMP municipal detachments, totalling 471 RM [[12]](#endnote-12) or an average of 14 RM per detachment. Again, applying the average ratio of 1:2.5 presents an average of 5.6 ME per detachment or 190 in total.

**1.7 Provincial Responsibilities for Civilian Employee RCMP Staffing**

* The 2021 BC Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General report on police resources reveals that 115 communities under 5,000 population plus unincorporated rural areas are served by 794 RCMP Regular Members administered through the Provincial Business Line (PBL) where 100% of civilian support start is paid for by the Province. Using the formula of 1:2.5 this works out to about 318 civilian support staff serving all areas of provincial policing, or about 2.7 support staff per detachment.

**1.8 How Many Municipal Employees Are Enough in an RCMP Detachment?**

As noted earlier, the overall average of one municipal/civilian employee per 2.5 sworn police officers can be affected by a variety of factors affecting policing with no apparent consistency applied to the formula.

**1.9 The Survey Results from 17 RCMP Detachments (September 2023)**

To identify any patterns to the hiring of civilian staff within RCMP detachments the authors of this study used data pertaining to the number of civilian employees as well as the authorized strength of 17 various sized RCMP detachments throughout BC (September 2023). In addition, the data was compared to each detachment’s Criminal Code offences as well as crime rates (2022). The civilian / RM ratio ranged from 1:1.0 (1 civilian per 1 officer) to 1:4.0 (1 civilian for 4 officers), with an average of 1:2.0 (one civilian per two RCMP officers).

Important factors not considered in this brief review include geography, travel time to calls, calls for service and types of calls, support levels from nearby detachments, turnover of police officers, the demographics of a population served, and actual versus authorized strength of detachment police personal.

An analysis of the 17 detachments using 2021 Provincial government policing statistics (the latest publicly available) reveals:

* The detachment with the highest RM case load had a civilian/RM ratio of 1:2 (one civilian municipal employee per two police officers) while the detachment with the *lowest* RM case load had a civilian/RM ratio of 1:3 (one civilian municipal employee per three police officers).
* The detachment with the highest crime rate had a ratio of 1:2.4, meaning one civilian municipal employee per 2.4 police officers. The detachment with the *lowest* crime rate had a ratio of 1:1.6 meaning one civilian per 1.6 police officers.
* The detachment with the highest number of Criminal Code offences had a ratio of 1:2 meaning one civilian per two police officers while the detachment with the *lowest* Criminal Code offences had a ratio of 1:4 meaning one civilian per four police officers.

**1.10 A Cautionary Conclusion**

* The limited research suggests a relationship between higher case loads, crime rates, and Criminal Code offences within a detachment and the need for a higher ratio between the number of civilian/municipal employees and police officers.
* **A very important consideration is the effectiveness of the formula used in allocating civilian/police officer ratios is the workplace environment of BC RCMP detachments****.**

**1.11 Managing People Not Just Statistics**

**1.12 Civilian RCMP Detachment Employees Often Operate in Stressful Workplace Conditions with Poor Employer Attention to their Mental Health and Well-Being**

The top causes of workplace stress rated by RCMP municipal employees in the online survey are:

* Levels of pay.
* A heavy workload.
* Facing unreasonable deadlines.
* Long work hours.
* Balancing work and personal life.

While 43% of municipal employees agreed that understaffing of their position was causing stress, more than a third (34%) also agreed that the understaffing of RCMP police officers within their detachments was causing them stress.

**1.13 The Overall Detachment Culture**

A workplace culture includes the stated and acted-on values of a workplace such as fairness, accountability, and respect, and the organization’s ability to accept change and innovation. The survey used 10 proven measures of organizational culture. The results, presented in Table 1, reveal that barely half (55%) of municipal employees agreed that their workplaces “actually put into practice what it states are its values,” only 53% agreed that their workplaces placed a priority on employees’ mental health and well- being, and only 59% agreed that their detachments “place a priority on creating a harassment free workplace.”

*“Values and priorities that have been talked about have not actually been practiced or put in place. Mandatory training on empathy in the workplace when we are not shown empathy in any way. We are seat fillers and until we are seen as more nothing will change. Certain people get away with things others can't and there is no room for flexibility for the employer to work with employees to reduce burnout and stress.”*

*-Municipal employee in RCMP detachment*

In addition, less than half (40%) of municipal employees agreed that “change is well managed” within their detachments, only 36% agreed that their detachment encourages innovation, and only 37% agreed that all employees regardless of category, are held accountable for their actions.

**Table 1. Workplace culture performance gaps**



**Questions for discussion**

An examination of the organizational culture within BC RCMP detachments whose civilian employees participated in this study revealed significant dysfunction that impacts the quality of the workplace climate, their mental health and well-being, and the ability of the civilian employees to effectively support both sworn officers in the detachment and the communities they serve.

1. Why are there significant performance gaps between what employees rate as being very important to a detachment workplace and the actual performance ratings? What are the root causes of these performance gaps? What are the solutions and changes required? Which changes are within the control of employees, and which are not?
2. Can the RCMP detachment successfully serve a community with rapidly evolving public safety needs if there is a lack of focus on innovation and managing change? What actions are needed to correct this situation?

**1.14 Detachment Structures and Systems**

Organization structures are designed to maximize the efficiency of reporting lines, present the most effective level of decision-making, provide clarity of leadership and responsibility, and ensure effective communication, collaboration, and decision making.

Organization systems and processes are designed to at least ensure ongoing accountability, responsiveness to change, effective human resource management, and attention to employee emotional and physical wellness. The RCMP nationally has, over many years, been the subject of numerous external and internal studies and reports exposing the impact of negative workplace structures and systems on the mental health and well-being of sworn officers, although less attention has been given to civilian employees.

With respect to the structure and the various management systems in the RCMP detachments where the survey respondents work, the survey found through 17 specific questions that:

* Less than half of municipal employees agreed that key workplace factors contributed to workplace efficiency and effectiveness.
* 45% agreed there is a fair promotion process.
* 44% of municipal employees believed that they could initiate a formal complaint process without fear of reprisal.
* 41% of civilian employees felt the workplace structure allowed for timely decision-making, and
* Only 36% agreed that there are enough human resources to allow them to do a good job.

(Table 2)

Organizational research has found that, when a workplace has problems with its *culture*, this often contributes to problems with the workplace *structure and systems* which can quickly create a poor, often toxic *workplace climate* with lower morale, poor conflict management, and employees feeling stressed out, leading to symptoms of emotional distress. This is the experience of the respondents in the RCMP detachments.

**Table 2. Employee ratings of detachment structures and systems**



**Questions for discussion**

1. How many civilian resources, including municipal employees, are required to fully and effectively support detachment police officers? Is there a “formula” for such a number? Is it a question of needing more resources or improved management of existing resources?
2. What are the reasons for the large gaps between what employees rate as being important structures and systems in a detachment and the performance of those factors? What can be done to close those gaps?
3. How are the list of factors connected to each other, i.e., how can a change in one impact others either positively or negatively?

**1.15 Detachment Workplace Climate (job satisfaction, morale)**

Morale is a measure of how employees *feel about conditions* affecting their job, while research shows that *job satisfaction* is more about how much employees *like what they do* in terms of training and responsibilities. The results are presented on page 25.

*“The relations between RCMP staff and City Hall are unique from other city jobs in that the city senior management team has little knowledge of detachment climate / culture or the challenges faced in a policing environment by municipal staff. City Senior Management Team receives information either through the Officer in Charge who sits at the city SMT (Senior Management Team) table but does not have any involvement with municipal staffing and or city policies. This disconnect has made minor grievances that should be managed at the detachment level be elevated to involve the union and HR.”*

*-Municipal employee in RCMP detachment*

**Comparisons to 2012 Study Results**

In 2012, municipal employees in B.C. RCMP detachments reported morale at a 49% good/very good, the present 2023 survey found it basically unchanged at 53%. More troublesome is that in 2012, municipal employees rated their job satisfaction at 81% good/very good (N=231) but in 2023 that level of job satisfaction dropped to 69% (N=122).

The interconnected culture, structure, systems, and climate of a workplace directly impacts the quality of workplace service and actions.

In the case of RCMP detachments, deficiencies in the workplace can have a direct impact on important police officer work including accurate file management, the burden of administrative work on already overworked, and understaffed police officers and sworn officer morale and emotional wellness.

**1.16 Emotional Health**

Workplace “emotional health” is a description of an especially important state of employee psychological well-being in their workplace. Numerous research studies show that connections between emotional and physical health impacts workplace performance and relationships. There are clinically diagnostic measures of workplace emotional health and wellness.

This study of the workplace conditions of municipal / civilian employees within RCMP detachments and civilian employees of the E-COMM emergency response centres asked employees 22 questions derived from existing standard psychological surveys related to mental health and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) plus validated emotional wellness questionnaires.

The responses of many municipal employees working in BC RCMP detachments evidenced a variety of indicators that, when combined, created conditions of emotional stress and psychological impairment over the past 14 days of work. Key highlights from Table 3 show that **in more than half and nearly every day over the previous 14 days**:

* Almost half (42%) felt tired or had little energy at the end of the day.
* Over a third (36%) had trouble falling or staying asleep at home or sleeping too much.
* Close to a third (30%) had either a poor appetite or experienced overeating.
* One in five (20%) no longer experienced any interest or got pleasure from doing things.

Also, of major concern is the percentage of employees who agreed that for **“several days”** over the previous two-week period they experienced:

* Feeling down, depressed, or hopeless.
* Little interest or pleasure in doing things.
* Trouble concentrating on things, such as news and social media, watching TV, doing tasks.
* Thoughts that they would be better off dead or of hurting themselves in some way.

(Table 3)

**Table 3. Emotional health ratings of RCMP detachment municipal / civilian employees**



**Questions for discussion**

1. What processes and systems are available in your workplace to address emotional wellness and mental health needs?
2. Is emotional wellness taken seriously in your detachments—how, why, and when?
3. What do you think the sources are for are the causes for stress and mental health issues in your detachment?
4. What more can be done to effectively address workplace emotional health in detachments?
5. How does the emotional health of civilians and municipal employees in detachments affect police work by officers?

**1.17 The Causes of Municipal Employees Feeling Emotionally Stressed**

The survey questionnaire asked the municipal employees to rate 13 scaled-answer questions that are commonly used to measure workplace stressors which can result in toxic workplaces with lower morale and communication quality, and higher levels of conflict and disrespect. The “large-very large” highlights from Table 4 are:

* Not enough overall employees to do the work (50%).
* Understaffing of Municipal Employees (43%).
* Understaffing of sworn police officers (34%).
* Pay or other compensation-related issues (33%).
* Heavy workload (32%).
* Lack of control or input in decision-making (31%).

**It is important to note that the major stressors on municipal employees at RCMP detachments are not separate categories open to individual attention. The data show that they are all very inter-related, meaning that the ratings of one, affect to varying degrees, the ratings of others.**

**Table 4. Causes of emotional stress for civilian employees in RCMP detachments**



**Questions for discussion**

1. Almost a quarter of civilian employees in detachments agree that they take their workplace stress home and into their personal life. How do you think this affects personal relationships and the emotional and physical well-being of employees? How can these issues best be addressed?
2. Will adding more civilian staff to a detachment reduce the workplace pressures or is improved management and leadership required and/or both?

**1.18 In Their Own Words: Stress and RCMP Detachment Municipal Employees**

The format of the survey questionnaire provided the opportunity for municipal employees to comment on their lived experience with stressors in the detachment workplace. The comments that were offered included the following:

* “*Negativity in the home and workplace, when mixed create an unhappy life for the employee. This in turn affects everyone that works with them. Our jobs are quite often stressful in themselves.”*
* *“You need to work with people who can focus on just getting the job done. Sometimes the process of reaching out to the mental health professionals is seen as a weakness, or it is just too hard a step to take.”*
* *“Managers should take systemic issues to RCMP management who take it to federal policy. There must be understanding of how their decisions affect those who are required to implement and manage the fallout. The effects on mental health are enormous - anxiety regarding the repercussions of what is not getting down.”*
* *“There is extreme burnout across the board post pandemic with resources being low. Better communication on changes, as well as member engagement would be a boost. Having proper resources in place as well.”*

**1.19 The Myth of Civilian Work-Life Balance in RCMP Detachments**

The phrase “work-life balance” is often misunderstood in writings on the topic, leaving the impression of some mythical 50/50 commitment to the workplace and private life. Essentially, the extant research shows that most employees have great difficulty in totally compartmentalizing their *away-from-work* experiences from *at-work* experiences. The question is to what degree and to what effect.

The municipal employee survey addressed this issue with two scaled-answer questions related to the extent to which *stress in personal lives* is taken to work versus *stress at work* is taken into their personal lives.

**Table. 5. The balancing of workplace and personal life**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Not at all** | **To a small extent** | **To a large extent** | **To a very large extent** | **Large / very large extent** |
| Taking my personal stress into the workplace | 64% | 31% | 4% | 1% | 5% |
| Taking my workplace stress into my personal life | 35% | 42% | 16% | 7% | 23% |

The figures in the table reveal that only five percent of detachment civilian employees agreed that they brought not-at-work personal stresses into their job to a large / very large extent.

*“Taking workplace stress into our personal lives is part of the job. We are constantly reminded in this job what the reality of the situation on the streets and in social housing, we live in this community and raise our families in this community. I'm always on guard about homeless coming near or onto my property, my children going to and from school or walking to friends houses. I fear someone setting my house or neighbours house on fire at random, coming into my home to assault me or my children. The homeless and drug use are a substantial problem that the police deal with all day, every day.”*

*-Municipal employee in RCMP detachment*

However, 23%, almost a quarter of civilians, agreed that to a large / very large extent they took workplace stresses into their personal lives. When combining “to a small extent” to the results, *65% of employees took workplaces stresses home* while a much smaller number (36%) brought personal stressors into the workplace.

The findings from these data are *inconclusive* as stressors at home and at work can begin to co-mingle, making it difficult to make a clear delineation of the respective impacts. Nevertheless, civilian employees at RCMP detachments view their workplace as a source of their emotional stress and likely certain physical illnesses.

This result raises serious questions about the extent to which these issues are considered and addressed in detachments as well as the accessibility and effectiveness of employee assistance programs and interventions.

**1.20 The Different Opinions of the Workplace by Non-Supervisors and Supervisors**

The survey found that those in supervisory and management positions in RCMP detachments, while sharing the same workplace as their staff, have very different perceptions of their workplace. This gap in the perceived importance and performance of key workplace measures can be a major reason for cases of workplace conflict, poor communication, and the extent to which the municipal employees feel that their efforts are supported and valued.

The survey compared responses from employees who self-identified as either “non-supervisor manager” and those in the “supervisor-manager role.” In many areas of workplace ratings, significant differences occurred between both the importance and performance of key culture, structure, systems, and workplace climate measures.

**1.21** **The Workplace Culture: Significant Gaps in the Workplace Ratings Between Civilian Municipal Employees and Their Managers**

At the core of any workplace environment is the organizational culture, the measure of what values are important and lived daily, what decisions are celebrated, what actions are rewarded, and which are sanctioned, and the style of everyday leadership. The nature of the culture is what determines the formation of workplaces structure, systems, processes, and the workplace climate.

The results, presented in Table 6, reveal that BC RCMP municipal employees being managed/supervised by others (civilian and/or sworn police officer) have distinctly worse impressions of their workplace culture than their managers. The biggest gaps are:

* 64% of supervisors/managers agreed that a good/very good job was being done at **innovation** within their detachment, compared to 36% of civilian non- supervisor/managers who agreed resulting in a 28% gap.
* 89% of supervisors/managers agreed that a good/very good job was being done at having **employees feel safe in discussing workplace problems** with their supervisor, compared to 64% of civilian non supervisor/managers who agreed resulting in a 25% gap.
* 61% of supervisors/managers agreed that a good/very good job was being done at having **employees quickly held accountable** for their actions, compared to 37% of civilian non- supervisor/managers who agreed resulting in a 24% gap.
* 82% of supervisors/managers agreed that a good/very good job was being done at having a **harassment-free workplace**, compared to 59% of civilian non-supervisor/managers who agreed resulting in a 23% gap.

**Table 6. Difference in ratings of workplace culture**



**Questions for discussion**

* Why are there different ratings of how good a workplace culture is between those managing / supervising employees and those being managed? Is this an issue of communication, of understanding the workplace needs, of having enough time, and/or other factors?

**Table 7. Managers/supervisors versus direct reports rating of workplace structures and systems**



**Questions for discussion**

1. Why do employees who are managed by supervisors and workplace managers at RCMP detachments hold very different opinion of how well the workplace structures and systems are performing? Is this a matter of communication quality, management skills, available time, and/ or other factors? What can be done to close the gap?
2. Do these survey results suggest that civilian managers within RCMP detachments are not as connected to those they manage as they should be?

**Table 8. Differences in impact on stressors on managers/supervisors**



**Questions for discussion**

1. Mangers and supervisors rated the negative impact of harassment and discrimination on their personal work lives six times higher than those civilians they manage in RCMP detachments. What is the reason for this? What can be done to improve things?
2. Managers are more stressed than the personnel under their supervision by understaffing of municipal employees, their interactions with sworn police officers, and the challenges of balancing work and personal lives. What impact are these much higher impacts having on the ability of managers to manage?
3. Non-managers are feeling the stress more than managers when it comes to having a voice in, or control over, decision-making. How does this impact their performance?

**1.22 Managers/Supervisors and Direct Reports: Resistance to Change**

Sworn officers and municipal employees work in a high-urgency, high profile, high demand, and rapidly changing environment as the nature of crime rapidly changes in complexity, court rulings and new legislation continually demand changes to operation strategy and tactics, and both public and employee expectations are rapidly changing.

Adapting to the many changes in a post-pandemic and highly technological world demands that all organizations recognize and embrace change and innovation. The RCMP nationally has been the focus of numerous studies, public enquiries, court challenges, and reports have highlighted the need for cultural, structural and system changes at the national, regional, and detachment levels. The absence of a comprehensive plan for reform and change in response to the recommendations of these studies impacts municipal employees at the detachment level.

The survey results reveal significant gaps in perception between municipal employees working in RCMP detachments and those assigned to directly manage/supervise them (Table 9).

The survey results with respect to workplace culture reveal:

* Only 50% of detachment managers/supervisors of civilian employees agree that change is well managed in their workplace, while only 40% of the civilian municipal employees they manage think so.
* While 64% of the managers/supervisors agree that their detachment encourages innovation, only 36% of the municipal employees agree.
* While just 54% of managers/supervisors agreed that their workplace is “quick to admit and correct mistakes,” only 38% of civilian municipal employees agree with this statement.

**Table 9. Attitudes toward and ratings of innovation and change by managers/supervisors vs. direct reports**



**Questions for discussion**

1. What can be done to foster greater innovation and the successful change management in your detachment?
2. What innovations and changes are urgently needed and why? What will happen if they are not made?
3. Only 37% of non-managers agree that their detachment holds all employees accountable for action while 61% of managers agree. Why the discrepancy?

**1.23 Workplace Climate: Significant Gaps in Workplace Ratings Between RCMP Civilian Municipal Employees and Their Managers in Levels of Job Satisfaction and Morale**

The workplace climate in an organization includes employee job satisfaction, morale, how engaged employees feel in their work, and the impact of key factors such as internal communication and conflict management. Job satisfaction is the degree that employees like the nature of their work and responsibilities while morale is how they feel about conditions that affect their emotional well-being. The results of such interconnected factors determine the physical and emotional health of a workplace and the resultant quality of police service and performance.

The figures in Graph 1 reveal that managers/supervisors express higher levels of job satisfaction and morale than the civilian employees under their supervision.

**Graph 1. Differences in morale and job satisfaction by managers / non-managers**

A graph of a graph with blue and orange bars

Description automatically generated

**Questions for discussion**

1. Why do civilian managers at BC RCMP detachments have higher ***job satisfaction*** than the civilians that they manage? How can job satisfaction for non-managers be increased?
2. Why do civilian managers at BC RCMP detachments have higher ***morale*** than the civilians that they manage? How can morale for non-managers be increased?

**1.25 Workplace Climate: Significant Gaps Between RCMP Civilian Municipal Employees and Their Managers with Respect to Organizational Dynamics**

The work climate also includes organizational dynamics, including the nature and quality of daily interactions. The figures in Table 10 reveal that there are different lived experiences of the supervisors/mangers and the civilian municipal employees that they manage. The gaps are most notable with respect to the resolution of workplace conflicts, post-COVID pandemic normalization, and the quality of communication in the workplace.

**Table 10. Managers vs. non-managers rating of workplace dynamics**



**Questions for discussion**

1. Why are managers of civilian / municipal employees far more positive than those they manage when asked to rate critical workplace climate factors such as conflict resolution, timely communication, and agreeing that the detachment workplace is “back to normal” following the recent global pandemic? Is this gap between perceptions of the workplace attributable to the attitudes and management/leadership styles of civilian managers, and/or other factors?
2. Non-managers agree that they take home negative events from work almost twice as much as managers / supervisors. Why does this occur and how can this best be addressed?

**1.26 Who is Responsible for Improving the Workplace?**

While 100% of the funding for municipal/civilian employees in an RCMP detachment is the responsibility of municipal governments in populations over 5,000, and the Province for communities under 5,000 population as well as rural areas, *which* ***one*** *specific workplace position has the responsibility and leadership to ensure that the workplace has a positive and healthy culture, structure, systems and process and ultimately a workplace climate that includes effective communication, conflict management, and high job satisfaction/morale*?

The online survey posed this question to RCMP detachment municipal/civilian employees. The results reveal significant differences in opinion between those persons in municipal/civilian manager/supervisor roles and the municipal/civilian employees that they manage. The results are presented in Table 11.

**1.27 The Workplace Culture**

* The survey results show there is no agreement between managers/supervisors and those they manage on who is responsible for improving the workplace culture. For example, while 25% of non-supervisors agreed it should be “My immediate supervisor after consultation with all employees,” only 7% of managers/supervisors agreed. While 36% of managers/supervisors agree that it should be “Senior sworn management (RCMP/municipal) after consulting with all employees”, far fewer (23%) of non- supervisors/managers agree.

**1.28 The Workplace Structure and Systems**

* 31% of non-managers agree that the responsibility for improving workplace structures and systems falls to “My immediate supervisor after consultation with all employees,” while only 14% of managers/supervisors agree. However, there is agreement between managers and those managed that “The Manager of Police Services after consulting with all employees” is responsible for improving workplace structures and systems.
* Another area of disagreement between managers and those they manage is the responsibility of “Senior sworn management (RCMP/municipal) after consulting with all employees” to improve structures and systems. While 29% of managers agree, only 9% of non-managers agree.

**1.29 The Workplace Climate**

* The workplace climate includes the effectiveness of such factors as communication, conflict management, fairness, trust, and areas of emotional wellness. The survey shows that 37% of non-managers/supervisors agree that this responsibility lies with “My immediate supervisor after consultation with all employees,” while only 11% of managers/supervisors agree, instead selecting “Employees themselves have a responsibility to recommend changes without being asked” (43%) to which only 15% of non-managers agree.

**Table 11. Responsibility for improving workplace conditions at BC RCMP detachments**



**Questions for discussion**

1. Why are there differences between civilian managers and those civilians / municipal employees they manage with respect to being responsible for the improvements to a detachment’s workplace culture, structure and systems, and the workplace climate?
2. Does the result showing that 43% of managers agree that “Employees themselves have a responsibility to recommend changes without being asked” compared to 15% of non-managers who agree, have the potential to create conflicts in the workplace?
3. Change and innovation in a workplace cannot happen without successful communication, coordination, collaboration, and trusted relationships between all stakeholders. What do the results in Table 11 suggest about the future state of BC RCMP detachments?
4. What is needed to create successful processes of urgent change?

**1.30 In Their Own Words: What Civilian Employees in BC RCMP Detachments Have to Say About Their Lived Experiences**

The following is a cross-section of verbatim comments made on the survey by non- managers/supervisors and managers/supervisors.

**1.31 Comments: Non-supervisors.**

1. *“Currently my job duties depend mainly on what type of files the RCMP are managing, such as a murder or drug trafficking investigations. When a murder happens, it is often not within the 8-4, Monday-Friday work schedule. In order provide the proper assistance to the RCMP I am often fighting with the municipality for overtime just to do be able to do my job. As well, our department has not been fully staffed since I started working here in 2019. In terms of the actual job description and tasks I would say I am satisfied and the RCMP is respectful and provides positive feedback. It is the municipality that makes it difficult to want to continue working here even though I love the job that I do.”*
2. *“Improve some of our technologies/software....they are slowing me down.”*
3. *“Access to training -Access to job growth -Change in Management -Programs so employees are being helped to grow and move into jobs that they are interested in pursuing -Management needs to care about employees job satisfaction and wellbeing above their own agenda -Employee mentorship programs (eg. If I wanted to become a Watch Clerk maybe one day a month I get to job shadow a Watch Clerk and see what their job entails).”*
4. *“Treating me with trust when I request overtime. Also having flexibility to discuss changes in schedule (i.e: modified work week, working from home, etc).”*
5. *“I love my job. However, management make the workplace so toxic that remaining a City employee is becoming increasingly difficult. Being appreciated and valued would make things much easier to handle. Our jobs are very stressful, and we are subject to very disturbing images and text. However, we are not allowed to mention our mental health, as management uses this as an excuse to pull your security clearance. So we are stressed and traumatized, then never recognized for any of our efforts by management and then to top it off, we have no way to debrief, other than with our co-workers.”*
6. *“In general ... the RCMP detachment is not a "good news" place. It's very important to put up boundaries and "leave work at work". This is sometimes a very hard place to work if you are a soft-hearted, empathic person. I understand the use of dark humour to lighten the load/use as a coping mechanism.. but sometimes things that are not funny are turned into a joke. One can become jaded or "hardened" to the suffering of fellow human beings quite easily. Some days I struggle very hard and feel completely emotionally drained when I leave work. Some mornings I struggle to leave home and drag myself to work.”*
7. *“I hope this survey actually helps implement changes because the last mental health survey seemed to provide zero actionable results. If this survey gets discussed the municipal management should not be present to intimidate employees so that they can speak freely and safely. The municipality is not going to be able to retain employees based on their old school mentality that we should all just be happy we have jobs no matter how we are treated when other workplaces are promoting a healthy and happy work culture with a flexible work environment. I can say I am actively looking for another job even though I love what I currently do directly because how I am treated by the municipal supervisors, management, director and CAO.”*
8. *“My workload is heavily variable but is always extremely high. Due dates and urgency shift depending on the task, and overtime is consistently needed to stay up to date with many projects, but it is not granted. The COK supervisors consistently deny overtime requests and offer solutions that are unhelpful.”*
9. *“It is time for a complete change of upper management at the RCMP and possibly City Hall. This toxic environment has been fostered and encouraged for too many years. Senior Manager at the RCMP has been getting away with bullying employees out of their jobs for many years. No one is ever accountable, and most employees are afraid to come forward, knowing they will be targeted for doing so. Managers promote those they like and stonewall those who have opinions. If an outside agency were to interview each Muni Employee regarding our workplace, if they KNEW it was anonymous and they wouldn't be targeted, I believe you would be absolutely shocked and disgusted to know what is actually happening here.”*
10. *“Staffing is an ongoing issue, and it mostly comes from pressures of the City to keep staffing at low levels and then the hiring process/level of qualified applicants. Too many auxiliary positions and not enough full-time staff/part time staff.”*
11. *“Personal emotional health over past 14 days has been fine. However, I've worked very hard to get there. I've been to see a counsellor, taken time off for my mental health. The issues have all been calls, the stress of working too many hours with too little staff and too little pay. I believe that every employee should be required to see a counsellor at least once a year as a mental check in and to get help dealing with issues.”*
12. *“If you're going through issues at home.. coming to work can be very challenging and the pressure to not have a bad day at work due to understaffed / nobody to cover you if you need a break.”*
13. *“We are understaffed for municipal employees and police officers. For police officers is a huge safety concern. For municipal employees, we're not able to efficiently support Members with administrative tasks which means they must spend more time in the office and less time on the road. To me, this results in an underperforming detachment when it comes to public safety, community engagement, and proactive policing.”*
14. *“It is much easier to have the resources to get the work done, than to think about what didn't get done once you are at home, where you should be thinking about your personal matters. It feels like a vicious circle, that you just cannot get out of. And, unfortunately, I don't see that changing anytime soon. Thank you for your time in preparing this for us.”*
15. *“Being understaffed it a huge problem. Especially where recommendations have been made for further positions that aren't materializing. And the fact that management will pull people from one unit to cover certain other units but not others show a favoritism within the detachment that doesn't sit well with many employees. There is also a big discrepancy within wages for administrative staff that doesn't show appreciation towards all employees.”*
16. *“I would like to see a reclassification of the job type for the work done by Municipal Employees who work in proximity with the same clients that the RCMP officers work with. When we are dealing with the same marginalized, drug affected, mentally unstable clients we need to be described as more than Office Staff. Those of us are affected by the clients, the RCMP officers dealing with the clients and the residual effects of the type of calls those officers deal with. As much as I try not to bring work home with me, sometimes the mental challenges for leaving the work behind are too much to deal with.”*
17. *“Understaffing is causing massive burn out. There is no acknowledgment that we are human beings outside of this building and nobody cares about how we are feeling as long as the work is being done. Stats are collected about how far behind we are but there is no support to reducing burn out or reducing workload. It doesn't seem like staffing this place has any priority and many people are sick and tired of doing all the work.”*
18. *“We are expected to do more and more for the same pay. Vacations get approved for others to have weeks off at a time leaving no time off for the people with less seniority. WE are expected to do all the work and then get no support when we are beyond exhausted. The employer refuses to work with the employee and have any flexibility in scheduling that would benefit the employee but continuously change the things that directly affect the work/ life balance.”*
19. *“Being a long-time employee & working mother and feeling no support is an insult, especially when you plan on retiring in this organization. Stress is at an all time high and there are zero supports for it. Management is basically invisible in the day-to-day in this building unless you need some help or ask for something and then they go out of their way to make things even more difficult for your situation.”*
20. *“I have found for myself personally and for others in my position that our worldview has changed drastically as a result of our work (ex. obsessive thoughts about making sure property is locked/secure, avoiding certain areas because of the potential presence of clients, difficulty relating to people outside of the law enforcement subculture, vicarious trauma, etc.). I know there have been studies done on how police culture impacts members but I'm not aware of any the unique impact that it has on civilian employees as we feel many of the same impacts that members do but are still considered as part of the "out group" by many members, so we lack the supports that police culture provides to them.”*
21. *“Taking workplace stress into our personal lives is part of the job, we are constantly reminded in this job what the reality of the situation on the streets and social housing, we live in this community and raise our families in this community. I'm always on guard about homeless coming near or onto my property, my children going to and from school or walking to friends houses. I fear someone setting my house or neighbours house on fire at random, coming into my home to assault me or my children. The homeless and drug use are a substantial problem that the police deal with all day, every day.”*
22. *“Being able to have more sick time to actually go to appointments would be great. I am finding that because you incur sick time, sometimes you do not have time to stay home when you're sick and end up coming to work. It is frustrating to see how some have unlimited sick days and municipal employees get 7 a year. Being that COVID is far from over, I feel this is just a small part of what these unprecedented times will bring. Mental Health is becoming a real thing and I feel that if everyone had the chance to find that life balance, you would have healthier and happier people at work.”*

**1.32 Comments: Supervisors/Managers**

1. *“Workload to be more manageable. I am unable to take health breaks, such as a short walk or a lunch break, due to the volume of work I need to do daily.”*
2. *“Better work - life balance.* *Too many responsibilities and putting out helmet fires that others won't take responsibility to do for themselves or as related to their direct reports. People always seem to look to the top to complain or to get things fixed without offering suggestion or making any attempt to solve at the first level. I work long days and it all goes home with me when I go.”*
3. *“Inclusivity and a movement away from an us and them mentality.* *Often municipal staff are treated by members as an annoyance rather than the experts in their jobs that they are. Members who have served in a small detachment appreciate the efforts by municipal employees. Members who have not had that experience take us for granted and tend to talk down to municipal staff. That attitude is often a top-down perspective. I will admit it is lessening over time and has changed from over a decade ago but still exists within the workplace where respect is not always given regardless of your job or title. All people have value in the workplace from the cleaning staff to the top management regardless of being RCMP or municipal.”*
4. *“An overall path of what is next so that the job doesn't become routine or stagnant however, in my experience it is hard to move across departments as usually job knowledge or experience is lacking. More educational options would be great as well.”*
5. *“There is extreme burn out across the board post pandemic with resources being low. Better communication on changes, as well as member engagement would be a boost. Having proper resources in place as well.”*
6. *“The morale of the general duty officers in our detachment feels low and that morale starts to show in interactions with municipal employees. I think some support needs to be provided to the officers to assist them and help increase morale. There is concerns about workplace conditions and staffing levels - I am unsure how to work to address those as some of these are issues with many layers that may not have simple solutions. Communication to the membership and ways to provide them a way to advocate and suggest changes may work.”*
7. *“My personal morale is average as I have autonomy in my role. I believe others, as in RCMP officers, need to voice to the powers at be their unhappiness and low morale. Staffing levels and having a new building is not perhaps the focus, but the fact that team members are. This is a para-military organization so "going above" your NCO's and Line Officers is often scolded and results in a negative response. Having an approach where people can speak freely, and the concerns are openly heard and actioned would boost morale.”*
8. *“Morale is very low due to the lack of staff, so it becomes a negative work environment quickly when the municipal staff do not get along. I believe there should be a more open communication and less work-place gossip.”*
9. *“High functioning and always on at work. Once I leave and get home, I have no capacity left to do anything for myself. I am defined by the work and have little outside of it.”*
10. *“Managing municipal employee support to overworked\understaffed sworn officers impacts stress levels in balancing staff workload. Important projects are often set aside just to keep day-to-day operations moving. This impact on all staff ultimately creates workplace\personal life imbalance. There is little time to devote to staff development and collaboration with heavy workloads.”*
11. *“We all struggle to maintain a work/life balance. I think everyone has down moments and periods in their lives. Covid has had a negative impact in many areas of life. It has also brought to light a huge need for a focus on mental health issues in the workplace. If anything, positive comes from this in that area it has the potential to turn a negative situation into a positive one.”*
12. *“The security clearance process is far to long to try and get staff into the positions causing them to find other jobs so that once they are cleared to come in we are in the exact same spot with more people that have zero availability.”*
13. *“Working within the policing realm comes with a lot of exposing traumas'; we must find it within our organizations to be mentally resilient within our own minds and support our peers when working in such a busy environment. I believe we all have a part to play in our mental and emotional well-being. Our police environment's could use some emotional intelligence in leadership, and when making decisions that affect people on a large scale. If we come together, bring forth a collaborative approach, our workplace can flourish.”*
14. *“Shortage of staff has been a big stressor in the workplace for the last two years. Taking time off does not allow you to relax as all you think about is how much extra work you will have to do as your job has not been worked on while you were off.”*

**PART II: The E-COMM Emergency Response Centre**

*“This is not a company. Stop treating us and the environment like we are Telus or Bell. We are a paramilitary organization aligned with 13 different POLICE jurisdictions. Not a sales centre. Hire people who have been in the field. Not management from big box stores. TRAIN OUR EMPLOYEES. Look at the training provided in other cities such as Calgary, Edmonton, Portland, Phoenix, Toronto, Ottawa. Next to them, we are a joke. You take people off the street with ZERO experience and given them 3 weeks in the classroom, a month on the floor and then wonder why lethal mistakes are made, why the road is pulling out their hair, why dispatchers don't want to work OT.*

* E-COMM employee

*Other cities train their call takers AND dispatcher for 2-3x the amount we do = officer and public safety, efficiency, confidence, accountability, and employee investment. Instead, this company focuses on hiring more and more managers to fix their problems all while watching their employees burn out from lack of staff, support, and compensation. Stop allowing civilians to run this place.”*

* E-COMM employee

**2.0 Background**

E-Comm is the first point of contact for 9-1-1 callers in 25 regional districts in British Columbia and provides dispatch services for more than 70 police agencies and fire and rescue services across the province. E‐Comm also owns and operates the largest multi‐jurisdictional, tri‐service, wide‐area radio network in the province used by police, fire and ambulance personnel throughout Metro Vancouver and parts of the Fraser Valley.

In May of 2023, shortly after the employee survey was administered for the present study, E-Comm 9-1-1 (Emergency Communications for British Columbia Inc.) and Emergency Communications Professionals of BC (CUPE Local 8911) reached a tentative agreement for a new three-year collective agreement. Although improvements to compensation and benefits were made, CUPE 8911 President Donald Grant stated that “More work will need to be done to stabilize staffing levels at E-Comm, but this is an important step towards making sure there is a strong and resilient emergency communications system in British Columbia” (https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20230504006107/en/E-Comm-CUPE-8911-Reach-Tentative-Agreement).

Concerns over emergency response services at E-COMM have been expressed by Greater Vancouver mayors whose municipalities are “shareholders” in the operations of the organization. In December 2022, Delta mayor George Harvie stated in a letter to the BC government that, “There’s unacceptably long wait times for emergency and non-emergency calls and our problem is that often leads to abandoned calls” (https://vancouversun.com/news/local-news/delta-mayor-lost-confidence-in-e-comm-over-dropped-calls-to-delta-police).

In September 2022, a staff report by the Vancouver Police Department stated that,

“More than 88,000 calls from citizens to the non-emergency line in 2021 were abandoned — often after lengthy delays — before they could be answered by the dispatch service contracted to take the calls… Even worse, there is evidence that some crime victims in Vancouver do not even try to call the non-emergency line in the first place because they know it is plagued by long delays and they are not willing to wait for several minutes before talking with an E-Comm call taker,” creating incomplete crime statistics (https://www.vancouverisawesome.com/local-news/vancouver-police-say-88000-calls-to-non-emergency-line-abandoned-in-2021-ecomm-adam-palmer-5864199).

In the present study, 57 E-COMM employees completed the on-line survey with 49 self-identifying as unionized non-managers and eight identifying as managers.

**2.1 Summary of Key Findings**

It was noted in Part 1 of this report that a significant body of empirical research literature provides conclusive evidence that effective, efficient, and healthy workplaces reflect high levels of positive internal communication, conflict management, employee involvement, fairness, respect, and an openness to change and innovations, regardless of the organization.

Although this research study collected data from civilian personnel working within BC RCMP detachments and the E-COMM emergency 911 centres, comparison between the two organizations is tempered by the fact that the job responsibilities are significantly different in many instances.

However, comparisons can be made between proven indicators of organizational excellence including the state of the workplace culture, the efficacy of organizational structures, systems, and processes, and the combined and interconnected impact on the workplace climate. The employee survey results provide insights into the lived experiences of E-COMM employees in the workplace. Key issues identified included:

* Understaffed.
* Overworked.
* Stress due to ongoing issues surrounding pay.
* Challenges in finding a balance between work and personal lives.
* Taking their workplaces stresses into their personal and home lives.
* Feeling fatigued with little energy.
* A quarter of all employees feeling bad about themselves or thinking that they are failures.

**2.2 E-COMM Workplace Culture**

* On ten measures of the workplace culture, an average of 43% of E-COMM employees agreed that the measures existed compared to 59% of RCMP detachment civilians.
* Only 15% of E-COMM employees felt that the workplace managed change well, as compared to 46% of municipal employees in the RCMP detachments. There were also differences in perceptions regarding employees being held accountable for their responsibilities and actions (21% for E-COMM employees vs. 44% for civilian employees in RCMP detachments) and that the workplace climate facilitated the quick admission of mistakes and actions to address them (31% for E-COMM employees vs. 43% of civilian employees in RCMP detachments (Table 12).

**2.3 E-COMM Structure and Systems**

* On average only 53% of E-COMM employees somewhat/strongly agreed that 14 measures of workplace structures (reporting lines) and systems/processes (ranging from communication to various human resource practices) were effective compared to 66% of BC RCMP detachment civilian employees.
* Of particular concern is that only one-third (35%) of E-COMM employees agreed that there were enough human resources and proper equipment to do a good job.
* Far less than half (38%) of E-COMM employees agreed that they could initiate a formal grievance process without fear of reprisal (Table 13).

**2.4 E-COMM Workplace Climate**

* The job satisfaction (liking the responsibilities and nature of the work) was 68% good/very good for E-COMM civilians versus 74% good/very good for BC RCMP detachment civilians.
* Employee morale (the emotional impact of workplace factors) was close to equal at 56% good/very good for E-COMM employees and 59% good/very good for BC RCMP detachment civilians. (Table 14)

*“I feel like any issues brought forward tend to be brushed off or ignored, or the response is "that's just the way it/they is/are". Staff on the floor have good ideas and solutions to some of the key issues currently and none of it seems to be heard or implemented. We are handed new policies and procedures overnight without an opportunity to provide our input as the people physically doing the job, and the issues we see often end up being the issues faced with these new policies thrown at us.*

* E-COMM employee

*A huge part of this job is taking accountability for your mistakes and learning from them. I feel that this is something that I have stayed true to throughout my course of employment. It is extremely disheartening when I bring concerns and I am told "that's just the way they are" or "that's the old school mentality" when we are constantly talking about trying to change the environment.”*

-E-COMM employee

*“I feel defeated, beaten down, and disheartened and I always second and triple guess if I should even reach out about feedback or concerns I have because of the constant shut down. I have big dreams and hopes for the workplace to improve and become a highly sought after place of employment. I want to proudly refer my friends or family for a position here knowing that it is supportive and encouraging. I work a lot of OT so this review is not reflective of my direct supervisor as she has been extremely supportive and really does listen to the issues and concerns, and I feel as though we have a very open line of communication about work and personal struggles I am facing.”*

-E-COMM employee

**Table 12. E-COMM employee ratings of workplace culture factors**



**Table 13. E-COMM employee ratings of workplace structure and systems / processes**



**Questions for discussion**

1. Why are there significant performance gaps between what employees rate as being very important to the E-COMM workplace and the actual performance ratings? What are the root causes of these performance gaps? What are the solutions and changes required? Which changes are within the control of employees, and which are not?
2. Can E-COMM successfully serve a community with rapidly evolving public safety needs if a poor job is being done on innovation and managing change? What actions are needed to correct this situation?
3. Why is there a very large gap in the importance of confidence in senior managers and their actual performance ratings? What must be changed and how?

**Table 14. E-COMM workplace climate**



**Table 15. E-COMM workplace climate job satisfaction and morale**





*“Old school style of thinking and way to do our work is really a hindrance on the incoming influx of new peers; what is the E-Comm way of teaching vs what it's actually like on the floor vs this is how this specific person wants your work to be like. Management should be speaking with those who have been operational for quite some time, and please remind them that times will be changing and as a company we should not be static in our way of work as well as our thinking. Change is not always a bad thing, but sometimes it is required as the world expands and how 911 is reforming.”*

* *E-COMM employee*

**Questions for discussion**

1. How is the large gap between the importance of workplace conflict resolution and the importance of that measure affecting workplace morale and the efficiency and effectiveness of E-COMM operations? What needs to be done to address the issues that exist?
2. Are the gaps in the performance versus importance of internal communication hindering the effectiveness and the efficiency of E-COMM to response to 911 calls? What can be done to improve the situation?

**Table 16. E-COMM employees’ emotional health**



Table 16 applies a common psychological workplace wellness and post-traumatic stress (PTSD) set of questions to gauge the emotional health of E-COMM employees. The results indicate a workplace with important danger signals of workplace burnout. This is especially troubling for employees whose job is to deal with high volumes of emergency 911 calls involving police, ambulance, and fire department situations.

Of particular concern is that eight percent of E-COMM employees agreed that had “Thoughts that you would be better off dead or of hurting yourself in some way” on several days (6%) or nearly every day (2%) over the past two weeks.

*“We need to keep bodies in the building. We are being bombarded with high call volumes and regularly receive complaints form the public. We also have aging technology in an increasingly technological world.”*

*-E-COMM employee*

*“I was involved in a very stressful career change where my feelings and mental health were completely invalidated by both my manager, training supervisor and new manager. Decisions about my career were made without any consultation with me causing me immense personal stress and anxiety. I think any career decisions or changes within employment (location, schedule etc.) should have the employee involved to voice their thoughts on the matters.”*

*E-COMM employee*

**2.5 E-COMM managers vs. non-managers workplace perceptions**

In Part 1 of this study, comparisons were made between civilian RCMP detachment managers (municipal employees) and civilian non managers related to ratings of the workplace culture, structures and systems, and the workplace climate (job satisfaction and morale).

The data concluded that, while civilian RCMP detachment managers sometimes shared the importance of many measurable factors of the workplace, their ratings of the actual performance of those factors was often significantly more positive than those they managed.

Because of the resultant response rate (eight E-COMM managers and 49 non-manager employees) the E-COMM (Part 2) employee survey results in this report should be considered a preliminary venture into uncovering a larger body of employee opinion from the organization. Nevertheless, a comparison of the very two distinct operational and structural organizations show important commonalities.

**2.6 Early comparisons of civilian workplace culture—RCMP detachments and E-COMM**

* Overall, (Table 17) both organizations show major gaps in workplace performance ratings with managers rating 10 areas of workplace *culture* measures significantly higher than those they manage. Where differences occur is with ratings specific culture measures such as clear and accountable values. The results show that 74% of RCMP non-managers agreed that such measures existed while a far less 65% of E-COMM non-managers agreed. More to the point, while 55% of RCMP non-managers agreed that the workplace reflected the organization’s espoused values, only 45% of E-COMM non-managers agreed.
* One measure of workplace culture is the level of innovation and managing change. In the cases of the RCMP and E-COMM both organizations face significant and changing demands to address public emergencies and community safety. While 36% on non-manager RCMP detachment civilians agreed that innovation was encouraged a slightly lower 31% of E-COMM non-manager employees agreed. With respect to managing change well, 40% of RCMP detachment civilians agreed compared to only 25% of E-COMM non-management personnel.

**2.7 Early comparisons of workplace structures and systems/processes: civilian employees at RCMP detachments and E-COMM**

Comparing the ratings for 14 measures of workplace structure, systems and process, the following was found (Table 18).

* In RCMP detachments 36% of civilian employees agreed that they have enough human resources to do a good job compared to 32% of E-COMM non-managers. Within RCMP detachments 41% of civilians agreed that the workplace allowed for timely decision-making compared to 32% of E-COMM civilian non-managers.
* Within RCMP detachments 44% of civilian employees agreed that “I can initiate a formal recourse process without fear of reprisal” compared to an equal 45% of E-COMM non managers.
* While 73% of non-management civilian employees agreed that they had confidence in their immediate supervisor and equal 72% of E-COMM non managers agreed. However only 57% of RCMP detachment civilians agreed that leaders within their workplace had sufficient training to do a good job with an even lower 50% of E-COMM non-managers.

**2.8 What this all means**

The survey of civilian employees at two very distinct emergency-service workplaces, one with federal government imposed structures, systems, and processes (RCMP detachments) and the other under a governance model including municipalities and the provincial government (E-COMM) found that the two organizations shared many negative features of workplace culture, structure, systems and processes resulting in statistically significant correlations to negative measures of emotional wellness and employee morale.

**Table 17. RCMP and E-COMM non-manager/supervisor civilian employees’ perceptions of workplace culture performance**



**Table 18. RCMP and E-COMM non-manager/supervisor civilian employees’ perceptions of workplace structure, systems, processes performance**



**The Study Team**

**Dr. Eli Sopow, Ph.D. – Co-Investigator**

Eli Lawrence Sopow is former Director of Research and Analysis with the BC-RCMP Headquarters Operations Strategy Branch and is now Associate Professor of Change Management and Leadership within the MBA faculty of University Canada West, Vancouver B.C.

In his 20-year career at the RCMP Sopow headed a unit responsible for not only Division-wide socio-economic-crime impact analyses, but also the survey and analysis of personnel in over 300 Detachments across Canada, reviewing the alignment between workplace environments and expectations-quality of police services. He also contributed to design and analysis of environmental scanning, risk management, change management, and strategic planning processes. Within BC, Sopow co-designed the RCMP Resource Management Matrix which showed and predicted the interconnectivity of RCMP Detachment resource factors with community socio-economic, and crime measures. Sopow also served as Research Director with the RCMP national change management project.

In addition to his extensive strategic planning and analysis work with RCMP Detachments across Canada, Sopow has consulted for the Delta Police Department and other municipal police services in B.C. and Alberta. He is a chapter author in Leading in Complex Worlds, Jossey-Bass publishers, which explores police leadership needs, and the recent Aligning workplace wellness with global change: An integrated model, published in the Journal of Organization Change Management (Emerald Publishing). Prior to his career with the RCMP, Sopow also served as Associate Deputy Minister with the B.C. Premier’s Office, and a partner with an international issues management consulting firm.

Dr. Sopow conducted the community survey portion of the first Surrey Police Service community consultation completed in 2021. He has also collaborated with Dr. Griffiths on the study of mental health and well-being of sworn officers and civilian staff in the Victoria Police Department, the resource review of the RCMP/Community Safety Officers/Bylaw Officers/Fire & Rescue Service in Penticton, and the resource review of the Prince George RCMP detachment.

**Curt Taylor Griffiths, Ph.D. – Co-Investigator**

Curt Taylor Griffiths is a Professor and Coordinator of the Police Studies Program in the School of Criminology at Simon Fraser University. Among his primary research interests are the organizational and operational dynamics of policing, police effectiveness and efficiency, the police and communities of diversity, police performance measures, the effectiveness of police strategies and interventions, and the delivery of policing services in high demand urban and remote environments. His work has been carried out at the national and international levels.

In Canada, this has involved working with communities, municipal councils, municipal police services and the RCMP on a variety of projects focused on the police and communities of diversity, including Indigenous communities and vulnerable and at-risk persons, police performance, building organizational and operational capacities, and the effectiveness and efficiency of police policies and strategies. Internationally, this has included police-related projects in Latvia, Denmark, Netherlands, the Commonwealth Caribbean, Japan, the United States, and Egypt.

Griffiths is the author of three university-level texts: Canadian Criminal Justice: A Primer (6th ed., 2019); Canadian Corrections (with D. Murdoch, 6th ed., 2022); and Canadian Police Work (5th ed., 2020), all published by Nelson, Toronto. He has published widely in academic journals on a variety of police-related topics and has been a Visiting Fellow at the American University in Cairo and a Visiting Professor at the United Nations Asia and Far East Institute for the Prevention of Crime and Treatment of Offenders (UNAFEI), Fuchu, Tokyo, Japan.

Recently-completed projects include a resource review of the Prince George RCMP detachment (2022); a resource review of the Penticton RCMP, Community Safety Officers, Bylaws, and Fire and Rescue Service (2022); and an evaluation of CFSEU for Police Services (2023); a study of mental health and well-being among sworn officers and civilians in the Victoria (BC) Police Department (2021); an evaluation of the Metro Vancouver Transit Police Service Delivery Model (2020); a resource review of Kelowna RCMP and Police Services (2019); reviews of street check policy and practice in Edmonton (2018) and Vancouver (2019); an operational review of the Vancouver Police Department (2017); a study of patrol deployment in the Delta (BC) Police Department (2016) and in the Saanich (BC) Police Department (2016); and, an operational review of the Winnipeg Police Service (2013). Recent reports produced for Public Safety Canada include *Contemporary Policing Responsibilities* (2017); *The Use of Private Security Services for Policing* (2016); and *Improving Police Efficiency – Challenges and Opportunities* (2015).

Current studies include a national study of the victimization of police officers and a study of the mental health and well-being of civilian municipal employees in BC police services.

**References**

Reports by authors

* Griffiths, C.T., E. Sopow, and J.J. Murphy. 2021. *The Mental Health and Wellbeing of Sworn Officers and Civilians in the Victoria, British Columbia Police Department: Current Issues and a Way Forward*. Victoria, B.C.: Victoria City Police Union and Victoria Police Department. https://vancouverisland.ctvnews.ca/victoria-police-officers-report-work-culture-mental-health-challenges-as-top-concerns-1.5718352
* Griffiths, C.T., E. Sopow, and J.J. Murphy. 2022b. *Resource Review of the RCMP and Policing Services*, City of Prince George, B.C. Prince George, BC: City of Prince George. https://pub-princegeorge.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=18535
* Griffiths, C.T. and E. Sopow. 2022a. *Resource Review of the RCMP, Policing Services, Fire and Rescue, Bylaws and Community Safety Officers*. City of Penticton, BC. Penticton, BC: City of Penticton. https://www.penticton.ca/sites/default/files/docs/our-community/social-development/2022-10-22-PDF-Penticton%20Community%20Safety%20Resource%20Review%20Final%20Report%20Griffiths%20and%20Sopow.pdf

**Embedded references**

1. https://bc-cb.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/ViewPage.action?siteNodeId=2094&languageId=1&contentId=108 [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/law-crime-and-justice/criminal-justice/police/publications/agreements/police-agreement-provincial-2012.pdf [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/law-crime-and-justice/criminal-justice/police/publications/agreements/2012-municipal.pdf [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/law-crime-and-justice/criminal-justice/police/publications/agreements/2012-municipal.pdf [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/law-crime-and-justice/criminal-justice/police/publications/statistics/bc-police-resources-2021.pdf [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. Source: Operations Strategy Branch, BC RCMP Headquarters [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
7. https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/law-crime-and-justice/criminal-justice/police/publications/statistics/bc-police-resources-2021.pdf [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
8. City of Kamloops (2020). *RCMP Municipal Employees – Financial Clerk and Crime Analyst Business Case*. https://ehq-production-canada.s3.ca-central-1.amazonaws.com/6cf32ab746afc13684a1e7f2375efc69a180cfac/original/1610403422/BC20-01\_RCMP\_Additional\_FTE.pdf\_244508618b7d26f9ee0c68f546dcca80?X-Amz-Algorithm=AWS4-HMAC-SHA256&X-Amz-Credential=AKIA4KKNQAKIOR7VAOP4%2F20230927%2Fca-central-1%2Fs3%2Faws4\_request&X-Amz-Date=20230927T170701Z&X-Amz-Expires=300&X-Amz-SignedHeaders=host&X-Amz-Signature=fa05246f6495efa9a33ebd69964d19f21cf86a551ed4c35a1efa1335d5f6d5df [↑](#endnote-ref-8)
9. City of Kamloops (2020). RCMP Municipal Employees – Financial Clerk and Crime Analyst Business Case. https://ehq-production-canada.s3.ca-central-1.amazonaws.com/6cf32ab746afc13684a1e7f2375efc69a180cfac/original/1610403422/BC20-01\_RCMP\_Additional\_FTE.pdf\_244508618b7d26f9ee0c68f546dcca80?X-Amz-Algorithm=AWS4-HMAC-SHA256&X-Amz-Credential=AKIA4KKNQAKIOR7VAOP4%2F20230927%2Fca-central-1%2Fs3%2Faws4\_request&X-Amz-Date=20230927T170701Z&X-Amz-Expires=300&X-Amz-SignedHeaders=host&X-Amz-Signature=fa05246f6495efa9a33ebd69964d19f21cf86a551ed4c35a1efa1335d5f6d5df [↑](#endnote-ref-9)
10. Source: Operations Strategy Branch, BC RCMP Headquarters [↑](#endnote-ref-10)
11. Police Resources in British Columbia, 2021. https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/law-crime-and-justice/criminal-justice/police/publications/statistics/bc-police-resources-2021.pdf [↑](#endnote-ref-11)
12. Police Resources in British Columbia, 2021. https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/law-crime-and-justice/criminal-justice/police/publications/statistics/bc-police-resources-2021.pdf [↑](#endnote-ref-12)