AN EXAMINATION OF POLICE-BASED PROLIFIC OFFENDER PROGRAMS AND TEAMS IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

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The Crime Reduction Research Project

The Crime Reduction Research Program (CRRP) is the joint-research model in British Columbia between academics, the provincial government, and police agencies operated by the Office of Crime Reduction – Gang Outreach. The CRRP is supported and informed by a Crime Reduction Research Working Group which includes representation from the Ministry of Public Safety Solicitor General (represented by Community Safety and Crime Prevention Branch and Police Services Branch), the Combined Forces Special Enforcement Unit of British Columbia and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police "E" Division.

The CRRP focuses on investing in research that can be applied to support policing operations and informing evidence-based decisions on policies and programs related to public safety in British Columbia. Each year, the CRRP reviews submissions of research proposals in support of this mandate. The CRRP Working Group supports successful proposals by working with researchers to refine the study design as necessary, provide or acquire necessary data for projects, and advise on the validity of data interpretation and the practicality of recommendations.

The CRRP operates a $1M annual funding allocation in the form of grants that are dedicated to support university-led research at Canadian institutions. This project was supported through the 2017/18 CRRP funding allotment.

Executive Summary

Prolific offenders typically represent a small proportion of the overall offending population but can be responsible for more than half of the offending in a jurisdiction. Therefore, identifying and managing prolific offenders is a key strategy for police-based crime reduction (Cohen et al., 2014). There are a variety of ways that RCMP detachments identify and respond to prolific offenders in their jurisdictions. This occurs because some detachments have prolific offender teams that directly manage offenders, while others have their general duty members manage their own prolific offenders. Furthermore, some detachments may have access to dedicated Crown to assist with prolific offenders, while others rely on more typical case processing practices. This project reviewed the various ways that RCMP detachments in British Columbia identify, manage, and respond to prolific offenders, and considered the strengths and challenges associated with these various approaches.

The crime data used for this report were provided by RCMP 'E' Division Operations Strategy Branch (OSB). The data covered the decade between 2007 and 2017, a period of time sufficient in length to establish visual trends. In addition to total crime figures, the data was broken down by type of crime: person crimes, property crimes, and other crimes. The data was collected for 20 RCMP jurisdictions. These jurisdictions were drawn from each of the four RCMP policing districts in British Columbia. Because the purpose of the analyses was to establish general trends, and not to compare specific jurisdictions, the crime data was aggregated to three different levels of analysis. First, all data was aggregated to produce annual crime rates for these 20 jurisdictions in British Columbia as a whole. The second level of analysis used district-level crime rates. The specific breakdown of jurisdictions per district was as follows: Vancouver Island (five detachments); Lower Mainland (six detachments); North District (three detachments); and Southeast District (six detachments). The third level of analysis involved categorizing the detachments by size: small (jurisdictions with a population under 5,000 people; four detachments), medium (jurisdictions with a population between 5,000 and 15,000 people; eight detachments), and large (jurisdictions with a population over 15,000 people; nine detachments). Interviews were also conducted with a sample of police officers and crime analysts from each of the selected detachments whose responsibilities included the identification and management of prolific offenders. The interview themes focused on the detachment's policies, practices, efficiencies, and effectiveness of their unit's organizational design, their definition of prolific offending and prolific offenders, the methods used to identify prolific offenders, offender management practices, community and criminal justice partnerships, the members' experience working with prolific offenders, their descriptions of prolific offenders in their jurisdiction, and the criminal pathways of prolific offenders.

There were several key takeaways from the analyses of the crime data. Crime rates in British Columbia have fallen between 2007 and 2017. This decline was evident for total crimes, person crimes, and, with notable exception of the Northern District, property crimes. In contrast, the rates of 'other' crimes has been fairly consistent over the study years. Second, most of the reduction in crime rates occurred during the first four or five years of the time series. After 2011 or 2012, the rates of crime tended to stabilize. Third, the district-level analyses revealed a fairly consistent pattern of crime ranking. For all the crime types, the North District recorded the highest rates.

Conversely, the Lower Mainland tended to show the lowest rates. The Island and Southeast districts were normally in the middle, switching back and forth across years and across crime types. Finally, the analyses that compared jurisdictions based on their size produced more variated results. There was no overall pattern to characterize small, medium, and larger sized jurisdictions. Rather, each type of crime revealed more or less distinct patterns.

When considering 'E' Division's definition of a prolific offender, it appeared as though detachments from the North were most consistently following this approach. Some of the variations among the Lower Mainland detachments, therefore, included that they may narrow down the list based on offence type and that they used sources of information other than strictly police contacts as reflected by PRIME (Police Records Information Management Environment) data, such as information from probation, general duty, or community partners to identify who was a relevant target. Similarly, detachments in the Island or Southeast District who did not strictly follow 'E' Division's definition of a prolific explained that they focused on those individuals who generated problems, regardless of whether they met the minimum of three police contacts within the past six months. Detachments from the Island and Southeast Districts appeared to prefer the term 'priority' to 'prolific' to describe their target populations.

All four districts indicated that the primary focus of their prolific offender management team was enforcement, to monitor and arrest individuals who were violating conditions or committing crimes, with the goals of reducing criminality and calls for service. Regardless of district, most detachments indicated that they met with and informed prolific offenders that they were on their list.

The large detachments in this study generally used 'E' Division's definition of a prolific offender. However, most of the medium-sized detachments were not using 'E' Division's definition of a prolific offender and did not distinguish between prolific and priority offenders in practice. Like with the medium-sized detachments, for the small detachments there was little distinction between a prolific and a priority offender. Given that they were working in small detachments with limited resources, the designation of prolific offender was sometimes less useful than understanding which specific offender was causing the most harm in a community.

Most large detachments stated that they managed between 12 to 18 prolific offenders. Most of the medium-sized detachments reported handling between two to five prolific offenders at any given time. Small detachments indicated that they could only manage a small number of prolific offenders effectively. While one detachment indicated that they only had the capacity to manage two prolific offenders at the same time, other detachments indicated that they had the resources and capacity to manage between six and 12 prolific offenders.

For large detachments, the threshold for intervention was based on the number of recent negative police contacts, as well as other factors, such as the nature of the offence and changes in crime statistics. Most of the participating medium-sized detachments indicated a fairly low threshold that was based on the frequency or severity of police contacts, the frequency with which a particular individual's name came up among their colleagues or partners, or if someone had been recently released into their jurisdiction on conditions. For small detachments, there did not appear to be a specific threshold that an offender had to meet for intervention to take place. It was reported that,

because the detachment was small, rather than creating a list of the ten most prolific offenders and intervening with those individuals, officers tended to focus more on those who were having the largest negative effect in the community.

For large detachments, their typical profile of a prolific offender was someone who had substance abuse issues. Most detachments reported that their prolific offenders were overwhelmingly male, and many noted that most prolific offenders were Caucasian. The typical age range reported was 20 to 45 years old. Other less common characteristics mentioned were mental health issues and homelessness. For medium-sized detachments, the most common profile was a 20- to 35-year-old white or Indigenous male who was drug addicted and engaged in property and drug-related crimes. Small detachments tended to target prolific offenders who were repeat offenders, took up a disproportionate amount of police resources or time, and were most typically engaged in the drug trade or property offending. In addition, the typical profile of a prolific offender was male, between the ages of 20 to 40 years old, unemployed, had a history of alcohol and/or drug addiction, suffered from mental health issues, had few social supports, and was economically disadvantaged. Some participants also indicated that their prolific offenders had a history of physical or sexual abuse, personality disorders, and a violent criminal history.

The majority of large-sized detachments noted that arrest was the primary focus of their prolific offender management teams. However, many detachments also stated that their approach involved a combination of helping, arresting, and displacing. While several of the medium-sized detachments emphasized the use of arrest to target their prolific offender population, the main strategy used by medium-sized detachments was to communicate with the target population to ensure that the offenders knew they were under police scrutiny. How this was achieved varied. A more common approach used in small detachments was to identify the problems that caused or were at the root of the majority of the crimes being committed by these offenders. This was followed by an internal detachment discussion about what avenues were available to address both the offender and the root causes of their offending. In this way, one focus was to assist the offender by referring them to programs and services dedicated to turning their life around. However, additionally, arrest and incarceration were other options that detachments spoke of.

Almost all the large-sized detachment prolific offender management teams indicated that they had various partnerships both within and outside the RCMP. For medium-sized detachments, general duty, as well as other specific units, such as drug units, surveillance teams, street crime teams, and traffic units, were the main partners within the detachment identified by participants. Outside of the detachment, some participants reported partnering with other prolific offender teams from other jurisdictions; however, only a few criminal justice agencies and social service agencies were identified as relevant partners. Probation was routinely identified as an important partner for prolific offender management as police and probation commonly worked together to monitor prolific offenders. Among the smaller detachments, partnerships with other neighbouring detachments were viewed as very important in responding to their prolific offenders. In terms of partnerships external to policing, probation, mental health services, addiction services, the local hospital, victim services, and other outreach workers were seen as effective and valuable partners. Bail supervisors were also viewed as essential for the management of prolific offenders.

The purpose of prolific offender management prolific offender management is to manage those individuals causing the most concerns, harm, or damage to a community using a three-pillared approach of targeted enforcement, rehabilitation, or displacement. Given that prolific offenders tend to be between 20 to 40 years of age, effectively intervening earlier in their criminal career could represent substantial cost savings for a jurisdiction. To be effective, prolific offender management teams must stay actively focused on their target populations and should operate with the most up to date information available about their targets' court ordered conditions, whereabouts, associates, risk factors, and underlying needs.

Regardless of the detachment size or policing district, the interview data indicated that most participating detachments were not utilizing 'E' Division's definition of a prolific offender. For some, this was due to not having anyone in their jurisdiction who would technically meet that definition while for others, the issues in their community were being driven by individuals who were generating not only crime-based calls for service, but nuisance-based calls as well. Rather than rely on a quantitative assessment of negative police contacts over a defined period of time, the detachments preferred to have more flexibility to allow for intelligence and other qualitative assessments by fellow officers or partner agencies to indicate who was of concern for them at any given time. Introducing a more broadly defined prolific/priority offender program is recommended to provide detachments with greater flexibility to define an appropriate target population based on jurisdictional needs. At the same time, maintaining clearer definitions and criteria for prolific, priority, and social chronic offenders may be helpful for the purposes of tracking the types of offenders that the team manages and evaluating which strategies are more or less effective with different types of offenders.

Providing training around establishing and maintaining multi-jurisdictional approaches, the benefits of and methods to addressing underlying issues that manifest or lead to offending, and successful examples of crime reduction and crime prevention initiatives would be of benefit regardless of the specific population that the detachment's prolific offender management team works with. Going forward, this training could be provided through online courses, such as those provided on the AGORA site where the content could include a brief summary of the academic research on prolific offenders, an explanation and demonstration through case study examples of successful crime reduction tactics and strategies, discussions about the three pillars of prolific offender management and how best to achieve the targeted enforcement pillar, and the demonstration of various possible models for prolific offender management , including how to best use crime analysts to support the work of prolific offender management.

Although some participants desired more vehicles or access to a greater variety of covert vehicles, overall, most of the participants felt adequately resourced. However, the participants consistently reported needing more members assigned to prolific offender management. Generally speaking, the participants appeared to desire a team that was composed of a corporal or staff sergeant who had the ability to ensure that members were focused on their mandate and avoided either mission creep or being diverted to other responsibilities in the detachment.

The extent to which detachments are currently tracking information about their targeted population and the method by which they are tracking this information is unknown. Given this, it is recommended that detachments develop tracking sheets and databases where officers can record

information about the type of offender they target (i.e., a prolific offender based on quantity and frequency of police contacts; a priority offender based on police contacts and intelligence; or a social chronic based on police contacts and psychosocial needs), the approaches officers have taken with each individual, such as the number of contacts with the team, the nature of those contacts, whether a notification letter was delivered, whether the Lifestyle Interview was completed, and which resources were offered, and the responses of the offender. This will enable detachments to better measure their outputs and assess these measures against outcomes.

While approaches to prolific offender management that focus on strategic partnerships, dedicated Crown, or regional teams may not work for all jurisdictions across the province, these tactics may be beneficial to implement in some jurisdictions. However, their empirical value towards prolific offender management has not been clearly established in the literature. Therefore, the province may want to consider piloting and empirically measuring the outcomes of jurisdiction-specific Situation Tables, Designated Crown Counsel, and Regional Teams approaches to prolific offender management, assessing whether these models work well, why they work well in those jurisdictions, and the cost/benefit outcome of each of these approaches.

Introduction

Prolific offenders typically represent a small proportion of the overall offending population but can be responsible for more than half of the offending in a jurisdiction. Therefore, identifying and managing prolific offenders is a key strategy for police-based crime reduction (Cohen et al., 2014). There are a variety of ways that RCMP detachments identify and respond to prolific offenders in their jurisdictions. For example, some detachments have prolific offender programs but differ in their offender identification and management strategies. This occurs because some detachments have prolific offender teams that directly manage offenders, while others have their general duty members manage their own prolific offenders. Furthermore, some detachments may have access to dedicated Crown to assist with prolific offenders, while others rely on more typical case processing practices. This project reviewed the various ways that RCMP detachments in British Columbia identify, manage, and respond to prolific offenders, and considered the strengths and challenges associated with these various approaches. This report also reviewed the literature to identify and recommend, where appropriate, promising practices used in British Columbia and in other jurisdictions, including Canada, the United Kingdom, and the United States, for the identification and management of prolific offenders by the police.

Project Objective

The purpose of this project was to identify the various formulations of prolific offender teams and programs in a selection of RCMP detachments across British Columbia. Specifically, one component of the project examined the crime trends associated to prolific offenders in the Lower Mainland, Island, North, and South-East policing districts. For the second component, with the assistance of Operations Strategy Branch (OSB) and Office of Crime Reduction and Gang Outreach (OCR-GO), specific detachments within each of these four policing districts were selected for participation in semi-structured interviews as they represented the different approaches taken by various detachments to identify and manage their prolific offender populations.

By providing an assessment of the effectiveness of various types of prolific offender management practices among police detachments throughout British Columbia, this project will improve the quality and efficacy of responses by police to prolific offenders and assist police leaders in making better decisions about the most appropriate ways to identify and address the prolific offenders in their jurisdictions. The overall objective of this project was to recognize promising practices that enable police detachments to manage their prolific offending populations most effectively and efficiently.

Prolific Offender Management Programs Literature Review

Prolific offenders, commonly referred to as chronic offenders, habitual offenders, or priority offenders, are of significant concern to policing agencies. There is consensus in the criminological literature that a disproportionate amount of crime is committed by a relatively small number of

offenders, an idea reflected in the 80/20 rule. Although the percentages rarely work out to exactly 80/20, this rule implies that roughly 80% of crimes in a community are committed by just 20% of criminals and that around 80% of crimes in a community occur in just 20% of a given jurisdiction (Clarke & Eck, 2005). This is particularly true for property crimes, the bulk of which are committed by a minority of offenders (Mawby & Worrall, 2004; Millie & Erol, 2006). While the actual percentage of overall crime committed by prolific offenders in a community is commonly debated, with some early research arguing that as much as 50% to 60% of crime is committed by just 5% to 10% of offenders (Millie & Erol, 2006; Wolfgang, 1972), the notion of prolific offenders suggests that if the police want to substantially reduce the level of crime in their jurisdiction, it is both effective and efficient for the police to focus on this relatively small population of offenders who are responsible for a disproportionate amount of crime (Cohen et al., 2014).

Another reason why effectively dealing with this segment of the criminal population is important is because these offenders consume a substantial proportion of police time and resources. By focusing the often-limited police resources on detecting and effectively responding to prolific offenders, an overall decrease in crime rates can be expected. The costs imposed on society for one lifetime chronic offender[1] can range from $3.6 to $5.8 million USD (Cohen & Piquero, 2009). These costs can be divided into three main elements: costs to victims, cost to criminal justice-related sectors (e.g., police, courts, corrections), and losses to societal productivity (e.g., labor, earnings). Previous work by Cohen (1996) has approximated the breakdown of costs accordingly: "25% are tangible victim costs [e.g., medical costs], 50% are losses in quality of life [e.g., pain and suffering], 20% are criminal justice costs [e.g., incarceration], and 5% are offender productivity costs" [e.g., earnings] (p. 17).

Despite these findings, the cost of crime committed in a community remains widely debated in the research literature, particularly when considering the difficulty in estimating the financial costs of different types of crimes, such as violent personal crimes as compared to personal or commercial property crimes (e.g., Anderson, 2014; Easton et al., 2014; Heeks et al., 2018; Kleiman et al., 2014; Lugo et al., 2019; McCollister et al., 2010). Still, prolific offenders place a heavy financial burden on the police, criminal justice system more broadly, and the community. Beyond the obvious direct costs of crimes committed by prolific offenders, the associated increases in crime rates related to their activities can lead to numerous indirect costs to a community, such as an increase in the public's dissatisfaction with police, greater fears of crime, a reduction in the public's confidence in their police service, and a belief that the police are not competent or capable in ensuring and maintaining an expected level of public safety (see Kleiman et al., 2014; Lugo et al., 2019). These very important public perceptions can result in a reduction in the quality of life among citizens, active avoidance of certain areas of the community, and reductions in the commercial and residential enterprise and value of the community (Segal & Conroy, 2011). The activities of prolific offenders, including higher levels of drug and property crime, can have the tangential effect of community members and those living near the community feeling like the community is an unsafe place to live, work, and play (Segal & Conroy, 2011).

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[1] Total cost calculated for lifetime offenders (age to 8-26) with 15 or more police contacts.

The preponderance of research on prolific offenders suggests that custody or incarceration alone is not an effective or efficient way to deal with this population, nor an effective approach to reducing the overall offending of a prolific offender in the long term (Andrews & Bonta, 2010; Griffiths, 2007; Johns et al., 2016; Jolliffe & Hedderman, 2015; Moore et al., 2006; Plecas et al., 2014; Someda, 2009). Instead, these types of approaches have contributed to an increase in correctional populations, which has resulted in higher costs for government, but which has not substantially increased public safety in the longer term. As an alternative, some researchers have argued for the need to establish a "Risk, Needs, Responsivity", or RNR, model designed to identify and respond to the specific risks and needs of an offender in custody (Andrews & Bonta, 2010; Dowden & Andrews, 2000; Hanson et al., 2009).

RNR principles underlie the fundamental framework of several offender assessment and case management tools for adult and youth offender populations, e.g., the Level of Service/Case Management Inventory and the Youth Level of Service/Case Management Inventory (LS/CMI and YLS/CMI; see Andrews et al., 2011; Brooks et al., 2012). For instance, the LS/CMI was designed to assist professionals working in the criminal justice system to identify risk/needs factors specific to a particular offender. The objective was to customize a treatment and case management plan for each offender. As an assessment tool, the LS/CMI instrument has shown high predictive validity for recidivism among male and female offenders (see Dyck et al., 2018). The application of and solid adherence to RNR treatment plans have been successful in reducing recidivism by approximately 10% to 50% for various types of offenders, including general offenders, violent offenders, sex offenders, female offenders, racialized offenders, and substance abusing offenders within the community and institutional/correctional contexts in Western nations (Andrews & Bonta, 2010; Bonta, 1997; Bonta & Andrews, 2017; Bourgon et al., 2010; Di Placido et al., 2006; Dowden & Andrews, 2000; Hanson et al., 2009; Lowenkamp & Latessa, 2002; Lowenkamp et al., 2006a; Lowenkamp et al., 2006b; Luong & Wormith, 2011; Prendergast et al., 2013; Stewart et al., 2014; Wormith et al., 2007, 2015).

Despite these promising findings, the application of RNR for prolific offenders is lacking. However, findings from an exploratory study on prolific offenders in the Priority Prolific Offender Program (PPOP) in Canada showed initial support for RNR effectiveness (Martynuik, 2015). In this study, researchers assessed nine measures of risk, needs, and other related factors previously outlined by Andrews and Bonta (2010). These factors encompassed the offender's previous and current antisocial behaviour and characteristics, criminal justice experiences, associations with antisocial individuals, interactions with pro-social individuals, employment, treatment engagement, or substance use/abuse.[2] RNR techniques helped reduce the number of incarceration days and encouraged positive/pro-social interactions in the community and program/treatment

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[2] (1) Number of antisocial interactions with police; (2) Evidence of antisocial associates with the offender; (3) Number of criminal charges; (4) Number of criminal convictions; (5) Number of incarceration days; (6) Evidence of substance use; (7) Evidence of employment and housing; (8) Evidence of interaction with pro-social contacts; and (9) Evidence of education and substance treatment programs (Martynuik, 2015, p. 26)

participation; also, moderate support was found for improving employment and housing prospects (see Martynuik, 2015).

These approaches include interventions such as long-term treatment, rehabilitation, housing, and employment, with a focus on addressing the specific needs of the offender (e.g., Andrews & Bonta, 2010). As a result of these types of approaches, some agencies (e.g., police) in the province of British Columbia have emphasized initial success in managing and dealing with prolific offenders in the community,[3] with a particular focus on interagency collaboration (see Rezansoff et al., 2012). In a longitudinal pretest-posttest pilot study, six local interagency teams with members from different partnered agencies (i.e., including police, probation, Crown counsel, psychiatry, social assistance, child and family services, and housing) provided case management services to Prolific and other Priority Offenders (PPO; Rezansoff et al., 2012). Each team had a designated Team Coordinator who facilitated collaborative decision-making processes regarding PPOs' service plan needs and access to services (e.g., mental health, addiction, legal, employment, income assistance, or housing). PPO management teams promoted offender re-integration and needs management in each community jurisdiction after being released from custody, mental health facility, hospital, or treatment centres (n = 198; Rezansoff et al., 2012).[4] Rezansoff et al.'s (2012) study showed that the average annual number of offences for PPOs in the year pre-and post-enrollment in the PPO management program were reduced by 40%. Overall, the reported outcomes of this model were a demonstrated reduction in overall crime rates, suggesting PPO management programs' success as a method to improve public safety (Rezansoff et al., 2012).

Research has demonstrated that the prolific offender population tends to face a combination of co-morbid risk factors, such as mental health issues, substance abuse, poverty, and homelessness, many of which tend to co-occur in this population (Paetsch et al., 2015; Rezansoff et al., 2012). For instance, among a small sample of male PPOs (n = 78) from Calgary, Edmonton, and RCMP locations, nearly 80% had a substance use addiction, 31% had a confirmed psychiatric disorder, and 79% were unemployed at the time of the PPOP (Paetsch et al., 2017). The problem profile of prolific offenders highlights the need for effective and accountable interagency collaboration and partnerships with a wide range of social services in the community, as the police alone are simply not equipped, trained, or structured to deal with the full range of personal, social, economic, employment, education, mental health, and addiction issues that prolific offenders routinely present with.

This is not to suggest that PPOs represent a homogenous type of offender, as scholars have suggested the need to distinguish typologies/subtypes (Hopkins & Wickson, 2012). Thus far, subtypes of prolific offenders have been based on offending rates over a particular timeframe (e.g., 12 months), previous and current offending patterns, and the length of a criminal career. Hopkin and Wickson (2012) have identified three subtypes: (1) *prolific but not persistent*, (2) *persistent but not prolific*, and (3) *prolific and persistent*. Persistent offenders are those with a history of "six or

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[3] Victoria, Kamloops, Nanaimo, Prince George, Surrey, and Williams Lake.

[4] Victoria (n = 34), Nanaimo (n = 31), Kamloops (n = 56), Surrey (n = 35), Prince George (n = 28), and Williams Lake (n = 14; Rezansoff et al., 2012).

more offences," and prolific offenders are those "who committed six or more offences in 12 months" (Hopkin & Wickson, 2012, p. 601). Further, to contextualize, *prolific* can be conceptualized as brief periods of high offending rates, whereas *persistent* refers to ongoing/consistent offending over time. In a study of a group of 3,131 offenders located in the UK, Hopkins and Wickson (2012) classified offenders according to these types: 1% (*n* = 9) as *prolific but not persistent*, committing approximately 8.5 crimes per offender; 42% (*n* = 1335) as *persistent but not prolific*, committing 1.7 crimes per offender; and 3% (*n* = 100) as *prolific and persistent*, committing on average 9.4 crimes per offender. Of note, crime rates were collected from 2009-2010.[5] Overall, compared to non-PPOs, PPOs were responsible for many theft crimes. Future research on typologies for PPOs needs to consider not only offending patterns and the length of criminal career, but also offence type and offender characteristics and various risk/need profiles – typologies which have been created for many other classifications of offenders (e.g., sexual offenders, murderers, etc.; see Fox & Farrington, 2018).

This multi-faceted rehabilitative approach is challenging for a policing agency to conduct on their own. More problematically, it is outside of the mandate of a police agency. Given this, to deal effectively with prolific offender populations, police agencies need to work collaboratively with other criminal justice as well as social sector partners to deliver more comprehensive services that address the underlying reasons for the individual's criminality. Establishing strong working relationships with the social sector (e.g., housing/shelters, employment agencies, mental health agencies) would allow police to focus more specifically on activities more closely associated with their mandate through the use of targeted enforcement strategies.

One of the main features of a prolific offender management approach is the targeting of specific offenders identified as 'prolific' or priority offenders by police for intensive monitoring and, at times, surveillance, often through partnerships between police and probation officers, which has been referred to as 'polibation' (Nash, 1999, 2008). At the same time, the offender is supported in the community by service providers delivering interventions specifically tailored to them, typically relying on the RNR model, such as housing, employment, mental health or addiction treatment services, or income assistance (Rezansoff et al., 2012). If the offender does not comply with their release conditions, or becomes involved in re-offending, the enhanced monitoring by police or probation results in arrest and enforcement, including a possible return to prison (Mawby & Worrall, 2004). Ideally, this enforcement component is supported by provincial Crown prosecutors, who can expedite charges stemming from re-offending by these prolific offenders, creating elements of certainty and celerity (Rezansoff et al., 2012). Charges can also be expedited through specialized courts, such as community courts, drug treatment courts, First Nations courts, or domestic violence courts that are problem-solving courts. When there are rigorous evaluations, problem-solving courts have demonstrated some degree of effectiveness in reducing drug use and recidivism and increased the capacity to deal with relapse and its consequences in a timely manner, and the capability to integrate drug treatment with other rehabilitation services to promote long-

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[5] The remaining 1,687 offenders (54%) were classified as 'neither prolific nor persistent' (Hopkins & Wickson, 2012).

term recovery" (Government of British Columbia, 2016, p. 8). Indeed, for prolific and social chronic offenders, community courts have been advantageous for mitigating recidivism rates (Somers et al., 2014). In a quasi-experimental design, Somers et al. (2014) found that, among a group of high-risk offenders (i.e., chronic offenders with multi-risk/needs), those who were managed through Vancouver's Downtown Community Court with an Integrated Case Management Team showed more positive financial, mental, and healthcare outcomes, and a greater reduction in recidivism than those processed through more traditional means.

In Alberta, Canada, the results from an evaluation of the Priority Prolific Offender Program (PPOP) revealed that some stakeholders perceived a need for a "Crown prosecutor specifically designated to deal with PPOP files to ensure the background information is appropriately put before the court" (Paetsch et al., 2017, p. 76). Some PPOP staff stated that although extensive "complete, accurate, and up-to-date information" in the Comprehensive Offender Management Packages (COMP) are provided to Crown for prosecutorial purposes (e.g., bail, sentencing, etc.), often the COMP documents are too long and detailed for the Crown to sift through. PPO program staff suggested that approximately 45% of Crown are likely not using the COMP. Moreover, nearly 67% of PPO program staff indicated the lack of accessibility and availability of essential services for their clients. Staff elaborated on issues surrounding the lack of formal multi-agency collaboration for the PPOs in the program and insufficient rules and regulations for accessing particular services. For instance, one staff member stated that "I believe that there are appropriate services; however, they are structured so that many of those individuals with criminal records cannot access them, i.e., housing" (Paetsch et al., 2017, p. 59). Overall, the PPO program shows promising results regarding recidivism reductions; however, given the problems cited above, researchers outlined 11 recommendations for improvements (see Paetsch et al., 2017, pp. xxii-xxiii):

- Tailor or revise the structure or content included in COMP
- Review accessible and available support services
- Formal partnerships with service providers
- Additional addiction counselors
- Educating police officers on the PPO program
- Review offender monitoring processes
- Improve timely responses to relapse and recidivism
- Review the referral processes
- Set clear and relevant PPO case management goals
- Review program process and procedure to determine whether expansions are needed
- Continuing to evaluate the process of the PPO program

HISTORY OF PROLIFIC OFFENDER MANAGEMENT

Although the emergence of modern prolific offender management programs has become popular over the past 15 years, particularly in England starting in the mid 2000's, there has been a long history of police agencies working with probation and other external agencies to reduce the offending of those reentering the community post-incarceration. Mawby and Worrall (2004) identified the trend of prolific offender management as starting in the 1980's in the United

Kingdom (UK), beginning with police partnerships with external agencies to reduce the offending of chronic offender populations. During this period, many American jurisdictions focused on punishment, deterrence, and supervision. Likewise, programs in the UK tended to include intensive efforts for offender supervision in the community (Merrington, 2006; Moore et al., 2006; Worrall et al., 2002). Many of these initial programs in the UK in the late 1990's did not receive positive evaluations, as prolific or priority offender participants continued to offend at high rates, and rarely was there an effective response from the criminal justice system in terms of arrest and conviction (Worrall et al., 2002). In their 2002 evaluation of UK-based prolific offender programs, Worrall et al. (2002) found that "it is not possible to demonstrate that the [prolific offender management] projects have any direct impact on local crime rates" (p. 290), although they further noted that project funding was often limited to a single local jurisdiction and evaluations did not include a cost-effectiveness analysis due to funding or resource-related issues. Also of issue was that published evaluations of prolific offender programs were limited in their scope, making it difficult to draw clear conclusions about the program effects (Worrall et al., 2002). Further, as Millie and Erol (2006) pointed out, many of the early program attempts (e.g., cognitive skills programmes in prison) at prolific offender management in the UK demonstrated significant disconnects between the specific needs of the offender and the programming offered to them in the community. More specifically, although these programs provided rehabilitative support services (e.g., cognitive behavioural therapy; see Clarke et al., 2004) or monitoring in the community, they were often interrupted, brief, and/or inconsistent. Further, policing, probation, and external agencies in the community often initially struggled to work together effectively. For instance, some issues included procedural problems, such as determining appropriate referral avenues for services (e.g., employment, education), explicit instructions/guidelines outlining agency responsibilities, motivating criminal justice personnel, such as probation officers, to see the value in the program, lack of consistent service delivery (e.g., during the transition from prison to community), and problems with service availability (e.g., housing) (Millie & Erol, 2006).

Over time, prolific offender management programs in the UK evolved and, by the mid-2000's, often included components of deterrence, mainly through enhanced surveillance and monitoring, alongside stronger efforts aimed at rehabilitation and treatment (Mawby et al., 2006; Millie & Erol, 2006). The enhanced focus on rehabilitation frequently relied on the RNR model, or similar methods, for identifying the specific needs of the offender, as opposed to offering a 'one-size-fits-all' program that was likely to be ineffective (Rezansoff et al., 2012). Typically, these early prolific offender programs were aimed at offenders aged 17 to 25, given the well-established age-crime curve seen in most countries (Sampson & Laub, 2005).

Programs aimed specifically at dealing with problematic or prolific offenders started to appear in Canada in the late 2000s, starting with six cities in British Columbia in 2008 (Kamloops, Nanaimo, Prince George, Surrey, Victoria, and Williams Lake) under the title of Prolific Offender Management, or POM. Alberta followed with their Priority Prolific Offender Programs, or PPOM, and the Yukon with Prolific Offender Management or Collaborative Case Management. Many of these prolific offender programs in Canada were directly modeled after the programs developed in England and Wales in the mid-2000s. Specifically, the 2004 'PPO Programme' in the UK gained generally positive reviews in 2007 and 2009 by the UK Home Office that provided support for the effectiveness of these approaches in other Western countries (Dawson & Cuppleditch, 2007/08; U.K. Home Office,

2009). The PPO programs implemented in the UK during the mid-2000s showed promising evaluative results among large samples of PPOs (n = 7,801 to 10,771) ranging from a 10% to 62% reduction in convictions post-intervention (Dawson, 2005, Dawson & Cuppleditch, 2007, Home Office, 2010). Early Canadian programs (~2008), with similar structures to the early-2000 UK programs relied heavily on collaboration between police, Crown prosecutors, correctional agencies, and various community and social services (Mawby et al., 2006; Paetsch et al., 2015; Rezansoff et al., 2012). Like UK prolific offender programs, Canadian Prolific Offender Management programs aimed at ensuring a "timely and meaningful" response to reoffending while also providing targeted services and rehabilitation efforts in the community (Paetsch et al., 2015; Rezansoff et al., 2012).

Small sample evaluations of Canadian Prolific Offender Management programs have revealed a roughly 40% reduction in substantive convictions (see Paetsch et al., 2017; Rezansoff et al., 2012). In conjunction with decreases in convictions, a Social Return on Investment (SROI) ratio was calculated for 28 PPOs that completed the program to determine the value to society from initial investment costs. The total investment for 28 PPOs in the prolific offender program was $1,134,774 and the anticipated societal monetary benefit to society was $4,305,443 – $3.79 gained per dollar investment (Paetsch et al., 2017). Since then, numerous cities across British Columbia and Canada have implemented similar, but often unevaluated, programs, such as Prolific Offender Management programs in several BC Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) detachments, the South Asian Community Resource Officer (SACRO), Prolific Offender Engagement Teams (POET), or Serious Habitual Offender Program (SHOP) in Calgary, Alberta, and the Serious Habitual Offender Comprehensive Action Program (SHOCAP) in Regina and Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. While most of these programs do not appear to have been evaluated, an evaluation of SHOCAP conducted in 1995 by Medaris (1996) indicated several positive outcomes of the program related to multi-agency collaboration, resources, and information exchange, cooperative and offender-centered approaches, and early identification and intervention efforts.

During this same period, Integrated Offender Management (IOM) programs started to appear in several provinces, including British Columbia, with very similar goals to prolific offender management. For example, the IOM program provides adult offenders with vital social services in a wraparound multi-agency method (see Cohen et al., 2014); similar programs have been used for at-risk or gang-involved youth in Surrey, BC (see Corrado et al., 2020). Researchers have noted that the IOM program's partial success is contingent upon prompt and effective communication between agencies, such as corrections and police departments (see Cohen et al., 2014). "The first three months on parole are the most crucial for an offender's successful reintegration into society" (Evans, 2001 as cited in Cohen et al., 2014, p. 45), meaning the transitional phase between incarceration and community living requires timely interagency communication. Results from an evaluation of two facilities implementing the IOM program, Alouette Correlational Centre for Women and the Fraser Regional Correlational Centre, showed a reduction in reoffending rates[6] at five follow-up points (3, 6, 12, 24, and 48 months). Rates of post-IOM desistance initially started high at a 45% reduction in offences (3 months) and ended at an 8% reduction at the four-year post-

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[6] Excluding probation breaches.

program follow-up. Compared to offenders not enrolled in IOM, IOM participants went nearly 4 months longer without committing a crime and showed higher desistance rates at the 3- and 6-month follow-ups (British Columbia Ministry of Justice, 2013/14). Offenders in IOM have reportedly gained "a greater sense of accountability and independence, and more positive self-regard" after partaking in the program (Government of British Columbia, n.d., para. 3). The similarities between POM and IOM programs will be discussed later in this report.

PREVIOUS EVALUATIONS OF PROLIFIC OFFENDER MANAGEMENT

Although a number of policing agencies around the world have implemented prolific offender management programs in the past ten to fifteen years, there is surprisingly little research evaluating these programs (Rezansoff et al., 2012). Further, as several authors have pointed out (Merrington, 2006; Vennard & Pearce, 2004; Worrall et al., 2002), the few programs that have been evaluated have typically relied on very small sample sizes, with little information on overall cost-efficiency or long-term outcomes in reoffending. Given the recent proliferation of Prolific Offender Management programs across Canada, this is somewhat surprising. However, there have been a handful of program evaluations, starting in the UK in the mid-to-late 2000's, and later, in British Columbia and Alberta in early 2010's, which will be reviewed here.

The Prolific and Priority Offender (PPO) program in the UK, which started in 2004, was aimed at: (1) preventing and deterring crime that could lead to offenders becoming prolific; (2) catching and convicting prolific offenders, including swift apprehension and meaningful punishment; and (3) rehabilitating and resettling to assist offenders in the rehabilitation process in the community (Dawson & Cuppleditch, 2007/08). The PPO program was evaluated after two years, through several different research methodologies. Qualitative methods included 60 offender interviews, as well as 52 staff interviews, from 10 different geographical areas. Quantitative methods included an analysis of offending for individuals involved in the PPO program, both before and after taking part, using a Propensity Score Matching (PSM) technique.[7] When comparing the number of convictions in the 17-month period before and after taking part in the PPO program, they found a 43% overall reduction in offending, and the offending rate for individuals taking part in the PPO program fell from an average of 0.51 convictions per month to 0.39 per month, representing a decrease of nearly one-quarter (24 per cent). Further, offenders who committed an offence during the PPO program were sentenced 13 days faster than average (Dawson & Cuppleditch, 2007/08). However, Dawson and Cuppleditch (2007/08) stated that the PSM method of evaluating pre- and post-PPO groups was less successful than anticipated, thereby limiting their ability to accurately estimate the full extent of crime reduction caused by the PPO program participants. The researchers outlined several reasons that could explain the limitations of the PSM method in the current investigation, including unobserved decision-making variables unaccounted for in the model, pre-identification of PPOs before the program launch, thereby influencing baseline conviction rates, police discretion in

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[7] Dawson and Cuppleditch (2007/08) argued that PSM techniques "mimic the effects of random assignment through the construction of a control group post-hoc" (p. v) that allowed for an assessment of intervention effects on individuals taking part in the PPO program.

PPO selection, simultaneous interventions (i.e., the Drug Interventions Programme), and systematic or sentencing changes in the criminal justice system. Overall, the generally positive qualitative interviews, along with the broad trend of crime reduction, led Dawson and Cuppleditch (2007/08) to conclude a positive evaluation of the PPO program. For instance, offender interviewees expressed that the supports, monitoring, and rehabilitative components offered in the PPO program were beneficial in their offending desistance. Specifically, one PPO stated the benefits of additional supports: "there was no support in the past – you had to go once a week to see a probation officer for two minutes – it was like clocking in and out once a week. All that did was keep you out of prison for a certain amount of time until you got nicked again. Now you get all the help that you can" (Dawson & Cuppleditch, 2007/08, p. 12).

In 2009, the UK Home Office released an evaluation of the PPO program after five years, and found similarly positive results, showing that most PPO programs were still running successfully, and many program participants were no longer offending at prolific levels. However, their evaluation showed that nearly one-fifth of the prolific offenders in PPO programs had been in the program since the beginning (five years), even after a decrease in offending (UK Home Office, 2009). These offenders typically remained in the program out of a fear that, without the support given by the PPO program, they might fall back into a life of offending. These offenders often stated that a less intensive program, which could still provide some support in the community without requiring the full program intervention, simply did not exist, leaving the PPO program as their only option (UK Home Office, 2009). The 2009 evaluation also showed nearly one in three offenders in the PPO program received no convictions during the previous 12 months, while just under one-quarter (23 per cent) received more than six convictions. However, their PPO cohort included a number of offenders in custody, up to half at any given time, which could clearly have an effect on these numbers. The authors of the 2009 evaluation also stated that some of the longer-lasting members of the PPO cohort could also influence these overall numbers, as they would no longer be considered 'prolific offenders' under most definitions yet were still considered to be prolific offenders under the program's jurisdiction (UK Home Office, 2009).

In another UK study, Feasey and colleagues (2009) evaluated the Sheffield Priority Prolific Offender (PPO) program by conducting numerous qualitative interviews. Overwhelmingly, offenders in the Sheffield PPO program were convicted of property offences, such as burglary, theft, or robbery, with only six out of the 89 offenders having convictions for a violent offence. Within their sample of 89 prolific offenders, nearly three-quarters (73 per cent) identified their lifestyle and associates as their greatest needs for intervention, with financial management and income, thinking and behaviour, and drug misuse all following closely behind. The interviews with program participants found that, generally, individuals involved in the PPO program were positive about their experience, and commonly stated that they continued to engage with the program, even though they felt they were low risk to reoffend. Further, individuals responsible for running the PPO programs identified several key issues, including the need for clear criteria for selection and entry into the program, the need for contact points with outside service agencies, particularly in housing and income assistance, and the importance of direct communication with external agencies in the community, which was a sentiment echoed by community stakeholders (Feasey et al., 2009).

In terms of Canadian research, in 2013, Rezansoff et al. conducted an evaluation of six Prolific Offender Management programs in British Columbia, in Kamloops, Nanaimo, Prince George, Surrey, Victoria, and Williams Lake. Cohort sizes from each program ranged from 14 to 56 participants, based on the size of the community. Their analysis included POM participant data from the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General, Health Services, and Social Development, including demographic data, offence history, police contact (both neutral and negative), social assistance utilization, and recidivism while in the POM program. Their analysis found that offenders in the POM program were an average of 31 years old and were overwhelmingly male (93 per cent). Further, nearly two out of three participants had less than high school graduation (65 per cent), with just 9% having any post-secondary education.

The average participant had over 30 criminal convictions, including nearly half of that, 15.8, in the five years prior to taking part in the POM program. Notably, while the average number of criminal convictions for participants in the year prior to the POM program was 3.7, this decreased to 2.2 in the year after enrolling in the program. Property offences remained the most common type of conviction, both before and after taking part in the POM program, from an average of 1.5 property offence convictions per year prior to enrollment, to 0.8 convictions in the year following enrollment. Violent offences similarly decreased, but were less common overall, from an average of 0.3 convictions per year prior to enrollment, to 0.1 after enrollment. Similarly, drug and alcohol offences were not as common, with an average of 0.4 convictions per year prior to enrollment in the POM program, followed by an average of 0.2 convictions per year after enrollment (Rezansoff et al., 2012). All these decreases in average offending were found to be statistically significant, meaning they were unlikely to occur by chance alone. Statistically significant decreases were also found for the overall numbers of police contact, from an average of 13.8 police contacts per year prior to enrollment, to 11.2 after enrollment. Negative police contacts, defined as police contact resulting in arrest or detention, also had a statistically significant decrease, from 10.1 negative contacts per year to 7.1 negative contacts per year. Additionally, Rezansoff et al. (2013) found that participants in the POM program accessed increased amounts of health and social services post-PMO enrollment (e.g., physician support and social assistance) suggesting greater service use that is essential for treatment and desistance (also see Worrall et al., 2003).

As mentioned previously, Rezansoff et al. (2013) concluded that the six POM programs in British Columbia had positive effects in reducing offending by participants, like those seen in the UK (Dawson & Cuppleditch, 2007/08; UK Home Office, 2009). Furthermore, occurring concurrently with reductions in the average number of offences per year (M = 3.7 pre-POM to M = 2.2 post-POM), researchers also found that participants in the POM program in BC had a 13% decrease in custody time. Although changes in custody times were not statistically significant, given the estimated cost of nearly $200 per day, this cost saving was considerable. Further, the authors argued that the decrease in custody time post-POM demonstrated that the reduction in offences "was likely not attributable to reduced opportunities to offend due to incarceration" that was identified as a limitation in the 2009 UK Home Office report (Rezansoff et al., 2012, p. 570). The authors noted that "participants were subject to a higher level of surveillance, which could be expected to increase the detection of crime if offending behaviour is taking place," (Rezansoff et al., 2012, p. 570). Yet, this begs the question as to whether the offence reduction was due to rehabilitation, increased surveillance, or a combination of these approaches. Reduced conviction rates were also

accompanied by decreased overall contacts with police and negative contact with police. It is possible that some of this reduced offending was due to improved social assistance payments, which increased for participants from just over $2,400 per person, per year, to over $3,400 per person, per year, along with increased assistance and support by the POM team acting as an "effective brokerage" (Rezansoff et al., 2012, p. 571). For example, financial assistance may act to decrease the turmoil associated with unstable housing.

Paetsch et al. (2015) conducted a review of Alberta's Priority Prolific Offender Programs (PPOP) in 2015, two years after the programs started. The sample included over 50 offenders (*n* = 56) from two independent police services in Edmonton and Calgary, as well as two combined Royal Canadian Mounted Police locations (identified as RCMP-North and RCMP-South). The two RCMP samples combined prolific offenders from several different RCMP jurisdictions in Northern and Southern Alberta. Like other prolific offender management programs, Priority Prolific Offender Programs in Alberta focus on prolific offenders in two main ways. First, through enhanced monitoring and enforcement, which is done in cooperation with Crown prosecutors to ensure swift prosecution in the event of a criminal offence. Second, program participants are offered rehabilitative services that are deemed appropriate and specifically tailored to each offender, as well as enhanced support services in the community (Paetsch et al., 2015). The goal is to manage these difficult offenders in a focused way, ensuring a balance between deterrence and targeted and offender-specific rehabilitation. As seen in other jurisdictions, this requires substantial collaboration between police services, correctional services, and community partners. Priority Prolific Offender Programs in Alberta include a project manager, four police constables (one each from Edmonton and Calgary Police Services, and two from the RCMP), two probation officers, two criminal intelligence analysts, as well as administrative support, and collaboration with Crown prosecutors.

The evaluation of Alberta PPO programs by Paetsch et al. (2015) included a retrospective time series analysis and a pre/post-test longitudinal sample, to determine if the sample of prolific offenders (*n* = 56) had been positively affected by the program. While Paetsch et al. (2015) identified the possibility that some offenders from the sample could have spent some of the review period in prison, leading to the possibility of reduced recidivism rates, they removed any offenders who spent more than one year in prison from their sample. The average age of client in the Alberta PPO program was similar across all four sites, with average ages between 31.3 years old at the two RCMP sites, 32.7 years old in Edmonton, and 33.2 years old in Calgary (Paetsch et al., 2015), very similar to the 31 years old seen in the British Columbia evaluation conducted by Rezansoff et al. (2013). Analysis of the Alberta PPO programs showed that the average age of first conviction was 18.4 years old. However, after removing a newly immigrated offender who received his first conviction at the age of 42, the average age of first conviction in the Alberta PPOP sample dropped to just 16.5 years old (Paetsch et al., 2015). Interestingly, offenders in the Alberta PPOP sample had spent a substantial amount of time in custody prior to taking part in the program, with the average participant spending nearly one-third of their life in custody, clearly showing the serious nature of the offender sample. Four-fifths of participants in the Alberta sample stated that they were unemployed and did not have a stable home (80.8 per cent), with more than 40% stating they relied on social assistance (43.5 per cent), and one-third (34.8 per cent) stating they had no income. Very few Alberta PPO program participants completed high school (12.5 per cent), with only one individual stating they had some university and one individual stating they had completed a

university degree. The majority of offenders in the Alberta sample had either a confirmed serious addiction issue (56 per cent), or moderate to severe substance use problem (24 per cent), and more than half (53.8 per cent) of participants stated that their offending was related to their substance abuse or addiction issues. Finally, while 35% of participants had a confirmed diagnosed mental health issue, an additional 20% of clients were suspected of having a mental health issue by program personnel. When asked, 15.4% of the Alberta Priority Prolific Offender Program sample stated that they had a mental health issue that was related to their offending (Paetsch et al., 2015).

With all four Alberta Priority Prolific Offender programs combined, the average prolific offender in the sample had nearly 16 criminal convictions (15.93) in the five years prior to taking part in the program, virtually identical to the 15.8 criminal convictions seen in the British Columbia sample (Paetsch et al., 2015; Rezansoff et al., 2013). Like the findings in the British Columbia evaluation done by Rezansoff et al. (2013), the most common conviction in the five years prior to taking part in the Alberta PPOP was for property offences, with an average of 11.07 convictions, with violent offences being far less common, at an average of 1.07 convictions in the 5 years prior to Priority Prolific Offender Program enrollment (pre-PPOP conviction rates; Paetsch et al., 2015). To analyze and compare criminal convictions before, during, and after participating in the Alberta Priority Prolific Offender Program, Paetsch et al. (2015) reviewed data from the Alberta Justice and Solicitor General's Justice On-Line Information Network (JOIN) to identify any administrative or substantive convictions of participants since program completion. The average "de-selection" time from the Priority Prolific Offender Program varied from 14.9 months to nearly 2 years (22.2 months), with an average of 19.4 months away from the program. This time represented the measurement of post- Priority Prolific Offender Program conviction rates. Potential explanations for de-selection included custody, death, incapacitation, or relocation. Individuals that de-selected for these reasons were excluded from further analyses (n = 34). However, most offenders left the Priority Prolific Offender Program due to low risk of recidivism, low public safety risk, or desistance over a 6-month period. To account for differences in de-selection times, researchers calculated a per-month conviction rate. After removing offenders who had left the program due to incarceration, death, or relocation (n = 34), a sample size of 56 remained. Across the board, the average number of convictions per-month decreased while in the program and further decreased after leaving the program. In the five years before taking part in the Alberta Priority Prolific Offender Program, participants averaged 0.43 convictions per month. This decreased to an average of 0.19 convictions per month while taking part in the Priority Prolific Offender Program and further decreased to 0.09 convictions per month after completing the program (Paetsch et al., 2015). These results are, again, very similar to results seen in British Columbia, where offenders had an average of 0.31 convictions per month before taking part in the Prolific Offender Management Program, based on an average of 3.7 convictions in the 12 months before starting the program, and 0.18 convictions per month in the year after starting the program, based on an average of 2.2 convictions per year during the program (Rezansoff et al., 2013).

Paetsch et al. (2015) concluded that the data collected from the Priority Prolific Offender Programs in Alberta strongly suggested that the prolific offender programs effectively reduced offending behaviour for the program participants. This was true for offending both during the programs and after program completion, where average per-month offending continually declined before, during, and after program completion. Further, in responding to criticism by Rezansoff et al. (2013)

regarding small sample sizes common in evaluating prolific offender programs, Paetsch et al. (2015) pointed out that their sample size of more than 50 participants was much larger than previous studies. However, they acknowledged the need for more data collection from prolific offender programs to allow for future longitudinal studies, allowing for more complex analyses and comparisons between different program sites (Paetsch et al., 2015).

While the evaluations of prolific offender management programs in the UK and Canada have seen generally positive evaluations, noting decreases in reoffending of around 40%, there are limitations to these findings that should be considered. The evaluations discussed here typically used participant comparisons before and after taking part in a prolific offender management program, rather than comparing them to a separate group of similar offenders not involved in such programming. While this allowed for identifying a possible relationship between program participation and decreased offending, more rigorous methods would be required to define that relationship as causal. It is difficult to tell, for example, if the crime reduction is due to the efforts of the prolific offender management teams or if other factors have not been considered (e.g., changes in sentencing trends). Further, it is unclear which element of the prolific offender management program is most effective at reducing crime. In other words, was it the increased surveillance and monitoring or the improved access to social services and rehabilitation, or some combination of both? Finally, there is no evaluation looking at the composition of the prolific offender management team, such as the ideal number of police or probation officers, criminal analysts, or social workers relative to the number of program participants, and how those numbers could possibly affect the outcomes, nor is there evaluation of the overall cost-effectiveness of prolific offender management programs that include detailed data. Due to this, several authors have identified that the overall reduction in offending by individuals taking part in a prolific offender management program should be viewed positively, but carefully (Paetsch et al., 2015; Rezansoff et al., 2013; UK Home Office, 2009).

INTEGRATED OFFENDER MANAGEMENT

Whereas Priority and Prolific Offender programs are police-led, Integrated Offender Management (IOM) is a collaborative effort by institutional and community based correctional staff for creating a comprehensive treatment plan for persistent and problematic offenders who are reentering the community after time in prison or jail (British Columbia Ministry of Justice, 2013/14; UK Home Office, 2015). Central to this effort is the identification of risk factors for reoffending, both static and dynamic in nature, at all stages of supervision; in the prison, during reintegration into the community, and while living in the community. Like PPO programs, IOM programs require a high level of collaboration between correctional staff in the institution, community correctional personnel, such as probation officers, and community program providers, to be successful in reducing long-term recidivism of offenders in the program (UK Home Office, 2015). As stated by the British Columbia Ministry of Justice (2013/14), the overarching goal of IOM is to improve outcomes for offenders serving sentences in the community, improve the reintegration process for offenders entering the community after time in prison, reduce recidivism rates, and improve social outcomes, such as housing, employment, and general well-being for offenders serving time in the community. IOM programs were created in response to the identification of the challenges typically faced by

offenders reentering the community, such as difficulty finding gainful employment or a stable place to live, and lack of access or understanding how to access social supports in the community (Axford & Ruddell, 2010; British Columbia Ministry of Justice, 2013/14). These issues have frequently been linked to high recidivism rates for offenders reentering the community after time in a correctional setting and remain an ongoing challenge for the Canadian justice system (Axford & Ruddell, 2010). In fact, as Axford and Ruddell (2010) pointed out, these types of challenges to reintegration into the community lead to as much as 30% to 50% of offenders recidivating and ending up back in prison within three years.

Using a sample of 619 clients in the IOM program[8] and a matched comparison group of 546 offenders who did not take part in an IOM program with similar characteristics, such as risk level, length of incarceration, and IOM eligibility, the British Columbia Ministry of Justice (2013/14) attempted to determine the effectiveness of IOM programs in terms of recidivism rates. After looking at five fixed periods for tracking recidivism after release (3 months, 6 months, 12 months, 24 months, and 48 months), researchers determined that IOM participants typically committed new offences (recidivism) at much lower rates than clients who did not take part in an IOM program. Further, this reduction in recidivism for IOM participants was true at all time periods. At the 3-month point, researchers found a 26% reduction in recidivism, with a statistically significant difference in IOM clients remaining offence free. Similar results were found at the 6-month point, with a 23% reduction in recidivism.[9] Analysis showed by the 12-month point, IOM clients had similar reoffence rates to non-IOM participants, with 52.6% of IOM participants reoffending, versus 54.8% of non-participants, although logistic regression analysis was not statistically significant in this instance. This smaller gap in recidivism rates between IOM program participants and non-participants remained consistent, with a smaller 6% difference in recidivism rates at the 24-month point, and a 5% difference at the 48-month point. In other words, IOM participants remined free of new offences, on average, more than 90 days longer than non-participants, which is a very positive outcome (British Columbia Ministry of Justice (2013/14), although the effects appeared to weaken by a year post-release. Given that the IOM program spans the time of custody, pre-release, and post-release/supervision in the community, it should be noted that the average length of IOM participation among clients was not specified in this report. Thus, it remains unclear whether the program length was consistent within or between the two facilities. Also, program completion or withdrawal times remain uncertain, which is a crucial factor in recidivism (e.g., Berman et al., 2019). Additional research should focus on the longer-term outcomes of these types of programs given that the effects appear to wear off over time.

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[8] IOM participants completed the program between 2006 and 2013 at one of two locations: (1) the Alouette Correctional Centre for Women (ACCW) and (2) the Fraser Regional Corrections Centre (FRCC). Eligibility requirements for IOM participation consisted of a minimum custody duration of 90 days for women and 135 days for men, six months community supervision after release, a prior history of community or custody sentence, and a high or moderate Corrections Risk-Needs Assessment Rating (British Columbia Ministry of Justice, 2013/14).

[9] Including probation breaches.

The Integrated Offender Management program, in many ways, is similar to prolific offender management, at least in terms of creating comprehensive and individualized treatment plans for offenders based on their specific criminogenic risk factors. These programs have shown significant success in reducing recidivism for offenders reintegrating into the community, with statistically significant reductions at multiple time points after release (British Columbia Ministry of Justice, 2013/14; U.K. Home Office, 2015). This provides strong empirical support for the rehabilitation and reintegration efforts common in prolific offender management programs, provided they are identifying individual risks, and responding to those risks with comprehensive and individualized treatment and support programs in the community. IOM is intended to integrate a co-operative case management strategy between adult custody personnel and community corrections during the offender's transition back into the community. While law enforcement does not appear to be directly involved in the current Canadian IOM approach, according to the literature (e.g., British Columbia Ministry of Justice, 2013/14), previous research suggested the utility of a probation-police agency partnership (e.g., information sharing) for monitoring and managing risk/needs of exclusively high-risk chronic probationers to reduce recidivism rates (Correctional Service Canada, 2011; Griffin et al., 2004; Matz & Kim, 2013; Murphy, 2008; Walton, 2006).

COMMON ELEMENTS OF PROLIFIC OFFENDER MANAGEMENT

Prolific offender management programs in Canada typically rely on three key components. First is the element of *deterrence*, which typically includes enhanced surveillance by both police and correctional officers working in the community. The program participant is made aware that they are under enhanced scrutiny, and that failure to comply with the law or any conditions of release, if applicable, will likely result in their incapacitation. The objective is to "promote meaningful consequences" for an offender's actions (Paetsch et al., 2017, p. 2) The second component is aimed at *incapacitation*, catching, and convicting prolific offenders who do not follow the law or the rules of the program. If a program participant breaks the law, the enhanced surveillance and monitoring will ideally lead to their prompt arrest and punishment. In some prolific offender management programs (e.g., the Priority Prolific Offender Program in Alberta, Canada), this element of enforcement is further enhanced by partnerships with Crown prosecutors, who are ensured access to "accurate and up-to-date" information to facilitate that prosecution of prolific offenders more effectively in the criminal justice system. Finally, the third component is *rehabilitation*, which involves ensuring that the specific needs of the offender are met in the community, be it drug or alcohol addiction treatment, anger management programming, education, assistance with finding a stable job or home, or simply learning how to manage day to day tasks, such as shopping or paying bills (i.e., RNR approaches). These community-based rehabilitation efforts and "appropriate support services" are vital to improving long-term desistance from crime and can potentially involve several professionals in the community, such as psychologists and psychiatrists, doctors, and social workers (Paetsch et al., 2017, p. 2).

When considering the third element of prolific offender management programs, experts have pointed to the importance of rehabilitation as a long-term strategy for reducing recidivism (Andrews & Bonta, 2010). In particular, the need for offender-specific programming, rather than general, or 'one-size-fits-all' programming, is essential. This focus on rehabilitation, rather than

punitive measures, is often a significant point of debate in the criminal justice field. However, as Andrews and Bonta (2010) pointed out, the 'get tough on crime' approach, made popular starting in the 1970s, has only led to drastically increased incarceration rates over the past few decades and has not led to any substantial decreases in recidivism. Instead, they argued for a rehabilitative approach specifically tailored to the offender using the RNR model, which they stated has decreased recidivism by as much as 35%. Due to these findings, it is not surprising that many prolific offender management programs, both in the UK and Canada, rely on this type of model for delivering rehabilitative services to offenders (Rezansoff et al., 2012).

At the heart of the rehabilitative approach commonly used in prolific offender management programs is the RNR model, developed and formalized by Andrews, Bonta, and Hoge in 1990 (Bonta & Andrews, 2007). The three principles identify the important elements required to deliver effective rehabilitative programming. First is the *risk* principle, which states that programming delivered to offenders must match their risk level; a low-risk offender should receive minimal services aimed at low-risk individuals, while a high-risk offender should receive far more programming specifically aimed at high-risk offenders. Central to this point is ensuring that the programming given to an offender is of proper intensity. For example, a low-risk offender taking part in high-risk programming could potentially lead to adverse outcomes, while a high-risk offender taking part in programming aimed at low-risk offenders would not be intensive enough to have any positive effect and could potentially lead to problems for the other lower-risk participants. An essential factor to consider with the risk principle is the importance of proper risk assessment, ideally conducted by qualified professionals using proper assessment tools.

The next factor, *need*, focuses on identifying what issues should be treated, both criminogenic and non-criminogenic. Andrews and Bonta (2010) identify several examples of possible dynamic factors, or criminogenic needs, including antisocial personality, pro-criminal associates, or substance abuse issues, along with possible static factors, or non-criminogenic needs, such as a personal history of victimization, or issues of anxiety or depression. Ideally, criminogenic factors should be a priority for rehabilitative programming, and typically, high-risk offenders will have more factors and a broader range of factors that need to be considered and treated. Like the *risk* principle, Andrews and Bonta (2010) pointed out the importance of using proper risk assessment tools to identify static and dynamic risk factors.

The final principle identified by Bonta et al. (1990) is that of *responsivity* that emphasizes how rehabilitative interventions take place. The responsivity element consists of two components: general and specific responsivity. The general responsivity element stresses cognitive-behavioural intervention, while specific responsivity refers to individualized treatment that considers the offender's strengths, abilities, characteristics, and personality. According to Bonta et al. (1990), of particular importance is the consideration of cultural and gender differences in participants.

The value of the RNR model in improving rehabilitative outcomes and reducing recidivism has been shown in academic literature over the past twenty years by numerous authors (Andrews & Bonta, 2010; Dowden & Andrews, 2000; Goggin & Gendreau, 2006; Hanson et al., 2009; Hart & Logan, 2011; Koehler et al., 2013). For example, research conducted in 2006 by Andrews and Bonta showed that rehabilitation programs following the RNR model led to a 30% or more decrease in recidivism by participants, while programs failing to follow these principles led to an increase in

participant recidivism. These findings were consistent when reviewing programs aimed at youth, women, racialized offenders, violent offenders, gangs, and sex offender programs that relied on the RNR (Andrews & Bonta, 2010). In contrast, others have found less supportive findings of RNR approaches. For instance, Seewald et al. (2017) used a quasi-experimental design and found mixed support for RNR interventions in Switzerland among violent and sexual offenders in treatment (n = 20) and not in treatment (n = 25). Their results revealed commensurate conviction or charge rates between the treatment and control groups. Researchers measured violent or sexual offence[10] recidivism rates over an eight-year post-release period. Although recidivism rates were lower among offenders in the treatment condition (11.7 per cent), these results were not significantly different from the control condition (15.8 per cent). Notably, treatment was court-mandated and delivered by the Department of Mental Health Services in the Office of Corrections. In this context, mandated court treatment does not automatically imply that offenders had a mental illness.

Others have outlined several limitations of RNR approaches, as Polaschek (2012) stated:

> This appraisal [of the RNR model of offender rehabilitation] has noted (a) difficulties with complexity, accessibility of language, and clarity in the model itself, (b) large-scale operationalization of a narrow range of RNR programmes, and (c) implementation of interventions that emphasize the core principles of risk and need at the expense of other, equally important principles such as responsivity and core staff practices. Together, these factors may foster a sense of disenchantment with, and misunderstanding about the model and its value. However well supported it is empirically, future developments should be directed at improving both the model and its application (p. 12).

Given these criticisms, RNR principles have been, in some cases, misapplied or misinterpreted. Despite these criticisms, generally, research has supported the effectiveness of RNR methods in the context of the general offender population and sexual and violent offenders (e.g., Hanson et al., 2009). What is scant from the literature is an evaluation of the effectiveness of RNR techniques with prolific/habitual offenders.[11] A preliminary investigation of the efficacy of RNR approaches for prolific offenders (n = 49) in the Priority Prolific Offender Program in Alberta, Canada showed promising results for crime reduction. Out of the nine domains of risk/needs factors measured over two years, Martynuik (2015) found that post-RNR inventions significantly reduced the number of days in prison and improved interactions with pro-social individuals and treatment engagement.

Martynuik (2015) argued that while "neither front-line police nor corrections officers should be expected to directly fulfill an offender's underlying criminogenic needs, it is imperative that the police and justice culture be taught that there is an underlying root cause to an offender's criminal actions and that without addressing those causes, the criminal cycle will only continue or possibly escalate" (p. 41). Thus, there is a need for specialized prosecutors and judges for prolific offenders in Canada to appropriately manage the complexities of offender's risk/needs profiles at the front end (Martynuik, 2015), like the Priority Prolific Offender Program strategies. Others (see

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[10] i.e., homicide, manslaughter, robbery, assault, coercion, kidnapping, false imprisonment, endangering life, rape, child sexual abuse, incest, sexual coercion, or sexual molestation.

[11] Repeat offenders who commit low complexity offences, such as theft, break and enter, breaches of court orders/release conditions, and property crimes (see Martynuik, 2015).

Correctional Service Canada, 2011; Griffin et al., 2004; Matz & Kim, 2013; Murphy, 2008; Walton, 2006) have also stressed the utility of police-probation officer collaboration for prolific offenders who are reintegrating into the community. The purpose of this partnership is to jointly monitor and address risk and needs at this transitional point.

Current Project

The literature suggests that prolific offender management is an important police strategy for successful crime reduction. While the existing evidence-base is still developing, the limited research indicates that identifying prolific offenders and targeting police attention, efforts at rehabilitation, and incapacitation produce measurable reductions in crime. While prolific offender management programs have been implemented by RCMP throughout the province of British Columbia, the exact nature of the program structure and activities are unclear. The objective of the current project is to examine various POM programs in operation across the province and describe the organizational structures and activities with consideration to detachment size (e.g., small, medium, large) and policing district.

Project Methodology

The objectives of this project were achieved using a combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods and data collection. The project was broken down into two key elements.

DATA ANALYSIS

The crime data used for the following analyses were provided by RCMP 'E' Division Operations Strategy Branch (OSB). The data covered the decade between 2007 and 2017, a period of time sufficient in length to establish visual trends. In addition to total crime figures, the data was broken down by type of crime: person crimes, property crimes, and other crimes. The data was collected for 20 RCMP jurisdictions. These jurisdictions were drawn from each of the four RCMP policing districts in British Columbia. In many instances, the crime data from an RCMP detachment is divided into a "municipal" and "provincial" component. For analytic purposes, this data was aggregated to the detachment level. Thus, the crime rate of each of the detachments was an aggregate rate corresponding to the whole area that was under the jurisdiction of each detachment.

Because the purpose of the analyses was to establish general trends, and not to compare specific jurisdictions, the crime data was aggregated to three different levels of analysis. First, all data was aggregated to produce annual crime rates for these 20 jurisdictions in British Columbia as a whole (see Figure 1 below). In other words, the crime rates for British Columbia represented an extrapolation of the data from 20 jurisdictions. The second level of analysis used district-level crime rates, such as those presented in Figure 2. The specific breakdown of jurisdictions per district was as follows: Vancouver Island (five detachments); Lower Mainland (six detachments); North District (three detachments); and Southeast District (six detachments). The third level of analysis involved

categorizing the detachments by size: small (jurisdictions with a population under 5,000 people; four detachments), medium (jurisdictions with a population between 5,000 and 15,000 people; eight detachments), and large (jurisdictions with a population over 15,000 people; nine detachments). Once again, the detachments for which data was provided were aggregated to represent each of these categories.

INTERVIEWS WITH PROLIFIC OFFENDER TEAM MEMBERS

In consultation with OSB, a sample of 23 RCMP detachments were identified that represented the range of different prolific offender management programs and team structures in British Columbia. Interviews were conducted with a sample of police officers and crime analysts from each of the selected detachments whose responsibilities included the identification and management of prolific offenders. The interview themes focused on the detachment's policies, practices, efficiencies, and effectiveness of their unit's organizational design, their definition of prolific offending and prolific offenders, the methods used to identify prolific offenders, offender management practices, community and criminal justice partnerships, the members' experience working with prolific offenders, their descriptions of prolific offenders in their jurisdiction, and the criminal pathways of prolific offenders.

All interviews were conducted by University of the Fraser Valley faculty or student researchers. The interviews were conducted either in a private office or meeting room in the participant's detachment, or via a telephone interview. The ethics of the research project, including the interview schedule and project methodology, were approved by the University's Human Research Ethics Board prior to any data being collected (Protocol #1095-18). Participation in the interview was voluntary and those willing to participate were provided with an information sheet prior to the interview that included a detailed overview of the purpose of the interview. Immediately before the interview began, all participants were provided with the information sheet and asked to sign an informed consent form. Interviews were not video or audio recorded and all information provided by participants was anonymized prior to analysis.

Once the interviews were completed, all the anonymized information was entered into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet and qualitatively analysed for common themes. The analyses focused on themes emerging from the specific content provided by respondents during their interviews, in addition to latent content illustrating any underlying themes.

Prolific Offender Crime Statistics in British Columbia

Generalizing from the detachments that participated in the study, crime trends across three geographic entities were explored. The geographic areas were the Province of British Columbia, the four RCMP districts within the province, and the tripartite categorization of jurisdictions as small, medium, or large RCMP detachments. The overall baseline for crime rates for the province is presented in Figure 1. Between 2007 and 2017, the total crime rate across all of British Columbia dropped a total of 28%, an average decrease of about 2.5% per year. However, it is worth noting that the bulk of the reduction occurred in the first few years of the time period under study (2007

and 2011). Except for a couple of slight dips in 2013 and 2017, the total crime rate consistently hovered at about 80 crimes per 1,000 people. Much of this total crime rate pattern was driven by property crimes, which consistently comprised 60% to 65% of the total volume of crime. Not surprisingly, the pattern demonstrated by property crimes roughly mirrored that of total crime. Between 2007 and 2017, property crime declined by 29%, or 2.6% annually. Again, the bulk of the decrease occurred between 2007 and 2011. The pattern of falling rates was also evident for person crimes. Because there were comparatively many fewer person crimes, the decrease was, in numeric terms, comparatively large. Over this period, the person crime rate fell by a total of 45%, or 4.1% per annum. Although it is difficult to discern because of the scale in Figure 1, the drop in person crime was similarly most pronounced over the first couple of years. Since 2013, the rate has always been 10% +/- 1%. Finally, and in contrast to the other crime types, "other" crime was stable throughout the entire period.

FIGURE 1: CRIME RATES BY TYPE, BRITISH COLUMBIA, 2007-2017
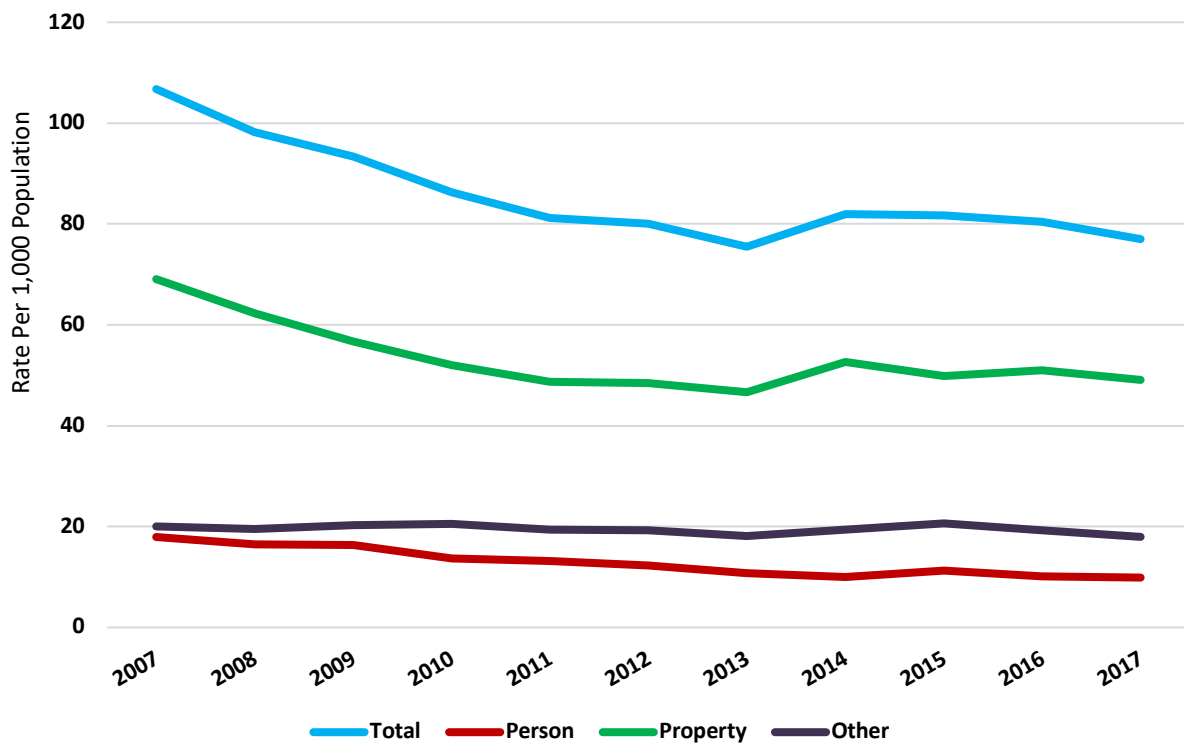
By and large, the provincial-level patterns of crime were evident across the four policing districts in British Columbia. In general, the primary difference is one of scale. Figure 2 indicates that the North district, which had the highest total crime rates in BC, showed an overall decrease of 21%. This includes the upswing (5 per cent) in the North District in 2017. An even larger increase of almost 10% was revealed in the Southeast District between 2015 and 2016, although the reason for this increase remains unclear. Because of these rises at the end of the period under consideration, the overall drop in the crime rate for the Southeast District was about 23%. Without these rises, the decrease would have been over 30%. The pattern demonstrated by the Island District was similar;

still, it was more pronounced in the earlier years and less pronounced later. Between 2007 and 2011, total crime in the Island District fell by one-third. But, except for a small downtick in 2013, the Island District crime rates were very consistent between 2011 and 2017. In comparison to the other RCMP districts, crime rates in the Lower Mainland District showed a less consistent trend. The crime rate decreased by 25% between 2007 and 2013. In 2014, the crime rate increased by 13.7%, the largest single year rise in the dataset. But the trends of falling crime rates in the Lower Mainland District re-emerged with modest drops in 2015 and 2016, followed by a 9.2% decrease in 2017. This was in stark contrast to the other districts that all experienced an increase in 2017.

FIGURE 2: TOTAL CRIME RATES BY BC RCMP DISTRICTS, 2007-2017
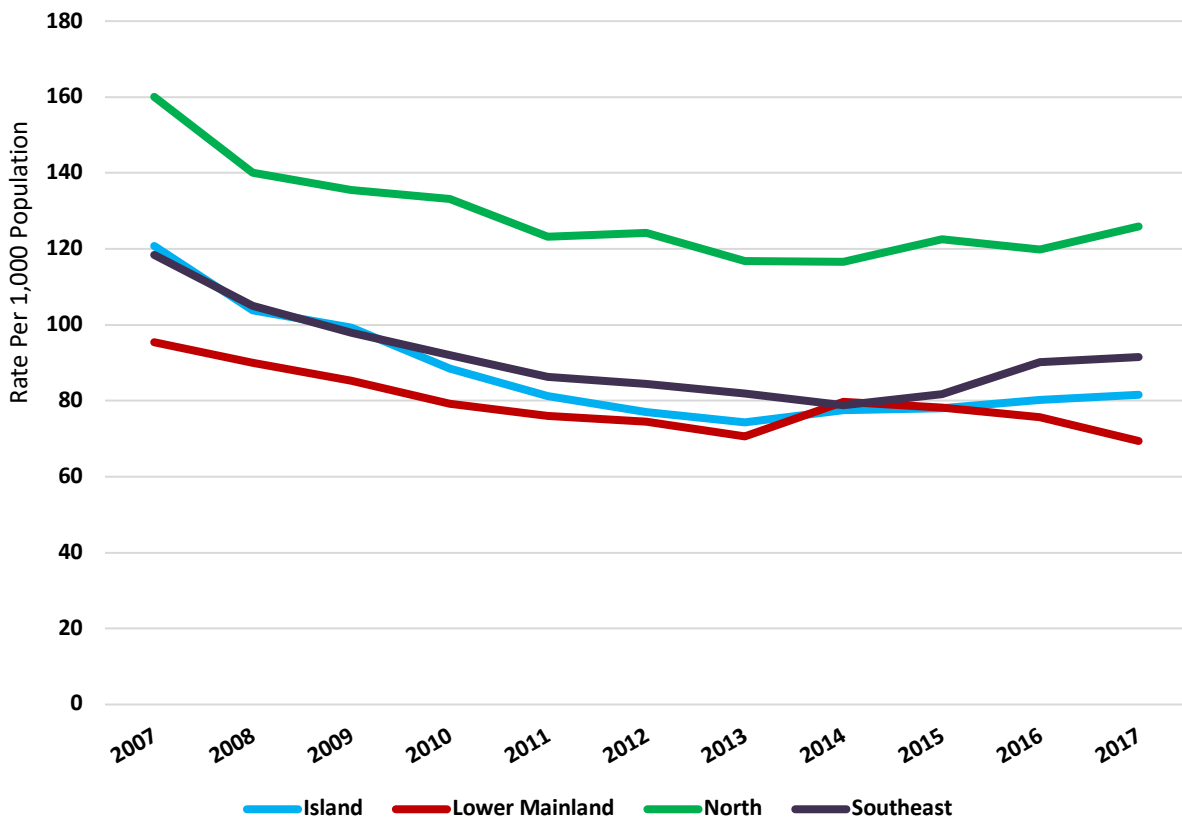
The district-level results for property crime, illustrated in Figure 3, largely mirrored those in Figure 2. The specific patterns for the Lower Mainland District were reproduced almost perfectly: relative decline until 2010; stability until 2013; significant "bump" in 2014; and a decrease through 2017. The trend of the Southeast District was similar as there was a 33% reduction in property crime rates between 2007 and 2011, stability through 2014, and noteworthy increases in 2015 and 2016. For the Island and the North Districts, the observed trends revealed exaggerated versions of the total crime rate. Regarding the Island District, property crime fell annually until 2013 (a total of 43 per cent). After 2013, property time increased an average of 5.2%. In 2017, the property crime rate in the Island District returned to approximately the same level as that recorded in 2010. This "u-

shaped" pattern was similar for the North District, which saw a 45% decline in property crime rates between 2007 and 2013, followed by an average per annum jump of 7.6%.

**FIGURE 3: PROPERTY CRIME RATES BY BC RCMP DISTRICTS, 2007-2017**
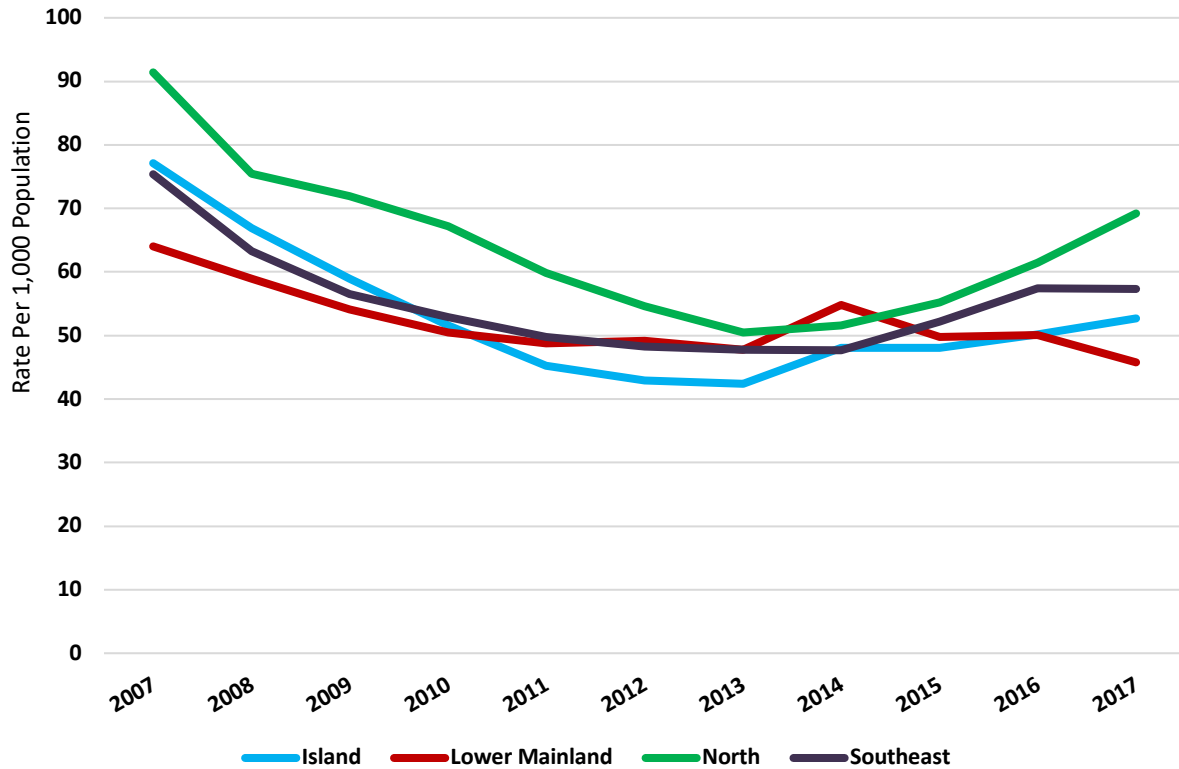
Compared with property crimes, person crimes confirmed the general pattern of results demonstrated in relation to total and property crime in the four RCMP policing districts but showed relatively less volatility. Figure 4 shows that, like property crime, most of the overall decline in person crime rates occurred in the first part of the time series. Following 2014, none of the districts saw a change in person crime rate that exceeded 2%. This consistency was also illustrated by the figures for all annual change. At the highest end, the annual rate of decrease was 4.1% (North District), while the lowest rate of decrease was 3.7% (Southeast District). This represented significant clustering around the overall annual rate of decline of 3.9%. In short, the picture of person crime in British Columbia during the period in question was one of symmetry between police districts.

**FIGURE 4: PERSON CRIME RATES BY BC RCMP DISTRICTS, 2007-2017**
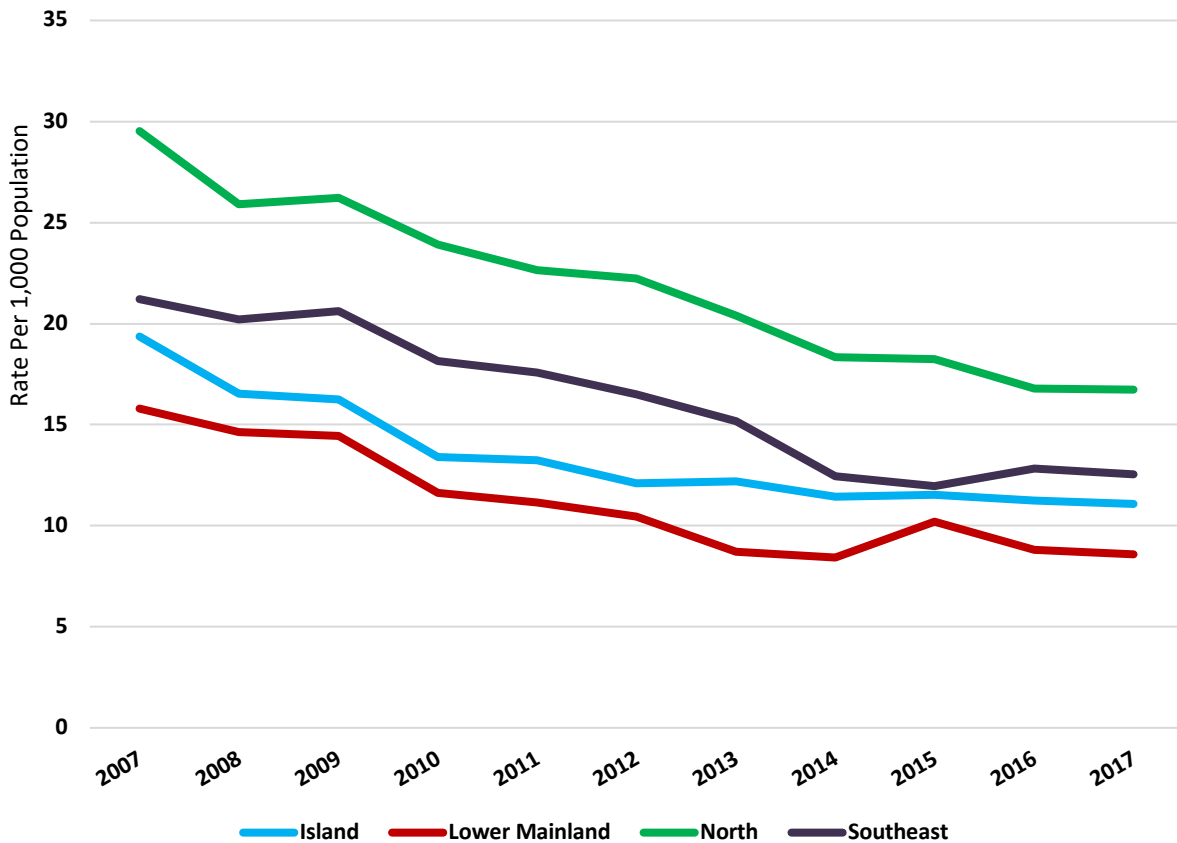
With one glaring exception, the trend rates for 'other' crimes in RCMP police districts illustrated in Figure 5 was one of uniform stability. The best example of this was in the Southeast District, where the rate of other crime in 2017 was essentially the same as it was in 2007. The annual change in 'other' crime rate never exceeded two percentage points. The same was true in the Lower Mainland District, which began with an 'other' crime rate of 16% and ended with a rate of 15%. The trend for the Island District was constant, but not as flat. Between 2007 and 2017, rates of 'other' crimes decreased by 27%. Apart from the "blip" in 2008, this rate showed a gradual decline over the time series. In contrast to these districts, 'other' crime rates in the North District revealed considerably more "bounce." Interestingly, the rates in 2007 and 2017 were virtually the same (2017 was 2.4 per cent higher). But large fluctuations were evident throughout the period. On one hand, 'other' crime jumped by 13.5% between 2009 and 2010, and by 14.6% between 2011 and 2012. Conversely, 'other' crime decreased by 14.3% between 2015 and 2016. Although the data was not available for this report, **future research should try to disentangle the specifics of this volatility**.

**FIGURE 5: OTHER CRIME RATES BY BC RCMP DISTRICTS, 2007-2017**
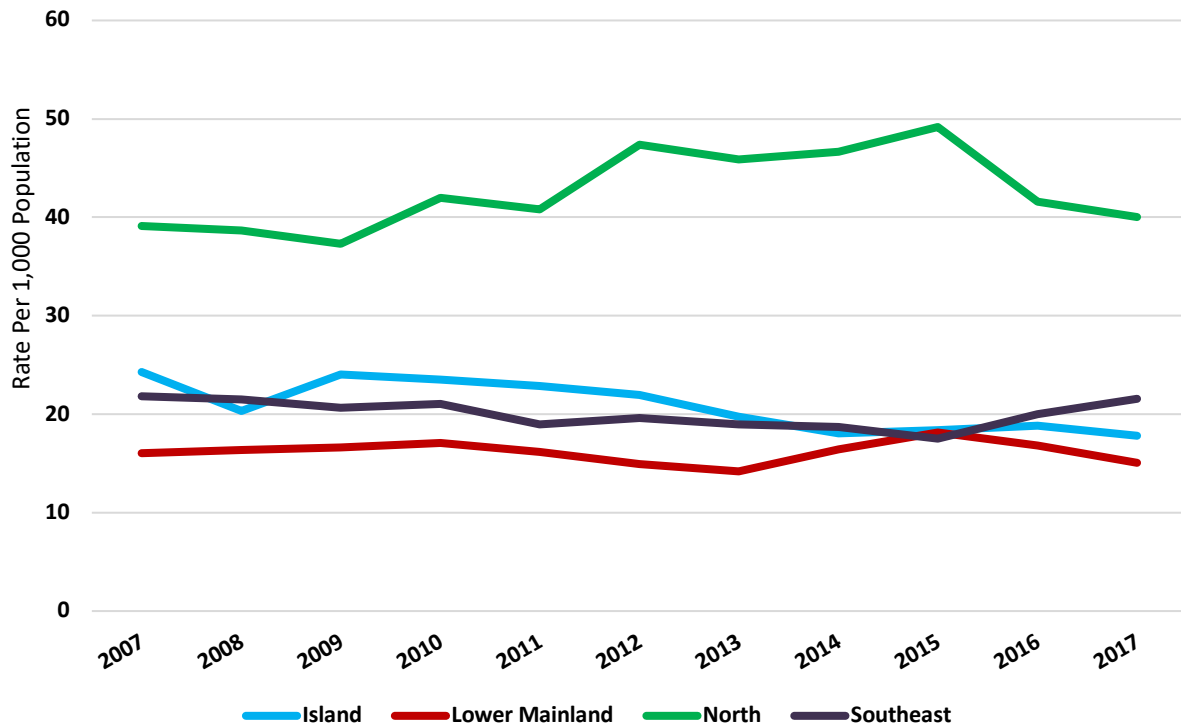
The same patterns noted in previous figures were also evident when "size of jurisdiction" was used as the unit of analysis. Figure 6 illustrates total crime rates in small, medium, and large RCMP jurisdictions. There were perceptible downward trajectories across all jurisdiction sizes, but most of the change took place in the earlier part of the time series. Beginning in about 2011, the trends were essentially flat. Total crime was consistently lower in smaller detachment jurisdictions. While total crime rates in medium sized detachment jurisdictions exceeded those in larger detachments in 2007 and 2008, by 2009, the crime rates in these detachments became indistinguishable. For the most part, this close tracking of total crime rates in medium and large places continued through 2017.

**FIGURE 6: TOTAL CRIME RATES BY BC RCMP JURISDICTION SIZES, 2007-2017**
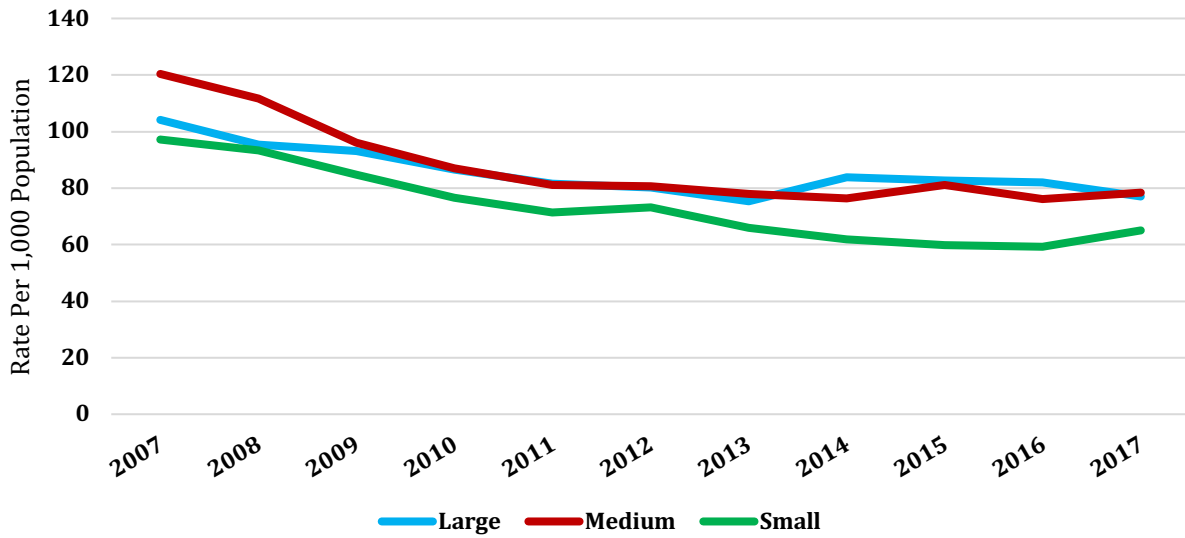
In part owing to the change in scale, Figure 7 demonstrates greater differentiation between jurisdictions based on detachment size regarding property crimes. Consistent with Figure 6, smaller detachments presented the lowest levels of property crime for each year. On the other end of the spectrum, the highest rates of crime primary (for every year after 2008) were found in those jurisdictions with large detachments. This finding was particularly noteworthy when considered in conjunction with Figure 8 presented below.

FIGURE 7: PROPERTY CRIME RATES BY BC RCMP JURISDICTION SIZES, 2007-2017
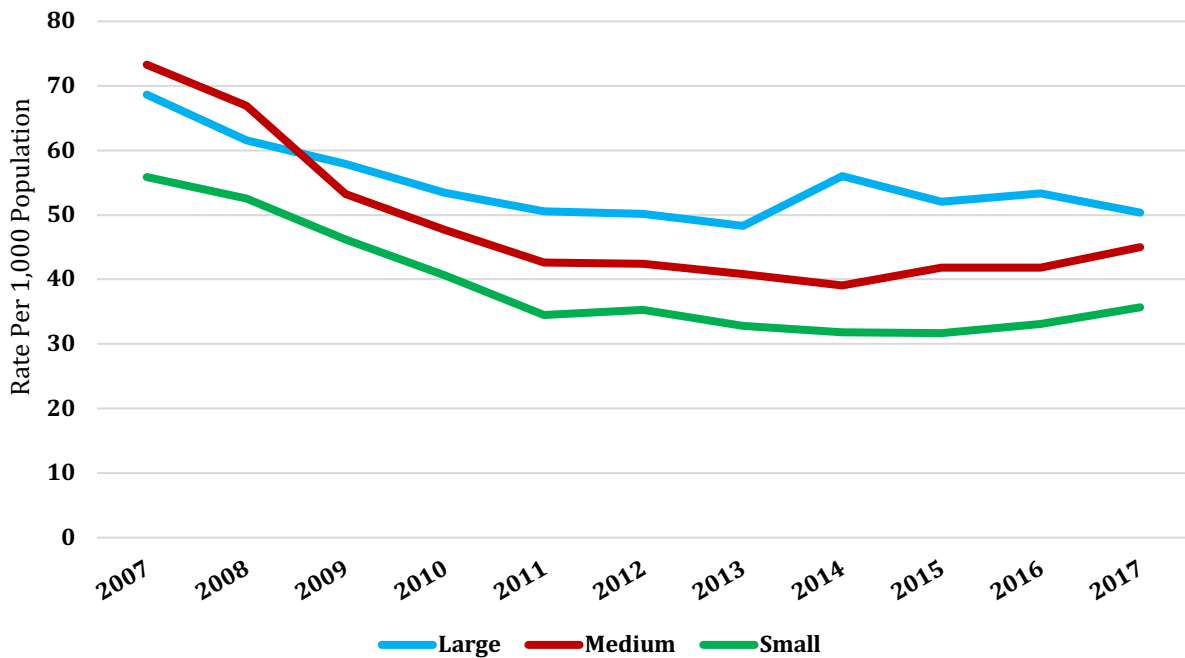
The pattern of person crime rates evidenced in Figure 8 was not consistent with that presented in the previous figure. Figure 8 depicts larger jurisdictions as unfailingly having lower person crime rates. The trends for small and medium areas were less consistent. Keeping in mind that the overall trends across both types of crimes was decreasing, on a per capita basis, person crime was more likely in small and medium sized detachment jurisdictions, while property crime was more prevalent in larger jurisdictions. It is important to note that the distinctions shown is Figure 8 are, to some degree, the result of the scale of the figure. In relative terms, the differences were not as large as they might appear by simply examining the figure.

FIGURE 8: PERSON CRIME RATES BY BC RCMP JURISDICTION SIZES, 2007-2017
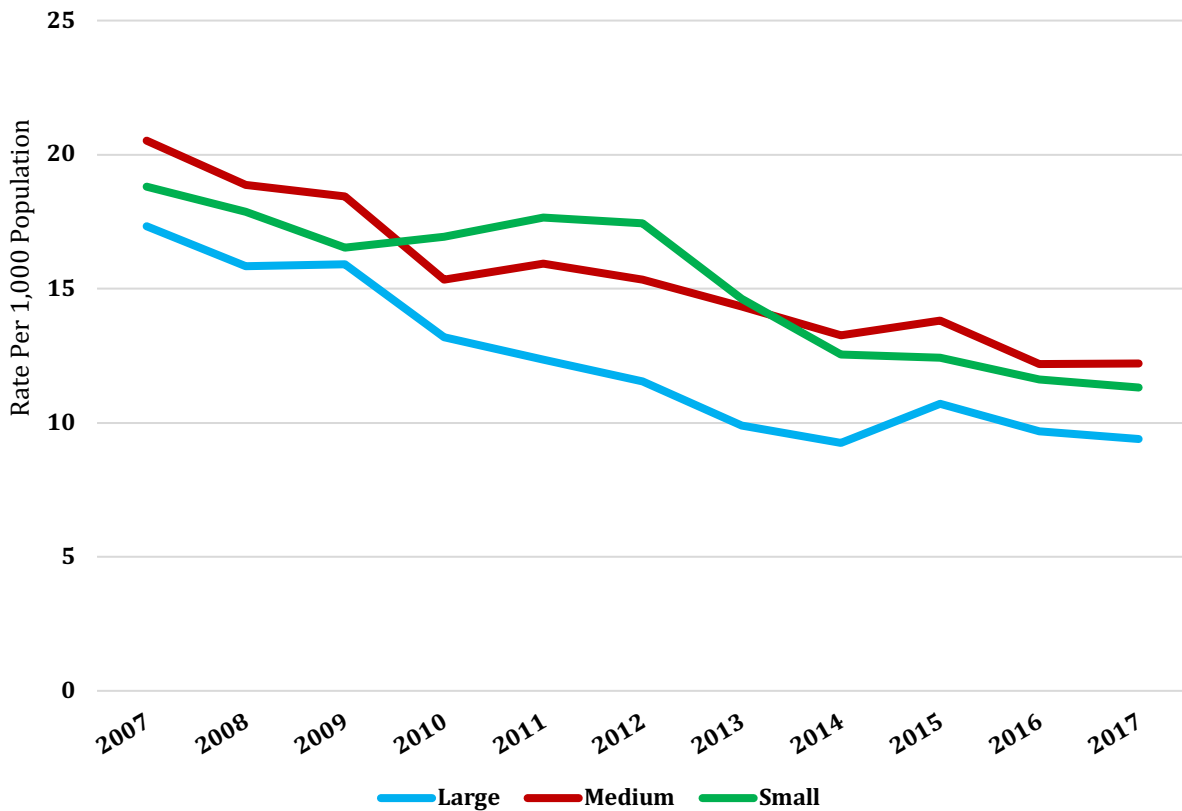
In contrast to Figures 6 through 8, the trends in the rates of 'other' crimes depicted in Figure 9 did not indicate decline over time. Rather, they were characterized more by rough stability, punctuated with ups and downs on a year-by-year basis. 'Other' crime rates were repeatedly higher in medium-sized jurisdictions, while the rates of 'other' crimes in larger and smaller areas revealed a more "back and forth" pattern. As was noted in the discussion for Figure 5, the data necessary to account for these seemingly random patterns were not available for this report. Given this, further research would be required to specify these relationships more thoroughly.

FIGURE 9: OTHER CRIME RATES BY BC RCMP JURISDICTION SIZES, 2007-2017

Rate Per 1,000 Population

Large   Medium   Small
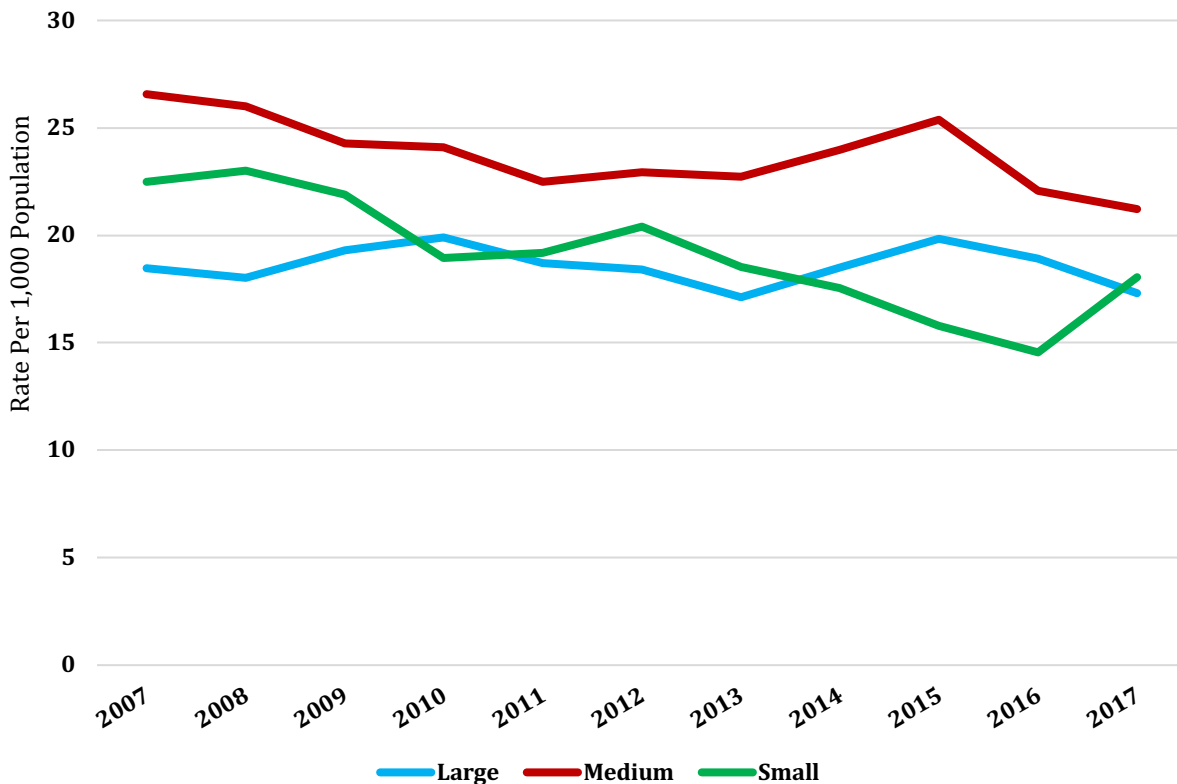
SUMMARY OF CRIME DATA TRENDS

There are several key takeaways from the analyses above. First, in general, crime rates in British Columbia have fallen between 2007 and 2017. This decline was evident for total crimes, person crimes, and, with notable exception of the Northern District, property crimes. In contrast, the rates of 'other' crimes has been fairly consistent over the study years. Second, most of the reduction in crime rates occurred during the first four or five years of the time series. After 2011 or 2012, the rates of crime tended to stabilize. Third, the district-level analyses revealed a fairly consistent pattern of crime ranking. For all the crime types, the North District recorded the highest rates. Conversely, the Lower Mainland tended to show the lowest rates. The Island and Southeast districts were normally in the middle, switching back and forth across years and across crime types. Finally, the analyses that compared jurisdictions based on their size produced more variated results. There was no overall pattern to characterize small, medium, and larger sized jurisdictions. Rather, each type of crime revealed more or less distinct patterns.

Interview Data

In consultation with the Operations Strategy Branch (OSB) for 'E' Division RCMP, 23 RCMP jurisdictions from across the four policing districts were identified for potential participation. This included six detachments from the Lower Mainland, six from the Island, six from the Southeast, and five from the North. When broken down by detachment size, there were nine large detachments, nine medium detachments, and five small detachments who were identified for potential

participation. OSB identified one or more potential contacts at each of the 23 detachments. The research team emailed or phoned the nominated representative to explain the nature of the study and invite participation from one or more participants on a voluntary basis. When considering the participating detachments by district, two of the North District detachments, one Island detachment, and one Southeast detachment did not participate. When considering the participating detachments by size, two of the small detachments, one medium detachment, and one large detachment did not participate. In total, interviews were conducted with 31 participants from 19 different detachments. The participants came from a wide range of positions, including crime analysts, constables, corporals, inspectors, sergeants and staff sergeants, and detachment commanders. The results of the semi-structured interviews are presented in two main sections. The results were first analysed by district, and then by detachment size.

Prolific Offenders District-Level Analyses

According to RCMP 'E' Division Headquarters, the definition of a prolific offender is an individual who has had three or more police contacts in the previous six months. The definition of a priority offender is a qualitative assessment that is intelligence-based. When comparing the four RCMP policing districts, there were both similarities and differences in how they defined and managed prolific offenders that did not appear to be based on the different sizes of their individual detachments.

When considering 'E' Division's definition of a prolific offender, it appeared as though detachments from the North were most consistently following this approach. This may be due to the crime rates, and particularly the property crime rates, generally being higher in the North (as discussed in the previous section), meaning that there were more offenders who would fit this intended designation. In contrast, while some of the Lower Mainland detachments reported using 'E' Division's definition, this varied somewhat according to detachment size. For example, one large detachment reported that using this definition would generate a far larger list than the detachment could adequately manage, whereas several other smaller or medium sized detachments felt that if they used this definition, no one in their jurisdiction would be identified as a prolific. Some of the variations among the Lower Mainland detachments, therefore, included that they may narrow down the list based on offence type and that they used sources of information other than strictly police contacts as reflected by PRIME (Police Records Information Management Environment) data, such as information from probation, general duty, or community partners to identify who was a relevant target. Similarly, detachments in the Island or Southeast District who did not strictly follow 'E' Division's definition of a prolific explained that they focused on those individuals who generated problems, regardless of whether they met the minimum of three police contacts within the past six months. Participants from the Island District detachments explained that they included those about to be released from corrections on their list, even if they had not been active in the past six months, as these individuals had lengthy criminal records and would potentially return to a criminal lifestyle following release. Consequently, detachments from the Island and Southeast Districts appeared to prefer the term 'priority' to 'prolific' to describe their target populations.

All four districts indicated that the primary focus of their prolific offender management team was enforcement, to monitor and arrest individuals who were violating conditions or committing crimes, with the goals of reducing criminality and calls for service. This was particularly true of the Lower Mainland and North detachments, who acknowledged that while rehabilitating these individuals was desirable, they primarily relied on enforcement. The Island and Southeast districts tended to indicate that another goal of their teams was to help offenders leave a life of crime by referring these individuals to community services. While the detachments in these Districts emphasized rehabilitation as a main goal, most still relied primarily on enforcement, with some acknowledging the use of displacement when needed.

Regardless of district, most detachments (n = 14) indicated that they met with and informed prolific offenders that they were on their list. Typically, this meant that they would meet with them, and verbally warn them that they were on the police radar, that they would be closely monitoring their compliance with conditions and suggested that they access services or resources if they wanted to get off this list. However, very few detachments reported using the Lifestyle Interview (n = 5), which is supposed to be a comprehensive assessment of the individual's criminal history and underlying issues. However, while they attempted to conduct a Lifestyle Interview, several detachments observed that the offenders generally refused to participate in that conversation. Similarly, while five detachments used a formal notification letter that was given to prolific offenders, two no longer did so, one of whom specifically commented that they did not have the resources to keep up with this. In total, only three of the detachments, all from different districts, used both the formal notification letter as well as offering a Lifestyle Interview.

Overall, regardless of district, the nature of the outreach to prolific offenders was generally a verbal warning to the offender that the police were aware that they were in their community on conditions, and that they would be checking in with them on a regular basis to ensure they were abiding by their conditions, and then enforcement through monitoring of said conditions. The following section of the report provides a district-level analysis of prolific offender programming and activities.

LOWER MAINLAND DISTRICT

Interviews were conducted with six detachments located in the Lower Mainland District. In terms of defining prolific offenders, none of the detachment specifically stated that they used the 'E' Division Headquarters' definition of prolific offenders. However, they generally provided definitions that were consistent with the concept. In effect, prolific offenders were those offenders who generated a high number of calls for service and were consistently criminally active. However, the nature of the contacts, the nature of the offences, and the timeframe over which they were active was more fluid. One Lower Mainland detachment stated that they did not have any offenders that fit 'E' Division's definition of a prolific offender. Rather, these individuals would be considered priority offenders by the detachment as they were the people that were causing issues in the community, even though these may be more nuisance based than crime based.

Three of the Lower Mainland detachments appeared to have a dedicated prolific offender team. Two other detachments shared the responsibility across the detachment, while a third had a team

that identified and then assigned prolific or priority targets to specialized units. The number of members that comprised the prolific offender teams ranged across the detachments. Those who had a dedicated team reported between six and nine members. While all participating detachments used analysts, they were generally not dedicated solely to Prolific Offender Management. For the smaller Lower Mainland detachments, the analysts were at a district-level rather than located in the detachment.

In terms of the number of prolific offenders managed simultaneously, this ranged from one to 18. However, most detachments stated that they managed or could manage two prolific offenders per member. Consistent with what was reported above, all but one detachment indicated that the primary focus of their prolific offender management team was to monitor and arrest individuals in the hopes that these people would become criminally inactive. They also felt that this strategy would have the secondary effect of reducing overall calls for service to the detachment. The main strategies for most detachments for engaging with prolific offenders was enforcement, which participants defined as in-person contacts by checking on whether individuals were complying with their conditions. This approach was followed by monitoring in the form of having members attending areas where prolific individuals were known to frequent. When asked about their threshold for intervention, all but one detachment indicated that they used a combination of frequency of contacts and severity of crimes to determine when it was necessary to intervene. Regarding notifying prolific offenders that they were on a prolific offender management list, there was a general lack of consistency in the Lower Mainland District detachments that participated in this study. In total, two detachments stated that they did not notify those on the list, two detachments stated that they did notify individuals that they were part of a list and that they were being monitored more closely, and two detachments indicated that they notified the individuals on their lists and attempted to conduct an in-depth interview (Lifestyle Interview) with each offender for the purposes of rehabilitation. These members expressed that they used these interviews to determine and identify what community resources or programs might be best suited to assist the offender with desisting from further criminality.

All Lower Mainland detachments felt that they had enough support from management to meet their mandate, though some did acknowledge that at times they would be pulled off their mandate to provide support elsewhere. When asked about their physical resources, all six detachments reported being generally satisfied with the number of members, vehicles, phones, and surveillance equipment assigned to the teams. One detachment reported that more covert cars were needed, and another detachment reported that having access to drones would be helpful. From a technological resource perspective, all detachments generally felt that they had the necessary technological resources to achieve their mandate. Still, members from one detachment reported that queries could be run more efficiently if the system did not shut down so frequently; however, this type of concern was not commonly expressed by those interviewed from the Lower Mainland District. The main challenges to their operations were identified as not having enough human resources dedicated to prolific offender management. One detachment commented on the issues with the courts not giving out substantial sentences, which weakened the overall effects of the program, while another participant suggested that having best practices would be helpful and would enable them to better measure their effectiveness.

ISLAND DISTRICT

Interviews were conducted with five detachments from the Island District. In terms of defining prolific offenders, none of the five participating detachments used the 'E' Division definition and three detachments indicated that they did not have a strict definition of a prolific offender. While they did consider the frequency of police contacts, they did not restrict this to negative police contacts. Offenders might be added to the list if they were a suspect in particular crimes, if they had a lengthy criminal record, if they were in custody and inactive but were known to the team, or if their name came up in conversations with others (e.g., other police officers, probation, informants). One detachment indicated that they relied more on the analysts or data; however, they examined these patterns alongside officer knowledge of the particular individual and used that combination of information to identify those who posed the most problems in their jurisdiction. Generally, the Island detachments appeared to lean more towards the use of 'priority' rather than E-Division's definition of prolific. Of note, one jurisdiction intentionally used the phrase 'chronic offender' for their target population, which they explained was due to the training they received prior to starting their unit.

Three Island detachments reported having a unit that focused on prolific or chronic offender management; each of these teams was composed of three officers. Two of these detachments reported that they were actively engaged with around 20 prolific offenders, while another 20 would be on their watch list or inactive (i.e., incarcerated). The third detachment reported actively managing approximately five prolific offenders. Of note, at the time of this interview, only two of the three positions in the unit were staffed. The remaining two detachments did not have a prolific offender team. One had a relatively new program, but no actual team. This detachment handled between five to 12 prolific offenders. The other detachment had a prolific offender management position, but it had been vacant for years. Instead, they had a Street Crimes team that would often handle prolific offenders, as their mandate was focused on property crime and street level drug enforcement. Therefore, while their mandate was not specific to prolific offender management, due to the nature of their work, they often ended up engaging with "dozens" of prolific offenders. Nearly all participating Island district detachments reported needing more officers assigned to prolific offender management. One detachment reported needing at least one more officer that would increase their number to a four-member unit. A second detachment with a three-member team indicated that they could easily commit a dozen officers to prolific offender management given the issues their jurisdiction was facing. This would enable them to work more proactively. At a minimum though, increasing their staffing to five officers would allow them to work more effectively as they felt unable to carry out their mandate with their current staffing. This determination was based on the notion that at any given time they were actively working with 20 or more prolific offenders. A third detachment, also with a team of three positions, felt that increasing their staffing to a team of five would support them in carrying out their mandate, as they were struggling to conduct their curfew checks and conduct surveillance without pulling other members from other units away from their primary duties to assist the team. The detachment with a prolific offender management position that was empty suggested that a team with at least four people was necessary, as currently this work was being carried out by a unit with a different mandate. The only detachment to not indicate a need for more officers assigned to prolific offender management felt that the funding would be better directed into social services.

One of the Island detachments had a dedicated crime analyst on their team, while another had a crime analyst located at their detachment, though they did not appear to be working directly on a regular basis with the prolific offender team as they were the only analyst for the entire detachment. The remaining three detachments stated that they had access to a district analyst if needed . When asked how they would reorganize differently, three of the detachments specifically mentioned that they would like to have an analyst work with their team more directly. One of the detachments that did have an analyst reported that they were more effective in their work because of the analyst's role, as the analyst would assist them in selecting their targets and directing where they should focus their resources.

Most of the Island detachments described their approach to prolific offender management using the three-tiered approach though, in practice, rehabilitation was the least likely strategy to be articulated. All but one of the Island District detachments indicated that their main strategy for engaging with prolific offenders was enforcement through in-person contact to ensure compliance with conditions and interacting with these individuals in public. In other words, their strategies for prolific offender management were mainly focused on verbally warning the individuals, monitoring their compliance though curfew checks, traffic stops, and foot patrols, arresting them when they failed to comply, and attempting to relocate or displace them elsewhere when needed. When asked about their threshold for intervention, three of the five detachments stated that they used a combination of frequency of contacts and the nature of offences committed to determine when it was necessary to intervene. One detachment also indicated that if an individual with a lengthy criminal record or who had court ordered conditions was new to the area, members would visit and reach out to interact with that individual. Another explained that they would attempt to meet with incarcerated prolific offenders prior to their release back into their jurisdiction. Regarding notifying prolific offenders that they were on the detachment's prolific offender list, four detachments stated that they advised individuals of their status on a list. One used the formal notification letter in the past, but no longer did so due to personnel shortages. None of the Island District detachments indicated that they used or attempted to use the Lifestyle Interview. Their approaches generally consisted of meeting with prolific offenders, informing them that they were on their list and would be checking up with them, offering resource connections or other options (i.e., relocate) when available or necessary, and then monitoring for compliance with conditions.

Overall, the Island District detachments felt that their mandate was supported by their leaders, though a few commented about staffing shortages. When asked about their physical resources, two detachments reported needing more members for their prolific offender management teams. Although they generally were satisfied with their physical resources, a few comments were made about needing a variety of unmarked vehicles. In addition, a common theme was that better equipment for the purposes of surveillance, such as unmarked cars, tracking devices, and night vision equipment. From a technological resource perspective, four out of the five detachments felt that they had the necessary technological resources to achieve their mandate.

The biggest challenge to prolific offender management was identified as staffing shortages that prevented them from focusing their attention on carrying out their mandate. Two other comments were made about the revolving door of the criminal justice system, and the difficulty with deterring repeat offences or encouraging change as the sentences given were typically very light. To work

more effectively, the detachments primarily reported needing more officers assigned to prolific offender management. Additional comments included **needing a dedicated analyst, a records position, and Crown Counsel that understood the seriousness of prolific offenders and the value of jail time**. The detachments saw value in having a regional approach to prolific offender management and two noted that steps were already being taken in the Island District towards implementing a regional approach.

NORTH DISTRICT

Interviews were conducted with three detachments in the North District. In terms of defining prolific offenders, two of the three detachments clearly stated that they used the 'E' Division definition, while the third used a consistent approach, updating their list every six months and targeting those who were recently active or whose names were coming up frequently. This detachment reported using an analyst to create their list of targets only when they did not identify their own targets through word of mouth. While two of the detachments reported having a Crime Reduction Unit (CRU) team (one with two members and one with six), those on the smaller CRU reported being pulled off task to provide support elsewhere. The third detachment had the most members working in prolific offender management, with about a dozen members involved; however, they did not operate a specific prolific offender management team. These members worked in other units and were additionally assigned shared responsibility to work on prolific offender management. One detachment reported having a dedicated crime analyst, another did not but had access to a district analyst, and the third detachment indicated that they have funding and a posting for the position, but the position had yet to be filled.

Two of the three detachments indicated their total list of active prolific offenders ranged from 10 to 14 individuals, whereas the third detachment reported that four offenders were the total number of individuals they managed simultaneously. While all three detachments indicated that the focus of their prolific offender management team was to arrest individuals, two detachments also stated that they attempted to connect the individual to resources for rehabilitation when the prolific offender would accept it. Still, all three detachments indicated that their primary strategy for engaging with prolific offenders was enforcement by ensuring that offenders complied with their conditions. When asked about their threshold for intervention, all three detachments indicated that they used a combination of frequency of negative contacts and the nature of any offences committed to determine when it was necessary for the team to intervene. One detachment also stated that they examined whether individuals had a history of non-compliance with conditions and were a current public safety risk. Regarding notifying prolific offenders about being on the detachment's prolific offender management list, there was a general lack of consistency in the North District detachments that participated in this study. In total, two detachments stated that they notified individuals, but the third detachment stated that there was no explicit notification given to their prolific offenders. Of the two detachments that notified their prolific offenders, one did so verbally while the other served a formal letter and attempted to conduct a Lifestyle Interview.

All participating North detachments felt that they were supported in their mandate by their management; however, two made the caveat that this was when members were available to serve in prolific offender management. When asked about their physical resources, all three detachments were generally satisfied with respect to the number of vehicles, phones, and surveillance equipment that they had to fulfill their mandate, though two noted that having more vehicles or vehicles for surveillance would be nice. However, two detachments indicated that more members on their prolific offender management team would be helpful. From a technological resource perspective, all detachments reported that they had the necessary technological resources to achieve their mandate.

Like with the previous two districts, the most challenging aspect of prolific offender management from the perspective of participating North District detachments was insufficient human resources. One detachment felt that they were too spread out geographically, another did not have the time to focus exclusively on prolific offender management, and the third felt that their members were generally fairly inexperienced. One detachment felt that creating a team of eight to 10 members who worked together under an overarching mandate but divided their responsibilities within into the groupings of prolific offenders, property offences, and drug offences would allow them to support each other yet focus on achieving their specific mandates. A second detachment felt that a multi-jurisdictional team supported by an analyst would be ideal in the North District. The third detachment felt that a team of four constables, one corporal, and an analyst focusing on prolific offenders, with a separate team dedicated to social chronic offenders would be ideal. This detachment also emphasized the importance of interagency partnerships to work collaboratively to connect both prolific offenders and social chronic offenders to the relevant resources.

SOUTHEAST DISTRICT

Interviews were conducted with five detachments from the Southeast District. In terms of defining prolific offenders, only one detachment clearly stated that they used the 'E' Division definition, though they explained that they also used their discretion within this to select their targets. The remaining detachments indicated that they generally focused on those offenders who committed a large number of crimes and who were currently or recently active. For example, one detachment reported that if someone was actively committing crime over a period of several days, the detachment targeted them, but that there was not a formal bar or threshold that needed to be met to consider the offender a prolific offender. Another detachment identified that they based their designation on repeat calls for police service, which could involve repeat offending, but could also be repetitive calls related to mental health. A third detachment reported that criminally active would be their guiding principle, but that they also made this decision based on individual officer insights, knowledge, and priorities at the time. The fourth detachment reported that they did formally identify offenders for their watchlist based on police contacts and information from partner agencies, such as probation, but they would not take these offenders off the list if they were inactive or due to be incarcerated as they wanted to continue to monitor them.

All participating Southeast District detachments reported having members assigned to prolific offender management, and most had a prolific offender team. The number of members that

comprised prolific offender management was consistent for the majority of detachments; three detachments reported two members, whereas one detachment reported six members and one reported a single member. Within this, two detachments reported that while one or two people were assigned to prolific offender management, in practice, they shared the responsibility for prolific offender management across the detachment. Three detachments reported that they did not have a dedicated crime analyst, but that team members had access to one at the district level if needed. Two detachments reported having a crime analyst in the detachment who would work with them, though they had other responsibilities outside of prolific offender management.

In terms of the number of prolific offenders managed simultaneously, two of the detachments indicated a total list that ranged from five to 12 offenders, one managed between 10 and 15, one managed between 18 to 20 offenders, and one detachment reported managing two offenders at a time. All detachments stated that the focus of their prolific offender management team involved a combination of helping offenders avoid criminality, arresting offenders when required, and displacing individuals to other communities, though displacement was not recognized by some as an effective strategy. In effect, rather than a primary focus on enforcement, the participating detachments from the Southeast District appeared to take an offender-focused approach that targeted the needs of the individual offender. Nonetheless, when asked, participants reported that the primary strategy they used for engaging with their prolific offenders was enforcement and monitoring. One detachment also stated that they provided information about available community services to their prolific offenders. When asked about their threshold for intervention, all detachments indicated that the frequency of negative police contacts and the nature of the crimes committed determined when the members intervened. Regarding notifying their prolific offenders that they were on a prolific offender list, four detachments stated that they primarily engaged with individuals in person to notify them that they were part of a list and were being monitored, while one detachment specified that individuals were not advised that they were part of a list. Two detachments explained that they previously used the notification letters, but no longer did so. Here, one of these detachments no longer notified offenders, and the other did so by notifying the offender in person or face-to-face. Only one detachment discussed using the Lifestyle Interview but noted that none of the prolific offenders were willing to participate in this.

As with the previous Districts, the Southeast District detachments generally felt that their mandate was supported by management but added the caveat that this did not translate into human resources. While they felt supported in principle, they felt as though they were either pulled off task to help elsewhere or were not provided with sufficient staffing. When asked about their physical resources, all five detachments were generally satisfied with respect to phones and surveillance equipment. However, two detachments reported that they required more members to be part of their prolific offender management team and two detachments indicated that, to be more effective at surveillance, they required access to additional covert or unmarked vehicles. From a technological resource perspective, all detachments reported that they had the necessary technological resources to achieve their mandate. However, one detachment reported that there needed to be improvements to their digital evidence management system.

The most common identified challenges to prolific offender management were not being able to stay on mandate due to being resourced elsewhere, and not having enough assigned members for

prolific offender management. For most of the participating Southeast District detachments, **the main thing they needed to be more efficient and effective in prolific offender management was more assigned members**. Although many detachments were satisfied with how their prolific offender management teams were organized (other than the assigned numbers), suggestions for how they would build their teams included assigning a corporal to ensure they stayed on mandate, increasing the human resourcing, having more access to dedicated crime analysts, taking a regional approach, and interagency partnerships with mental health and addictions.

As it is possible that variations in prolific management teams and strategies were based less on the geographical district that the detachment was in but on the size of the detachment, the information from the interviews was also analysed based on detachment size.

Large Detachments

PROLIFIC OFFENDER DEFINITIONS, TEAMS, AND STRATEGIES

Across the four RCMP districts, eight large-sized detachments participated in this study. As mentioned above, according to RCMP 'E' Division, the definition of a prolific offender is an individual who has had three or more negative police contacts in the previous six months. The definition of a priority offender is a qualitative assessment that is intelligence-based. Although only three detachments stated that they used 'E' Division's definition of prolific offenders, the remaining five detachments provided definitions that were generally consistent with the 'E' Division's definition. In effect, prolific offenders were those offenders who generated a high number of calls for service and were consistently criminally active. When asked how they distinguished priority offenders from prolific offenders, there was no common theme across the large-sized detachments. Only three detachments referred to prolific offenders as individuals who generated a large volume of calls for service and/or that a qualitative analysis contributed to classifying individuals as priority offenders. Some of the characteristics used to differentiate priority offenders included criminal activity that was serious in nature, being consistently involved in lower-level drug trafficking, fraud, or property crimes, and contributing to a short-term increase in crime statistics. Two detachments stated that they did not distinguish between priority and prolific offenders and suggested that when individuals did not meet the 'E' Division's definition of a prolific offender, they were referred to as priority offenders so that the team could target them. As an example, one detachment noted that an individual who was potentially violent, confrontational, or destructive would be prioritized. Most participating large detachments stated that they distinguished social chronic offenders from prolific offenders, whereby a minority of detachments noted that a different unit or team managed social chronic offenders. One detachment indicated that there was a mental health unit, but that this unit did not necessarily focus on social chronic offenders. Of note, in one case, a detachment indicated that their team focused on both groups of offenders because their prolific offenders and social chronic offenders were the same individuals.

Of the six detachments that recalled how long the prolific offender management team had been in operation, there was variability in when the teams were formed. The earliest team reported by participants was established in 2011 and the most recent team was created in 2017. There was also

variability in whether each detachment's prolific offender management teams had changed since their inception. Two detachments specifically noted that there has been no change and six detachments noted a range of changes. These included changes in responsibilities because another unit underwent changes, an increase in using enforcement strategies, a greater focus on property crimes, shortening the time frame for targeting offenders from two months to one month, getting a new crime analyst that contributed to improved data, recently being assigned another team member, and better articulation around the definition of a prolific offender. None of the large-sized detachments reported receiving training in prolific offenders or that any specific training was required prior to joining the team. With respect to management support, all eight detachments felt that they had sufficient support from management to fulfill their mandate. The only negative comment was that there may be conflicting views of crime reduction and how to best utilize the team.

In terms of the composition of the prolific offender management teams, all four large-sized detachments in the Lower Mainland District stated that their teams were comprised of six to eight members. In contrast, the two large-sized detachments from the Southeast District reported teams comprised of two to five members and the two large-sized detachments from the Island and North Districts stated that it was more appropriate to describe their teams as units whereby dealing with prolific offenders was one of their assigned responsibilities. These detachments reported teams comprised of nine to twelve members. When asked how many members they needed for their teams, five detachments reported a range of four to 20 members, two detachments simply stated that more officers would be helpful, and one detachment noted that rather than adding more people, they needed either more resources or more time for the current members to be able to accomplish their tasks. It is also important to note the context for the comment that a team of four would be sufficient. This detachment currently had nine members, but these nine members were responsible for prolific offenders in addition to various other duties. In other words, a team of four members dedicated to prolific offenders was viewed as preferable to a larger team that was tasked with multiple duties. The tasks that were negatively affected because their teams had insufficient members varied but included conducting proper surveillance, analysis of criminal activity trends and patterns, curfew checks, proactive strategies like check in meetings with offenders, and the overall ability to run the unit effectively. One detachment also noted that when they were short-staffed, they must prioritize their targets which negatively affected their ability to ensure public safety.

The organizational structure of the prolific offender management teams also varied. More than half the detachments stated or suggested that their corporal managed their team of constables. In contrast, two detachments reported a combination of corporals and sergeants/staff sergeants and one detachment stated that a sergeant and staff sergeant managed their team. Five detachments did not provide suggestions for a different organization of the team, whereas three detachments provided recommendations for how to best structure a prolific offender management team, although the suggestions varied. Still, it seems that the most common recommendations included **two teams dedicated to prolific offenders to provide better and more consistent monitoring of offenders, an analyst dedicated to prolific offenders, the creation of more permanent positions, and a potential combined team that addressed street crime**. It was very common for the prolific offender management team to work with other units in the detachment. Some of the

units that were more often mentioned included the drug teams, the property crime units, the traffic unit, the street enforcement teams, and the mental health unit. Given the profiles of prolific and priority offenders described in the literature review and the interviews, **it seems very appropriate that prolific offender management teams work closely with these other police units and teams**.

In terms of the number of prolific offenders managed simultaneously, most detachments stated that they managed between 12 to 18 prolific offenders and one detachment reported managing eight prolific offenders. Less than half of the detachments were able to estimate what proportion of all prolific offenders their team managed. Two detachments stated that the proportion they managed was small, one detachment estimated it was about 5%, and another detachment indicated it was about one-third of their prolific offender population. Many detachments indicated that their target population was largely property offenders, such as those committing auto theft and break and enters. Two detachments did not specify their target populations; rather, their analysts derived their target lists based on data. Except for one detachment, all detachments reported that their typical profile of a prolific offender was someone who had substance abuse issues. Most detachments reported that their prolific offenders were overwhelmingly male, and many noted that most prolific offenders were Caucasian. Of the six detachments that commented on age, the typical age range reported was 20 to 45 years old. Other less common characteristics mentioned were mental health issues and homelessness. This may be due to the distinction many large detachments drew between prolific offenders and social chronic populations.

The majority of large-sized detachments noted that arrest was the primary focus of their prolific offender management teams. However, many detachments also stated that their approach involved a combination of helping, arresting, and displacing. With respect to engaging with prolific offenders, many detachments stated that enforcement was their strategy (e.g., curfew checks). The next most common strategy was monitoring, which involved reaching out to offenders before they were released or while they were in the community. The purpose of this was to check in on offenders and to make them aware of the prolific offender team. The other strategy noted was surveillance, although this was explicitly noted by only two detachments. Most detachments indicated that their decisions to adopt their approach was because it was 'E' Division's policy or that their approaches made strategic sense. Both of these categories of responses alluded to the use of statistics and having a prolific offender management team that was data-driven. Other detachments stated that they used the approaches they did because others were using similar strategies. When asked to comment on how successful their strategies were, there was variability in the responses. Four detachments stated that their strategies were successful because it led to prolific offenders being arrested and jailed or resulted in prolific offenders receiving lengthier sentences. In contrast, three detachments defined success by the fact that their work resulted in fewer calls for service. At the same time, it was also noted that success was difficult to measure and depended on how success was defined. For example, one detachment stated that if success was defined as getting prolific offenders out of the criminal justice system, this would be difficult to achieve. Although one other detachment stated that they knew of prolific offenders who were no longer criminally active, they also indicated that they could not confidently attribute this to being identified and monitored by the prolific offender team.

When asked about their threshold for intervention, all three detachments from the North and Southeast Districts noted that it was based on the number of recent negative police contacts. Although this also applied to the four detachments from the Lower Mainland District, this district also took into consideration other factors, such as the nature of the offence and changes in crime statistics. The majority of detachments reported that they relied on statistics, crime trends, and criminal activity to identify the prolific offenders to prioritize or target. For example, the crime analyst would analyze the data and this information would be discussed with the team or amongst section supervisors to determine whether there had been recent negative police contacts or criminal activity. Regarding notifying prolific offenders that they were on a prolific offender management list, approximately half of the large-sized detachments stated that they notified the offenders on their lists and two detachments specifically stated that they did not notify offenders that they were part of a list. Another common approach involved attending areas where prolific offenders frequented to have conversations, conduct check ins, and make them aware they were being monitored. Others stated that they conducted formal interviews to understand the factors contributing to their crimes and assess their receptiveness to interventions.

HUMAN, PHYSICAL, AND TECHNOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Regarding resources, most large-sized detachments indicated that they were generally satisfied with their surveillance equipment and felt that they had the appropriate amount and kind of equipment. However, there were some suggestions for improvement. Three detachments stated that they required more members, with one specifically noting that this was necessary to conduct proper surveillance. Four detachments also stated that they required additional vehicles; two specifically mentioned more covert vehicles and one noted that the technology in their vehicles was outdated. Related to technology, one detachment felt that better quality technology was required, such as smaller phones and radios, and more reliable surveillance equipment. Additional recommendations that were not commonly noted were to have access to drones and a more subdued, consistent uniform that was like the uniform worn by the gang task force members.

Approximately half of the large-sized detachments indicated that they managed their information about prolific offenders through PRIME and two detachments stated that they did so through the Canadian Police Information Centre (CPIC) and Computer Statistics (COMSTAT). Generally, the detachments stated that their members were responsible for monthly updates, information would be shared at meetings or watch briefings, information was posted on shared drivees, and information was noted on white boards or large video screens. Similar strategies were used for sharing information about prolific offenders. Some of the common strategies were meetings or briefings and email. Other strategies mentioned were notations in PRIME and bulletins or posters. Most detachments reported that they had sufficient technological resources, although there were some suggestions for improvement. One general comment was that **better equipment was needed because the technology was outdated**. Other suggestions included improvements to the crime analysis search tool so that queries could be run quicker and more efficiently, access to municipal data when dealing with prolific offenders who crossed jurisdictions, and better management of digital evidence. For example, audio or visual files should automatically upload to cloud software rather than requiring the member to download and transfer the file. In contrast,

about half of the detachments stated that they had the necessary technological resources for information-sharing. Two recommendations were for **the ability to have real time intelligence sharing and an integrated system that everyone could access**. Similarly, approximately half the detachments indicated that their members had the appropriate training to use the technological resources available. Two suggestions were for **more advanced training and for the whole unit to be trained** rather than only one or two members.

Approximately half of the participating detachments reported that they had a dedicated crime analyst. The remaining detachments stated that there was an analyst for the entire detachment. The overall role of the analyst was to engage in intelligence and analytical work. Detachments reported various tasks that the analysts conducted, such as gathering and assessing data to assist with defining prolific offenders, maintaining criminal history information about prolific offenders, updating the curfew check list, compiling information about the profiles of prolific offenders, supporting enforcement, and identifying crime trends. When asked to describe their relationship and interactions with crime analysts, it was generally positive. One detachment spoke highly of their analyst's ability to analyze data and provide real-time intelligence and others commented that they worked well together. Many detachments also noted that the information provided by the analyst was current, useful, and relevant. When asked to comment on any changes to the analyst's role, the information they provide, and how it is shared, the only suggestion by two detachments was that **more analysts were required**, as typically, one analyst was insufficient.

BUILDING A PROLIFIC MANAGEMENT TEAM IN A LARGE DETACHMENT

When asked about the threshold for implementing a prolific offender program, the responses varied. Three detachments stated that there needed to be enough prolific offenders to justify the allocation of dedicated resources for a team. While the number of required prolific offenders was not provided, the general feeling was that the creation of a prolific offender management team needed to be evaluated in consideration of the size, available resources, and needs of the detachment. Two detachments made reference to community values and concerns. In effect, if there were community concerns about crime statistics and the community values knowing and monitoring prolific offenders, then a team was warranted, even if the number of active prolific offenders might not merit such a team. Only one detachment stated that every detachment should have a prolific offender team. In terms of designing an ideal prolific offender management team, most detachments said that the current structure was appropriate, but what was needed were additional members. One detachment stated that they would change the management of prolific offenders so that they were strategically assigned. For example, they would create teams, such as a warrant team and a curfew team, to address the specific approaches taken with their prolific offenders. The notion was that spreading out the management of prolific offenders amongst various specialized units would allow the detachment to use their limited resources more strategically. Two other detachments noted that an ideal team included an analyst assigned specifically to the team and an additional team to deal specifically with social chronic offenders.

PARTNERSHIPS

Almost all the large-sized detachment prolific offender management teams indicated that they had various partnerships both within and outside the RCMP. In addition to the units noted above, detachments identified the strike force team when they required surveillance support, victim services, and municipal police. The most common external partnerships noted by detachments were probation or community corrections. Two detachments also reported that their members liaised with bylaw and parole. Finally, one detachment noted that that they worked with their prolific offender management committee, which was comprised of various partners, such as probation, Crown counsel, and health services. The nature of information and intelligence shared with their partners appeared to vary depending on the type of agency and the purpose for information-sharing. The consensus among detachments was that a lot of information was shared with probation and community corrections, particularly with respect to monitoring. At a minimum, prolific offender management teams shared who was on their prolific offender list. In response to whether there were any missing partnerships, participants indicated CFSEU gang task force and BC Corrections as partnerships that should be better developed. Two other suggestions were a program with pawn shops so that the team could identify offenders more frequently and a dedicated Crown counsel to address files associated with prolific offenders. None of the detachments could think of any partnerships that would be more of a hindrance than an assistance to their prolific offender management teams.

GENERAL COMMENTS

There was no common theme across the large-sized detachments with respect to anything the prolific offender management team should not be doing or anything that could be done better by others. Some comments noted that it was important that the team follow their mandate to be effective, that it is problematic when their members are pulled away to work on serious crimes, and that they faced challenges with being more proactive because of detachment policy and resources. There was also no common theme regarding things that the prolific offender management teams should be doing that they currently were not. Two detachments specifically noted that they needed to develop a more formalized team so that they could focus on prolific offenders, rather than being tasked with this responsibility in addition to other duties. Another detachment stated that, to be more effective, the lists of curfew checks and warrants needed to be housed with their team. Lastly, one detachment reported that they could be more active in certain investigations and spend more time on crime reduction. Regarding information sharing within the prolific offender team, this was generally viewed as well done without the need for improvements. However, one general comment was that **information sharing could always be improved** by streamlining the process so that the appropriate people received the necessary information in a timely fashion. Two specific comments noted were that communication between units required improvement and one suggestion was to have better attendance at meetings by representatives from various units.

Most participating detachments reported that their prolific offender management teams were effective and efficient. Some specific examples provided of aspects that were considered effective included liaising with their partner agencies and conducting curfew checks. One detachment also noted that they observed a decrease in calls for service, which they used as evidence of their effectiveness. Across all the detachments, the common method of assessing effectiveness was

examining arrest statistics, crime statistics, and calls for service. However, two detachments stated that they were somewhat or not very effective. This assessment was driven by the fact that these detachments did not have a dedicated prolific offender management team (i.e., managing prolific offenders was just one of their many responsibilities). Despite the view that their teams were generally effective and efficient, challenges were noted in terms of being able to operate effectively. Many of the challenges concerned resources, such as staff shortages, lack of surveillance resources, and time, particularly when team members were redeployed to other areas. Other challenges noted as hindering the effectiveness of their prolific offender management team included the legal system not supporting the incarceration of prolific offenders and when the team's mandate was too broad.

Regarding the value of a regional approach for dealing with prolific offenders, there was neither overwhelming support nor opposition to the idea. Rather, many detachments spoke of both the advantages and disadvantages of such an approach. Some of the potential advantages included the ability for information-sharing, the ability to manage prolific offenders who are mobile and cross jurisdictional boundaries, and the potential to influence Crown counsel to advocate for a more effective approach to dealing with prolific offenders. The disadvantages to a regional approach primarily focused on the fact that a standardized approach does not work when jurisdictions vary in size and differ in the types of prolific offenders each jurisdiction deals with. Another concern was that when any system becomes too large, it runs the risk of becoming inefficient and ineffective. For example, resources may be allocated to jurisdictions that have the greatest number of prolific offenders as opposed to jurisdictions that have a smaller number of prolific offenders who were having a large negative effect on the community.

Medium Detachments

PROLIFIC OFFENDER DEFINITIONS, TEAMS, AND STRATEGIES

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 13 representatives from eight medium sized detachments across the four policing districts. Three of the medium sized detachments reported using 'E' Division's definition of a prolific offender. There appeared to be two main reasons why the other five detachments did not. First, they preferred to use the term priority offender as some of the population they were dealing with in their jurisdiction were nuisance based rather than crime-based offenders. However, these offenders still generated a lot of calls requiring police attention. For example, one participant identified their target population as the "people who cause the community the most grief," whether that was criminal in nature or related to drugs or mental health issues. Relatedly, another participant reported that if the same individual's name came up in multiple conversations with other police or non-police partners, they would look more closely at that person as a possible priority for the detachment to focus on. One detachment reported that they did not go by a strict number of charges for identifying who would be placed on the list. Instead, they preferred to keep their designations more flexible noting that even people with a minor criminal history could quickly become chronic offenders when involved in drug use. Another detachment reported that they did not use a set number of negative police contacts or arrests. Their process included examining the particular circumstances of the individual. For example, if the detachment was notified that someone with a lengthy criminal history was released on conditions

into their jurisdiction, they would check up on them. A second participant from this same detachment felt that the term priority offender better reflected the population they were dealing with. They felt that the term prolific offender was too restrictive as it had a quantifiable definition attached to it, which they were concerned would weaken a case in court if the offender did not meet that strict definition.

The second main reason for not using 'E' Division's definition was that some detachments preferred to monitor inactive offenders over a longer period of time than six months. Whereas 'E' Division's definition focuses on the number of negative contacts over six months, one detachment reported that they would keep some known individuals who were currently inactive for more than six months on their list, only removing them once they maintained that status for a full year. Of note, at the time of the interviews, this had not yet happened to anyone on the inactive list.

For many of the medium-sized detachments, 'E' Division's definition of a prolific offender was too restrictive. The consequences of this restrictive definition included that these detachments would have no individuals in their jurisdiction that met 'E' Division's definition and so the prolific offender management team would not have a target population to engage with, and that the population who actually were causing problems in that jurisdiction would not meet the mandate of the prolific offender management team. Having a specific definition of a prolific offender may be of benefit to larger detachments with a greater number of prolific offenders, as it would help them to narrow down their target populations. However, **introducing a more broadly defined prolific/priority offender would be of benefit for the medium-sized detachments**, who could then include in their target population the individuals who were creating a significant number of issues, whether criminal or nuisance-based.

As most of the medium-sized detachments were not using 'E' Division's definition of a prolific offender, they did not distinguish between prolific and priority offenders in practice. Rather, they focused on those who were causing the most problems in their community, whether that was due to criminal offending or nuisance behaviours. However, most of the medium-sized detachments did intentionally separate the social chronic population who were identified as people with a lot of police contacts that were not necessarily related to crime, but more a result of mental health or addiction issues. Several participants observed that social chronic offenders required different intervention strategies than prolific or priority offenders, and that they would be handled by different units other than the prolific offender management team. For example, participants explained that social chronic offenders might be those who were aggressively panhandling, homeless, or intoxicated in public, or were experiencing mental health issues and reported to the police as causing a disturbance. While members might engage with them should they escalate into criminal offending, for the most part, participants recognized that these people's underlying issues required more of a community-based or multi-agency intervention than a police response and that these people were not ideal targets for a prolific offender management team to focus on as they were generally not involved in criminal behaviour. Overall, only three of the detachments did not distinguish social chronic offenders as a separate group. These participants explained that this population might be involved in low level crimes to feed their addiction and would, therefore, become a priority offender requiring the same or similar interventions as a priority or prolific. Given that these police officers tended to have fewer prolific offenders in their communities, they

had the time and resources to include social chronic offenders as part of their target population. Therefore, **expanding the definition of a prolific offender to include prolific/priority offenders would enable detachments to design their programs to focus on the individuals generating the highest volume of calls for service in their individual jurisdictions**.

The earliest prolific offender management program among the eight medium-sized detachments was reportedly established in 2008 while the most recent was established in 2018. Few participants reported receiving any training in prolific offender management. Two participants indicated that when the prolific offender management strategy was first adopted, they were given some informal training that consisted of reading policy and learning/hearing about best practices from other detachments. A third participant reported that, at one time, a district analyst had offered training to those who were interested. Overall, none of the participants reported receiving any formalized training on prolific offender management.

Nearly all of the medium-sized detachments noted that they had at least one member, if not a team, assigned to prolific offender management. However, it appeared as though only two of the eight medium-sized detachments had a fully dedicated prolific offender management team. One detachment operated with two constables and one corporal, and the other had six positions made up of one corporal and five constables. Having a dedicated prolific offender management team enabled some detachments to not only take on more prolific offenders at one time, but to work more closely with these offenders in consistently carrying out prolific offender management strategies. For example, one of the detachments with a higher number of prolific offenders dedicated three constables to the work, but also had the flexibility to be able to increase that to five members if necessary by pulling members from other units or teams. In this detachment, having dedicated constables allowed them to work on larger crime trends in addition to monitoring and interacting with their prolific offenders. These members reported that having dedicated members allowed them to know the offenders better, spend more time in prolific offender hot spots, and to be more effective when working with their prolific offenders in their community. These members reported being able to connect with a prolific offender when they moved or were released into their jurisdiction to let the offender know that the police were aware of them and their criminal history, and that they could either desist from crime, move to another jurisdiction, or be arrested and incarcerated. This model worked for this jurisdiction as they had a large team relative to the geographical area they covered. Similar targeted enforcement work was engaged in by another detachment that had six dedicated members. In that detachment, each team member was assigned a few prolific offenders to work with and monitor, and they engaged in prolific offender management strategies, such as checking in with the offenders and surveilling them when needed.

The remaining six detachments had a range of one member to a full Crime Reduction Unit (CRU) assigned to prolific offender management but noted that these members were not solely dedicated to prolific offender management. Most medium-sized detachments observed that, formally, between one and three members were assigned to prolific offenders, though these were not their only responsibilities. As an example, in one detachment, while one person was officially assigned to prolific offender management, they were also assigned several other tasks (e.g., drugs, traffic, school). In effect, while that person was responsible for prolific offender management, they could not dedicate all their attention to this issue and relied on the rest of the detachment to assist them.

Similarly, one detachment identified that they assigned one prolific offender to two watches and another prolific offender to the other two watches so that there was always someone on shift that could implement prolific offender strategies. However, in this case, they selected two names off a larger list of prolific offenders produced by an analyst. Perhaps if the detachment had a dedicated team for this work, they would be able to manage more than two prolific offenders at a time. In fact, many of the medium-sized detachments reported that they frequently faced issues with human resourcing/understaffing that made it difficult to have a dedicated team, particularly when serious violent crimes occurred that pulled them off mandate to support other officers or units. While they reported engaging in the typical prolific offender management strategies, such as reaching out and contacting prolific offenders, offering them opportunities for rehabilitation, and using enforcement if rehabilitation was rejected, these activities appeared more sporadic in nature depending on whether there were enough prolific offender management officers to carry out the program.

Overall, while on paper, most of the medium-sized detachments that participated in this study were operating a prolific offender management program, the general model implemented was such that it was rare for these detachments to have a single member or team whose sole purpose is prolific offender management. As mentioned above, these members or units were often tasked with additional responsibilities ranging from traffic and drug crimes to dealing with larger crime trends. Given that dedicated prolific offender management involves connecting with offenders on a regular basis, conducting weekly if not nightly curfew checks, and conducting surveillance, it is possible that having to assist in other investigations, calls for service, or the work of other units detracted from these members' ability to effectively implement prolific offender management.

While two medium-sized detachments would like to see up to a dozen members assigned to prolific offender management, generally the participants felt that having between four to six members on a team (one corporal and between three to five constables) would be ideal. This was needed to run more tactical operations, such as surveillance, to engage in other tactics more actively, such as curfew checks, and to monitor or engage with the target population more closely. Participants explained that surveillance and curfew checks were important strategies to closely monitor their target populations and reduce opportunities for criminal participation, but with fewer members dedicated to prolific offender management, combined with regular vacation time and sick days, as well as being pulled off mandate to help with other units, this work was often not being done as often as needed. Several participants explained that their operations were mostly reactive, as they had too few members to be proactively checking in with their target populations. While they can request that general duty members assist in things like curfew checks, general duty were not always able to help the prolific offender management team due to their other duties. In other words, participants reported that they were not able to maintain their desired level of contact with the prolific offender population as they had too few team members available to work on these proactive strategies.

It appears that **for most medium-sized detachments, the desired prolific offender management would be one corporal and three to five constables**. The corporal would be focused on running the unit and keeping team members accountable to and focused on their mandate, while the constables would be assigned to work with prolific offenders by meeting with them, meeting with other relevant partners (e.g., probation and mental health), conducting curfew

checks, and working with other members of the team to conduct surveillance when needed. Most of the medium-sized detachments did not have specific positions within their prolific offender management team, they simply had investigators who shared the work, though two of the detachments reported having some specialized team members (e.g., one for high-risk youth, someone with experience working with Indigenous populations). Other suggested positions that were not commonly identified across all eight participating detachments included a court liaison, a liaison for community groups, a dedicated records clerk, a file coordinator to work on some of the larger projects, an Indigenous policing section, and a mental health officer. These desired positions appeared to vary by detachment location and were based on jurisdictional issues or concerns.

Only one of the eight detachments had a position for a dedicated analyst, though at the time of the interviews, that position had not yet been filled. A second medium-sized detachment had an analyst, though it appeared that they were not dedicated to prolific offender management. Five detachments reported that they relied on a district analyst who was shared between multiple detachments. One detachment simply reported that they were too small to have an analyst. While some of the participants did not identify that having a dedicated analyst was a necessity, **access to a district-level analyst was seen as extremely valuable** by most, as the analyst can maintain current profiles of the target populations. For example, a district analyst can monitor information about upcoming appearance dates, and changes to release conditions, address, vehicles, and associates. The other common tasks by analysts were monitoring crime trends for the jurisdiction, notifying members when they had an area or target in need of attention and providing information on multi-jurisdiction offenders. The detachments with an in-house analyst reported working on a daily or weekly basis with them. Those who relied on a district level analyst reported working with them twice a year or as needed based on their jurisdictional issues. Of those who indicated what they would change about the analyst role, the comments were to have more analysts, to have analysts who were more closely assigned to work with the prolific offender management teams, and to co-locate the analysts with the prolific offender management team. These changes would enhance regular communication and support the team in working more proactively and effectively.

Overall, 11 of the 13 participants from the medium-sized detachments felt that their mandate was supported by management. However, several mentioned that while they felt supported in principle, that did not translate directly into resource supports. Those who did not feel supported by management felt that prolific offender management was not viewed as a successful endeavour by their senior leaders or that the detachment prioritized putting human resources into other areas of need. Some detachments acknowledged that the personnel assigned to their prolific offender management program fluctuated over time because of shifts in detachment priorities or the need to be deployed to other tasks or units. While one detachment reported that their program had grown slightly in the number of personnel, two others reported that the numbers had been reduced as members were shifted to other priority areas. One detachment with only one member assigned to prolific offender management had reduced the number of prolific offenders they targeted (from five to three) as the program was deemed to be unmanageable otherwise. Two detachments reported that their strategies had become more direct over time, particularly as the prolific offenders and the prolific offender management team became more well known to each other. A third detachment explained that when they identify a prolific offender, they spent their time surveilling them to be able put together a more complete package of their criminal involvement to Crown that

theoretically would translate into an increased chance of charge approval and a meaningful sentence. Over time then, some of their strategies to target prolific offenders appeared to have shifted as members learned which approaches and strategies worked best.

Most of the medium-sized detachments reported handling between two to five prolific offenders at any given time, while three managed around 15 to 20 prolific offenders. While half of the medium-sized detachments felt that they were actively monitoring around 50% of the prolific offender population in their communities, there were wide variations in these estimates. One detachment estimated they were focusing on only around 10% of the prolific offender population, another suggested they were managing nearly 100% of them, while two of the detachments did not provide an estimated proportion. Although an exact ratio was not provided and appeared to vary based on whether the entire detachment was involved in carrying out the prolific offender management strategies or if these were assigned to a specific team, a few detachments implied that a reasonable number of prolific offenders per officer would be somewhere between two to three at any given time.

The medium-sized detachments identified that their target populations generally consisted of lower-level criminals who were primarily involved in property and drug-related crimes. They described the 'typical profile' of a prolific in their jurisdiction as approximately a 20- to 35-year-old male who struggled with drug addiction. Several detachments identified that these individuals were career criminals, although this was not commonly identified by participants. Similarly, only a few detachments identified that their population of prolific offenders were homeless, though being unemployed was commonly identified as an issue. Mental health issues were also identified by some detachments. There were also some variations by ethnicity and gender in some of the jurisdictions. Several detachments observed that around half of their prolific offender population was female. While most detachments indicated that the prolific offenders in their community were Caucasian, some communities reported a larger proportion of Indigenous prolific offenders. Overall, the most common profile was a 20- to 35-year-old white or Indigenous male who was drug addicted and engaged in property and drug-related crimes. However, one detachment varied from the rest, as their community dealt with drug trafficking and weapons offences. Their target populations were primarily violent criminals. These individuals were more likely to be male, some were involved in drug use, but drug trafficking and gang involvement were also identified as common characteristics.

Given that most medium-sized detachments were not using 'E' Division's definition of a prolific offender, their threshold for intervention varied. Most of the participating medium-sized detachments indicated a fairly low threshold that was based on the frequency or severity of police contacts, the frequency with which a particular individual's name came up among their colleagues or partners, or if someone had been recently released into their jurisdiction on conditions. Several of these detachments observed that they were not dealing with a substantial amount of criminal offending from their prolific offenders compared to some of the larger detachments. In effect, the threshold for their definition of prolific offender was relatively flexible and primarily based on community-level crime trends. Relatedly, the strategies used to identify the target populations typically involved checking the background (e.g., criminal history, current conditions, known associates, and recent police contacts) of individuals whose names more routinely came up from

other officers, their partners (e.g., probation and mental health), or confidential informants, or who were already known to the prolific offender management team members. Less commonly, detachments reported intentionally scanning or having their analysts scan for police contacts and police files to identify those who were most active over the previous months. Only one medium-sized detachment reported a strategy that was more consistent with 'E' Division's suggested practice of reviewing for negative police contacts over the previous six months. Of note, this particular detachment was one of the few medium-sized detachments that also utilized 'E' Division's definition of a prolific offender and their prolific offender management team was closer in size and structure to the larger-sized detachments.

While several of the medium-sized detachments emphasized the use of arrest to target their prolific offender population, the main strategy used by medium-sized detachments was to communicate with the target population to ensure that the offenders knew they were under police scrutiny. How this was achieved varied. For example, if a known prolific or priority offender was released into their community or moved into their community, some participants reported that they would speak with the offenders to make them aware that the police knew who they were and were watching them. Half of the medium-sized detachments would present the three common options of complying and abiding by the law, not complying and being arrested, or moving to another jurisdiction. Within these options, officers would discuss community level resources to assist with compliance. However, there were typically no formal multi-agency or collaborative teams in place to address the offender's needs and so officers would provide information about possible resources than actively connect them with other agencies. Prolific offender management teams also used curfew checks to connect with their target population and to demonstrate that the police were watching them. In addition to these purposes, this approach allowed the police to attempt to build rapport with their target population.

Beyond 'checking in' with their target population, very few medium-sized detachments reported using more consistent targeted enforcement strategies. Two detachments reported staying on top of their target population using traffic stops, street checks, and foot patrols, in addition to curfew checks. However, very few detachments reported using strategies like surveillance. Only one medium-sized detachment reported using the Lifestyle Interview. This detachment was also quite proactive in ensuring that their prolific offender management team would have contact with their targets at least a couple of times per month. Members from this detachment would also issue a formal letter each year to the target letting them know that they were on the detachment's prolific offender list and what they could do to get off the list. This detachment also worked collaboratively with other agencies to develop wrap-around style interventions (e.g., building an offender management strategy that addressed housing, addictions, mental health, employment, and other needs). However, this more in-depth approach was uncommon across the participating medium-sized detachments.

Overall, while the participants generally felt as though their approaches were successful, this was more of an anecdotal perception. Participants felt as though they were building a rapport with the target population, displacing them to other communities, or catching them in violation of their conditions facilitating an arrest. However, how success was measured or determined varied across detachments. Some felt that if the number of arrests were high or if a known prolific received a

lengthy sentence, that would be indicative of a successful program. Others felt that if the type of offending commonly committed by their prolific offenders was reduced that this would be indicative of success. Some detachments felt that the offender leaving their jurisdiction would also be considered a success. Given the inconsistent definitions of success and the inability to assess the work of the team against any sort of independent, empirical measure or outcome, **it would be beneficial to define more clearly what a successful prolific offender program looks like and to create some objective benchmarks to measure success**.

HUMAN, PHYSICAL, AND TECHNOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Participants from the medium-sized detachments generally felt that they had the physical resources needed for prolific offender management. Regarding vehicles, while, for the most part, they had enough or close to enough in terms of quantity, several detachments observed that it would be valuable to be able to use a greater variety of undercover vehicles, as the prolific offenders in some communities were familiar with the covert vehicles used by the police. Several participants expressed an interest in being able to switch undercover vehicles between different detachments but noted that this was made difficult by RCMP policies. Several medium-sized detachments would also use rental cars when needed. However, the main gap in resourcing had to do with having enough officers dedicated to prolific offender management. More specifically, when asked about resourcing needs, participants from five of the eight medium-sized detachments reported needing more members assigned to prolific offender management.

The participants generally felt that they had the necessary technology to manage information about their target population, which, for the most part, appeared to be held in PRIME. Two detachments reported using a big board to visually display information about their target population while several other detachments reported storing relevant information, such as lists of curfews, current location of prolific offenders, list of vehicles, and enforcement/reintegration strategies, in Microsoft Word documents or Microsoft Excel spreadsheets stored on the detachment server. One participant explained that they were not allowed to maintain private databases as per RCMP policy presumably so that information that should be shared with police in other jurisdictions does not get missed. **However, it may be beneficial to develop some clear policies or guidelines around the kind of information that should be recorded in PRIME and what information can or should be stored at the detachment level**.

Information sharing was mainly accomplished via emails, phone calls, meetings or briefings, or through PRIME. One detachment identified that within their prolific offender management team, they had formally started conducting weekly meetings to share updates and information with each other. Another detachment reported that their team wrote bi-weekly or monthly reports on their offenders. Outside of their team, participants at one detachment reported providing a more structured presentation every few weeks on offender updates at watch meetings, while one participant at a different detachment reported giving a monthly update to the detachment. Still, for most participants, the information sharing appeared to occur as needed, rather than as an intentionally scheduled practice. Several participants commented that information sharing would be enhanced with having an analyst on site. As an example, an analyst at a medium-sized

detachment reported using a weekly crime bulletin to identify any new offenders of interest, those who might be returning to the community, those currently on conditions or watch/wanted lists, or those who had not been checked in a while.

To encourage more routine and consistent information sharing within the detachment, it may be beneficial to formally implement a regular monthly update at detachment briefings where updated watch lists, photos, conditions, or other changes in status are presented. To share information with partners outside of the detachment, it may be beneficial to examine the use of situation tables or hubs where agencies can discuss and share information concerning individuals of current interest to multiple agencies.

The most common technological gap that was identified by medium-sized detachments was not having a dedicated analyst who could more effectively utilize the available technology and information in relation to identifying, monitoring, and updating members and the detachment about prolific offenders. For example, in the detachment where there was a dedicated analyst, this individual would run queries to identify the list of relevant offenders, document the nature of their contacts (e.g., police files versus street checks), compare these individuals to other lists of interest , such as pawn sheets, correctional databases, or CORNET, and then develop posters or information sheets with tombstone information, a picture of the individual, and any other relevant information (e.g., known associates or vehicles). Detachments without a dedicated analyst did not appear to have the time or capacity to engage in this depth of work or the skills to engage in strategies like social media monitoring. Analysts also had access to databases that members did not and could develop a more complete profile than the police officers themselves were able to. While most of the detachments without a dedicated analyst reported that the information they received was generally up to date and useful, the frequency with which they received this information was inconsistent. Some detachments only received this information twice a year from their district analyst and, at times, the information or the profiles were not what they needed regarding the current target population. As will be discussed in greater detail in the recommendation section, while it would be beneficial for the district analysts to connect with all detachments in the district more than twice per year, this is likely not realistic given the number of detachments. Moreover, the information presented by the district analyst may not meet the needs of each detachment because of the importance of understanding what is going on in the community and the specific issues that each detachment is dealing with. As such, **it might be useful to consider having a dedicated analyst at each medium-sized detachment focused on prolific offenders or to have an analyst assigned to several detachments in a specific geographic area that may share common offenders or issues**.

BUILDING A PROLIFIC MANAGEMENT TEAM IN A MEDIUM-SIZED DETACHMENT

Participants were asked about the threshold for when a prolific offender management team should be implemented. Several participants reported that the prolific offender program had been mandated for them without proper consideration of detachment size or priorities. As previously noted, most of the medium-sized detachments considered priority rather than prolific offender populations as their target, and so they felt that adopting the formal prolific offender strategy using

'E' Division's definition was not necessary or useful for their jurisdiction. Several participants felt that whether a detachment should implement a prolific offender management program depended on the size of the detachment, their access to resources to successfully implement and carry out a prolific offender management program, and the crime rate or crime problems in that community. However, while several participants felt it should be up to the detachment commander to decide when a prolific offender management team should be implemented, others felt that a prolific offender management team should be in all detachments so that the detachment could more proactively address crime problems, rather than reactively trying to deal with an already well-established crime issue or offending population. **Given that most medium-sized detachments preferred to focus on priority offenders rather than 'E' Division's definition of a prolific offender, yet used similar strategies to approach these individuals, rather than mandating a formal specific prolific offender management program with a strict definition of a prolific offender, more flexibility should be offered to allow detachments to implement an offender management program that better reflects the nature of their particular offending population**. Again, this can be achieved through broadening the definition of prolific offender management to prolific/priority offender management.

As discussed above, in terms of designing the ideal prolific offender management team, many participants felt it should consist of a corporal and between four to six constables, though some participants felt that up to 12 members would be needed in some detachments, a dedicated and co-located analyst, and other support staff as needed, such as a records clerk and a court liaison officer. The ideal strategies would be to use the three-pronged approach of desisting, displacement, or enforcement, to connect a willing offender to the necessary services and resources, and to enable offenders to make the right choices when presented with the three options. The team would focus solely on prolific/priority offender management and not get pulled off mandate to assist other units. Their time would be spent checking in with and monitoring their target population, holding regular meetings and information sharing with partners, such as community corrections, mental health, employment, shelters/housing, bylaw, and Crown counsel, conducting surveillance when needed, meeting with informants, and doing administrative work like writing warrants. Many of the medium-sized detachments felt there would be value in taking a multi-jurisdictional approach as the offenders they dealt with often moved between multiple cities. For example, this might involve **combining human and physical resources into a regional team with a dedicated regional analyst**. Another benefit of this approach was that a regional team would be less likely to be pulled off mandate to support other detachment initiatives. However, some participants also noted that there was value in having a detachment specific team that was more familiar with the local crime landscape and the particular concerns and hot spots in their own jurisdiction. **Still, it may be of value for the RCMP to pilot some regional approaches to prolific offender management**.

PARTNERSHIPS

General duty, as well as other specific units, such as drug units, surveillance teams, street crime teams, and traffic units, were the main partners within the detachment identified by participants. General duty might be asked to keep a look out for priority/prolific offenders, or they might be requested to conduct curfew checks during the night hours when the prolific offender management

team was not on shift. Other teams, such as the K-9 unit or specialized surveillance teams would also be called in when relevant and available to assist in an investigation.

Outside of the detachment, some participants reported partnering with other prolific offender teams from other jurisdictions, particularly when those jurisdictions were bordering theirs as they shared some of the same targets who travelled between their jurisdictions committing crime, or who resided in one jurisdiction but were active in another. These participants identified that district or multi-jurisdictional prolific offender meetings would be held every few months where offenders common to these multiple jurisdictions would be discussed. Less commonly, participants reported partnering with the Bait Car program, particularly if they experienced a rash of theft from motor vehicles or other similar property crimes.

In terms of non-policing agencies, a few criminal justice agencies and social service agencies were identified as relevant partners. Probation was routinely identified as an important partner for prolific offender management as police and probation commonly worked together to monitor prolific offenders. Probation officers would inform the police when a prolific offender was to be released and would update them on the offender's conditions. The police would then enforce curfew conditions by conducting curfew checks. Although there are examples in the literature of active police-probation partnerships where officers from these two agencies would partner to check that a prolific offender was complying with conditions, the medium-sized detachments did not appear to directly collaborate with probation in the field. Still, they felt their information sharing with probation was good, as probation would be up to date on an offender's conditions, current address, and local contacts that could help the police to monitor a prolific offender more effectively.

Participants felt as though Crown Counsel was an important partner because Crown needed a comprehensive understanding of the cycle of prolific offending and the underlying causes of these behaviours. Participants felt that without this knowledge police would be less successful in getting charge approval and Crown might be less successful in obtaining meaningful sentences for prolific offenders. Participants agreed that having an informed Crown who was willing to work with the police to get to charge approval and a trial was very important. However, there was some debate about whether a specialized Crown would be beneficial. Some participants felt that the issue was more with the shorter sentences given by judges, and that Crown was doing their best. Others felt that once a jurisdiction had enough prolific offenders to justify it, having a specialized Crown would be helpful as they would be able to form better relationships with the prolific offender management team and work together more effectively on files. Participants noted that Crown may not get to a prolific offender's file until one week before a trial and they may not see these files as a priority, whereas if they were a specialized or dedicated Crown, they would have a much deeper understanding of the importance of achieving meaningful consequences as a deterrent to continued criminal involvement. Several participants observed that their relationship with Crown was problematic in that their Crown did not see the value in prosecuting prolific offenders.

Outside of probation and Crown, a few other agency types were identified by the participants, including mental health and addictions, corrections (provincial and federal), the Ministry of Child and Family Development, Indigenous agencies, bylaw, housing, and school districts. However, for the most part, these partnerships seemed quite informal. Only a few of the detachments reported

having regularly scheduled meetings with these partners, and only one detachment reported engaging in joint operations with their partners. In this example, the detachment planned to work with bylaw to target some identified crime hot spots to connect offenders to services and disrupt the criminal activity in that area.

Of note, information sharing with partners was generally seen as effective. Participants appeared to have built strong relationships with probation, who they routinely received information from and communicated with on a regular basis. However, it was unclear how formal this information sharing was. It was also unclear how often the police shared information with their partners, as opposed to primarily being the recipients of information from their partners. Few participants commented on how to improve information sharing with other partners, though several mentioned that privacy regulations could make information sharing more difficult to achieve.

The research literature suggested that getting Crown, mental health, probation, and others working together with the police is needed for the successful operation of a prolific offender management team. Just incarcerating prolific offenders, especially for only short periods of time, was not seen as effective in deterring these individuals from offending or in rehabilitating them. However, while it was recognized that there were underlying issues, such as addiction and mental health issues, that drove the actions of their target populations, the participants also recognized that the offenders themselves needed to want these resources for these options to be used effectively. Therefore, wraparound strategies would not be successful if offenders did not want to access the resources being offered. **It may be beneficial to examine the growing research on information sharing tables, such as situation tables or to pilot these approaches in more communities in British Columbia to measure the effects of a more formalized partnership focused on connecting identified prolific offenders to community resources**. Still, while prolific offenders can be encouraged to access resources, the threat of enforcement was somewhat weakened by the relatively short sentences typically given to these individuals, if charges are even approved. Given this, **it may be of benefit to study the effects of having a dedicated Crown Counsel assigned to work specifically with a prolific offender management team** to determine whether this approach increases charge approval or results in longer sentences following trial.

GENERAL COMMENTS

The most identified challenge in prolific offender management among medium-sized detachments was delivering on the mandate while not having sufficient personnel. Participants felt that it was difficult to stay on mandate as they were often being pulled into other detachment priorities, and that they did not have enough time to effectively engage in prolific offender management strategies. Other comments concerned the short sentences given to prolific offenders and the repetitive cycle of offending.

When asked what they should be doing that they were not already doing, there was no one consistent theme, other than the participants generally felt that they were doing what they needed to. Some of the other comments made by one or two detachments included that they should be alternating between working days and nights, working more with neighbouring detachments where their prolific offenders may be travelling between, working more closely with analysts to

identify and update their target population, being more proactive with their target population, and more actively educating general duty members about the purpose of prolific offender management.

Most participants from medium-sized detachments felt that their prolific offender management teams were effective and efficient, though they did not have firm metrics to base that assessment on. One participant based this assessment on the feedback from their senior managers, Crown, and other partners, while another felt that there were more priority/prolific offenders in jail than when the program began. Several others felt that their communication within the detachment and with their partners was effective. However, four participants were either unsure as to how effective their team was or felt that they were not very effective. In effect, participants felt that they could be more effective by having more members assigned to prolific offender management, changing their hours to work more during the evening, being more proactive, and being able to stay focused on their mandate.

Small Detachments

PROLIFIC OFFENDER DEFINITIONS, TEAMS, AND STRATEGIES

Given the size of small detachments, the three participating detachments either had no officers specifically assigned to manage prolific offenders, had one or two members tasked with addressing prolific offenders, but the responsibility was generally shared across the detachment, or had a small crime reduction team that included a focus on prolific offenders. The existence of a crime reduction unit that focused on prolific offenders or a dedicated prolific offender management officer or team ranged from being created just under one year ago to being established nearly 15 years ago. Regardless of whether one member or more was specifically assigned to manage the jurisdiction's prolific offenders, detachments indicated that the responsibility for identifying, interacting with, and responding to prolific offenders was shared across the detachment.

Like with the medium-sized detachments, for the small detachments there was little distinction between a prolific and a priority offender. Given that they were working in small detachments with limited resources, the designation of prolific offender was sometimes less useful than understanding which specific offender was causing the most harm in a community. To this end, defining someone as a prolific offender was frequently based on the nature of the offender and their offending. For example, some participants indicated that who they designated a prolific offender was not based on the number of offences an offender had committed, but the nature of the offences or how socially destructive the behaviours were. These offenders received the most attention by the police. This group was followed by those who were criminally active but not engaged in violent offences. The last group to be designated a prolific offender were those who frequently breached their court mandated conditions. Some participants also suggested that they rarely used the designation of prolific offender because of the challenges of having this label accepted and applied in court. For example, there was a recognition from some detachments that there was much more work involved within the court process for an offender labeled as a prolific offender. So, while there was no difference in how this offender was identified or responded to by the police, it was reported by participants that small detachments may not have the resources to dedicate to doing all the

additional work required by the court to establish the label of prolific on an offender. Given this, some detachments chose to simply use the term priority rather than prolific when discussing the offender in court.

For the small detachments in the sample, there was a mix between using some elements of the RCMP's official definition of prolific offenders and developing an internal set of criteria to identify prolific offenders. For example, some detachments did not have a specific definition and based their targeting on offenders currently active with repeat offences. Another detachment relied on the information provided by an analyst to identify offenders responsible for a large number of calls for service and offenders who were in their crime cycle for members to prioritize and focus on. In effect, this approach, which was viewed as closer to the RCMP's definition of a priority offender, focused their targeting on those offenders who were having the largest negative impact on the community. Another participant reported that their detachment defined a prolific offender as someone who committed multiple criminal acts and was known to the police. The prolific offender was usually on court mandated conditions that could be breached or had a warrant for their arrest. These offenders were more likely to have committed particularly egregious or violent crimes and they were believed to be criminally active. This participant further defined a prolific offender as someone likely to draw disdain from the police and the community. The offender usually suffered from a drug addiction or mental health issues, had little to no community support, and presented with a host of other social issues. In effect, in this detachment, a prolific offender was someone with a criminal past, who had conditions, who was actively breaching their conditions or committing crimes, and had recently come to the attention of the police. In general, while the definitions provided by small detachments differed from each other in several ways, and none of them fully embodied the RCMP's definition, what they had in common was an active offender with a criminal past that was disproportionately responsible for crimes that were of concern to the public and the police.

These detachments tended to target prolific offenders who were repeat offenders, took up a disproportionate amount of police resources or time, and were most typically engaged in the drug trade or property offending. In addition, the typical profile of a prolific offender was male, between the ages of 20 to 40 years old, unemployed, had a history of alcohol and/or drug addiction, suffered from mental health issues, had few social supports, and was economically disadvantaged. Some participants also indicated that their prolific offenders had a history of physical or sexual abuse, personality disorders, and a violent criminal history.

Given this profile, in terms of their approaches to prolific offenders, small detachments indicated that it was a combination of displacement, assistance, and arrest. However, it was clear that participants from small detachments did not view displacement as a beneficial or helpful strategy. Participants felt that displacement created its own unique problems as it made prolific offenders more mobile and difficult to track. It was reported that prolific offenders often displace themselves once they become the target of police attention and surveillance. While those with strong ties to the community may not displace themselves, other prolific offenders may not have anywhere else to go and may not have other support people in other locations, which was reported as being common in rural or small communities. From a policing perspective, it was reported that the displacement strategy does not help the crime problem in communities overall and was short-sighted as the

receiving community would then likely have to detect, identify, and pursue the prolific offender who was displaced. Given their knowledge of the offender, it was felt that the original detachment would likely have a much better chance of catching the prolific offender than the new community. In effect, it was felt that moving a prolific offender to a new community often resulted in the new detachment having to start from scratch with limited resources. To address this concern, detachments indicated that **it would be beneficial to have a system to easily relay information about a prolific offender to another community**. While this could be done informally, participants believed that it was rare for a detachment that displaces a prolific offender to warn the next community because, in the view of one participant, displacing an offender that you either cannot manage or as a strategy to lower one's reported crime rate was an aggressive and offensive tactic that was not commonly supported by police officers.

A more common approach used in these small detachments was to identify the problems that caused or were at the root of the majority of the crimes being committed by these offenders. This was followed by an internal detachment discussion about what avenues were available to address both the offender and the root causes of their offending. In this way, one focus was to assist the offender by referring them to programs and services dedicated to turning their life around. However, additionally, arrest and incarceration were other options that detachments spoke of. All detachments indicated that they were very clear with their prolific offenders that the primary goal was to stop the offender's criminal behaviour, but that it was up to the offender whether that outcome was achieved through self-initiated positive change or police enforcement. Detachments reported that they monitored their prolific offenders to ensure they complied with their bail, probation, parole, or other conditions, and that their crime reduction or prolific offender management team members proactively sought out prolific offenders with outstanding warrants of arrest. From the perspective of participants, the reason for doing this was that proactively managing their group of offenders who committed a disproportionate amount of the crime in a community would result in lower crime and less victimization. The police in these small detachments deal with their prolific offenders in real time and arrest them on criminal breaches or warrants to either break the cycle of offending or to have the leverage to get the offender into treatment or other suitable programs. The small detachments participants stated that these approaches meant that prolific offenders spent less time in the community, more time in treatment or custody, and had less opportunity to commit crime.

It should be noted that, while there was an emphasis on treatment or trying to help offenders, there was also the recognition among some of the detachments that this was not the primary role of the police, nor what the officers were trained for. There was a general recognition that, while police officers had a role to play in assisting offenders leave a life of crime behind them, the primary responsibility of the police was to enforce the law. The idea expressed by participants was that the police should partner with a wide range of agencies, such as addictions services, mental health practitioners, and other local support groups, to assist with addressing the specific needs of prolific offenders, which will be discussed in greater detail below. The basis for this claim was the belief that if the mental health, drug addiction, housing, and poverty issues facing many prolific offenders were proactively addressed through community support groups, the police in small detachments would be in a much better position to manage those offenders who were also criminally active. Still, it was recognized that the community had limited resources to address the full range of issues

driving prolific offenders. Given this, detachments acknowledged that, while not the most effective long-term strategy, arrest and disrupt were the primary ways that police addressed prolific offenders in combination with providing assistance. While not typically in favour of the practice, displacement remained an option for those offenders where the police could not achieve compliance or there were no available services to assist offenders.

To either increase the likelihood that offenders complied with conditions or to have conditions placed on an offender so that the police had more control or influence with an offender, some detachments indicated that they tried to arrest prolific offenders for even small offences or breaches. The philosophy of this approach was that it provided officers the grounds to check offenders more often, for example, by doing a curfew check. Detachments indicated that offenders understood that they would be checked more often, which could have a deterrent effect for some. Moreover, breaching conditions was another offence that officers could report to Crown.

It should be noted that because participants emphasized that changing the behaviour of prolific offenders was the main goal, as mentioned above, the strategy of displacement was viewed as being not particularly effective. While participants indicated that displacement did serve the purpose of reducing the crime rate in the jurisdiction, it did nothing to fundamentally change the behaviour of the offender. It simply shifted crime to another location. It was also felt by the small detachments that the court system was not the way to achieve lasting change in an offender's behaviour. While it might happen for some, it was more generally felt that offenders needed to want to change, and the role of the police was to assist with supporting that change. This support could be achieved by referring offenders to services, ensuring that offenders complied with all of their conditions, and working with them when needed, especially in the areas of mental health and drug addiction. Still, enforcement was recognized as an important aspect of how police responded to prolific offenders. To that end, it was understood that prolific offender management strategies were more likely to be successful when the police identified their prolific offender population, understood the kinds of crimes these offenders typically committed, as well as when and where they committed their offences. Participants spoke of the importance of knowing where in the crime cycle each offender was as this allowed the police to target those at different stages of the crime cycle with different strategies. As will be discussed in greater detail below, even for smaller detachments, this approach requires the involvement of crime analysts to assist in the identification of prolific offenders and to understand which offenders require immediate police attention. Still, all detachments indicated that the most effective approach with prolific offenders was to be proactive rather than reactive. However, it was noted that this was hard to do in smaller detachments because there were fewer police officers, analysts, and other resources to dedicate exclusively or primarily to prolific offenders.

In terms of identifying prolific offenders in their jurisdictions, participants indicated that the two main approaches were data analysis and the personal experiences and interactions of officers in the community. Given that these participants worked in smaller communities, they indicated that it was not hard to know when new people moved to the area and crime increased, who might be responsible. In effect, participants indicated that they were provided with information from the community and members verified the information and targeted individuals. Targets were also

identified through information provided by probation and parole services about who was living or moving into the community.

Given that the detachments were small, it was not surprising that participants indicated that they could only manage a small number of prolific offenders effectively. While one detachment indicated that they only had the capacity to manage two prolific offenders at the same time, other detachments indicated that they had the resources and capacity to manage between six and 12 prolific offenders. This number was based on the notion that managing a prolific offender in the community involved consistently doing curfew checks, interactions with prolific offenders at unpredictable times when they were in the community and involving general duty members when they were not responding to other calls for service. It should also be noted that all detachments indicated that the proportion of offenders who were prolific offenders was extremely small; estimated to be around 1% of the offender population, which was a very small proportion of the general population. Still, detachments suggested that, in their jurisdictions, prolific offenders were responsible for the majority of police time and resources.

As a result of these numbers, it was interesting to note that, for small detachments, there did not appear to be a specific threshold that an offender had to meet for intervention to take place. It was reported that, because the detachment was small, rather than creating a list of the ten most prolific offenders and intervening with those individuals, officers tended to focus more on those who were having the largest negative effect in the community. As such, officers focused on those offenders who were known to the police, were engaged in repeat offending, and were criminally active. These offenders would be identified as requiring additional attention that could result in increased enforcement activities against them or having the police refer them to appropriate services and programs while remaining vigilant in their surveillance of the offender.

All participants from the smaller detachments recognized a distinction between prolific offenders and social chronic offenders. All participants indicated that social chronic offenders were engaged in much more petty crime and took up a lot of police resources but were considered lower priority offenders. Participants provided examples of street-entrenched people who suffered from addictions, mental health issues, unstable housing, and poverty as the profile of their social chronic offenders. It was also recognized that these people did not benefit from enforcement actions and that they needed social assistance and programs rather than incarceration. Still, all detachments reported that social chronic offenders frequently required daily police intervention. The primary strategies used to address social chronic offenders were taking them to a hospital, a homeless shelter, or other social services. Importantly, it was understood that many social chronic offenders would meet the threshold of a prolific offender; however, participants argued that these people did not need to be in jail, but rather cared for in the community. Additional tactics that small detachments took with their social chronic offenders included serving them a letter stating that they have been identified as a social chronic offender and the possible ways that the police could assist them with social assistance and addiction services. The letter also informed these offenders that if their behaviour did not change, they would be responded to through the criminal justice system. Again, participants indicated that using the criminal justice system was the last option because it was recognised that these individuals were better served in the community. While the general strategies were the same, in terms of trying to link social chronic offenders to community

services, some detachments used face-to-face conversations rather than a letter, as they believed this was a more effective approach that assisted in building rapport that could result in a social chronic offender being more open to police assistance.

HUMAN, PHYSICAL, AND TECHNOLOGICAL RESOURCES

As mentioned above, among the small detachments in the sample, the range of people responsible for prolific offender management varied from those few officers assigned to the Crime Reduction Unit to a shared responsibility among all officers across the detachment. In one interesting example, participants spoke about having their members partner with another nearby small detachment's members to have more human resources to address drug trafficking and the opioid crisis among their prolific offenders. While some participants felt that there were enough officers to address their prolific offenders, one detachment indicated that there was a need for more human resources to do curfew checks, while another stated that the issue was not about having more or less officers, but more resources in community-based social services to address the needs of prolific offenders.

When asked what functions or responsibilities related to prolific offenders were not being addressed because of not always having sufficient human resources, two main themes emerged. The first theme was that members were not able to attend calls for service involving prolific offenders in a timely fashion or to allocate the necessary time and resources to address the underlying issues related to prolific offending. Related to this concern was the amount of time and resources it took to complete a disclosure package for Crown to lay a charge. The concern was that the disclosure package took so long to complete that prolific offenders remained in the community for extended periods of time without conditions, thus without getting any help and frequently continuing to commit crimes. Moreover, working on completing disclosure packages for Crown resulted in fewer police officers doing proactive work in the community to, again, address some of the root causes of prolific offending. The second main theme was that members were so busy responding to calls for service that they did not have the time to do curfew checks or other interventions with their prolific offenders. **Given this, it would appear that there is a benefit to having a well-staffed prolific management team, even in small detachments. Having a dedicated team would allow for a number of officers to focus on being proactive to address the needs of prolific offenders, while being sufficiently staffed to complete all the necessary investigative and other tasks related to successfully having prolific offenders charged when the formal criminal justice system was deemed necessary. It would also provide sufficient resources to monitor those prolific offenders still living in the community**.

It was not surprising that none of the detachments stated that they had a dedicated analyst assigned to the management of prolific offenders. All detachments understood the value and contributions that an analyst could provide, in terms of highlighting criminal profiles or crime trends, but detachments also stated that they had access to either an internal analyst or a regional analyst when needed. Detachments reported that analysts did the background checks for them on an identified prolific offender and put together a package that identified known associates and other important information. Moreover, analysts sent out intelligence reports that detailed organized crime, criminal activity, and crime trends. They also complied statistics and information

for the detachment. In effect, the members supplied the analysts with information and the analysts delivered a detailed report with crime statistics and information to better intervene with their prolific offenders. Given this, unlike in larger detachments, **it appears that there is not a need to have a dedicated prolific offender crime analyst for every small detachment**. It was also interesting to note that two of the three detachments indicated that they would not organize their detachment any differently to manage their prolific offenders more effectively. The one comment to the contrary was not about reorganizing the detachment but rather adding an additional member to the general investigations section that would be responsible for connecting the detachment more directly to social services.

With respect to training issues, it was not typical for members to receive any specific training related to either crime reduction or prolific offender management. Only one participant indicated that they had received training on crime reduction strategies. Instead, it was more common for members to receive some education and training related to general interviewing and investigations techniques that could then be applied to prolific offenders. In effect, detachments indicated that there were no specific training courses of prolific offenders, but that their general police training, as well as training on interacting with the public, could be applied to responding to prolific offenders. **It is recommended that all members of Crime Reduction Units or Prolific Offender Management Teams receive some training focused on identifying risk factors and promising practices in prolific offender intervention strategies**. Finally, participants indicated that, overall, they had enough support from senior management to fulfill their mandate with respect to prolific offenders.

In terms of physical resources, it was interesting to note that two of the three small detachment participants reported that they had all the necessary physical resources, in terms of funding, vehicles, equipment, and space. However, one detachment indicated that they needed more resources specifically for surveillance. Again, given the comments above about more prolific offenders spending extended periods of time in the community from the time they were arrested to the time they are charged and given conditions, **it would seem prudent to have sufficient resources allocated to surveillance as a public safety measure**. This includes having enough unmarked vehicles that could be used for covert surveillance of known prolific offenders.

Given that participants were working in small detachments, the main way that they managed their information about prolific offenders was through the collective knowledge of the officers. While participants spoke of using probation and parole lists that were published routinely with a list of offenders on conditions, PRIME was the main database where prolific offender information was documented and stored. All detachments agreed that they had the necessary technology to monitor their prolific offenders; however, the one area that was consistently reported as requiring additional support was open source or social media searches. While the role of analysts has been discussed above, participants did mention that **having in-house expertise on social media searches would be a benefit**.

In terms of the ways that information about prolific offenders was shared, again, detachments indicated that their primary method was PRIME. However, participants did speak about the value of personal relationships within the detachment and across neighbouring detachments. Given the size of these detachments, participants spoke of the value of being able to reach out to someone from a

neighbouring detachment to inform them of a prolific offender who had been displaced or to share information about common issues or concerns. In addition to formal information sharing strategies, such as PRIME, bulletins from sections, such as the Real-Time Intelligence Centre (RTIC-BC), and PTEP (Provincial Tactical Enforcement Priority) intelligence reports, word of mouth was seen as a very effective method of sharing information. As one detachment put it, while data was important and necessary, equally important was the social network that members had in sharing and obtaining information about prolific offenders. One area of concern was the need for secure video conferencing technology to reduce the amount of travel that members needed to do to attend larger meetings. Another identified need for information sharing was a real time system that identified and tracked prolific offenders through communities. In other words, rather than relying on external crime analysts or the RTIC-BC to provide tracking information, it was felt that having the ability to do this type of analysis and tracking internally would be beneficial, especially given the mobility of prolific offenders. Nonetheless, participants did report that the information they received about prolific offenders was up-to-date and useful, but it was incumbent upon the member to request relevant information.

Part of the challenge identified by detachments was that, given the lack of human and technological resources, members had to become familiar with all the various information systems and tools on their own, resulting in 'a jack of all trades and a master of none' strategy. Participants indicated that there were people responsible for prolific offenders who did not know how to use all the technology available to them. Participants spoke of **the need for specific training in prolific offender management and the technology and equipment available to members to assist with these responsibilities**. To address some of the concerns expressed above, participants indicated that having **an analyst who could make the unit more intelligence-led would be beneficial**, as it would allow members to more efficiently harness the data that the detachment already had. Related to this point, even though these members were working in small detachments, they reported seeing **the value of predictive intelligence related to crime trends that would allow them to prioritize enforcement priorities and use their limited resources more effectively**.

BUILDING A PROLIFIC MANAGEMENT TEAM IN A SMALL DETACHMENT

When asked what the threshold for the implementation of a prolific offender program should be, participants had a number of ideas. Obviously, participants stated that a community needed to have prolific offenders, even if they were not currently criminally active. Given the emphasis that participants placed on non-enforcement interventions, it was not surprising that participants felt that the police had a role to play in assisting prolific offenders to address their mental health, addiction, and housing issues. Participants linked property crime to addiction issues faced by prolific offenders and, as such, believed that all detachments should have a prolific offender program designed to either prevent or respond to these issues to limit the number of prolific offenders or the harm they could commit in the community.

As an example, one detachment felt that if there were more than five prolific offenders in a community of around 5,000 people, a prolific offender program was needed. The basis for this claim was that general duty members could address crime hotspots and calls for service; however, they

would not be able to effectively address issues involving chronic vandalism or break and enters. It was at this point, according to the detachments, that a prolific offender program and team became extremely valuable. In addition to a threshold of offending behaviour, political will and the allocation of funding, resources, time, and partnerships was also reported as being necessary for the development of an effective prolific offender management team.

Again, in terms of the development of a prolific offender team, it was interesting to see the perspective from small detachments range from the very practical to the philosophical. While some detachments emphasized the need for members of a prolific offender management team to develop meaningful connections and partnerships in the community and the need for more officers and analysts to provide real-time data to team members, other participants spoke of the need to shift management's orientation from emphasizing the number of arrests and convictions to solving the root causes of offending. More specifically, all detachments stated that it would be a mistake to take a one-size-fits-all approach to prolific offender management programs or teams in smaller detachments. Instead, detachments recommended that **the team should be tailored to the needs of the particular community being served and integrated into the operations of other teams in the detachment, especially the drug and property crime units, in addition to the crime analyst**. Moreover, it was important that **the team be integrated into the various community-based services that also worked with prolific offenders**.

PARTNERSHIPS

It was interesting to note that, among the smaller detachments, partnerships with other neighbouring detachments were viewed as very important in responding to their prolific offenders. In terms of partnerships external to policing, probation, mental health services, addiction services, the local hospital, victim services, and other outreach workers were seen as effective and valuable partners. Bail supervisors were also viewed as essential for the management of prolific offenders. One detachment stated that their relationship with the Mayor and Council was also helpful, especially on the issue of finding housing for prolific offenders. According to the detachments, interagency cooperation was the key, especially on the issues of addiction, housing, mental health, and poverty. One of the issues that was identified by all small detachments was related to information sharing with community partners. All detachments reported that there was very minimal information sharing with these important partners. While informal conversations were common, formal information sharing was not. Moreover, the information shared in these conversations was limited to public information, such as the conditions attached to a particular offender or the care program established by a community organization. While detachments understood the reasons for the current policies and practices associated with information sharing, it was felt that these restrictions did limit the benefits that could be achieved with partners if information sharing was more robust.

When asked about things that members did that could be done more effectively or efficiently by partners, participants spoke of the role of the police compared to the role of community partners. For example, one detachment indicated that the police were not well positioned to address the root causes of offending, nor were their responses likely to result in resolving the underlying issues that

contributed to prolific offending. Given this, while the police were effective at responding to the crimes committed, partners were necessary to address root causes. For example, all of the small detachments indicated that the most common offences their prolific offenders engaged in were property crimes to support an addiction. They spoke about the strategies they used to prevent and respond to property crimes, but that they were not in a position to address the addiction issues that were at the root of the offending behaviour. Community partners were much better positioned and trained to deal with this issue. A similar argument was made related to mental health issues.

GENERAL COMMENTS

When asked to comment on any actions, activities, or responses that members were currently not doing related to prolific offenders that they should be, the two most common themes were more training on prolific offender management strategies and changing shift schedules to have sufficient members available during peak policing hours. It was also suggested that members create specific programs and goals for their prolific offenders and to empirically measure the outcomes. Detachments identified the need for additional human resources to address prolific offenders. Not only would an increase in human resources make the workload more manageable, but it was felt that this would improve communication and information sharing within the detachment, across detachments, and with community partners. In particular, while not viewed as mandatory by all participating detachments, **having a dedicated or local crime analyst was seen as an important value-added resource for a prolific offender management team, even in small detachments**.

Still, while one detachment indicated that their unit was fully staffed, others specifically pointed to the need for additional human resources. While it was acknowledged that the need for additional members was a challenge for police organizations everywhere, it was recognized that police were constantly asked to do more with less resources and that units, like a prolific management team or a crime reduction unit, were those that were reduced or eliminated when front-line policing demands increased.

It was also interesting to note that all participants from small detachments indicated that the success of their strategies, programs, and activities were typically measured by a reduction in the crime rate, rather than measuring the effect of their efforts on altering or eliminating the root causes of prolific offending. Given what was reported above in relation to the role of partners, this measurement of success was not surprising. For example, one detachment suggested that if there was a lot of property crime, and the team was able to identify the prolific offender(s) who were responsible and arrest the individual, that was considered a success, even if the success was short-lived. In effect, while some detachments indicated that catching and arresting criminals was the measure of success, others emphasized public satisfaction, reducing the offending behaviour of prolific offenders through change rather than arrest, and addressing the root causes of prolific offending as the measures of success. Still, when asked what detachments would change to improve their effectiveness and efficiency, responses echoed the information already presented above; namely **focusing on the root causes of crime, rather than arrest, and enhancing training in prolific offender management**.

Participants were asked about the value of a regional approach to prolific offender management. All detachments felt that this was a good idea. Given that it would not be practical to have a lot of resources stationed in a smaller community, taking a regional approach was seen as a way to tap into the resources of larger detachments for a short period of time to address a particular crime spike or issue. In other words, a regional approach was seen as contributing to an economy of scale that could benefit smaller detachments. Still, it was believed that the effects of this kind of approach was more short-term, as resources would only be present in a smaller detachment for a short period of time and, therefore, the positive effect on the community would also be short-term. A concern expressed by the detachments was that as resources were removed from the community, any initial gains would eventually be lost as the pressure, surveillance, and/or interventions with prolific offenders diminished over time. Nonetheless, **the benefits of a regional approach were recognized by the small detachments because they understood that their prolific offenders belonged to other jurisdictions as well that could result in a more coordinated approach or response, an increase in teamwork across detachments, a reduction of a duplication of efforts, and the ability to use more sophisticated police techniques that would not be possible for a single small detachment to undertake on their own**.

In terms of challenges, there were a few general themes that detachments spoke of. The first was the common refrain of a 'revolving door' with prolific offenders. Detachments spoke of the challenge of contributing to meaningful change in their prolific offender population. It was suggested that it can be very disheartening to see the same offenders arrested, sentenced, and incarcerated over and over again, without any change in behaviour. Another participant spoke of the changes in case law and the challenges that decisions, such as *R. v. Jordan*, had on the police response to prolific offenders. Related to this point was the difficulty in just staying up to date with case law. The final theme was about resourcing. As mentioned several times in this report, there was a general feeling among small detachments that there was inadequate funding, not enough officers, and a lack of necessary equipment that contributed to a less than effective response to prolific offenders. Even so, detachments felt that they had been effective, but that an increase in resources, especially in the number of officers, would contribute to a greater increase in effectiveness.

When asked to discuss successes, the main themes that emerged were as follows: an overall reduction in the number of calls for service; an ability to disrupt the activities of some prolific offenders as a result of cooperation with neighbouring detachments; a reduction of displacement as a primary solution to a prolific offender; getting a small number of prolific offenders, particularly those with addiction problems, the help they needed to desist from crime; the dedication of members of the crime reduction or prolific offender team; and strong support and leadership from management towards the work officers undertook with prolific offenders.

Recommendations

The purpose of prolific offender management prolific offender management is to manage those individuals causing the most concerns, harm, or damage to a community using a three-pillared approach of targeted enforcement, rehabilitation, or displacement. Given that prolific offenders

tend to be between 20 to 40 years of age, effectively intervening earlier in their criminal career could represent substantial cost savings for a jurisdiction. The literature has also identified that prolific offenders often experience similar underlying issues, such as addictions, mental health, and unemployment (Paetsch et al., 2015). This was similar to the descriptions given by participants in the current project. Addressing these underlying issues by connecting prolific offenders with appropriate resources can contribute to rehabilitation and a reduction in offending.

As demonstrated in other jurisdictions (e.g., Paetsch et al., 2015; Rezansoff, 2012), to effectively engage in prolific offender management requires collaboration between police services and their partners, including correctional (provincial and federal) and community/social service (e.g., housing, mental health/addictions) partners. To be effective, prolific offender management teams must stay actively focused on their target populations and should operate with the most up to date information available about their targets' court ordered conditions, whereabouts, associates, risk factors, and underlying needs. As reviewed in the literature, one example of a successful Priority Prolific Offender Program is in Alberta, where their team consists of a project manager, four police constables from three different police agencies, two probation officers, two criminal intelligence analyst, administrative support, as well as collaboration with Crown prosecutors. In contrast, the findings of the current project generally revealed that "E" Division detachments had prolific offender management teams consisting of between one and eight sworn officers, few of whom were exclusively dedicated to prolific offender management. Few teams had a dedicated crime analyst, and while most reported working routinely with probation, there were very few formalized partnerships. None of these teams reported having any form of administrative support assigned to them, and none had a dedicated Crown Counsel or appeared to work collaboratively with Crown regarding prolific offender management.

While effective prolific offender management strategies elsewhere have reduced rates of recidivism among target populations and have resulted in some prolific/priority offenders exiting their criminal lifestyle, there were no measurable outcomes in place among the 'E' Division detachments that participated in this study by which they could objectively measure the success of their actions or operations. Further, other successful prolific offender management programs have engaged in the three pillars approach with a particular emphasis on targeted enforcement versus rehabilitation approach. In contrast, the 'E' Division detachments that participated in this study appeared to rely mainly on the targeted enforcement approach, although detachments of all sizes and in all the policing districts desired to engage in the rehabilitation pillar as well. From the perspective of participants, the lack of adequate human resources, the failure to stay focused on mandate, and the lack of formal partnerships and information sharing made it difficult for these detachments to carry out prolific offender management as it was fully intended to be implemented.

Paetsch et al.'s (2017) study on the Alberta Priority Prolific Offender Program made a number of recommendations to enhance their approach, many of which are also applicable to British Columbia's prolific offender management programming. These include, but are not limited to, establishing formal partnerships with service providers, educating police officers on the PPO program, reviewing offender monitoring processes, setting clear and relevant PPO case management goals, and continuing to evaluate the process of the PPO program. These and other recommendations are discussed in more depth below.

EXPAND THE DEFINITION OF PROLIFIC OFFENDER MANAGMENT

Regardless of the detachment size or policing district, the interview data indicated that most participating detachments were not utilizing 'E' Division's definition of a prolific offender. For some, this was due to not having anyone in their jurisdiction who would technically meet that definition while for others, the issues in their community were being driven by individuals who were generating not only crime-based calls for service, but nuisance-based calls as well. Rather than rely on a quantitative assessment of negative police contacts over a defined period of time, the detachments preferred to have more flexibility to allow for intelligence and other qualitative assessments by fellow officers or partner agencies to indicate who was of concern for them at any given time. Some detachments focused on those who were currently criminally active whereas others kept their attention on those who might not yet be active in their community but who might pose a threat based on their criminal history. While most detachments focused on property offenders, some targeted violent, drug, or gang-involved offenders, as these were the issues of primary concern to their community. While most detachments attempted to address social chronic offenders through other units or positions, some detachments included them as part of their targeted offender management. It was clear from the interviews that a one-size fits all prolific offender management program is not appropriate given the differing needs and pressures faced by detachments according to their geographical location in the province, as well as the size and nature of their offender population. The literature reviewed in this report identified successful examples of prolific/priority offender programs, such as PPOP. Introducing a more broadly defined prolific/priority offender program is recommended to provide detachments with greater flexibility to define an appropriate target population based on jurisdictional needs. At the same time, maintaining clearer definitions and criteria for prolific, priority, and social chronic offenders may be helpful for the purposes of tracking the types of offenders that the team manages and evaluating which strategies are more or less effective with different types of offenders.

TRAINING NEEDS

As explained by Martynuik (2015), "it is imperative that the police and justice culture be taught that there is an underlying root cause to an offender's criminal actions and that without addressing those causes, the criminal cycle will only continue or possibly escalate" (p. 41). Overall, the participants in the current study understood that the population they were dealing with had significant underlying issues relating to their criminality. However, for the most part, they were unable to address these issues. Their strategies generally focused on engaging in curfew checks and other methods of monitoring of conditions. While most detachments made their presence known to their prolific offenders by verbally informing them that they were on a watch list, they were unable to offer more resources or engage in a wider range of strategies to fully engage in the three pillars.

Regardless of whether the detachments focused on prolific or priority offenders, there was a desire for some form of formalized training on crime reduction strategies and best practices when working with prolific/priority populations. While some of the strategies may differ for prolific offenders versus priority offenders versus social chronic offenders, some detachments felt that

their target population moved along a continuum of social chronic through to prolific offending. Therefore, intervention strategies could be adjusted depending on the point of the continuum that the police were dealing with (e.g., homeless versus actively engaging in crime to support an addiction). While some detachments favoured a clear separation between these populations, for many, similar underlying issues were driving the behaviours they were dealing with. Regardless, police officers trying to identify the needs of their prolific, priority, or social chronic offenders would benefit from targeted training on identifying risk factors and the various programs or services available in the community to address those identified needs.

In this way, providing training around establishing and maintaining multi-jurisdictional approaches, the benefits of and methods to addressing underlying issues that manifest or lead to offending, and successful examples of crime reduction and crime prevention initiatives would be of benefit regardless of the specific population that the detachment's prolific offender management team works with. In the past, those with any exposure to crime reduction training summarized it as a presentation from other detachments based on what they were doing that was working well, as well as reading through the existing policy. Going forward, this training could be provided through online courses, such as those provided on the AGORA site where the content could include a brief summary of the academic research on prolific offenders, an explanation and demonstration through case study examples of successful crime reduction tactics and strategies, discussions about the three pillars of prolific offender management and how best to achieve the targeted enforcement pillar, and the demonstration of various possible models for prolific offender management , including how to best use crime analysts to support the work of prolific offender management. Moreover, this information should include what kinds of teams and information sharing should be established to effectively deal with the rehabilitation pillar of prolific offender management. While it is likely not necessary to have this form of training annually for all members of prolific offender management, it is important to consider the value of refresher courses as case law develops, technology to monitor offenders is improved and becomes available to police agencies, and information sharing methods and protocols evolve.

HUMAN RESOURCES

Although some participants desired more vehicles or access to a greater variety of covert vehicles, overall, most of the participants felt adequately resourced. However, the participants consistently reported needing more members assigned to prolific offender management. Generally speaking, the participants appeared to desire a team that was composed of a corporal or staff sergeant who had the ability to ensure that members were focused on their mandate and avoided either mission creep or being diverted to other responsibilities in the detachment. It was also recommended that between four to six constables be assigned to the team. Some of the larger jurisdictions would benefit from having multiple teams of this structure. Regardless of the size of the detachment, a ratio of approximately two to three active prolific offenders per team member might be an appropriate guideline to work with, although this is not an evidence-based recommendation.

In addition, most of the detachments expressed a desire for a dedicated analyst to support the work of prolific offender management. Analysts provide an essential role for prolific offender

management as they support the teams in identifying their targets, whether that is based on a quantitative assessment, an intelligence-based assessment, or a combination of the two. Analysts also provide up to date information on targets for the teams that can be shared with non-prolific offender management team members when needed. While it may not be reasonable to suggest that all detachments, regardless of size, have an assigned analyst, it was clear that for the detachments without an in-house analyst the communication between prolific offender management teams or personnel and analysts was not occurring on a regular basis.

Given the large number of detachments that may be supported by a single district analyst, it may be worthwhile to fund some district analyst positions that are specific to supporting a number of assigned detachments to identify and manage their prolific/priority offender populations. These analysts should be in contact with their assigned detachments on a much more frequent and routine basis, and the lines of communication should be two-way and promoted through regularly scheduled monthly meetings between the analyst and the detachment. The benefit of this approach is that it allows the analyst to be much more aware about the detachment's priorities resulting in the analyst providing profiles and reports consistent with that specific detachment's needs. As discussed in more depth below, it would also be beneficial to hold regular regional meetings with the District Analyst(s) and their assigned detachments to share information about multi-jurisdictional prolific/priority offenders. Again, it is important that the analyst for those detachments without an in-house analyst use the definitions and criteria established by the detachment rather than 'E' Division's definition to ensure that the reports and information they produce is useful to the detachment and in line with the detachment's priorities.

ESTABLISHING OUTCOMES TO MEASURE SUCCESS

The participating detachments used various methods to assess their effectiveness in responding to prolific, priority, and social chronic offenders. Several detachments monitored changes to crime statistics or rates or collected feedback from other police officers or from the public. Some detachments based their definitions of success on whether a prolific offender stopped or reduced their offending, regardless of whether this was through the offender's decision to desist from engaging in criminality, by successfully completing some intervention or treatment program, due to the offender being incarceration, or because the offender moved to another community. Other detachments measured success by increased conviction rates or offenders receiving longer sentences. Based on the information collected in this study, there were no clearly stated rationale for using these different approaches to measure success.

The extent to which detachments are currently tracking information about their targeted population and the method by which they are tracking this information is unknown. Given this, it is recommended that detachments develop tracking sheets and databases where officers can record information about the type of offender they target (i.e., a prolific offender based on quantity and frequency of police contacts; a priority offender based on police contacts and intelligence; or a social chronic based on police contacts and psychosocial needs), the approaches officers have taken with each individual, such as the number of contacts with the team, the nature of those contacts, whether a notification letter was delivered, whether the Lifestyle Interview was completed, and

which resources were offered, and the responses of the offender. This will enable detachments to better measure their outputs and assess these measures against outcomes.

It is also recommended that as part of the training on prolific offender management, the intended outcomes of these programs be more clearly articulated. Doing so will support the various teams in working towards more measurable goals. For example, if success is measured by more convictions and longer sentences, the detachment may want to advocate for a dedicated Crown Counsel to better support this intended outcome. If success is measured by reductions in overall crime rates, the detachment could work more closely with their detachment or district-level analyst to produce regular reports to evaluate this outcome and develop additional strategies to support this outcome. If success is measured by ending the crime cycle for a prolific offender, the detachment could work towards establishing more formalized partnerships with non-criminal justice agencies where they can more closely measure the participation of offenders and effectiveness of various community resources. Prolific offender management teams should clearly articulate the goals that they are working towards and should identify the outputs that need to be measured to evaluate the degree to which they are achieving their stated and intended goals.

PILOT PROGRAMS OR MODELS

While approaches to prolific offender management that focus on strategic partnerships, dedicated Crown, or regional teams may not work for all jurisdictions across the province, these tactics may be beneficial to implement in some jurisdictions. However, their empirical value towards prolific offender management has not been clearly established in the literature. Therefore, the province may want to consider piloting and empirically measuring the outcomes of the following three approaches to prolific offender management, assessing whether these models work well, why they work well in those jurisdictions, and the cost/benefit outcome of each of these approaches.

Situation Table Scenario/Formalized Partnerships

Prior research in British Columbia by Rezansoff (2012) identified that interagency collaboration resulted in substantial reductions in offending. However, the interview data in the current project indicated that interagency collaboration for prolific offender management was rare. In the current project, participants seemed to understand that the root of the behaviours they were dealing with lay with a few key issues, such as addictions, mental health, unemployment, and homelessness. Yet, prolific offender management members struggled with addressing these effectively for at least two reasons. First, while several detachments attempted to conduct the Lifestyle Interview with their target population, few offenders were willing to participate in this process. Second, the detachments generally did not seem to have sufficient formalized partnerships with relevant community partners. The result of this was that they were often unable to offer more than very basic information when it came to the rehabilitation pillar of the program. However, whether the rehabilitation pillar of prolific offender management should even be a police responsibility must be considered carefully. Establishing more formal partnerships and routine information sharing between various partners and stakeholders is critical for the rehabilitation pillar to be achieved successfully. This would enable police to focus more on the pillar that is much more consistent with

their policing mandate, namely targeted enforcement and secondarily displacement. While the police have a role to play, they should rely on their community partners to provide, monitor, and achieve the rehabilitation pillar. With little ability to connect a prolific or priority offenders to the appropriate resources, the enforcement arm of the three-pillar prolific offender management strategy is weakened, as offenders may believe they have few alternatives other than crime. However, if targeted enforcement is successful to the point where an offender chooses to access rehabilitation, having a strategic plan in place for how and where to connect them to the required resources should increase the success of the rehabilitation pillar.

Given this, it may be worthwhile for the province to pilot more extensively the use of situation tables to formalize information sharing and interagency efforts for prolific offender management. Holding regular meetings with partners is essential to ensuring that the proper information flows between those who hold different pieces of information and those in the best position to assist an offender. For example, formalizing a once-a-month meeting between the prolific offender management team and key partners, such as probation/community corrections, federal corrections, mental health/addictions, housing, and other relevant partners to share information, review and update the prolific/priority offender list, and strategically plan how to connect prolific offenders to the services or programs they require would support the rehabilitation pillar of prolific offender management. While police experience difficulty with conducting the Lifestyle Interview with offenders directly, they may be able to shift the Lifestyle Interview into more of a Risk-Needs-Responsivity type of assessment that is completed by their community partners, as each partner could contribute the information they hold and are able to share with other partners, including the police, regarding prolific/priority offenders. While some information may be considered private, it may be worthwhile to explore whether an agency can designate an offender as prolific/priority to allow for more open information sharing practices.

This approach would also assist police and their partners to implement a combination of IOM and RNR approaches. When a prolific offender is first identified as a community concern and added to the list of current targets, the interagency prolific/priority offender team can work together to identify the individual's risks and needs, in addition to identifying relevant programs or resources to connect the offender with. Should attempts at rehabilitation fail and the prolific offender require the enforcement pillar of the three-pillar approach, the team could then shift to an IOM approach where correctional staff would take the lead in updating the offender's risks and needs. This would also allow correctional staff to respond through connection to relevant programs and resources offered in the institution. As the prolific offender transitions back to the community post-sentence, the interagency prolific/priority offender team would continue to monitor the offender's RNR progress, updating their risk and needs over time, and monitoring the offender's compliance in the community to post-release conditions.

To test the utility of such an approach, several communities that are interested in piloting situation tables could be matched based on size, number and type of prolific offenders, and willing partners, with some of these communities establishing a situation table and others continuing as they have in the past. An evaluation could take place after six months and 12 months to assess the outcomes, in terms of reduced risk for offending and recidivism, connection to and participation in programs and

services, court-related outcomes, community reintegration, partner information sharing, the effectiveness of the tables in mobilizing support for particular interventions.

Related to this, it might be useful to consider co-locating probation and police for those detachments with a large number of prolific offenders to assess the degree to which this type of structure contributes to increasing information sharing between the police and probation, increases the effective enforcement of court mandated conditions, and results in more prolific offenders choosing to change their behaviour. Of note, co-locating probation and the police may also be beneficial for smaller detachments with fewer prolific offender management members and probation officers.

Designated Crown in High-Prolific Base Rate Jurisdictions

Given the lack of formal partnerships outside of the detachment itself, while many detachments reported that their prolific offender management consisted of a combination of enforcement, rehabilitation, or displacement, most detachments relied primarily on enforcement. Generally, this came down to curfew checks designed to confirm that the individual was abiding by their conditions. If offenders were not under conditions but posed a potential threat to the community, the prolific offender management team might surveil or otherwise keep an eye on an offender's activities. However, some of the participants also spoke about one of the main challenges to success was the short sentences given to prolific/priority offenders, if they even had charges approved. A few participants also spoke about the negative relationship they had with Crown. While many jurisdictions may not have a sufficient prolific offender base to require a dedicated Crown, the province might consider piloting a dedicated Crown for prolific offenders in those jurisdictions where there are a high number of active prolific offenders in the community. Alternatively, establishing a dedicated Crown who works on a regional basis may be an option for smaller jurisdictions with a larger number of cross-jurisdictional prolific offenders.

While there is a lack of research on the effectiveness of these models, having a dedicated Crown Counsel could mean that Crown Counsel become even more familiar with the prolific offender's cycle of offending, their underlying reasons for offending, any previously attempted strategies to rehabilitate or otherwise deter the offender, and the need for effective court responses when previous attempts at deterrence and rehabilitation have failed. Again, while the evidence-base is lacking, this type of approach may result in increased convictions, longer sentences, and more comprehensive responses to prolific offenders. Relatedly, specialized courts, such as drug courts, mental health courts, and community courts, that address the underlying mental health, addictions, homelessness, unemployment, and other related issues typically associated with prolific offending may result in more meaningful and effective criminal justice system responses to these individuals. There are a number of such specialized courts already in operation across British Columbia, and it would be worthwhile to evaluate their effects on prolific offender populations who may be receiving services through the specialized approach.

Regional Teams or Meetings

While there was a lot of support for regional approaches to prolific offender management, there were also some concerns about how smaller detachments would fare in relation to larger detachments, and about the loss of local knowledge and emphasis on local priorities. The participants from the Island District referred to a pilot regional approach. If this approach has not yet been evaluated, doing so is recommended. This approach may also work well for some jurisdictions in the North, where some detachments were already partnering with other detachments and sharing resources to engage in prolific offender management for cross-jurisdictional offenders. The province should consider formally piloting a regional approach in the North District.

An alternative approach that supports a regional approach while maintaining the community-specific focus is to ensure that all Districts are routinely engaging in regional meetings on a regular basis. Some detachments reported participating in these, though it was not clear how often they occurred, how formal they were, or who attended. It would be worthwhile to formalize regional meetings where a few members per team, including an analyst whenever possible, meet with nearby detachments every two to three months to discuss their prolific offender population. These discussions should focus on the specific population they are currently dealing with, the strategies they are currently using, best practices, how much displacement is occurring and what are the effects of displacement, the population they anticipate dealing with in the near future, and cross-jurisdictional strategies that they may consider implementing for particular offenders who are known to cross detachment boundaries. Again, routine information sharing is critical for effective prolific offender management.

Conclusion

To summarize, the ideal model for prolific offender management across E-Division RCMP detachments could be described as follows: a corporal or staff sergeant assigned to keep the team on mandate; a team of approximately four to six constables who could manage up to 12 to 18 active prolific/priority offenders simultaneously; a dedicated analyst who routinely feeds the team with updated information to support their work; a more broadly defined target population that can be based on prolific offending or priority concerns for that jurisdiction; more formalized partnerships with probation (in particular) as well as other relevant partners (e.g. federal corrections, a court liaison, mental health, housing) where information is routinely shared and steps towards rehabilitation can be more acutely offered; regional prolific offender management meetings every few months, and potentially a dedicated Crown/regional Crown.

Prolific offender management has been demonstrated as a successful approach to crime reduction. While the 'E' Division RCMP recognize this and have developed related policy, it is clear from this current project that there is no one unified approach to prolific offender management across the province, nor should there be given the varying community needs and resources. Still, the general principles of prolific offender management, in terms of the underlying causes of criminality and the corresponding three-pillared response, should underlie any prolific offender management program.

Regardless of the specific target population each jurisdiction decides to focus on and their varying threshold for intervention, identifying the populations that the members or teams are going to target and work with, providing training on the principles of crime reduction and prolific offender management to team members, supporting prolific offender management teams and personnel to stay on their mandate, providing access to information and intelligence through dedicated district- or detachment-level analysts, and emphasizing the values of interagency partnerships should be key components of 'E' Division's standard model for prolific offender management.

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