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Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

**NEW POLICE FINANCING MODEL TO TAKE EFFECT IN 2007**

VANCOUVER – Changes to ensure greater fairness in how communities’ policing costs are calculated will take effect in 2007, providing three years for communities to plan for the new arrangements, Solicitor General Rich Coleman announced today.

“Since 1999, when the UBCM requested changes, local governments have made it clear that there are significant inequities in how community policing costs are determined,” Coleman said. “At the same time, Premier Campbell has made it clear that our priority is to work with those communities to ensure changes are made fairly and equitably for local taxpayers.

“Local governments, communities and the UBCM have provided extensive input and advice on the best timeframe for implementing these changes. The timeframe we’re announcing today will allow three full years with no changes for communities to plan for implementation. It will also allow them to use the most current data from the upcoming 2006 census to calculate costs.

“Local governments have indicated they need time to prepare for this, particularly in light of the challenges many are facing this year, including wildfires, the impact of BSE and the softwood lumber dispute. In light of those pressures, it seems only appropriate to provide more time to prepare for implementation.”

When the changes are implemented, communities with populations under 5,000 will fund 35 per cent of policing costs. That compares to 70 per cent for communities with populations over 5,000, 90 per cent for communities over 15,000, and 100 per cent for communities with no RCMP contracts.

In addition, the province funds a further \$190 million for police arrangements to ensure full and adequate law enforcement across the province.

“I want to thank all members of the UBCM for working with us to implement these changes in the fairest way possible,” Coleman concluded.

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