



CN Police Service

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CCMTA – Police Partnership Award

An Application for the CCMTA-Police Partnership Award to honour the achievements of the police officers of the Richmond RCMP Traffic Service in developing key relationships with CN Police Service and the Canadian National Railway to enhance transportation safety in the City of Richmond.

This strategic partnership has resulted in the development and implementation of uniquely effective strategies and ongoing programs that focus on reducing injuries and saving lives while raising awareness within the police community and public to make Canada's roads the safest in the world by the end of 2010.

Commencing in the period from 2007 to 2010 it was recognized by both the CN Police Service and the Richmond RCMP Traffic Service that it was necessary for the police community to develop strategic relationships with their highway safety partners so that they could achieve their declared objectives.

Analysis of statistical data collected by both agencies for the prior eight-year period in the City of Richmond indicated that there was a significant and growing incidence of collisions involving trains and vehicles at level crossings. It became clear that a collaborative effort by both agencies involving front-line enforcement, education and engineering initiatives would be required to successfully deal with the problem.

A unique part this problem solving approach involved the use of an "Officer on a Train". During this enforcement initiative, an RCMP officer is placed in the lead locomotive of a train as a spotter. The officer observes traffic approaching the crossings as the train proceeds down the tracks. Other CN Police and RCMP officers pace the train or are parked at specific problem locations.

When a motorist is observed violating the law at a crossing, the officer on the train is able to radio one of the enforcement officers so that the motorist can be stopped to explain the dangers and issue a violation ticket. The spotter is also able to provide evidence of the violation from the perspective of the railroaders.

The benefits of this initiative are enhanced enforcement and the education of police officers regarding the problems and concerns of railroaders. In addition newer RCMP officers become familiar with traffic laws related to crossing enforcement and the related specialized enforcement techniques.

Another benefit is that ongoing enforcement efforts have been enhanced at identified problem locations year round. The resources of the group have produced a sustained effort at these locations that could not have been achieved by the efforts of each organization on its own. Regularly scheduled joint forces initiatives have taken place throughout the year creating a perception within the driving public of a continual police presence and a high risk of apprehension.

CN Police and the Richmond RCMP are also involved in a partnership with the Safe Communities Foundation creating a formal Safe Community Leadership Table. Membership at this table includes representatives from local civic government, public health, police, fire, emergency services, educational institutions, local businesses as well as health and safety organizations. Representatives meet monthly to bring their collective knowledge and skills to bear on issues of injury prevention and safety promotion in the community.

Another aspect of the cooperative effort is in relation to engineering solutions to the problem. The RCMP, CN Police, City of Richmond Engineering and CN Railway Engineering have all worked together to create a safer community by making physical and operational improvements where needed. Problem locations are identified and improvements made, which have included enhanced signage, new pavement markings, foliage removal to correct sight line issues and enhanced signal operation.

At the same time CN Police and RCMP in Richmond are involved in public safety education activities through the "Operation Lifesaver" partnership in public-rail safety. The stated goal of Operation Lifesaver is to prevent collisions between trains and motor vehicles as well as to prevent trespassing incidents that lead to serious injury or death. During the year police officers attended community events and area schools to educate people of all ages about the dangers of highway/railway crossings and the risks of trespassing on railway property. The methods used to reach the public included early elementary and driver education curriculum activities, civic presentations, as well as media coverage.

Presentations targeted the general public as well as specific high-risk community groups such as truckers, bus drivers, cyclists and youth living in close proximity to the railway. The educational materials selected include safety handouts, youth activity books, posters, videos and educational computer simulation games.

As a result of the extraordinary efforts of this partnership there has been a very significant reduction in collisions at railway crossings in the City of Richmond from one or more per month to only one single incident in the entire 2010

calendar year! This ongoing group effort will continue to enhance crossing safety for both the general public and railroaders alike.

If the group is chosen for an award it is requested that a representative from the Richmond RCMP Traffic Service, Sgt. Rob Quilley and from the CN Police Service, Cst. Cal Shamper accept the award on behalf of the group.