

**A Blueprint for Increasing RCMP Detachment Restorative Justice Referrals to  
Community Accountability Programs in British Columbia**

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## Executive Summary:

Restorative justice is one of many justice options in British Columbia. Restorative justice is supported by the Government of British Columbia, through its framework for Community Accountability Programs (CAPs), which provide community-level restorative justice services, and by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) in British Columbia, whose detachments represent the largest source of referrals to community restorative justice programs in the province. The roles of CAPs and the RCMP detachments in restorative justice require effectively working partnerships to ensure that restorative justice produces positive benefits for communities, and specifically those affected by crime. This report provides a guide for increasing referrals from RCMP detachments to CAPs in British Columbia based on information obtained through interviews with representatives from the RCMP detachments and CAPs in communities selected for their high police referrals. The report outlines a model for developing strong referral relationships and presents 19 recommendations to help detachments and CAPs to improve their relationships and increase the quantity and quality of referrals.

The concept and design of this report were undertaken by the “E” Division Restorative Justice Program Director and “E” Division Crime Prevention Research Analyst in collaboration with the Community Safety and Crime Prevention Branch of the British Columbia Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General. The interviews and research were conducted by “E” Division RCMP Crime Prevention Services staff in the communities of Nanaimo, Chilliwack, Kelowna, and Williams Lake. The questions were open-ended and asked respondents to reflect first on what they felt was responsible for the strong referral relationship and then on five areas predicted to be related to higher levels of referrals from police to community-level programs.

An analysis of the responses from the interviews revealed that strong referral relationships between CAPs and RCMP detachments follow a progression, modeled in this report under the acronym A.R.T./B.C. The four stages of the progressive development of relationships move from building **awareness** of restorative justice among detachment personnel, to formalizing a **relationship** between the program and the detachment through key personnel, to developing **trust** in the program and **buy-in** to restorative justice on the part of individual police officers, to developing a restorative policing **culture** in which the use of restorative justice becomes an expected part of doing police work within the criminal justice system. Each stage is identified by characteristics of the relationship between the CAP and the detachment, building upon and requiring the continuous maintenance of the characteristics in the previous stages.

- Awareness building is a stage in which a strong relationship is not in place and the police need to be made aware that a referral to restorative justice through the CAP is available to begin to build a referral base. It may exist when a new CAP is established or when changes to key personnel in the CAP or the detachment have led to a prolonged disruption in an existing referral relationship.
- Formalizing the relationships requires a collaborative working relationship between the CAP coordinator and the detachment liaison characterized by regular communication back and forth and the recognition of shared goals, perhaps through a letter of agreement or a memorandum of understanding.
- Developing trust and buy-in might happen separately or together, but are both required to move the relationship to the next stage. At this stage detachment personnel beyond the established liaison member are buying-in to the idea of restorative justice and are experiencing growing trust in the program, likely through participating in the forums that resulted from their referrals.

- Developing a culture of restorative policing occurs when the relationships is characterized by the features of each of the previous stages and a detachment's use of restorative justice has become a regular, built in practice where police officers begin to consider some type of restorative approach for most or all files. To its full extent, in a detachment that has a restorative policing culture, restorative justice becomes as normal a way of doing business as any other criminal justice option.

The findings have produced a thorough understanding of what leads to high referral relationships and what can be done to advance those relationships to levels that will further benefit the communities served. Recommendations are provided for each stage of the model. This allows detachments and CAPs to identify the stage that best represents their relationship and consider the associated recommendations that can enable the relationship to move to the subsequent stage. Advancing the relationship will also require implementing or maintaining the practices outlined in recommendations from earlier stages. The following are the recommendations for each stage within the model.

#### Awareness

- Promote the benefits of restorative justice and the CAP regularly at detachment watch briefing
- Develop information cards or pamphlets about the CAP

#### Relationship

- Select a Detachment Restorative Justice Liaison Member
- Ensure regular communication and collaboration toward shared goals
- Communicate expectations clearly
- Enable stable access to police for face-to-face interactions
- Establish RCMP detachment representation on/with the CAP's board of directors
- Establish and maintain a relationship between the CAP and police-based victim services

#### Trust/Buy-in

- Select an ideal Detachment Restorative Justice Liaison Member
- Enable and encourage police officers to participate in restorative justice processes
- Strive to achieve detachment leadership support and involvement
- Communicate success
- Attract and maintain high quality volunteers
- Operate within / Partner with an existing stable service organization

#### Culture

- Build restorative justice into the detachment structural processes
- Expect restorative justice as a default response to most files
- Embed restorative policing into police performance and reward systems
- Extend collaboration in restorative justice beyond the police / CAP partnership
- Encourage outside demand for the use of restorative justice

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## Introduction:

Restorative justice is one of many justice options available to those who have been affected by crime in British Columbia. The Government of British Columbia supports the use of restorative justice in many communities around the province through its framework, funding, and other support to Community Accountability Programs (CAPs), which provide community-level restorative justice services. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) in British Columbia also supports restorative justice, with RCMP detachments representing the largest source of referrals to community restorative justice programs in the province. In recent years, several reports, including the report from a Major Program Review of the “E” Division RCMP Restorative Justice Program, have recommended increased use of restorative justice in British Columbia. One way to achieve greater use of restorative justice in the communities of British Columbia is to increase the quantity and quality of referrals from RCMP detachments to their CAPs.

This report is intended to provide a guide, or blueprint, for increasing referrals from RCMP detachments to CAPs in British Columbia. The report contains a summary and analysis of information obtained through interviews with representatives from the RCMP detachments and CAPs in the communities of Williams Lake, Kelowna, Chilliwack, and Nanaimo, each selected for their high police referrals. The information within the report should be equally relevant to readers from both police and community restorative justice agencies. Recommendations are presented in this report to help detachments and CAPs to improve their relationships and increase the quantity and quality of referrals. A [table](#) summarizing the recommendations is provided at the end of the report. The lessons learned through the efforts to complete this report are intended to provide a thorough understanding of what leads to high referral relationships between RCMP detachments and CAPs and what can be done to advance those relationships to levels that will further benefit the communities served.

## Background:

Both the Government of British Columbia and the RCMP in British Columbia have supported the use of restorative justice through various ways since the late 1990s. The Community Accountability Program provides modest funding for training, volunteer recognition, and administration to approximately 50 community-based programs in communities across British Columbia. Collectively, these programs take on over 1,600 referrals of cases of criminal offending by youth and adults annually. Many of these are for thefts and mischief, although some CAPs have developed capacity to take on more complex cases, and most cases are referred by nearby RCMP detachments. Some CAPs also receive referrals from other police forces, Crown counsels, schools, and other sources. While a small number of CAPs provide service to First Nations communities in British Columbia, the majority do not. Many of the programs operating in and for First Nations communities do so under the Indigenous Justice Program (IJP, formerly the Aboriginal Justice Strategy), which is a provincial-federal partnership. There are approximately 30 programs within the IJP in BC. In other communities that do not have a CAP or IJP, there may be police-led programs or other independently run programs.

A major review of the RCMP's role in restorative justice in British Columbia was completed in 2015, resulting in a report recommending a new direction for the "E" Division Restorative Justice Program. The report recommended that the "E" Division Restorative Justice Program develop a vision that includes, among other aims, to support restorative justice as an effective complement to the criminal justice system. The "E" Division Restorative Justice Program Director has undertaken and completed a number of initiatives to action the report's recommendations, which include steps to increase referrals from RCMP detachments in British Columbia to community programs.

The project conducted to obtain the information presented in this report, Project Blueprint, was a combined effort between the "E" Division RCMP Restorative Justice Program and the Community Safety and Crime Prevention Branch of the British Columbia Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General. As the CAPs represent the largest category of restorative justice programs to which detachments make referrals and the RCMP is the primary referral agent to CAPs, both groups were eager to develop a guide to promote increased referrals from RCMP detachment to CAPs in British Columbia. While this report focuses on the relationship between RCMP detachments and CAPs and was not informed by relationships between the RCMP and other programs or between municipal police forces and CAPs or other programs, the recommendations may still be valuable for increasing referrals within these relationships.

The goal of this project was to learn what is necessary to bring British Columbia's criminal justice system to a point where restorative justice processes are regularly used as an effective complement to existing justice strategies. While many outcomes need to be achieved across the criminal justice system and within the field of restorative justice to accomplish this ultimate goal, two outcomes were believed to fall within the purview of the "E" Division Restorative Justice Program and the Community Safety and Crime Prevention Branch. These outcomes were for RCMP detachments to make effective referrals to community restorative justice programs and for community restorative justice programs to be capable of achieving justice outcomes. The main focus of Project Blueprint was on the issue of referrals, although the issue of program capability also influenced some of the work undertaken.

## Methods:

This project involved a number of steps. The first step involved using what was learned through the Major Program Review and the work experience of the project team to develop a model that predicted several factors that would lead detachments to make effective referrals to CAPs. Effective referrals were considered to be those that were appropriate for restorative justice and would likely result in both healing for those affected by the offence and a reduction in the risk of future offending on the part of the offender. The factors that were believed to contribute to RCMP detachments making effective referrals to their local CAP are depicted in the project's [logic model](#) shown below.

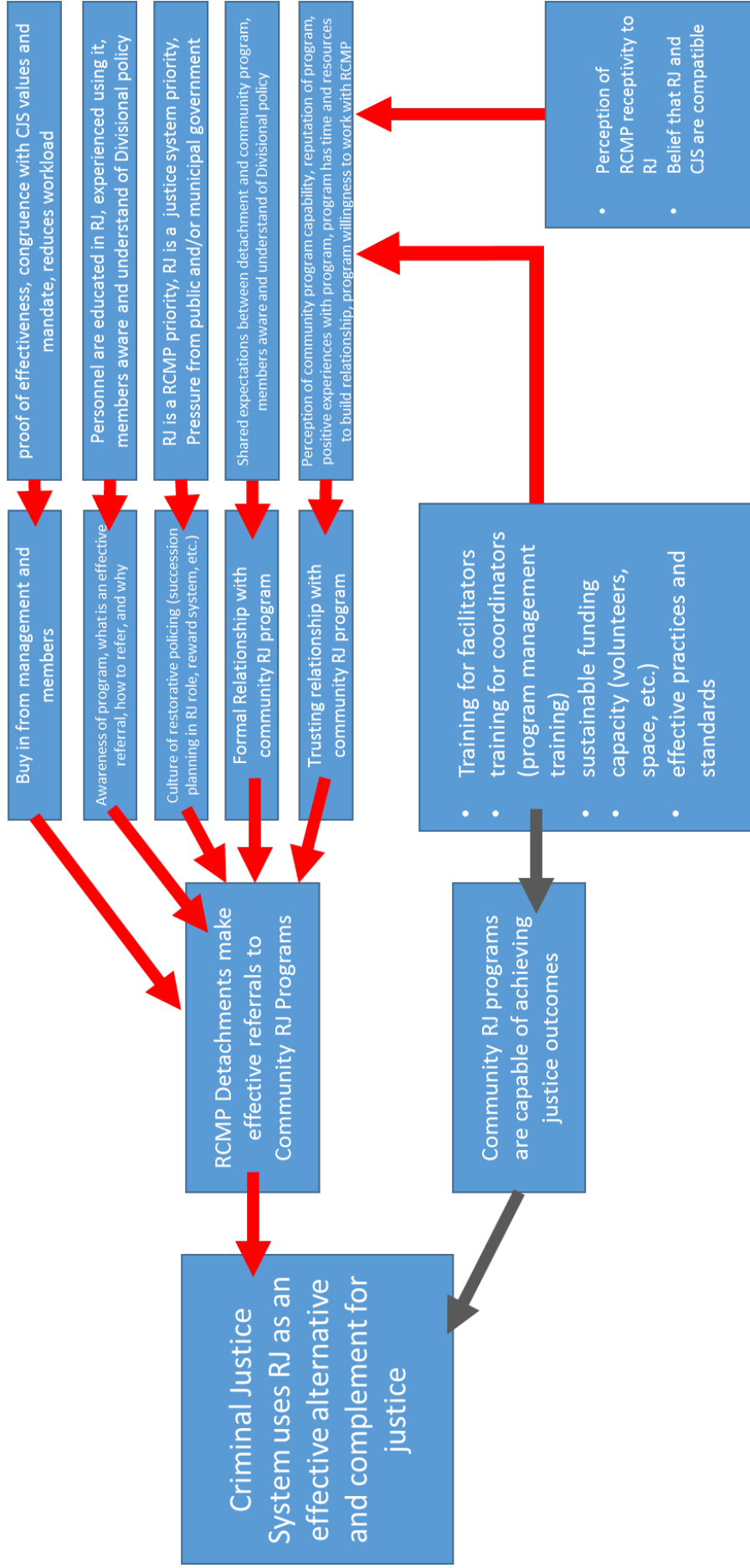
Five main factors were predicted to increase the likelihood that RCMP detachments make effective referrals to CAPs. These included achieving 1) buy-in from detachment management and police officers; 2) awareness of the local program, how to refer to the program effectively, and why referrals should be made; 3) a culture of restorative policing, which might manifest itself in characteristics such as having succession planning for the restorative justice role, a reward/performance measurement system that includes restorative justice, and other practices indicative of having a restorative policing culture; 4) a formalized relationship with the community restorative justice program; and 5) a trusting relationship with the CAP.

It was further predicted that there would be several conditions within the policing environment that contributed the presence of each of the five main factors.

1. Buy-in – It was predicted that the level of buy-in by detachment management and other police officers will depend on the level to which those police officers believe that there is proof that restorative justice is effective; that restorative justice is congruent with the values and mandate of the criminal justice system, including that of the police; and that restorative justice can reduce the workload on police in the long term by reducing crime and conflict in communities.
2. Awareness – It was predicted that the level of awareness of the community restorative justice program, what an effective referral is, how to refer, and why referrals should be made among police officers in a detachment will depend on the level to which personnel are educated and trained in restorative principles, experienced with restorative justice, and aware and informed about the “E” Division Restorative Justice Policy.
3. Culture of Restorative Policing – It was predicted that the extent of a culture of restorative policing will depend on detachment police officers’ perceptions that restorative justice is a RCMP priority, that restorative justice is a justice system priority, and of pressure from the public and/or government (municipal and provincial) to use restorative justice.
4. Formal Relationship – It was predicted that the existence of a formal relationship will depend on the extent of shared expectations between the detachment and the CAP, and the level of awareness and understanding of the “E” Division Restorative Justice Policy.
5. Trusting Relationship – It was predicted that the level of trust between the detachment and the CAP will depend upon the perception that police officers have that the program is capable, the reputation of the program in the community, the extent to which police officers have had positive experiences with the program, the time and resources the program has to dedicate to building a relationship with the police, and the willingness on the part of the program to work with the police.



## Logic Model



The logic model further predicted that in order for the criminal justice system to use restorative justice as an effective alternative and complement for existing justice strategies, the CAP must be capable of achieving justice outcomes such as crime prevention, public safety, and victim satisfaction among other things. It was believed that a number of key factors contribute to making a program capable, including having adequate training of facilitators, adequate training for program coordinators, sustainable funding, sufficient capacity, and effective practices and standards. While the Restorative Justice Blueprint Project did not evaluate programs to determine whether they were in fact capable of achieving justice outcomes, it did explore these same factors to determine whether they influenced the perception of the police and contributed to a trusting relationship between the detachment and the CAP. Those factors that were predicted to make a program actually more capable were also predicted to influence perceptions of the program’s capability, its reputation in the community, the extent to which police officers would have positive experiences with the program, and the time and resources that the program can dedicate toward building relationships, such as with the police. It was not predicted that the factors that would make a program more capable would necessarily lead those running the program to be willing to work with the police, and therefore, additional factors were added to the logic model to explain what might influence this factor.

The main method of data collection for this project was semi-structured interviews. The interviews were designed and conducted to explore the main factors and the conditions that were predicted to lead to them. The goal of the interviews was to assess whether the logic model was supported and, if so, in what ways.

To achieve this, the project team selected one community from each of the four RCMP districts in British Columbia. The communities selected had the highest referrals from the RCMP to the local CAP for the district in 2015. In the North District, Williams Lake was selected. In the Southeast District, Kelowna was selected. In the Lower Mainland District, Chilliwack was selected. In the Island District, Nanaimo was selected. The table below display the number of referrals made to local CAPs from the RCMP in each of the four selected communities. Interviews were conducted with five CAPs (two CAPs provide restorative justice services in Kelowna) and four detachment liaison members. The detachment liaison member and a program representative (or more than one) were interviewed separately within each of the four selected communities.

**Referral Numbers from the RCMP to CAPs in Selected Communities**

<b>Community</b>	Nanaimo	Chilliwack	Kelowna	Williams Lake
<b>2015 Referrals</b>	173	150	139	62

Six prepared open-ended questions were used in each interview varied depending on whether the interviewee was a detachment liaison member or a CAP representative. The opening question was very broad to capture respondents’ opinions and perceptions about why the referral rates were high, while each of the subsequent questions addressed the five main factors predicted in the logic model. Additional information was collected through sub-questions and discussion that arose through the answers provided by each respondent.

The interviews were audio recorded and notes were taken during the interviews to capture the information provided by each respondent. The recordings and notes were analyzed to determine whether the themes from the interviews supported the process predicted in the logic model.

This project also intended to explore whether a connection between the detachment's Police-based Victim Services program and the CAP influenced the amount of referrals that were received from the police. It became clear through the interviews with some CAP representatives and the Victim Services coordinators in the detachments that, while these relationships are recognized as important, they had yet to develop to the point where they were influencing referrals in any meaningful way. As a result, the analysis of the two interviews that were conducted with Victim Services coordinators were not included in the results from this report.

## Results:

The interviews resulted in information that both supported the ideas presented in the logic model and led to the development of new model that seems to better fit the development of a strong referral relationship between RCMP detachments and CAPs. In general, the five areas predicted to lead to high levels of referrals were well matched to the ideas discussed by interviewees. Support was found for each of the five areas, with many of the factors predicted to lead to those conditions in detachments also being supported. However, we found that which of the five areas a detachment liaison or CAP representative focused on as the primary reason for high referrals appeared to depend upon a developmental stage in the referral relationship. While each of these referral relationships were likely more advanced than the average across the province (which is why they were selected for this project), the results from the interviews point toward progressive stages in the development of these relationships that can differentiate between not only the number of referrals, but also the complexity of those referrals.

The first question asked during each interview was intended to get the respondent to identify what he or she felt was the most important contributor to the high number of referrals sent from the RCMP detachment to the CAP. Keeping the topic open allowed for an assessment of what is most important to the referral relationship without being influenced by the interviewers' reference to the five predicted areas in the logic model. The themes that arose from the reasons provided by the respondents are listed below. Each of the reasons is linked to one of the five areas predicted in the logic model.

### Themes Related to What RCMP Detachments and CAPs Feel Has Contributed Most to High Referrals

Themes Within Interview Responses	Area from Logic Model
Regular promotion of the program	Awareness
High program visibility – being located within the Detachment	Awareness
Strong relationship between the program and the liaison member	Relationship
RCMP police officers have a role on the program's board	Relationship
Great volunteers	Trust
Stable, structured, and capable organization housing the program	Trust
Great Detachment Liaison Member	Buy-in
Support by the OIC	Buy-In
Consistency among RCMP supervisors expecting the use of restorative justice referrals	Culture

The interviewers heard from detachment liaisons and CAP representatives alike that the regular promotion of the availability of the program, what files can be referred, and the benefits of making a referral was a key

reason for the high number of referrals. The promotion of the program was often done through presentations made by the CAP representatives and the liaison members together at watch briefings a few times each year. It was felt that these presentations grew the awareness of the program within the detachment, either introducing the program to new police officers or refreshing the memories of police officers who had been before. These promotional presentations also enabled police officers to meet the program representatives in person, ask questions about the program and the referral process, and see the relationship between the CAP and the detachment in action through the partnership between the CAP representative and the detachment liaison member. While primarily building awareness, these activities can also reinforce or formalize a relationship between the detachment and the CAP, and, when questions get answered or discussions become fruitful for police officers, can lead to buy-in among attending police officers.

Similarly, the interviewers were told that the high level of visibility of the program being housed within a detachment led to increased referrals. When a program is located in close proximity to the working space of police officers, there is an increased chance for ongoing contact to remind the officers of availability of the program and what it can offer to them. Essentially, for co-located CAPs, each working day provides the same opportunity as an annual or bi-annual watch briefing presentation with those police officers working in close proximity. Working so closely creates the opportunity to build awareness within the detachment and may be the result of a formal relationship, but for this proximity to generate even more referrals, it relies on the building and maintenance of that relationship.

Most relationships between CAPs and detachments had been long established in the cases of those who were interviewed. Sometimes these were between people and other times between the roles of CAP coordinator and the detachment liaison member regardless of who was currently filling those roles. Most often, it was identified that the selection of both detachment liaison members and CAP coordinators with the ability and willingness to work collaboratively was crucial. And, while few could point to a formal document that created that relationship, it was clear from some responses that the ongoing nature of communication between these two positions in each organization was critical to high numbers of referrals. When contact was regular and cooperative, and expectations were clearly communicated between the two organizations, any obstacles to referrals were dealt with quickly and effectively. A strong relationship based on regular communication and shared goals moved beyond simply ensuring police officers were aware of the program and how to use it toward finding ways to collaboratively increase referrals.

One program reported that having police officers and retired officers from the detachment take an active role in the program's board was beneficial to the referral relationship. Having this involvement from the police in the board demonstrated support and formalized the relationship between the detachment and the CAP. For some frontline police, the message that this stable relationship sends can increase buy-in to restorative justice and potentially trust in the program.

A key reason why some respondents felt their program received such high numbers of referrals from the police detachment was their roster of the volunteers. The interviewers heard about one detachment that benefited from the ability to refer files to very experienced and highly qualified volunteers who were capable of effectively addressing complex cases both within and outside of other criminal justice processes. The knowledge that a program's main function of holding restorative justice processes is done so by capable individuals builds trust within the detachment. This trust leads to more and more complex referrals, since those at the detachment know that the files they investigated will be dealt with effectively.

Even when a detachment lacks knowledge of the individual volunteers and their skills, some detachment liaison members pointed to the importance of the organizational structure and reputation of the larger organization that operated the CAP. Three of the CAPs selected for this project were programs housed within larger and long-standing organizations that local police officers would be familiar with for their other services as well as restorative justice. It was felt that these organizations had strong and stable reputations, which led to a level of trust that extended beyond simply the relationship between the detachment liaison member and the CAP restorative justice coordinator. There was a trust that even when coordinators vacated the position, the organization would find a suitable, capable replacement in a timely manner with an appropriate succession plan. This had proved true in a number of cases prior to the interviews, which provided strong examples for the maintenance of trust within the referral relationship when CAP coordinator turnover occurred. In these situations, however, a strong relationship between the detachment and the CAP was already present.

The interviewers heard from CAP representatives that the role of the liaison member was critical to the relationship and led to high numbers of referrals by communicating restorative justice to police in ways that the CAP could not. For the CAPs, the liaison member was often their primary source of referrals, working with frontline police officers to identify suitable files for referral and then making the referral on behalf of the investigating police officer. The work of a strong liaison member was recognized to add credibility among the police officers to the prospect of using restorative justice. A great detachment liaison member was reported to build buy-in by reducing the workload required on investigators, communicating the benefits of restorative justice, and demonstrating success by reporting back results to investigators. More than simply maintaining an effective referral relationship, effective detachment liaison members sold the idea of restorative justice to frontline police officers in a way that was meaningful to them, which increased their willingness to use restorative justice as an effective way to resolve a file.

The support of an officer in charge of a detachment was also noted as the main reason one detachment made a high number of referrals. The tone set by a detachment commander can ensure that there is an expectation that restorative justice is used by frontline police officers for appropriate files. This was found to build buy-in among other police officers in the detachment, because of the hierarchical structure of RCMP detachments. While the expectations of one person alone, even a detachment commander, cannot necessarily create a fundamental change in how police officers view restorative justice, the support of the detachment commander carries a lot of weight and can lead to a certain level of buy-in that may not develop otherwise. Importantly, some detachment commanders were viewed as being responsible for beginning to develop a culture of restorative justice that continued with successive detachment commanders.

While a complete adoption of a restorative policing culture may not exist in any RCMP detachment in British Columbia for a variety of reasons, the detachments selected for this project were certainly showing some elements of a budding restorative policing culture to varying degrees. In one such detachment, the reason for the high number of referrals that they consistently made to their local CAP was reported to be the consistency shown by police supervisors. In this detachment, it was felt that members in supervisory positions had bought-in and expected their subordinates to do the same. It was expressed that “restorative justice was the criminal justice system”, and this had developed in the detachment to the point where successive groups of supervisors had maintained the consistent expectation that restorative justice would be considered for files. The interviewers were informed that supervisors seriously questioned investigators about files that did not demonstrate that consideration, sometimes requiring files to be referred to the CAP upon review. This established a consistent message over time that restorative justice referrals are an

expected part of police work in that detachment, which undoubtedly has led to high numbers of referrals coming from a large portion of the detachment's police officers.

From the analysis of information collected during the interviews, it became clear that the logic model drafted for this project, though accurately identifying the areas that led to high numbers of referrals, did not fully explain the results. What was missing from the original logic model was the fact that referral relationships between detachments and CAPs appear to follow a progression in stages. These stages are a reflection of progression within the detachment related to the acceptance of restorative justice and the willingness to provide referrals to CAPs. It is believed that as the relationship progresses along the stages, the number and/or complexity of referrals from the police increases. Using the same five areas identified in the original logic model, the new staged progression was found to move from 1) building awareness, to 2) formalizing the relationship, to 3) gaining trust and buy-in, and finally to 4) developing a culture of restorative policing. The acronym A.R.T/B.C. was used to represent this new staged progression model.

**Awareness:** Awareness building is the first stage in the relationship between a detachment and a CAP that starts to lead to referrals. At this stage, there may not yet be a strong relationship in place, which requires that the police are made aware that a referral to restorative justice through the CAP is available. This stage would also likely occur when vacancies/changes within the program or key roles in the detachment, such as the detachment liaison member, have led to a prolonged disruption in an existing referral relationship. The goal at this stage appears to be to educate police officers about the CAP program and about restorative justice in order to build a base of referrals. While no relationship explored in this project would still be at this stage, it is clear that all relationships require ongoing effort to promote awareness, particularly for new recruits and other police officers newly working in the detachment.

Most of those interviewed reported that police officers in their community were generally aware of the program and how to make a referral. There was a general belief that police officers were aware of what makes a good referral, but this was noted as something that continued to need work. In fact, regardless of how far along a relationship between the detachment and the CAP, regular and ongoing efforts to increase awareness were required. This was noted to be especially true for new recruits and when turnover is high.

From the interviews, it was clear that the relationships explored had all made substantial steps in building awareness among police. These were often through promotional presentations during watch briefings. Some CAPs have developed information cards and pamphlets to communicate their messages to police officers. Other efforts included addressing scepticism through face-to-face interactions between detachment liaison members or other senior police officers and reluctant police officers. New recruits were sometimes required to meet with the CAP coordinator or take on restorative justice issues in their CAPRA projects. For those programs that were co-located, the opportunity to address awareness on a regular basis was critical in getting referrals and moving the relationship to the next stage.

**Relationship:** The second stage is the formalizing of a relationship between the detachment and the CAP. This generally requires a collaborative working relationship between the CAP coordinator and someone from the detachment in a liaison role. This stage is characterized by regular communication back and forth and the recognition of shared goals. While this stage may involve a letter of agreement or a memorandum of understanding, what is of most importance is the communication of expectations in the partnership, and the ability to quickly resolve any barriers to sending and receiving referrals. The goal of relationships at this stage should be to move from strong working partnerships between two or a few individuals to a more formalized structural relationship. This increased stability will ensure that more referrals are made and that the referral relationship thrives even during periods of change to key personnel.

From the interviews, it was clear that having a stable, strong relationship was a key to getting referrals. In some of the detachments, the detachment liaison member was long-serving in that role, ensuring that the relationship between the detachment and the CAP had consistency. These members also developed strong relationships with CAP coordinators, regardless of their tenure, through regular communication and a shared goal. In most cases, the relationship between the detachment liaison member and the CAP coordinator was the primary or only relationship that existed between the program and the detachment, the strength of which ensured referrals. In other cases, the detachment had representation on the CAP's board or the CAP coordinator and other volunteers developed direct relationships with referring police officers.

**Trust / Buy-in:** The third stage is the developing of trust in the CAP program on the part of the detachment police officers and their buy-in to the value of restorative justice as an avenue for resolving crime and conflicts. These two developments might happen separately or together, but when they are both happening, increased referrals will result. When police have bought-in to the idea that restorative justice is effective and beneficial to clients and themselves, they will be more likely to make referrals. However, restorative justice is still largely an unknown and misunderstood complement and alternative to the criminal justice system. Therefore, making regular referrals relies on their trust in the capability of the program receiving them, because without that trust, an investigator will likely stick with the more familiar process of recommending charges to Crown counsel. Complicating this stage is that the building of trust appears to require experience with the program and some level of buy-in to the effectiveness of restorative justice itself.

Trust was not always discussed as having been achieved among most police officers, but the interviews did indicate that it was growing within the detachments selected for this project. There were several factors that led to trust. As predicted in the original logic model, these factors were related to police officers' perceptions of and experiences with their local CAPs. Interviewees reported that once police officers had experienced the ease of sending a referral and having it dealt with effectively by the program, their likelihood of referring again increased. It was also suggested that experiencing the competence and professionalism, specifically getting regular updates and having results communicated back, built trust. Also, as previously mentioned the reputation of the program or the organization that ran the program led to trust, since police officers knew those organizations to be credible and stable. It was also noted that with the number of relationships that a CAP had developed with other reputable services, police officers could trust that a referral to that program would ensure that victims and offenders alike would be able to have their needs met, sometimes better than through the criminal justice process.

Buy-in was also something that detachment liaison members commonly noted was a work in progress. This buy-in came from within the detachment, through messages from influential individuals, and from examples or personal experience of the effectiveness of the process. CAP representatives pointed to the role of the detachment liaison members in some of the detachments in selling the merits of restorative justice to frontline police officers. Even the liaison members themselves discussed how they took steps to ensure that a referral to restorative justice would require less work and less time, and often prove more fulfilling for appropriate files than writing and following up with a report to Crown counsel would be. Also important, detachment liaison members indicated that they reported successes back to the investigators and often sought opportunities for the investigators to participate in the restorative justice forum. Personally experiencing restorative justice in action was reported to regularly improve buy-in. Additionally, some detachments reported that their officers in charge and other senior police officers had bought-in or were buying-in to restorative justice, which sent an important message to the rest of the police officers in the detachment about the value placed on restorative justice.



**Culture:** The final stage in the model is developing a culture of restorative policing. At this stage, a detachment's use of restorative justice has become a regular, built in practice. In these detachments, restorative justice principles start to get integrated into policing, where investigating police officers begin to consider some type of restorative approach for most or all files. To its full extent, in a detachment that has a restorative policing culture, restorative justice becomes as normal a way of doing business as any other criminal justice option. A restorative policing culture is characterized by advanced levels of the behaviours from the previous stages. Police officers will be aware of the restorative justice services available and understand how to refer to them effectively. A strong formalized relationship will exist with the community program(s). Additionally, there will be both buy-in to restorative justice and trust that using police discretion to direct a file to the restorative program will result in the best outcome for victims, offenders, the community, and the police.

From the interviews, it became apparent that while the detachments selected for this project had some elements of the development of a restorative policing culture, few of those interviewed would argue that a restorative policing culture existed as described above. Some of those characteristics that were present in some detachments were; strong support shown by successive detachment commanders, long term and stable detachment liaison member roles, succession planning for the detachment liaison member position, reward and recognition for police officers who refer to and participate in restorative justice, and a structure in the detachment for supervisors to review files to ensure the consideration of restorative justice.

While public, governmental, or RCMP organizational pressure did not seem to be an impetus for developing a restorative policing culture, in some detachments, there was also a growing culture of restorative justice in other parts of the justice system, which in turn strengthened the need for a restorative policing culture. In two communities, respondents reported that Crown counsels and judges had started using the local CAP, which had developed to the point where Crown counsels are now sending files back to the investigators when they feel that pre-charge restorative justice should have been considered and was not. This is a further expression outside of the detachment but within the criminal justice system that using restorative justice appropriately is expected of the police.

## Recommendations:

Based on the results of the analysis done for this project, several recommendations to improve the referral relationship between detachments and CAP are presented below. These recommendations have been organized within the stages of the A.R.T/B.C. model. For a relationship that is just starting out, the CAP and/or the detachment should consider implementing the recommendations within the awareness building stage. This will enable a referral base to begin to grow and ideally create the opportunity for the conversations and collaboration necessary to formalize the relationship into something stable and lasting. For those looking to formalize or stabilize an existing referral relationship to overcome periods of inconsistent referrals, detachments and CAPs should look to implement the recommendations from both the awareness building stage and the formalizing relationships stage. Similarly, for those relationships that are already stable and looking to increase trust and buy-in from police officers to increase referrals, detachments and CAPs should implement the recommendations from the third stage as well as the previous two. Finally, for those relationships ready to begin developing or maintaining a restorative policing culture within the detachment, the recommendations at the fourth stage should be added to the recommendations from the previous three stages.

### Building Awareness:

- **Promote the benefits of restorative justice and the CAP regularly at detachment watch briefing**

Detachment commanders, watch commanders, and other senior police officers within the detachment should make an effort to invite the local CAP to make promotional presentations to the watches one or more times per year. These promotional opportunities have been valuable for high referral detachments to build awareness among the police officers who are likely to be referral sources to the CAP as well as those in supervisory and leadership positions within the detachment. If your detachment is unsure of whether a CAP or other restorative justice program is available to provide service to your detachment, contact the “E” Division Restorative Justice Program Director.

CAP coordinators should make contact with the detachment to request opportunities to address police officers during watch briefings. These presentations should be short but effective in communicating what restorative justice looks like for your program, what benefits it has to victims, communities, offenders, and police, what appropriate referrals look like, and how to make a referral to your program. If making contact with the detachment proves to be a challenge, contact the provincial CAP Coordinator.

- **Develop information cards or pamphlets about the CAP**

CAPs should develop promotional and information materials and share those materials with police at the local detachment. The materials should not only provide clear and concise information about the program for police, but should also help police to provide appropriate and accurate information about restorative justice to potential program participants. The design of these materials should allow easy use by police.

Detachment personnel should keep information materials about the CAP or other local restorative justice program available for quick reference when considering a referral or discussing restorative

justice as an option to offenders, victims, and others affected. When police have and can communicate accurate expectations about what the program does and can offer to participants, it can be an important first step in a successful restorative justice outcome. If materials provided by the program do not meet the needs of the detachment, provide that feedback to the program and start a discussion about what would be better suited to the task.

## **Formalizing the Relationship:**

- **Select a Detachment Restorative Justice Liaison Member**

A stable relationship between a CAP and a detachment requires someone at the detachment to be in the liaison role. The interviews highlighted the importance of this role in being a main point of communication and access for CAPs to the detachment. Detachments should be sure to select someone who is supportive of restorative justice and has a clear understanding of the process used in that community and the benefits to participants, the community, and police. In addition to being supportive of restorative justice, the person in this role should have strong skills in communication and developing partnerships. Having someone who will serve in this role consistently over time will encourage stability in the relationship.

Detachment commanders should consider consulting with the CAP or its board on the selection of a detachment liaison member. For information about and support with selecting a detachment liaison member for your detachment, contact the “E” Division Restorative Justice Program Director.

CAPs should consider contacting the local detachment commander when the detachment liaison member position is vacant, or unknown to them. There may be someone designated as the detachment liaison, or there may be a need for the role to be assigned to someone. Promotional activities may have led to the development of information relationships with some police officers who would make strong candidates. These police officers could be respectfully suggested as being suited for the role, but it is important to remember that other detachment priorities and considerations will also factor into the selection of a detachment liaison member.

- **Ensure regular communication and collaboration toward shared goals**

When a detachment liaison member is in place, there should be regular communication between that person and the CAP coordinator. Regular communication has been found to strengthen the relationship and address any potential issues before they begin to affect the sending and receiving of referrals. At this stage, the number and quality of referrals are often directly affected by the strength and consistency of the relationship between the detachment liaison and the CAP coordinator, so regular maintenance of that relationship is important.

Some of the communication should be toward achieving shared goals. Such a goal is often finding ways to continue building awareness and increasing the number of the diversity of referrals. Working together toward a shared goal will enhance the capacity of both the detachment and CAP, both of which often have relatively few resources to direct toward restorative justice initiatives. This type of work can begin to bridge the gap that often exists between restorative justice program personnel and police that comes from the perceptions of different or opposing definitions and

goals of justice. It also creates reasons for regular communication that can be used for feedback and regular assessments of what is and is not working.

- **Communicate expectations clearly**

Both CAPs and detachments will have expectations about how their relationship should work. These expectations should be communicated clearly to ensure both sides of the relationship are aware of what the other expects and can and cannot deliver. While a strong relationship between the CAP coordinator and the detachment liaison member is important for discussing expectations, these relationships should be formalized through letters of agreements, which can be translated into detachment policy supplements and the CAP's policies. Whether set out in writing or not, the expectations of each side of the partnership should be revisited regularly to keep up with changes to detachment priorities, to personnel within the CAP and the detachment, and to restorative justice practices in general.

[Recommended principles and standards for restorative justice providers in criminal matters](#) were developed by Community Justice Initiatives BC in collaboration with others from around the province. This document can provide an excellent starting point for discussions around standards and expectations, and should be reviewed by CAPs and RCMP detachments.

- **Enable stable access to police for face-to-face interactions**

CAP and other restorative justice programs that operate within police detachments or community policing offices have a distinct advantage in formalizing a referral relationship with the detachment. While there are also valid reasons that some programs wish to remain physically separate from police locations, working in close proximity to police officers who will be making referrals enables a program to be more readily top of mind for those officers. It also ensures that questions can be addressed quickly and that the referral process itself can be expedited. Whether these benefits outweigh the potential issues associated to being co-located is something that CAPs and detachments may need to consider.

When a relationship has been established, detachments should consider providing office space within a detachment or community policing office if it is available. Many CAPs operate on very tight budgets, so such offers of support may have many benefits in addition to increasing face-to-face contact with police officers. For support in learning how other restorative justice programs have been effectively co-located in police buildings, contact the "E" Division Restorative Justice Director.

Even if space within a police building is unavailable, efforts should be made by both detachments and CAPs to increase access to police officers for regular face-to-face contact. The development of individual relationships beyond just the key relationship between the detachment liaison and the CAP coordinator can be crucial for moving the overall referral relationship to subsequent stages.

In "E" Division's Restorative Justice Policy, Operational Manual 20.5, section 7.4 provides guidance to detachment commanders on the requirements that must be met when providing Community Restorative Justice Coordinators and other program personnel access to the detachment and police buildings. The policy requires that any Community Restorative Justice Program Coordinator with ongoing access to a detachment maintains a RCMP Reliability Status

clearance for non-employees, is provided with adequate working space and access to necessary office amenities, and does not have access to CPIC databases or criminal record information.

- **Establish RCMP detachment representation on/with the CAP's board of directors**

To formalize and stabilize the relationship, CAPs and detachments should consider whether it might be appropriate for the detachment to be represented in some way on or with the board of directors. Having representation on or with the board can both send a message of support for the program on the part of the detachment and ensure that the expectations and concerns of the detachment can be expressed. This can also contribute to enhancing the perception that the CAP and the detachment are working toward shared justice goals.

RCMP representatives and CAP directors may have to consider whether any detachment representative should exercise a voting role or whether this should be a higher level of liaison only to avoid potential or perceived conflicts of interest. For those considering establishing such representation, consult the BC Societies Act and contact the "E" Division Restorative Justice Program Director for support in getting advice on this issue.

- **Establish and maintain a relationship between the CAP and police-based victim services**

While the interviews revealed that none of the relationships explored for this project had established strong relationships between the CAP and police-based victim services, such a relationship could provide another source of appropriate referrals. This largely underdeveloped relationship should be explored further in most communities, since victim services providers may be able to help explain the option of restorative justice to victims and could even make a referral or connect with a police officer to have a referral made to a CAP at the request of a victim. CAPs and detachments should make establishing this relationship a priority to not only increase and improve referrals, but also to ensure victims participating in restorative justice are properly informed about justice processes and their rights.

Establishing a relationship with a victim services program within a detachment would likely require following steps that mirror those within the stages of building awareness and formalizing a relationship between the CAP and the larger detachment. Important activities would include promoting restorative justice, having materials, meeting with the appropriate police-base victim services program representative(s), maintaining regular communication, and working together on common goals. Getting referral protocols established and formalized should also occur.

The Government of British Columbia and "E" Division RCMP support the use of restorative justice as a service for victims when done effectively and appropriately. [A partnership guide for police-based victim services and restorative justice programs](#) has been produced by Restorative Justice Victoria, and should be consulted for ideas and good practices toward establishing and improving these relationships. For further support in establishing or improving a relationship between a CAP and a police-based victim services program, please contact the "E" Division Restorative Justice Program Director, the provincial CAP Coordinator, and/or the "E" Division Victim Services Program Director.

## Developing **T**rust and **B**uy-in:

- **Select an ideal Detachment Restorative Justice Liaison Member**

While putting someone in the role of the detachment liaison member is a key step in formalizing a relationship, the importance of this role for developing buy-in among frontline police officers means that the person filling this role must not only support restorative justice, but also be highly influential in the detachment. In high referral detachments, the detachment liaison member is the person who removes barriers to making referrals and sells the options as one that is not only beneficial to participants and the community, but also to the investigators. The right detachment liaison member not only represents the detachment to the program, but perhaps more importantly represents restorative justice as a credible justice option to the rest of the detachment. Detachment commanders looking to increase the use of restorative justice should carefully consider who within their detachment can fill this role effectively.

Ideal detachment liaison members often find ways to reduce the burden of file loads on investigators by making restorative justice an enticing option. When building buy-in, the detachment liaison member might need to work directly with investigators to identify suitable files for referral. This may also involve reviewing files regularly to provide advice and guidance to investigators and supervisors about the suitable files they find for which a referral has not yet been made. The detachment liaison member may accept the file from the original investigator and make the referral him/herself, taking responsibility for following up, and updating the investigator on the outcome of the process. When a detachment liaison member can make a referral to restorative justice and take only a matter of minutes from the investigator's time, the appeal of making that referral rather than investing time into a full report to Crown counsel is quite strong.

For support with selecting a detachment restorative justice liaison member and clarifying the role to facilitate the referral process, contact the "E" Division Restorative Justice Program Director.

- **Enable and encourage police officers to participate in restorative justice processes**

From both the interviews conducted for this project and the results from the report of the major program review of the "E" Division Restorative Justice Program, it is clear that one of the best ways to build support among police officers (or anyone else) is for them to experience what transpires during a restorative justice process. On top of police officers having the opportunity to see the process in action and witness the effects on participants, police officers can add a perspective to the dialogue that no other participants can, explaining the effects of crime on the wider community but also on themselves. Being seen as a person within (or outside of) the uniform and someone who is helping in addition to enforcing the law can help to improve the perception of police to offenders, victims, and other community members. Police officers can also provide knowledge of local services that might be beneficial to coming to more meaningful agreements. The effects of police attendance and the relationships built during a process could lead to ongoing positive results.

CAPs should, when at all possible, request or suggest to investigating officers to take part in the process. This will likely require flexible scheduling to accommodate the officers' shifts and schedules. Some detachment commanders have agreed to pay overtime to officers who are invited to attend a restorative justice forum outside of their regular schedule. While it is important for the

main participants in the process to accept police participation, existing research indicates that this should not be a problem in most cases. However, CAPs and attending police officers should consider how participation might be affected by the wearing of the police uniform, and make decision about the wearing of uniform during a restorative justice process on a case by case basis.

CAPs should also consider extending invitations to local police officers when training for facilitators occurs. Police officers would not have to participate in the entire training or get any accreditation/certification, but having the opportunity to meet with prospective facilitators and sit in on a role plays may be beneficial. Perhaps adding a section to discuss the police role and the referral process to the training day would ensure that participating officers gain practical knowledge in addition to experiencing the simulated process.

Within detachments, supervisors should enable and encourage the attendance of police officers at restorative justice processes by accommodating this attendance within scheduling. While this may not always be feasible, there are benefits to police attendance that merit the effort to make scheduling work.

- **Strive to achieve detachment leadership support and involvement**

Detachment commanders bring organizational authority and have influence over the police officers who work within the detachment. When a detachment commander buys in to restorative justice and has trust in the local program, the use of referrals to the CAP can become a detachment priority. If restorative justice becomes a detachment priority, there is a push through the entire detachment hierarchy to make use of the available service. When the detachment commander sees restorative justice instead as something to be left solely to the discretion of individual police officers, the legitimacy of making effective referrals to restorative justice is not reinforced within the detachment. It should be clear that an effective and appropriate referral to a CAP program is supported and expected by the organization, which is represented to individual police officers through the words and actions of the detachment commander.

Detachment commanders should consider making time to observe their local CAP in action and to review any materials and annual reports they produce. This will ensure that any decision to communicate support and direction toward making referrals is informed by the available evidence and one in which the detachment commander can be confident. The interviews produced stories of how detachment commanders who had been reluctant toward restorative justice became strong and influential supporters by getting more involved and seeing the program's work in action.

CAPs should take away from this the importance of having detachment commanders' support to building buy-in among police. Although the leaders in the detachment may not directly make referrals, the influence they can have on referrals can be of great importance. CAPs should consider extending invitations for participation to detachment commanders and other detachment leaders through the detachment liaison member. It may also be valuable to learn what the detachment's priorities are and find ways to demonstrate that the restorative justice process can contribute to reducing crime or safety issues related to those priorities. Restorative justice is one of many services available for police in a community to address the issues they face; demonstrating that the process is effective and can help to meet the detachment's goals is critical to getting buy-in from the top.

- **Communicate success**

Building buy-in to restorative justice and trust in the CAP among police may require strong evidence to overcome perceptions that it is a less effective or less appropriate way to respond to crime than the traditional criminal justice approaches, such as pursuing charges. Police officers may be reluctant to relinquish control over the outcome of a file to a program that is not embedded within the official criminal justice system. Positive outcomes for files can be a key motivator for police officers, many of whom get a sense of ownership over the files they investigate. When a police officer has taken what they might view as a risk in sending a file to the CAP, communicating positive results back to him or her could reinforce the point that such a risk was worthwhile. If a referral to the CAP can produce better results than typically achieved by pursuing charges, and with less work for investigating police officers, the decision to make future referrals becomes an easier one. First, the investigator needs to hear about the results.

Detachment liaison members should play an important role in this, especially if the referral goes through the liaison member rather than directly from the investigator. Detachment liaison members can ensure that the CAP coordinator follows up with the outcomes and agreements from each referral and then pass along that information to the investigator. The interviews suggested that informing investigators that their decision to refer made a positive impact can increase the level of buy-in and develop trust in the program.

CAP coordinators should consider building a protocol for providing information on the outcome of each referral back to the detachment, highlighting the successes, particularly from cases that were more serious or more complex. When police have lost trust in programs, it has often been the result of failing to receive regular updates on referred files, so ensure that outcomes are always communicated, and make special effort to demonstrate the benefits to participants.

While it has not been a practice commonly discussed by CAPs or police, CAPs should consider whether it would be appropriate in some cases to suggest that participating offenders or victims to produce a feedback letter discussing the effect of the referral and the restorative process. This letter could be shared with the investigating officers. Many restorative justice processes already result in agreements for the offending party to write an apology letter, so the act of documenting the transformation is not foreign to restorative justice. For an investigator, reading a personal account from a participant about the effects of the process could add weight to the feedback received from the CAP and further reinforce the value of making a referral. Each program would need to work out the specifics of implementing this recommendation with their detachment liaison member, but the potential benefits may make doing so worthwhile, especially for police officers who chose not to or were unable to participate in the process.

- **Attract and maintain skilled and highly-qualified volunteers**

Volunteer facilitators are a key component of CAPs in BC. Given that funding for restorative justice is not at a level to support numerous full-time paid employees and the restorative approach benefits from strong community participation, the framework for offering restorative justice services relies on having enough skilled, community-minded volunteers. As the number and complexity of referrals increases, the need for more and better-skilled facilitators also increases. The issue arises that police, who are used to a structured and professionalized criminal justice system, may be reluctant to view community volunteers as credible and capable justice system



actors like they may with other roles more established within the system, such as Crown prosecutors, psychologists, probation officers, and victim services workers. This reluctance can be alleviated when police are confident that the program's volunteers are well-trained, skilled interpersonally, reliable, and community-justice-oriented.

While all or nearly all CAPs make use of volunteers, the challenges of attracting and maintaining volunteer numbers can be considerable. While it may seem unnecessary to recommend to CAPs to continue to recruit volunteers, to focus on recruiting volunteers, and to find ways to keep those valuable volunteers engaged, it is necessary in a document like this to emphasize the importance of having capable volunteers to build trust in the program. Therefore, CAPs should make concerted efforts to connect with those in the community to create a pool of interested individuals from which to select those who would be good candidates for volunteer facilitators. Doing so may require forming partnerships with local colleges, universities, clubs, and other organizations to educate those within these groups in order to attract interest in volunteering to provide restorative justice services.

Detachments should consider participating in events that enable volunteer facilitators and frontline police officers to meet. The goals of these events should be to familiarize police officers with the capable volunteers who will take on their referred files and to provide volunteers with a sense of appreciation. For ideas and support on engaging volunteers within a RCMP environment, contact the "E" Division Volunteer Management and Crime Prevention Programs Director.

- **Operate within / Partner with an existing stable service organization**

The interviews revealed that one of the key factors that led to trust from the police to the CAP was when the program operated within the structure of a stable and well-recognized service organization. Because police were already aware of the work done by other programs operated by the larger organization, it was reported to be easier to extend trust. Knowing that the restorative justice services are offered by an organization with a long and stable history and a good reputation could make referring to the program feel closer to working within the established system than would referring to a stand-alone restorative justice program without that history and reputation. These organizations also come with a reputation for connecting their clients to other services, which may also be something that police might question about stand-alone restorative justice programs.

Existing restorative justice programs will not be able restructure to become a program of a larger, more established organization, and this point is certainly not intended to suggest to detachments to forego partnering with a stand-alone CAP. However, CAPs that are stand-alone programs may be aided by adopting some aspects of the larger organizations that appear to help them in building trust. These may include operating additional programs related to the organization's mandate; partnering with other organizations to provide additional services to victims, offenders, and community members; participating in other collaborative community service and social justice initiatives; and establishing strong succession planning and other continuity of service practices.

Detachments that are looking to establish a partnership to ensure restorative justice services are available in the communities they serve should consider approaching an existing and stable service organization prior to putting effort into establishing a new stand-alone program. Partnering with an established organization may facilitate the building of a restorative justice program by making

use of the existing structure and expertise within the organization, and can have ongoing benefits in terms of trust from the stability and reputation that the organization already has in the community.

For detachments looking for support with building community interest in establishing a restorative justice program, contact the “E” Division Restorative Justice Program Director.

## **Developing a Culture of Restorative Policing:**

- **Build restorative justice into the detachment structural processes**

In order for a restorative policing culture to develop, emphasis on using the values and principles of restorative justice to respond to crime and conflict needs to exist within the detachment beyond the detachment liaison member. At this stage, the emphasis comes from leadership through supervisors to the frontline police officers. The use of restorative justice should be built into detachment processes, so it becomes part of the structure for how things are done in the detachment. Supervisors should then communicate the expectations to their direct reports and have a process against which to assess the files that do and do not consider restorative justice.

Detachments should consider developing detachment supplements for restorative justice that outline the steps involved in considering and using police discretion to respond restoratively to files and the specifics of the referral relationships with the local CAP and/or other local restorative justice programs. Detachments should also establish a process of succession planning for the restorative justice liaison member position and any specifics related to this role in the detachment, and consider imbedding these in the detachment supplements as well. For support with developing detachment supplements for restorative justice, contact the “E” Division Restorative Justice Program Director.

- **Expect restorative justice as a default response to most files**

Restorative justice can be beneficial for most types of crime and community conflict, and, therefore, reducing the bias to consider restorative justice only in a narrow group of offences is an important step in increasing referrals. One way to encourage greater numbers of effective referrals is to expect that restorative justice will be considered for all files, and that files that do not result in restorative action, such as a referral to the local CAP, will have the justification articulated on the file. Ideally, having the requirement to articulate why restorative justice was not used could act as a reminder to consider a referral, which may result in more referrals being made in appropriate cases. This already exists in “E” Division policy, and detachments looking to develop a restorative policing culture should actively enforce this expectation. This will enable supervisors to assess whether or not and how effectively frontline officers are considering restorative justice and using their discretion for the files they investigate. It could also help identify areas for further guidance and training.

- **Embed restorative policing into police performance and reward systems**

The logic behind the common phrase “what gets measured gets done” could be used to increase referrals to the local CAP. Embedding the use of restorative justice into detachment performance measurement and the internal reward or recognition systems could create an additional incentive

for police officers to consider and refer to restorative justice more regularly. The interviews conducted for this project revealed that some detachments and/or CAPs take the time to recognize those police officers who make regular referrals. This may be through a formal dinner or ceremony or in a less formal way.

Detachments should consider ways in which using restorative justice effectively to respond to crime and other community problems can be incorporated into performance measurement. This could be something that is discussed during annual assessments and should be valued similarly to other effective resolutions to the files investigated by the officer. If this recommendation is combined with an emphasis on more regular communication of the success of restorative justice referrals, frontline officers and their supervisors will have more to refer to when having these performance discussions.

Detachments and CAPs should consider working together to develop a reward and recognition process for police officers who make regular effective referrals or who regularly apply restorative principles in their daily duties in other ways. While some coordination and additional costs may be necessary, it is likely that such gestures would be appreciated by referring police officers and may reinforce taking the time consider restorative justice as a valuable policing tool.

For support with developing and implementing restorative justice performance measures, contact the “E” Division Restorative Justice Program Director and/or the “E” Division Crime Prevention Research Analyst.

- **Extend collaboration in restorative justice beyond the police / CAP partnership**

A culture of restorative policing that leads to increased referrals to the local CAP can be greatly influenced by external justice agencies. The interviews conducted indicated that, in some communities, Crown counsels, judges, corrections, and other social services partners were influencing a restorative culture around justice in those communities. The involvement of other partners can not only build further buy-in from police by normalizing the expectation to use restorative justice, it can also improve the effectiveness of processes, as it opens up greater options to connect restorative justice participants to the services that can help them.

CAPs should consider developing collaborative partnerships with other justice and social services agencies in the community. Ensuring that these partnerships represent a referral relationship to the CAP does not need to be the goal, as building support for the use of restorative justice to respond to crime and conflict in the community may be more important. It is also valuable to develop connections with services that can be community participants in restorative justice processes or places to which other participants can be referred to meet the needs expressed during the process. Additionally, being an active player in collaborative responses to community problems can demonstrate the value of restorative justice within the larger criminal and social justice context. For support connecting with other justice and social service partners, contact the provincial CAP Coordinator.

Detachments should consider supporting the inclusion of restorative justice and/or the local CAP into collaborative justice contexts within which it has not traditionally had a role. The credibility and influence of the RCMP can help to establish the use of restorative justice by or connect the CAP with other partners than may have numerous benefits for the safety and security of the community. For example, probation, parole, Crown counsels, or other social service programs that

could all benefit from having awareness of and access to restorative justice in the community may be receptive to hearing from the detachment about ways to make better use of restorative justice, such as referrals to the local CAP. For support and ideas regarding ways that restorative justice can be included into other justice contexts, contact the “E” Division Restorative Justice Program Director.

- **Encourage outside demand for the use of restorative justice**

Policing is a service for the community that responds to criminal, social, and other safety issues. With so much to do, policing activities necessarily have to focus on those issues that are prioritized through consideration of a combination of organizational and governmental strategic directions, personal experience, objective data, and stakeholder consultation. Without outside interest or pressure to make use of restorative justice to effectively respond to crime and community conflict, developing a culture of restorative policing may not achieve the status to become a police priority. Therefore, even with strong support for restorative justice from within the detachment and the CAP, encouraging external demand can be critical to growing a restorative culture.

CAPs and detachments should consider taking steps to build the demand for restorative justice within the community. The target audience for CAPs could be other community service providers and the larger general public, exploring unique ways to build awareness of restorative justice and its benefits. Detachments may be better positioned to focus their attention on municipal governments and other justice partners. If the partnerships between detachments and CAPs are continually pushed by those who have a role in influencing police priorities and activities, a restorative policing culture could more easily emerge, which in turn will increase the quantity and quality of referrals to restorative justice programs.

For support developing effective messaging to generate support for restorative justice among external stakeholders, contact the provincial CAP Coordinator or the “E” Division Restorative Justice Program Director.

## Conclusion:

This report shares the knowledge gained through interviews with detachment and CAP representatives about what has led to the high-referral rates achieved in four communities in British Columbia. The goal was to present what was learned in a way that provides a blueprint to help detachments and CAPs to increase the number and quality of referrals they make and receive. The recommendations provided in the previous section provide some options that can be used to emulate the successes achieved within the referral relationships of the detachments and CAPs studied in this project.

The project started with a logic model outlining the areas and factors believed to lead to high levels of referrals. While the interview results largely supported that the five areas identified in the logic model influence the level of referrals made from the detachment to the CAP, the findings suggested that these five areas actually reflect four stages of progress in the referral relationship, summarized by the acronym A.R.T./B.C. (Awareness, Relationship, Trust/Buy-in, and Culture). This finding allowed for the recommendations to be presented for each stage that are believed to advance that relationship to the next stage. [The table](#) at the end of this report displays each of the recommendations from this report separated by stage. This allows the detachment and CAP to adopt strategies to tailor their efforts to increase the quantity and quality of referrals to the stage that best characterizes their existing referral relationship.

Because restorative justice operates differently across British Columbia, not all of the recommendations will be appropriate for every referral relationship. However, most CAPs and detachments will be able to improve their referral relationships by working to implement some of the strategies recommended in this report. British Columbia is also in the fortunate position to have numerous experts and networks that can be valuable supports for improving restorative justice in communities. Questions about anything in this report or requests for support in the implementation of any of these strategies can be directed to the “E” Division Restorative Justice Program Director for RCMP members and employees.

“E” Division Restorative Justice Program Director	778 290 4005 E_Crime_Prevention@rcmp- grc.gc.ca
“E” Division Crime Prevention Research Analyst	
“E” Division Volunteer Management & Crime Prevention Programs Director	
“E” Division Victim Services Program Director	

Requests for information regarding Community Accountability Programs can be directed to the Community Safety and Crime Prevention Branch:

CAP Program Coordinator	604 660 5199 CrimePrevention@gov.bc.ca
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**Summary of Recommendations:**

Stage	Recommendations
Awareness	<a href="#"><u>Promote the benefits of restorative justice and the CAP regularly at detachment watch briefing</u></a>
	<a href="#"><u>Develop information cards or pamphlets about the CAP</u></a>
Relationship	<a href="#"><u>Select a Detachment Restorative Justice Liaison Member</u></a>
	<a href="#"><u>Ensure regular communication and collaboration toward shared goals</u></a>
	<a href="#"><u>Communicate expectations clearly</u></a>
	<a href="#"><u>Enable stable access to police for face-to-face interactions</u></a>
	<a href="#"><u>Establish RCMP detachment representation on/with the CAP's board of directors</u></a>
	<a href="#"><u>Establish and maintain a relationship between the CAP and police-based victim services</u></a>
Trust/Buy-in	<a href="#"><u>Select an ideal Detachment Restorative Justice Liaison Member</u></a>
	<a href="#"><u>Enable and encourage police officers to participate in restorative justice processes</u></a>
	<a href="#"><u>Strive to achieve detachment leadership support and involvement</u></a>
	<a href="#"><u>Communicate success</u></a>
	<a href="#"><u>Attract and maintain high quality volunteers</u></a>
	<a href="#"><u>Operate within / Partner with an existing stable service organization</u></a>
Culture	<a href="#"><u>Build restorative justice into the detachment structural processes</u></a>
	<a href="#"><u>Expect restorative justice as a default response to most files</u></a>
	<a href="#"><u>Embed restorative policing into police performance and reward systems</u></a>
	<a href="#"><u>Extend collaboration in restorative justice beyond the police / CAP partnership</u></a>
	<a href="#"><u>Encourage outside demand for the use of restorative justice</u></a>