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Community and Police
Working Together

1998 June 10

Police Executive Research Forum
1120 Connecticut Avenue NW
Suite 930
Washington, D.C.
U.S.A. 20036

Attention: 1998 Herman Goldstein Award Selection Committee

Please find enclosed for your consideration in the sixth annual Herman Goldstein Award for Excellence in Problem-Oriented Policing the Calgary Police Service's submission on the establishment of its Domestic Conflict Unit.

The 1,700-member strong Calgary Police Service - in concert with other agencies and the citizens of Calgary, Alberta -- is instrumental in preserving the quality of life in our community by maintaining Calgary as a secure place in which to live. In doing so, the Calgary Police Service is dedicated philosophically and operationally to the concept of community-based policing.

Our primary focus is on crime prevention, crime detection and apprehension, and traffic safety. Our most effective tools in delivering our policing services are positive community relations, education, problem-solving and the effective use of current technology to analyse conditions, project trends and deploy resources.

Again, thank you for your consideration of our submission in the 1998 Herman Goldstein Award for Excellence in Problem-Oriented Policing.

Yours sincerely,


for **Christine E. Silverberg**
CHIEF OF POLICE

/ht

CALGARY POLICE SERVICE DOMESTIC CONFLICT UNIT

ABSTRACT

The Calgary Police Service (CPS), through a resolute commitment to community policing, believes all citizens have the right to live in an environment free of violence. The issue of domestic violence is a social concern that the Calgary Police Service recognizes as a priority crime. Initiatives and strategies will be undertaken which will reduce and diminish the number of incidents and traumatic effects experienced by victims and their families. This will be achieved through a commitment to a combined effort of the CPS, communities and external agencies. Through a dissolution of the cycle of violence, the Calgary Police Service will address all offences which are based on living and growing within a home permeated with domestic conflict.

In communities throughout North America, interventions have been established that bring together police, prosecutors, judges, probation officers, social workers and victims' advocates in a coordinated response to domestic violence. These initiatives show a great deal of consistency and effectiveness in preventing continued domestic violence. Both are necessary to establish consistent recognition of domestic violence as a serious criminal offence within the Criminal Justice System and the broader community.

Consistent with and based on the recommendations contained in the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police policy document - Responding to Family Violence: A Challenge to Police Management; the Family, Youth & Violent Crime Section actioned the formation of the Domestic Conflict Unit in April 1997 as the focal point for internal service units and external community partners to come together to respond to the issues of neglect, abuse and violence within the domestic context in the Calgary community.

The Unit is financed as a specific programme within the Family, Youth & Violent Crime Section, a component of the Criminal Investigation Division.

The design of the Unit and the planning process bringing it to fruition was consistent with the application of problem solving policing. Extensive research was conducted by the Advisory Committee on Family Conflict Model Formulation Team, consisting of cross functional Service members. The issue of domestic conflict was scanned, the resulting information analysed and a response was visioned in an internal plan entitled Partners in Prevention.

Additionally, a Unit manager was selected who conducted extensive research which resulted in a two stage Unit mandate. The mandate identified an investigative strategy for the newly formed Domestic Conflict Unit (DCU) and a training strategy for the CPS. Following Service review, external community partners were consulted and participated in refining the mandate of the unit. Modifications to the computerized Police Information Management System required to facilitate data collection and for later use in the evaluation of the unit and analysis of gathered data were undertaken by task group representatives from all functional areas impacted.

Training standards and selection criteria for Unit personnel were also developed, the former being consistent with or exceeding Alberta Justice standards.

The implementation phase of the Domestic Conflict Unit coincided with the completion of planned changes to the police service reporting mechanisms. A train the trainer process along with supporting documentation was developed and actioned to ensure consistency throughout the Service, with respect to domestic occurrence and information reporting. Input was sought and received from process users and minor changes were made to fine-tune the system. The reporting process is reviewed monthly.

Operationally, the Domestic Conflict Unit provides follow-up services to victims of domestic conflict during days and evenings. Emergency response remains a function of first responders from field units deployed throughout the policing districts. As well, new case intakes to the DCU result from direct referrals by community partner agencies such as Calgary Legal Guidance and community shelters. DCU members, while centrally housed in headquarters, are also responsible for acting as a specific district liaison.

The Domestic Conflict Unit is also responsible for providing Service personnel with ongoing learning experiences and training that reflects the primary concern of victim safety and includes information concerning topics such as the cycle of violence; collaboration with community resources/referrals; ethno-cultural dynamics. A F.A.S.T. Facts newsletter is also distributed to each sworn and civilian service member and is also forwarded to community partners.

An evaluation of the Unit's effectiveness and efficiency will be both a quantitative and qualitative analysis. This will occur in the latter part of 1998.

SCANNING

The traditional response by police services to domestic violence is slowly being enhanced by innovation and experimentation. Prior to this evolution of response, domestic violence was viewed as a private family matter. Unfortunately, this attitude remains prevalent in the minds of many persons involved in the criminal justice process.

The Calgary Police Service has identified the need for an improved service model as it relates to domestic violence. Recognition has emerged that domestic violence must be investigated by specialists who recognize and understand the issues and dynamics of domestic violence. These specialists will employ and foster a collaborative approach rather than a general investigation approach operating independently from other available community services.

Such innovation is taking place at several stages of the intervention phase, but without collaborative interaction of agencies within the process. This was resulting in limited impact on the improvement of victim safety and well-being. Compounding the problem, a message of minimization of the severity of abusive acts was being sent to society and offenders alike. The CPS understands that to continue down the same road will result in a limited impact of any applied strategies and limit the problem solving potential.

The domestic abuse investigation service model delivered by the Calgary Police Service has historically been identified as requiring improvement and routine scrutiny has occurred regularly in attempts to improve victim safety, investigations and means of collaboration. As a process of developing a framework for action, in November 1995, then Deputy Chief J. Graham actioned the Advisory Committee of Family Violence (ACFC).

The mandate of the ACFC was to identify and focus areas of concerns both internally and externally in addition to formulating a strategy for the CPS to employ which would afford an improved response to domestic violence investigations and facilitate a collaborative community approach.

As a result of the analytical findings of both ACFC and the Unit manager, the following issues were identified as requiring refinement or development for implementation. The areas of focused attention, established as priorities, included:

- Action a specialized unit to investigate domestic violence cases.
- Develop and implement an improved reporting system which better captures pertinent data specifically linked to domestic abuse situations. As a component of this process redefine the relationships and situations which comprise domestic abuse.
- Establish domestic abuse as a priority crime which will be investigated utilizing all investigative strategies available to members.
- Improve access and enhance Service delivery to citizens exposed to domestic abuse, whatever severity, and to ensure this is a continuing process.

- Ensure the Service uses all measures to protect victims of domestic conflict, prevent future violence and place victim safety as a top priority.
- Reinforce, that assault is a crime whether it has been committed in public or within the confines of a victim's home or within the family unit, and that aggressors will be held accountable and responsible for their behavior.
- Sensitize members of the Service to the fact that domestic abuse is a life threatening and/or physically and mentally debilitating condition with immeasurable costs and effects to society. Recognize that victims and family members have often endured years of abuse and must be dealt with in sensitive yet direct manner.
- Establish a protocol with referral agencies, Corrections, Crown Prosecutor's office and legislators to provide a seamless response to victims of domestic abuse. In doing so, provide the most effective and efficient services to address and assist with victims' needs. Ensure members of the Service are supplied with the tools and information necessary to assess high risk situations, which allows them to respond with the most appropriate assistance, intervention and referrals.
- Identify the most appropriate content and coordinate training of Service members to enhance their ability to identify and address domestic conflict issues.
- Through this multi-faceted approach of investigation, collaboration and learning, establish the Domestic Conflict Unit as a centre of excellence in the field of domestic abuse investigations.

To foster this collaborative approach and philosophy within the Calgary Police Service, the Family, Youth & Violent Crime Section was organizationally formalized in April 1996.

This realignment brought together existing Service resources to provide a focused and consistent response to domestic conflict, youth at risk and violent crimes within the context of community-based policing.

ANALYSIS

The Calgary Police Service accepted literature and research findings which identified a need for earlier and improved intervention with both victims and perpetrators. The aim would be to intervene in the cycle of violence; particularly in relation to children where violence seen is violence learned. Research papers and studies which correlated the link between youth crime and growing up in a home affected by domestic violence were also reviewed.

The literature repeatedly reinforced and illustrated the extreme increase in the propensity for children who have grown up exposed to domestic violence to have significant behavioral problems, often leading to violent criminal activity. This cycle conveys an undesirable message that violence is an acceptable means to resolve conflict. By addressing the cycle of violence, the CPS can affect future offences spawned by living and growing within a home overwhelmed with domestic conflict.

Internally the CPS identified the need for attitudes to change before a significant impact on the incidence of domestic violence could occur. Research identified the need to reinforce the fact that violence is a criminal act no matter whether the act has been perpetrated in public or within the home. Studies originating both in Canada and throughout North America identified this point as an important message which must be absorbed by all members of the Criminal Justice System and society as a whole.

Alberta Justice established minimum standards for both Policing and Prosecutorial procedures when conducting domestic violence investigations. During the analysis phase, the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police report "Responding to Family Violence: A challenge to Police Management" was reviewed at length. This document was used as a framework and guide in the development of a strategy the Domestic Conflict Unit would follow in both the development of a specialized team of investigators and a minimum training standard.

During the past two decades, the Calgary Police Service has recognized some important changes in the laws to assist victims of domestic violence. However, the uneven enforcement of the new laws and initiatives continues to plague the progress of providing needed protection to victims of domestic violence at the earliest possible opportunity.

Information identifying mandatory charging policies when implemented without changes in the other parts of the legal system will have little lasting impact on how police respond to incidents of domestic violence. If the official rhetoric about treating domestic violence as a crime is genuine, changes in attitude must also occur at all levels within the criminal justice system in coordination with changes in law enforcement practices.

In addition, services in the community must be well integrated with a coordinated Criminal Justice System response. A resolution to domestic violence is not a one agency issue. Significant progress will not be realized if agencies attempt to function as independent entities.

A manager was appointed in April 1997 and immediately identified the need to embark into an intensive learning process. Through comprehensive dialogue with community services representatives, it was identified that limited understanding of domestic violence issues among police officers represented a major obstacle embedded within domestic violence investigations. This resulted in victims being "revictimized" by investigators through unintentional actions and statements. Experts in the field identified that many actions and statements by police officers actually reinforced in the victim's mind the notion that they were the cause of the abuse.

This unintentionally placed the blame directly upon the victim, reaffirming the statements made by abusers during and after violent outbursts. Very often, police officers were reinforcing themes implanted in a victim's mind which, in turn, may prevent them from ever seeking police intervention again. Furthermore, the Domestic Conflict Unit manager reinforced the need to dispel many myths associated with domestic violence which were routinely accepted by police officers as factual.

The Unit manager was in short order invited or assumed a seat on no less than 12 community committees. It was during these meetings the next major component was analyzed. Exhaustive dialogue took place respecting the magnitude of the problem and what the community partners envisioned as the role of the police in domestic violence situations.

Specifically, they were asked to assist in the identification of a role for the Domestic Conflict Unit. The message was clear that the community wanted criminal intervention from the police while practicing a holistic, collaborative approach to the problem. Such an approach would facilitate a seamless service response to victims and their children.

In addition, community partners reaffirmed that police officers' understanding and awareness must be improved through learning opportunities to foster the realization that the problem does not end with the arrest of the accused.

During consultation with survivors of domestic violence the DCU manager came to understand that a major impact of domestic violence is that many victims come to see their homes as extremely dangerous places. Research was also analyzed which reflected the fact that hospital emergency rooms and family medical practices alike report a significant number of patients are repeat victims of domestic violence. A large portion of these patients had chosen not to seek police intervention or counseling, which in turn perpetuated the cycle of violence. This one factor alone weighs heavily upon the health care system.

During the analysis period of this project, the DCU manager examined a number of different policing models from across North America. This revealed the presence of a diverse number of approaches and philosophies for attacking this very serious and deep-rooted problem. The underlying theme of each model was the identified need for a charging policy whenever reasonable and probable grounds exist, regardless of the wishes of the victim.

Further, each project addressed the requirement to change the overall attitude of police officers when investigating domestic abuse situations. The third common denominator was the need for improved cross-functional learning opportunities relating to domestic violence. The final encompassing message was that regardless of design, the process must be collaborative and include the criminal justice system and service providers.

Careful consideration was given to all the factual information relating to domestic violence. Methods were explored which would facilitate access to persons who had not historically reported abuse to the police.

While we appreciate the need for timely consideration of the project, we also recognize that an initiative of this magnitude requires extensive input, detailed attention to operational issues and careful evaluation.

RESPONSE

The objective of the Calgary Police Service's Domestic Conflict Unit is to facilitate resolution for those affected by domestic violence and to ensure their safety and well-being while employing a collaborative approach involving all stakeholders.

The Domestic Conflict Unit, initially comprised of a sergeant and constable coordinator, soon came to include a constable investigator position, which was added by way of secondment. This secondment was deemed necessary due to the burgeoning Service call load and was further impacted by calls for service from external agencies.

During the period May 15, 1997 to August 1, 1997, the sole constable investigator was assigned approximately 45 calls for service which required extensive intervention and follow-up. During this initial four month scanning and analysis phase, the DCU sergeant developed a strategic plan for the DCU based on all information gleaned during the analysis stage.

He developed a two-stage mandate which incorporated an investigative strategy and training strategy for all CPS members. This included the completion of a standard operating procedure; mandate; selection criteria for DCU members; goals and objectives; the writing of a policy as it pertains to internal domestic violence situations; job descriptions for the three positions; developmental assessments; and a training standard for service members and recruits. In conjunction with the unit coordinator and a systems analyst, a data base for factual recovery of information for the DCU was created. A risk assessment process which identified cases of extreme danger was also formulated.

A public awareness process was also embarked upon to announce the commencement of the Domestic Conflict Unit to Service members and community partners. These information forums were conducted in a manner which facilitated a two-way flow of information allowing equal learning for the audience and presenter. Information learned was then taken back and each of the above initiatives was refined.

On August 1, 1997, three additional constable investigators were added to the strength of the Domestic Conflict Unit. During the period August 1, 1997 to June 3, 1998, the DCU undertook 545 cases for investigation.

The Domestic Conflict Unit investigated cases based on the following criteria:

1. Cases identified as high risk situations were assigned top priority.
2. Cases determined to be of a chronic nature were assigned with a view to limiting call backs to these situations or to determine prolonged criminal abuse.
3. Members of the Domestic Conflict Unit were first responders to cases referred by external agencies.
4. Cases referred by the Crown Prosecutor's office where the potential existed for witnesses to recant their evidence were investigated upon request.

Unit members also have additional responsibilities:

- The development and presentation of a 16-hour recruit lecture.
- The development of minimum training standards for the Service. This strategy includes production of a DCU bulletin which addresses awareness issues, learning issues, policy issues and topical ideas regarding domestic violence and which is disseminated to every sworn and civilian member of the CPS.
- The training and educating of all Service members.
- The assessment of the best practices of the Unit and other agency initiatives with a view to continuous improvement of the Unit and Service-wide response to domestic conflict.

During an average month, the Calgary Police Service responds to approximately 850 to 900 calls for service to domestic related incidents. Each incident responded to by uniformed personnel is reviewed and a risk assessment is completed by DCU members. Initially the DCU attempted to respond to all cases where there was demonstrated violence toward a victim and/or where children were deemed to be at an identifiable risk. The overwhelming number of incidents falling within this definition, in addition to human resource restrictions, caused the selection criteria to be re-examined. The Unit now responds only to cases demonstrating imminent danger, while forwarding cases involving children to Alberta Family Social Services and the CPS Child at Risk Response Team (CARRT).

In the course of operations, the Domestic Conflict Unit responds to numerous inquiries for advice and case conferencing. Inquiries and requests for service have been generated from probation, parole, other police agencies, judges, psychologists, doctors, therapists, shelters and Service members.

A number of internal policies and practices have resulted in a review of the need to expand the Unit mandate to include investigative partnerships with already assigned specialty unit members; for example, to assist in the investigation of all cases of abduction and sexual assault which fall within the realm of domestic relationship.

These offences are recognized as an escalation of the cycle of violence. A further successful response of the DCU is to external agencies and victims who historically would not have reported abuse. These persons now come forward in situations where the DCU has been committed as the first responder.

These incidents remain a very high priority; particularly when an independent risk assessment indicating the need for immediate intervention has been completed by outside professionals in the field. As well, many victims from external referrals are persons who have not previously disclosed due to a lack of trust in police or previous non-productive experiences. The first response capability of the DCU to these situations eliminates the need for repeated examination and interviewing of the victim by an array of different responders.

The Domestic Conflict Unit undertakes extensive case management and presents to Crown Prosecutors for trial only those cases that are beyond reproach and have left very little room for legal manoeuvres. This high standard of investigation has led to many early guilty pleas, detention of accused persons and increased sentences.

Often members of the DCU are capable of overcoming ethno-cultural issues; a victim's lack of resolve to attend court; a victim's tendency to involve investigators in trivial decisions; and/or the reluctance of a victim to provide investigators with assistance. These successes are realized due to the ability of members of the DCU to convey to victims and service providers their deep understanding of the issues and dynamics associated with domestic violence and their utilization of a caring and sensitive service model.

The Unit is routinely requested to facilitate training sessions and information forums with outside agencies. These forums often include the attendance of the entire Unit as the meetings are used as contact development opportunities. Each member of the DCU has embarked on an extensive learning regime. These learning opportunities are attended both during working hours and on the members own time and initiative.

Each investigator of the DCU is assigned a District of responsibility. Duties include all investigations in the assigned District as well as informal and formal training sessions for District members.

The DCU has undertaken a form of partnering which does not limit the use of all relevant stakeholders who work toward the needs of an identified victim. The unit works collaboratively with a number of agencies/individuals to effect a specific end: victim safety. These instances are further used as case studies during training of recruits.

Opinions and hard facts demonstrate the Unit has on at least six occasions prevented aggravated assaults or death. The Unit has established solid partnerships with the Calgary Counselling Centres, local women's shelters, Bethany Help Line, Crown Prosecutor's office, Action Committee against Violence, Calgary Legal Guidance, Discovery House (a second stage housing project for women), a number of local ad hoc communities, the East Indian Community for Harmonious Families, the Cultural Resource Unit of the Calgary Board of Education, parole and probation workers. Further, the Unit has developed a working relationship with 1st Energy Corporation in obtaining emergency funding to provide upgraded security to victims' homes.

A 'domestic conflict' handout for members of the public is used as a medium to convey information as it pertains to the CPS and the DCU. This bulletin has been translated into a number of different languages in recognition of the ethno-cultural diversity within Calgary's communities.

The Domestic Conflict Unit has very quickly established credibility with clients, service providers, police officers and collateral professionals alike. This credibility is illustrated by the following significant achievements:

1. Receipt of a certificate of appreciation recognizing outstanding volunteer service in 1997 from the Calgary Women's Emergency Shelter.

2. The implementation and successes of the Domestic Conflict Unit were singled out for recognition by the University of Calgary during the Montreal Massacre Memorial as a major achievement in the fight against violence.
3. The Domestic Conflict Unit was recognized during the Inaugural Workshop of Hope as a major contributor to the fight against Domestic Violence.
4. The Domestic Conflict Unit was the recipient of the Sheriff King Family Support Centre's Professionals of the Month Award for January 1998.

It is integral to the success of the Unit that the momentum, trust and credibility of the unit be maintained on all fronts.

The most vital priority is the ability of the Unit to respond to cases of imminent danger or violence regardless of which agency has made the referral. It is also important that the unit remain credible with street members and that it is available as a follow-up, investigative and guidance tool.

To this end, the unit is utilizing a regular bulletin (F.A.S.T. Facts) to address training and awareness concerns. In addition, members reinforce that successful long-term resolution of domestic violence cases requires thorough investigations which utilize all investigative strategies available.

Members of the DCU convey to all members of the Calgary Police Service that domestic violence investigations should be undertaken with the objective of collecting the best evidence possible from all available sources, without limiting evidence to the written statement of the victim and a possible statement by the perpetrator. Furthermore, members of the DCU facilitate learning opportunities which educate and sensitize all CPS members to the complex underlying issues of domestic violence.

The DCU manager recognizes appropriate attitudes and investigative habits will not be developed by simply providing written materials. Concepts must be entrenched by repeated successful investigations and interventions.

Presently, the generalist approach to domestic violence investigations is less responsive than the situation often demands. This results in the victim often being re-victimized and lost opportunities for successful prosecutions or intervention.

Future succession planning for the Unit is also essential. The Unit must remain comprised of members who have a demonstrated desire and aptitude for this type of police investigation. To provide a vehicle for this intensive training an initiative has been outlined which will add five training positions to the strength of the Unit. Staff would be seconded from other Service areas and would be committed on a two-month rotating basis.

Members would be assigned with a permanent unit member as a partner. This procedure would greatly decrease the learning curve and facilitate hands-on training. In addition, future replacement personnel would be developed and identified. This would afford the supervisor an opportunity to mentor individual understanding and commitment to the issues of domestic violence.

The most important benefit of such a practice would be the level of training 20 to 30 members of the Service would receive annually. It is anticipated each member trained would take back to the street a dramatically increased understanding of the dynamics and issues connected to domestic violence investigations. Furthermore, each trainee would have received hands-on training in developing good case management and investigative strategies applicable to all types of investigations. Trainees would develop or refine their skill sets to assist in further training, advice and guidance to their District peers, partners and Service recruits.

During the analysis phase, an important component which was identified and required assessment was member well-being. Domestic violence investigations are recognized as being very stressful and a high burnout rate is prevalent. To assist members with this concern, the DCU manager has established a procedure for each member to embark on a one-hour session with the CPS psychologist.

As reviewed in the analysis phase, an integral component to successful resolutions to domestic violence investigations is the active involvement of other members of the Criminal Justice System. To this end, members of the DCU have worked closely with Crown Prosecutors to increase their awareness levels.

During the first year of operation there has been a noticeable increase in the understanding projected by prosecutors. In addition to direct interaction, members of the DCU were delegates to a multiple agency conference to formulate a plan for a pilot court project in the City of Calgary. As a result of the conference, a strategy committee was struck. The DCU sergeant is a member of this working group which has produced a strategic plan for implementation of this project. The plan has been presented to both the Federal and Provincial Ministers of Justice. Both Ministers responded favorably and endorsed continuation of the project.

ASSESSMENT

An evaluation of the Domestic Conflict Unit's effectiveness and efficiency will involve both quantitative and qualitative analysis. This will occur in the latter part of 1998.

To date, success experienced by the Domestic Conflict Unit has been measured by the following results:

- The Unit has handled approximately 540 cases since August 1997. Involvement in the cases have ranged from first response and total case management to simply providing advice.
- Prior to the inception of the Unit, a victim who recanted evidence or statements was dealt with by either the Crown Prosecutor or an original investigating officer. All of these situations are now dealt with by a member of DCU. The success realized is an approximate 90 per cent return to original statement and attendance at court as reliable witnesses. Further to these investigations, a number of accused persons have been charged with obstructing justice through having coerced the victim to change their statement.

- The Unit has experienced a dramatic increase in the number of accused persons who are detained or are released on stringent conditions.
- The conviction rate of the DCU is 100 per cent for cases initiated or taken over by members of the Unit.
- Early guilty pleas have increased dramatically for cases where members of the DCU are involved in the investigation.
- Each of these successes during the Criminal Justice process are routinely observed by field officers, which in turn will have a definite impact on the investigative strategies they will employ in the future.
- The level of awareness with the Prosecutor's office has increased directly as result of interaction and preparation meetings with members of the Unit, who routinely share their knowledge.
- Acceptance of the need for change and the need for increased awareness by field officers is demonstrated during regular learning sessions. During the infancy of the Unit there was a definite reluctance by members to listen to the message. Members now regularly request advice, assistance and guidance from Unit members. This change in attitude is reflected in the quality of reports being submitted.
- Unit credibility is ensconced with all external agencies who provide services related to domestic violence. This is recognised through regular feedback, representation on community committees and the overwhelming number of referrals received from each agency. In addition, the DCU manager and members have been asked to lecture to the following groups: Alberta Social Services (all departments), the three shelters, Discovery House, probation, parole, University of Calgary Law Students, the Association of Women Health Obstetrical Neo-natal Nursing and Maternity Infant Nurse Association, the Alberta Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission, the Mayor's Task Force Consultation meeting and to multiple Units within the Calgary Police Service.

The success of DCU is further illustrated by the following public recognition:

1. Receipt of a certificate of appreciation recognizing outstanding volunteer service in 1997 from the Calgary Women's Emergency Shelter.
 2. The implementation and successes of the Domestic Conflict Unit was recognized by the University of Calgary during the Montreal Massacre Memorial, as major achievement in the fight against violence.
 3. The Domestic Conflict unit was recognized during the Inaugural Workshop of Hope as a major contributor to the fight against Domestic Violence.
 4. The Domestic Conflict Unit was the recipient of the Sheriff King Family Support Centre's Professionals of the Month Award for January 1998.
- With the implementation of the upgraded reporting system and daily review of each domestic report submitted, an assessment of the standard of reports is continuous. Marked improvement has been noted in the level of investigations conducted, compliance with policy and the quality of domestic reports submitted by street personnel. The daily report review also provides the DCU sergeant an opportunity to measure the degree of comprehension and practical application of the theory provided in training materials to all members of the CPS. Once again, there appears to be an increased understanding of domestic violence and the obstacles an investigator will need to overcome to realize successful interventions..
 - All statistical data is correlated and assessment of these findings indicate the CPS charge rate in relation to domestic violence over the period of the Unit's first year of operation is approximately 10 to 20 per cent higher than the provincial average. This figure represents a 10 to 20 per cent increase in the average charge rate of the CPS.
 - The credibility of the DCU is enhanced by the request from a Shelter worker to complete her Masters practicum within the Domestic Conflict Unit.

The DCU manager has recognized the need for continuous improvement within the Unit and has presented the following initiatives and visions for future implementation:

1. A standardized show cause hearing for all domestic charges service wide, which would be disseminated to the Crown Prosecutor and Parole and Probation. The show cause would be incorporated to the body of the occurrence report and produced with the electronically produced arrest report.
2. Working with Alberta Justice in the development of a Court dedicated to Family violence or group of Crown Prosecutors who specialize in family violence.
3. A full-time psychologist within the Unit who would act as an expert for court purposes and operational components of the Unit.
4. Re-write of the Domestic Violence Policy which will clearly identify procedures to follow when dealing with domestic violence. The identification of cases which the Unit will be tasked with the responsibility of investigating.
5. A full-time partnership with the Calgary Counselling Centre who will appoint a Domestic Violence coordinator to address the approximately 700 cases the service attends monthly where criminal action is not taken. This coordinator would intervene with a counselling follow-up component.
6. A volunteer base within the Unit to address the above concern. Reaction from outside agencies has been overwhelming to this idea and many professionals have volunteered their time.
7. Pilot project with the Crown, Calgary Legal Guidance and the Unit to afford counselling to persons who request to have no contact conditions removed or varied.

Evaluation of the secondment phase of the project would be ongoing. Measures would include the assessment of each individual as they work through their eight week period. As well, the seconded member would assess the training process as to their improved knowledge and investigative skills. District commanders would be asked to monitor to determine if there has been an improved response to the issue of domestic violence as trained personnel return to street duties. The Domestic Conflict Unit sergeant would be continually evaluating the quality of investigations and reports.

The Domestic Conflict Unit has realized achievements and successes well beyond all expectations.

AGENCY AND OFFICER INFORMATION

The Domestic Conflict Unit has been accepted at all levels of the Calgary Police Service. The executive have been fully supportive of the initiatives of the DCU. The CPS undertook extensive training for all members as it pertained to problem-oriented policing. Originally the DCU was resourced by the reallocation of funds and human resources. As of January 1998, the Domestic Conflict Unit is funded as a specific program within the Family, Youth and Violent Crime Section.

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