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Police force review extended

WHITEHORSE – The deadline for the Review of Yukon’s Police Force is being extended until December 31 by Justice Minister Marian C. Horne.

The extension is necessary to allow more time to meet with citizens and fully analyze their comments as well as co-ordinate recommendations with the Task Force on Acutely Intoxicated Persons At Risk.

“We need to take the time to thoughtfully consider the input that we receive from citizens and ensure that their concerns are reflected in our report. This is a pivotal time in the development of Yukon’s police service. The recommendations in the report will help to inform the future of policing in the territory,” review co-chair and Justice Deputy Minister Dennis Cooley said.

Review co-chair Simone Arnold also welcomes the extension.

“At the very beginning of this Review, many people expressed concerns about the tight deadline in September due to summer vacations, hunting season, berry picking and enjoyment of the summer in the Yukon,” Arnold said. “With such a precedent-setting transformation occurring in Yukon, time is needed to get a broad perspective and thoughtfully reflect on what’s best for all of us. I’m looking forward to what the future holds and continuing work with the advisory committee.”

The Review of Yukon’s Police Force is providing an opportunity to hear the perspectives of citizens, RCMP members, and the advisory group supporting the co-chairs. The dialogue is invaluable and common themes, echoed by both the public and RCMP, have emerged.

Chief Superintendent Peter Clark, Commanding Officer of “M” Division, said that action is already being taken to implement changes that are within the ability of his division.

“The transformation process within the RCMP, both in Yukon and across Canada, is underway. Some suggestions for change are not within the purview of the police and in these cases, the active participation of others will be required and care must be taken in the development of these recommendations,” Clark said.

“The additional window of time provided by the minister of justice will support the presentation of recommendations that are practical, sustainable and valued by the public. I am confident that the process will demonstrate that the RCMP is an adaptive and accountable organization which deserves continued public trust and confidence,” Clark added.

Another public meeting will be held in Whitehorse on September 30. More than 40 meetings have been held throughout Yukon since the review was announced in April. The meetings will wrap up in early October which will allow the co-chairs sufficient time to prepare their report.

For more information about the Review of Yukon's Police Force, visit www.policereview2010.gov.yk.ca.

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