

Toward a Distinctly Inuit Public Safety System in Nunavik

*An Audit Report on NPS Practices
Following the Events of November 2024,
May and July 2025 and Ongoing
Representation and Recruitment
Challenges*

Prepared at the request of:

Kativik Regional Government
Makivvik





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Timetable and Methodology



<i>November 2024</i>	<i>May to July 2025</i>	<i>August 2025</i>	<i>September and October 2025</i>	<i>November and December 2025</i>	<i>January 2026 - Today</i>
Fatal police intervention in Kangiqsualujjuaq and creation of the Nunavik Public Security Committee	The KRG mandated the law firm Bélanger Sauvé S.E.N.C.R.L., and Consultant Réjean Hardy Inc. to conduct an audit and lead wide consultations. Meanwhile, more fatal police interventions.	Review of Legislation, Inquiries and reports governing the public safety, justice and health systems in Nunavik	Consultations with current and former officers, including Inuit, mixed-heritage, and Qallunaat participants, as well as individuals holding influential roles in governance and policing in Nunavik	Report drafting and legal research.	Publication of report and identification of next steps

The Evolution of the Police Force in Nunavik

- Difficult historical relations with the police (RCMP, SQ);
- With the creation of the KRPF in 1996, the Inuit believed they were witnessing the creation of their own police force, as had been contemplated at the time of the signing of the JBNQA;
- In the early 2000's, there were more Inuit police officers, and the special constable program facilitated recruitment in the communities;
- Over time, the application of southern laws and Quebec's policing model poorly adapted to Inuit realities led many officers to difficult personal situation or experience burn out;
- In the past 10, or 20 years, the health and justice situation in Nunavik deteriorated, with the increasing presence of weapons and drugs in the communities making police interventions increasingly dangerous and frequent;
- The consultations revealed that today, there is a disconnection between the police service and the community it serves;

The Evolution of the Police Force in Nunavik

Key Issues in Policing: Representation, Training, and Community Relations

Representation challenges in the police force

- Most police officers in the NPS come from the south of Quebec, and do not speak Inuktitut;
- Cultural and linguistic barriers through interventions;
- Compared to other police forces in Quebec, the staff is relatively young;
- High turnover rate;
- Insufficient cultural training;
- Insufficient knowledge of the culture, the people and relational networks of communities;

Seniority	Qty. (Oct. 2023)	Qty. (Dec. 2024)	Variation	Current Average Age	Average Age at Hiring
Less than 1 year	28	23	-5	31	27
1 year to less than 2 years	13	43	+30		
2 years to less than 5 years	19	29	+10		
5 years to less than 10 years	21	31	+10		
10 years to less than 20 years	4	7	+3		
20 years or more	3	3	-		
Total	88	136	+48		

Source: NPS

Key Issues in Policing

Key Issues, Challenges and Failures of the Police Force

- Application of unadapted legislation led to Inuit over-representation in the justice system and penitentiary institutions;
- Inuit officers reported being obliged to intervene, investigate or even arrest relatives or close ones;
- Ill-equipped interventions;
- Inadequate recourses in terms of ethical complaints;
- Staff shortages and long working schedules;
- General lack of mental support to the officers;
- Unequal Working conditions and benefits compared to the Qallunaat;
- Difficulty to access police training (i.e. abolition of the special constable program);
- Interactions with the police and eroded community trust;
- General lack of interest of the population toward policing;

Key Issues in Policing

The Nunavik Police Service today

- Unprecedented budget increase (Tripartite agreement 2024-2029);
- Increase in the workforce (Conditions, benefits, pension plan, fly-in, fly-out as recruitment and retention strategies);
- The return of the Cadet program
- Emergency call center based in Saint-Eustache
- Communication strategies of the NPS among youth
- Shift towards community policing, some activities organized within the communities or schools;
- Increased training opportunities (RCMP, ENPQ Native police training)

Key Issues in Policing

35 Recommendations for Self-Determination and Legislative Reform

Governance and Self- Determination Recommendations

Recommendation no. 1

Shared Vision for Public Safety

Makivik and KRG should define a unified vision for public safety, integrating all emergency services in Inuit communities.

Self-determination : Legislative Framework and Declaration

Formalize the vision in a Declaration or Act outlining police service purpose and community involvement requirements.

Negotiations with the MSP and ENPQ

Enable and create for necessary legislative space and enter into corresponding agreements

Ensure transition

Plan an effective transition from actual legal framework to the new legal regime

Governance and Self- Determination Recommendations

Recommendation no. 2

Setting Out a Comprehensive Vision for the Future Police Service

- Provide a clear definition of the purpose of the police service in Nunavik;
- Emphasize the requirement for community involvement;
- Provide for a police training facility;
- Defining the mandate, structure and training requirements for the police service;

Governance and Self- Determination Recommendations

Recommendations 3 and 4

- Establish an advisory committee that will meet every three months involving Makivvik, KRG, NPS, justice workers and local leaders
- Develop formal partnerships with UTHC and IHC to ensure effective coordination between policing and health services, including tailored training, statistics and data sharing and increased awareness of mental health challenges specific to Nunavik

Recommendation no. 5

Amend the Police Act to confirm the ability of the KRG, by by-law submitted to the approval of Makivvik, to determine the physical characteristics, medical requirements, level of education required and other hiring standards not covered by paragraphs 1 to 3 of section 115, to become a member of its police force, as well as the qualifications required to perform investigative or management duties and to perform a function or obtain a rank in such a police force. As soon as legislation permits, the KRG should establish such requirements, and consider assets such as Inuktitut speaking and writing, community knowledge, reliability and good judgment;

- The Crees negotiated their own provisions to this effect (ss. 102.1 to 102.10 of the *Police Act*)

Legislative Amendments for adjustments in the Short and Medium Term

HIRING REQUIREMENTS (*Police Act*)

115. To be hired as a police officer a person must meet the following requirements:

- 1° be a Canadian citizen;
- 2° be of good moral character;
- 3° not have been found guilty, in any place, of an act or omission defined in the Criminal Code (Revised Statutes of Canada, 1985, chapter C-46) as an offence, or of an offence referred to in section 183 of that Code under one of the Acts listed therein;
- 4° hold a diploma awarded by the École nationale de police du Québec or meet the standards of equivalence established by by-law by the school.

The requirements specified in subparagraphs 1 to 3 of the first paragraph apply also to special constables.

(...)

Recommendation no 6

Amend the Police Act to incorporate an exception to s. 115 (3°) for Inuit beneficiaries and develop a list of summary offences considered “minor” in Nunavik, which do not prevent access to training for Inuit officer or special constable positions. The terms of such exception could be set out in an agreement between the MSP, the federal government, and the KRG.

Legislative Amendments for adjustments in the Short and Medium Term

Recommendation no. 7

Amend the Police Act to explicitly allow and ratify Nation to Nation agreements in police matters between the KRG and the Cree Nation Government, the Naskapi Village or any other Indigenous police force, particularly with regard to workforce training

**Legislative Amendments for adjustments in
the Short and Medium Term**

Recommendations 8 and 9

8. Amend s. 374 of the Kativik Act to remove the requirement for ministerial approval of the appointment of members of the regional police force

9. Amend s. 107 of the Police Act or create an exception allowing the KRG and Indigenous Police chiefs to swear in their own members as special constables when requirements are met, and amend the Kativik Act accordingly

**Legislative Amendments for adjustments in
the Short and Medium Term**

Recommendations 10 and 11

10. Amend section 150 of the Police Act to extend the time limit for filing police ethics complaints to three years;

11. The KRG shall, by ordinance and according to s. 21.0.17 JBNQA, establish and maintain a police training facility, and develop a training program led by the Inuit and for the Inuit. This training program could, in the short term and for the purposes of its implementation, benefit from ENPQ accreditation;

**Legislative Amendments for adjustments in
the Short and Medium Term**

Actions that *must* be undertaken by the Government

- ❖ Negotiation in good faith and in priority (Recommendation no 12);
- ❖ Provide for an Inuktitut-French-English translation technology or platform (Recommendation no 13);
- ❖ acknowledge, respect, and integrate the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) into its domestic legal framework (Recommendation no 14);

Recommendations to the KRG, Makivvik and the NPS

Training Facility

15. Develop a Nunavik-based police training program for Inuit. All recruits should receive a paid training salary and guaranteed employment upon completion and success of training;

16. Reinstate the special constable program to allow Inuit recruits acquire experience in real community policing in order to access the profession rather than adopting southern-style approaches on training and accreditation;

Recommendations to the KRG, Makivvik and the NPS

Cultural training

17. The KRG, in partnership with Makivvik, shall establish four-weeks mandatory cultural orientation and integration training for all incoming officers from outside Nunavik by Inuk trainer, focused on the communities they will be assigned to work, that shall not only include patrolling but general Inuit knowledge and traditional activities;

18. This cultural orientation and integration training shall also include a specialized training focused on intervening in situations of crises, intervening with a more vulnerable population and with intoxicated individuals and de-escalation methods;

19. Establish a minimum probationary period of three months to assess whether new non-Inuit officers are capable and ready to serve respectfully in the communities they are assigned to. Monitor new officers closely and intervene quickly in cases of adaptation issues;

20. Have every new officer sworn in publicly in the community they will serve at a municipal meeting or gathering so residents witness their commitment and officers feel genuine accountability and connection;

Recommendations to the KRG, Makivvik and the NPS

Recruitment and working conditions

21. Secure rentals and transit homes for Inuit workers and their family as a priority while the KRG continues investing in housing and stability;
22. Ensure priority hiring for Inuit in all police-related positions and workplace choices;
23. Expand recruitment and awareness campaigns in Inuktitut and in Nunavik schools, showing that policing can be a career of service, pride, and cultural strength for future generations. Collaborate with Qarjuit Youth Council and other youth organizations to develop strategies to change the perception young people have on policing, and remain proactive in the cadet program;
24. Offer fly-in fly-out schedules to Inuit officers among other villages to allow them to rest in their home communities and participate in traditional activities without the stress of being solicited on their time off;

Recommendations to the KRG, Makivvik and the NPS

Officer's health and wellness

25. Provide dedicated psychological and emotional support for all officers, especially after traumatic incidents, and continue offering preventive consultation with psychologists. Services must be confidential, culturally safe and accessible in Inuktitut whenever possible;
26. Develop, in collaboration with other Inuit community organizations and health centers, a program that will create a pool of psychosocial expertise and professionals in Nunavik and that will meet the psychological support needs of the NPS;
27. Develop a Community Policing Reintegration Program for former Inuit officers who left due to trauma or burnout, offering tailored roles in prevention, mentoring, public relations, recruitment or youth engagement;
28. Create an Inuit mentorship and support network within the NPS so officers have guidance from experienced Inuit who understand the community and its challenges;

Recommendations to the KRG, Makivvik and the NPS

Community-policing

29. Increase investment in community events featuring the presence of the NPS. These events should be held more frequently and designed to reflect Inuit culture and traditions. Participation in community events should be mandatory for all police officers, except when prevented by professional obligations.

30. Establish a new welcome protocol for the arrival of new non-Inuit officers, introducing them to residents and community organization's leaders. Also request new officers and constables to introduce themselves to local leaders as they arrive in the community, and check-in at the beginning of their first services;

Recommendations to the KRG, Makivvik and the NPS

Community-policing (ctnd)

31. Ensure elected officials and political authorities are involved in raising awareness about the importance of police work and show openness and support to the officers and constables;

32. Expand the Mobile Intervention Team pilot project in partnership with Saqijuq to all northern villages;

Recommendations to the KRG, Makivvik and the NPS

Internal Policy, Communications and Management

33. Draft new internal directives that prohibit officers from intervening or investigating in cases involving close relatives, and require a colleague to take over. This directive shall not take the form of “conflicts of interest”, but rather be based on the personal judgment of the officer in question and predetermined guidelines;

34. Appoint a dedicated communications officer and spokesperson, as outlined in the NPS organizational plan that may share or publish positive content and stories about police work in communities, as well as opportunities, benefits and conditions for the Inuit in public places or on social networks;

35. Translate all forms, directives, regulations, policies and other documents related to the policing work or justice in Inuktitut;

Questions ?

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