

Meeting 2009 November 23

COUNCIL REPORT

## **COMMUNITY POLICING COMMITTEE**

HIS WORSHIP, THE MAYOR AND COUNCILLORS

SUBJECT: AUTHORITY TO ADDRESS PROBLEM PROPERTIES

## **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- 1. THAT the Mayor, on behalf of Council, write to the Premier and Provincial Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General urging the Provincial Government to work collaboratively with the Union of British Columbia Municipalities to create an approach which includes municipal enforcement of safety-related Building Code requirements to address the public disorder and neighbourhood deterioration caused by illegal drug operations and other problem properties.
- 2. THAT a copy of this report be forwarded to the Union of British Columbia Municipalities.

### REPORT

The Community Policing Committee, at its Open meeting held on 2009 November 12, received and adopted the <u>attached</u> report providing a comparison of the powers currently available in British Columba for addressing problem properties with powers available under safer communities and neighbourhoods legislation in place in other Canadian jurisdictions.

SCAN legislation would fill a gap in powers available in British Columbia to address problematic residential properties, and would facilitate the elimination of many more illegal drug operations than is now possible. As a result, residents would once again be able to enjoy peace and safety in their homes and neighbourhoods, and local police and municipal authorities would be able to redeploy resources to meet the wider needs of the community.

Respectfully submitted,

Councillor P. Calendino Chair

Councillor P. McDonell Vice Chair

Councillor R. Chang Member

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City Manager

OIC, RCMP

Director Planning and Building



2009 November 5



TO:

CHAIR AND MEMBERS

COMMUNITY POLICING COMMITTEE

FROM:

DIRECTOR PLANNING AND BUILDING

FILE:
Reference:

DATE:

2410 20

c: Community Policing Cmtte

**SUBJECT:** 

**AUTHORITY TO ADDRESS PROBLEM PROPERTIES** 

**PURPOSE:** 

To provide the Committee with a comparison of the powers currently available in British Columbia for addressing problem properties with powers available under safer communities and neighbourhoods legislation in place in other Canadian jurisdictions.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- 1. THAT the Mayor be requested, on behalf of Council, to write to the Premier and the Provincial Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General urging the Provincial government to work collaboratively with the Union of British Columbia Municipalities to create an approach which includes municipal enforcement of safety-related Building Code requirements to address the public disorder and neighbourhood deterioration caused by illegal drug operations and other problem properties.
- 2. THAT a copy of this report be forwarded to the Union of British Columbia Municipalities.

#### REPORT

#### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

At its meeting of 2009 February 12, the Community Policing Committee considered a report from the City Solicitor describing Alberta's *Safer Communities and Neighbourhoods Act*. The report noted that the Alberta act provides "a powerful tool for dealing with problem properties", and goes "well beyond the current authority available in British Columbia at both the Provincial and municipal levels to deal with such properties." Arising from discussion of the report, the Committee requested an additional staff report providing a comparison of the powers currently available in British Columbia for addressing problem properties with powers available under Alberta's legislation.

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This report provides a comparison of the relevant powers available in British Columbia with powers generally available under safer communities and neighbourhoods legislation.<sup>1</sup>

### 2.0 CONTEXT FOR THE REQUESTED REPORT

#### 2.1 The Marijuana Grow Operation and Drug Laboratory Issue

Over the past several years, the province in general has witnessed an increase in the number of marijuana grow operations, and clandestine drug laboratories. The value of the cultivation and trade of marijuana alone is estimated to be over \$7 billion in British Columbia – comparable with industries such as forestry, agriculture, and tourism. In 2005, it was estimated by RCMP analysts that 20,000 properties in British Columbia were being used as grow operations. Despite increased police resources allocated to control this activity provincially, the illegal drug industry has continued to expand in terms of the size and number of operations, the volume of drugs produced, the sophistication of operations, and the monetary value of the output. The problem has become so serious that even were additional police resources available to pursue more cases, there is concern that the court system would be overwhelmed.

The proliferation of marijuana grow-operations in residential neighbourhoods is of particular concern given:

- the threat to neighbourhood security and liveability from both public disorder and neighbourhood deterioration associated with illicit drug houses, and the criminal activities such as weapons possession, home invasions and "grow rips" associated with the operations; and
- the health and safety risks to future building occupants and immediate neighbours arising from illegal modifications to building structure, electrical wiring, and ventilation systems, and the use of chemicals, pesticides, and other toxins in the operations.

# 2.2 Historical Concern With Problem Properties in Burnaby

Concern has been expressed for some time – both by Burnaby residents and by members of Council – about problem properties generally, and the presence of marijuana grow operations in residential areas particularly. In the early 2000s, in response to those concerns, and in an effort to gain an understanding of effective responses to the issue, City staff and the Burnaby RCMP reviewed relevant practices in other local jurisdictions. As a result, in 2001, the City established a safety inspection program, described in Section 3.3 of this report, to ensure that residential properties where electricity has been disconnected comply with City bylaws, and do not threaten the safety of future occupants.

In 2003, the City established an ad hoc staff Task Force on Problem Properties to address properties identified as problematic and of concern to the community. The Task Force includes representation from several City departments, as well as the RCMP and the Fraser

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> It should be noted that safer communities and neighbourhoods legislation is currently in place in seven Canadian jurisdictions, of which Alberta is one.

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Health Authority. Over the years, the Task Force has attempted to deal with numerous types of problems ranging from illegal squatting in buildings to rental buildings lacking electrical service or infested by rodents.<sup>2</sup> Although the Task Force does not take direct action on properties where illegal drug operations exist, it does refer such properties to the RCMP for investigation.

In late 2005, Council directed staff to research and prepare a report on the advisability and feasibility of adopting bylaw provisions to more effectively control the proliferation of illegal drug operations. Since that time, staff have researched and assessed possible responses to grow operations, including options suggested by local residents in correspondence with the Mayor and Council. A summary of the options reviewed, comparing them to safer communities and neighbourhood legislation, is *attached* as *Appendix 1*. To date, staff have concluded that none of the options reviewed are without either legal, jurisdictional, financial or safety complications and, as such, recommendations for bylaw changes have not been forwarded to Council.

## 2.3 Overview of Safer Communities and Neighbourhoods Legislation in Canada

Safer communities and neighbourhoods (SCAN) legislation is currently in place in seven Canadian jurisdictions including Alberta, Manitoba, New Brunswick, Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, Saskatchewan, and Yukon. In the acts, which are very similar, "problem properties" are generally defined as properties being used for:

- a. the manufacture, sale, storage, or consumption of liquor;
- b. the possession, growth, use, or sale of illegal drugs;
- c. prostitution and related activities;
- d. child sexual abuse and related activities;
- e. criminal organization offences;
- f. accommodation for a criminal organization or gang; or
- g. the possession or storage of prohibited or stolen weapons, firearms, and explosives.

Some of the acts also include in the definition "fortified buildings" – those with bullet-proof glass, explosive-resistant materials, and/or armoured doors.

Manitoba was the first Canadian province to pass SCAN legislation (2002), followed by Saskatchewan in 2004. The Alberta legislation, passed in October 2008, is no longer the most recent, with New Brunswick's enactment of its *Safer Communities and Neighbourhoods Act* in June 2009. In Ontario, a private member's bill on SCAN legislation received 2<sup>nd</sup> reading in autumn 2008, and is being reviewed by a Standing Committee of the legislature.

In British Columbia, Bill M203, the Safer Communities and Neighbourhoods Act, was introduced as a private member's bill by the New Democratic Party in the 2008/09 sitting of the B.C. Legislature. With the 2009 May Provincial election, the proposed legislation did not advance beyond First Reading. Subsequently, at the 2009 convention of the Union of British

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> The latter cannot be corrected through enforcement of the Building Code, and would require a Standards of Maintenance Bylaw.

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Columbia Municipalities (UBCM), Resolution B66, Safer Communities and Neighbourhoods, was passed. The resolution calls on the government of British Columbia to work with the UBCM to create or improve existing legislation to address the public disorder and neighbourhood deterioration associated with illicit drug houses, and problem addresses and businesses.

## 3.0 ADDRESSING PROBLEM PROPERTIES IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

At present, authority to address problem properties in British Columbia derives from legislation or regulations enacted by three separate levels of government.

#### 3.1 Federal Jurisdiction

Under Federal legislation, including the Criminal Code of Canada and the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act, police can pursue criminal charges against individuals affiliated with a problem property. Police intervention relates strictly to the behaviour of individuals, and to their adherence to laws. The process police are required to follow in order to obtain a search warrant, to gather evidence, to pursue charges, and to prepare documentation for Crown prosecution is necessarily onerous and time-consuming. At the present time, the Burnaby RCMP generally gives priority to those grow operation cases involving repeat offenders, organized operators, multi-venue operators, and theft of electricity as indentified through B.C. Hydro consumption records and other means.

## 3.2 Provincial Jurisdiction

Through the *Provincial Residential Tenancy Act*, landlords can pursue actions against problematic tenants to terminate a lease or tenancy. However, unless a tenant has entered into a lease which specifically prohibits illegal activity within his/her residential unit, the tenant's participation in an illegal activity on the premises is not just cause for eviction by a landlord. This legislation is also of questionable value in cases where landlords are reluctant to exercise their rights in the face of tenants who intimidate or threaten them, or in cases where a problem property is owner-occupied.

The Provincial Civil Forfeiture Act empowers authorities to seize a property that has been acquired, in whole or in part, as a result of unlawful activity(ies). Such seizure requires, however, proof of the property owner's complicity with the problematic activities.

2006 amendments to the Provincial Safety Standards Act gave City officials the authority to access electricity consumption information - and to share it with police - as a means of assisting in the identification of illegal grow operations. A number of local municipalities have used the opportunity afforded by the amendments to direct their staff to:

- monitor B.C. Hydro electricity consumption reports;
- receive tips for investigation from residents; and
- perform electrical inspections of buildings suspected of housing illegal drug operations but for which sufficient evidence is not available for police to obtain a search warrant.

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This approach, which has been reviewed by staff, is discussed more fully in Appendix 1.

## 3.3 Municipal Jurisdiction

Through enforcement of municipal land use and regulatory bylaws, municipal governments can pursue actions against a property owner. The power of municipalities is generally limited to:

- prohibiting specific land uses in some or all parts of the municipality;
- · acting upon physical building issues which pose public safety risks; and
- acting upon nuisance and unsightly premises issues (e.g., noise, animal control, and accumulation of rubbish, filth, discarded materials, or noxious weeds on a property).

Burnaby prohibits the use of a property for unpermitted uses through its Zoning Bylaw. If the use of a building or land is found to be in contravention of the Zoning Bylaw, the property owner is required to take remedial action in a timely manner. The City's Building Bylaw prohibits the unauthorized alteration of a building structure, and electrical and gas services.

In Burnaby, suspected illegal drug operations are investigated by the RCMP, who eliminate and dismantle any operations confirmed. City staff become involved when electrical or gas service to the property has been disconnected as a result of the grow operation. The RCMP or B.C. Hydro notify the Building Department of the power disconnect, and City staff notify the property owner that the building cannot be occupied until a safety inspection has been completed. The safety inspection covers items under the Building, Electrical, Plumbing and Gas Codes. The property owner must arrange for the inspection, correct any contraventions identified, and pay inspection and permit fees. As noted above, the safety inspection process has been in place since 2001. Burnaby's Building Department conducts approximately eighty safety inspections per year.

## 4.0 ADDRESSING PROBLEM PROPERTIES WITH SCAN LEGISLATION

SCAN legislation allows for intervention by public authorities through civil means to curb activities which:

- negatively affect the health, safety, or security of one or more persons in the community or neighbourhood; or
- interfere with the peaceful enjoyment of one or more properties in the community or neighbourhood, whether the property is privately or publicly owned.

The legislation relies more on an administrative approach than a criminal justice approach, and focuses more on the safety of individuals and neighbourhoods than on apprehending and punishing criminals.

The acts in place in other Canadian jurisdictions create a Provincial body with the authority to review and investigate complaints concerning a problem property. The Provincial body

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dispatches investigators, often sheriffs or former police officers, to engage in surveillance to determine whether the activities at the target property are indeed negatively affecting the health, safety, security, and/or peaceful enjoyment of the neighbourhood. If the activities are deemed to be problematic, SCAN legislation allows the Provincial body to order:

- the cessation of unsafé or disturbing activities, including restrictions on the use of a property to preclude specified illegal activities;
- the vacating by occupants of the property;
- the closure for use and/or boarding up of the property;
- the termination of utility services to the property; and/or
- alterations to the property to remove any hazards.

The acts do not, however, authorize demolition or forfeiture of the property.

Of the Canadian jurisdictions with SCAN legislation, only two – Manitoba and Saskatchewan – have had the legislation in place long enough to enable an assessment of its effectiveness or to gather meaningful statistics regarding its usage. Based on information from those two provinces, approximately 300 files per year are opened, with 30% to 40% of those cases meriting follow-up and action. Other details on Manitoba's and Saskatchewan's assessments can be found in *Appendix 2*, *attached*.

Given the presence of a Provincial authority with powers to order the cessation of activities and even the vacating and closure of a problem property, it would appear that the benefits of safer communities and neighbourhoods legislation are as follows:

- more cases than local police forces can focus on can be pursued;
- cases can be pursued in a more timely manner given that the approach does not rely on the lengthy police process of gathering evidence, obtaining a search warrant, and pursuing criminal charges against specific individuals;
- local police resources are freed up and can be more effectively used in pursuing charges against the major crime networks behind the drug trade, and others engaged in illegal activities;
- citizens are provided with an opportunity to become more involved in maintaining the safety of their neighbourhoods given their ability to report suspected problem properties directly to the Provincial authority;
- a problem property can be closed for use and/or boarded up, thus precluding the return to the property and to the previous activities of an offender released from custody; and
- municipalities with concerns about overstepping their jurisdictional and legal boundaries in attempting to deal with illegal drug operations are relieved of pressures to do so.

Given the above, it is the view of staff and members of the Burnaby RCMP detachment that safer communities and neighbourhoods legislation would fill a gap in powers available in British Columbia to address problematic residential properties, and would facilitate the elimination of many more illegal drug operations than is now possible. As a result, residents would once again be able to enjoy peace and safety in their homes and neighbourhoods, and

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local police and municipal authorities would be able to redeploy resources to meet the wider needs of the community.

One question that does arise is the role of City inspectors in drug operation inspection under SCAN legislation, and the possible need for additional municipal staff resources. Burnaby staff have consulted with officials in both Alberta and Nova Scotia about the municipal role, and have received very different responses: the role appears to be determined by the specifics of the legislation and the general practice pertaining to illegal drug operations in a particular province. The municipal experience in Edmonton is that the SCAN legislation has had little or no impact on work at the municipal level, as the Provincial focus is on the use of the property, and not on Building Code issues. In Halifax, however, municipal inspectors are expected to inspect properties for compliance with municipal building bylaws and the Provincial Building Code once the SCAN authority has caused the property to be vacated, closed, and/or cleaned-up. In the interests of public safety, and the safety\*of future occupants of properties formerly used for drug operations, City staff believe it is critical to – and would expect to – continue their building inspection role were SCAN legislation to be introduced in British Columbia.

#### 5.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Concern about problem properties and, in particular about illegal residential drug operations, has prompted considerable research and discussion at the Council, staff and police levels in Burnaby. Approaches used in neighbouring municipalities have been examined, but none are without either legal, jurisdictional, financial, or safety complications.

Seven Canadian jurisdictions provinces have passed legislation aimed at dealing with problematic residential properties, and an eighth province is actively considering such legislation. The legislation provides authority beyond what is currently available in British Columbia to protect communities from activities which could negatively affect the health, safety or security of persons in a neighbourhood in that it empowers a Provincial authority to order:

- the cessation of unsafe or disturbing activities, including restrictions on the use of a property to preclude specified illegal activities;
- the vacating by occupants of the property;
- the closure for use and/or boarding up of the property;
- the termination of utility services to the property; and/or
- alterations to the property to remove any hazards.

It would appear that safer communities and neighbourhood legislation enables communities to target problem properties in a more timely manner than is possible by police, and without relying on municipalities to take action which could be beyond their jurisdictional, legal and financial capacity.

At the autumn 2009 convention of the Union of British Columbia Municipalities, a safer communities and neighbourhoods resolution was adopted directing the UBCM to work with

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the Provincial Government to create or improve existing legislation to address the public disorder and neighbourhood deterioration caused by illicit drug houses, problem addresses and business, and the issues associated with them.

Given the foregoing, it is recommended that the Mayor, on behalf of Council, write to the Premier and the Provincial Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General urging the Provincial government to work collaboratively with the Union of British Columbia Municipalities to create an approach – which includes municipal enforcement of safety-related Building Code requirements – to address the public disorder and neighbourhood deterioration caused by illegal drug operations and other problem properties.

It is also recommended that a copy of this report be forwarded to the Union of British Columbia Municipalities.

B. Luksun, Director

PLANNING AND BUILDING

B. Rukson y

JS:sa

Attachments (2)

Copied to:

City Manager

Deputy City Manager

City Solicitor OIC - RCMP

Chief Building Inspector

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# Review of Possible Municipal Approaches to Addressing Residential Grow Operations

# 1. City Inspections of Suspected Illegal Drug Operations

Under this approach, City staff – sometimes in concert with fire officials and police officers – undertake inspections of properties that are suspected of housing illegal drug operations, but for which there may not be sufficient evidence for the RCMP to obtain a search warrant. Referral for inspections are typically advanced from the RCMP to Building Department staff. Staff, however, may also actively review B.C. Hydro electricity consumption reports, and solicit other tips for investigations.

This approach is used by some local municipalities, and offers the advantages of the identification of many more grow operations than can be accomplished by the police alone, and the freeing up of police resources to target the major crime networks behind the illegal drug industry.

Concerns with this approach centre on the risks to staff safety posed by the possible presence of hazardous chemicals or other toxins, booby traps, or armed criminals at a property with an active grow operation or drug laboratory. The latter concern is not unfounded given Burnaby RCMP statistics that, of the 25 search warrants they executed pertaining to grow operations in 2008, weapons were in evidence in 46% of the cases. This is an increase from 13% in 2007. While the presence of a police officer on the team of municipal staff responsible for the inspections could serve to reduce concern about potential violence during an inspection, it would not address health risks due to mould, chemicals, and other toxins. There is also a concern that providing occupants of targeted properties with forty eight hours notice of inspection, as is required by the Safety Standards Act, could simply result in the relocation of operations rather than the apprehension of those involved. Moreover, unless the approach were adopted regionally, it would likely simply result in the displacement of operations to municipalities relying solely on a criminal justice response. As well, the use of B.C. Hydro electricity consumption records to target properties could inadvertently lead to increased risk of fire as grow operators devise increasingly elaborate electrical wiring and bypass schemes to avoid detection of their hydro usage. Finally, were a municipality to adopt this approach, a considerable increase to staff resources would be required.

The existence of safer communities and neighbourhoods (SCAN) legislation in British Columbia would address some of the concerns outlined above, as follows:

• thoroughly prepared and trained Provincial authorities (likely former police officers) would enter suspect properties with considerable knowledge of – and protection against – the health and safety risks they might encounter; and

• identification of suspect properties would not be reliant on electricity consumption records, reducing the need for grow operators to tamper with electrical wiring.

# 2. Use of Contracted Services to Dismantle Illegal Drug Operations

Under this approach, the RCMP is assisted by a private company in the dismantling of illegal drug operations. This approach is used in at least one local municipality, and allows the RCMP to use its time and resources for other priority cases, and other police functions.

To adopt this approach, municipal budget resources to cover the estimated twenty hours it takes to dismantle and clean up a grow operation or drug laboratory, would need to be allocated. The existence of SCAN legislation in British Columbia would re-assign those budgeting responsibilities to the Province.

## 3. Establishment of Additional Service Fees

Under this approach, if a property owner fails to clean up after a grow operation, the municipality recovers the costs associated with the dismantling and clean up by charging the property owner, and adding the expenditure to the property tax statement. With this approach, which is used in some local municipalities, the recovered financial resources could be re-allocated to increase the number of drug operations which could be tackled.

The concern with this approach is that there is no clear authority under Provincial legislation for a municipality to enter a private property and effect compliance with City bylaws at the cost of the owner should the owner fail to take action. As such, a legal challenge could result.

The existence of SCAN legislation in British Columbia would relieve municipalities of the pressure to possibly over-step their jurisdictional and legal boundaries.

## 4. Establishment of Fines and Penalties

Under this approach, municipalities attempt to recover specific fines and penalties through the court system from property owners and/or occupants found to be in contravention of City bylaws.

In Burnaby, fines and penalties for the establishment of an unpermitted use can be pursued for contravention of the Burnaby Zoning Bylaw. As well, because the establishment of a residential drug operation often involves the unauthorized alteration of the building, fines can be pursued for contravention of the Building Bylaw.

In most cases involving rental properties, however, the occupants have abandoned the property, making it difficult for the municipality to impose a charge on the responsible party. As well, there is a legal concern that a charge against a property owner with a problematic rental property would be unsustainable without some proof that the owner was aware of the contravention of City bylaws. It should also be noted that process for collecting fines and penalties is costly, slow, and time-consuming, as it requires the City to lay a charge, to attend court, and to prove the building occupant's or property owner's guilt beyond a reasonable doubt. Moreover, the magnitude of the fine or penalty is decided by the court, and levies are often low. Burnaby's new Bylaw Notice Enforcement Bylaw could improve the process somewhat, but fines and penalties may still not be a significant deterrent.

The existence of SCAN legislation in British Columbia could address, these concerns in that the owner of the property could be named as the respondent in a Safety Order issued by the Provincial authority.

## 5. Requirement for Regular Inspections of Rental Properties

Under this approach, property owners are required by the municipality to conduct inspections of their residential rental properties at least once every three months to ensure that they are not being used for illegal drug operations. The property owner is also responsible for notifying the municipality of any drug operation found, and for bringing the premises into compliance with municipal bylaws within a specified timeline. Given the damage that a property can suffer from an illegal drug operation, there likely exists a strong motivation on the part of property owners to manage this issue.

The advantages of this approach, which is used in some local municipalities, are that it could help to deter the establishment of grow operations, and it could assist police and City staff to identify properties where residential grow operations exist or may have existed.

There are, however, a number of concerns with the approach. For example, the inspection of rental properties every three months could simply transfer the health and safety risks noted above to the property owner, as well as infringe on the rights of law-abiding tenants to reasonable privacy and freedom from unreasonable disturbance. Moreover, regular inspection of rental properties is difficult to enforce and is reliant on the diligence of property owners. Finally, in cases where the property owner is associated with the use of his rental property as a drug operation, this approach would clearly not be an effective deterrent to an illegal operation.

The existence of SCAN legislation in British Columbia would relieve landlords of the necessity to infringe on the rights of law-abiding tenants, as community members and neighbours would be empowered to forward complaints about a problem property to the Provincial authority.

# Assessment of Safer Communities and Neighbourhoods (SCAN) Legislation in Manitoba and Saskatchewan

Of the Canadian jurisdictions with safer communities and neighbourhoods legislation, only two — Manitoba and Saskatchewan — have had the legislation in place long enough to enable an assessment of its effectiveness or to gather meaningful statistics regarding its usage.

By autumn 2008 – six years after enacting its legislation – Manitoba had opened files on 1,805 properties (an average of 300 per year). Fifteen percent of the complaints had been resolved through mediation with tenants and owners, and another fourteen percent had resulted in the closure of operations. Several marijuana grow operations had been dismantled, and over \$2 million in drugs had been seized. Manitoba reports a low re-offending rate: only six individuals had re-appeared in new investigations after the closure of a problem property, and no problem addresses had re-occurred.<sup>1</sup>

In 2008, Saskatchewan conducted a review of the first two years of its legislation, in order to gain a better understanding of the types of cases being referred to SCAN investigators, the caseload of the investigators, and case outcomes. The review consisted only of reviewing case data and surveying SCAN investigators, as the strict confidentiality and anonymity guarantees embedded in the legislation made it impossible to question complainants about their experiences and level of satisfaction.

During the first year of the Saskatchewan legislation (2005), 305 files were opened. Eviction notices were issued in 22% of cases, and "other actions" (e.g., informal resolution discussions, landlord eviction of tenants, voluntary leave-taking on the part of the suspect) were taken in another 13% of cases. In 61% of the cases, no action was taken because there was not enough evidence to support the complaint. During 2006, 500 files were opened in Saskatchewan. Eviction notices were again issued in 22% of cases, and other actions were taken in 15% of cases. In 39% of cases, no action was taken, a significant improvement over the previous year.<sup>2</sup>

The review notes that the SCAN investigators believe that Saskatchewan's legislation "has been well-received by the community and ...there is community support for the legislation and the work.....Specifically, complainants appear to be happy that SCAN is able to help them, often more quickly or in areas where the police cannot."

<sup>2</sup> SCAN Evaluation, Ministry of Justice and Attorney General, Saskatchewan, March 2008, pp. 5 - 8.

Ibid, pg. 18.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Public Safety Investigations, Manitoba Justice, as quoted in documentation provided by the Whalley Enhancement Association, "Safer Communities and Neighbourhoods".