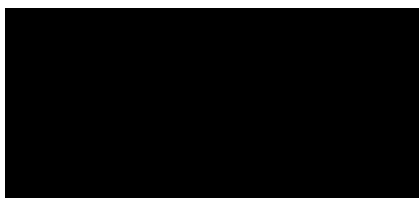




South Coast British Columbia
Transportation Authority
Police Service

307 Columbia Street
New Westminster, BC
Canada, V3L 1A7
Tel 604-515-8300
Fax 604-515-8361

April 15, 2013



Dear [REDACTED]

Request for Access to Records under the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act

I am writing to acknowledge receipt of your request for access to records under *the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (the 'FOIPPA'), which was received by the Transit Police on March 15, 2013. You have requested:

[...request information about the Transit Police Dog Squad. First of all is there one ; how many dogs ; how many handlers; from January 1 2010 – January 1 2013 how many times has the dog squad been dispatched/called out to an incident; how much does it cost to keep/maintain the team/s per year; if there was a team at one time and it has since been disbanded, why? ...]

Before I begin to answer your specific questions, I would firstly like to give some background and context to the South Coast British Columbia Transportation Authority Police Service (SCBCTAPS) Explosive Scent Detection Dog Unit.

Criminal acts involving both real and threats of explosive devices are a reality in Canada. It is appropriate that those entrusted with the protection of transit systems carry out necessary due diligence in relation to risk assessment. The disruption of Canadian transportation infrastructure due to bomb threats, either hoaxes or real, have a broad effect in safety, customer satisfaction and lost revenues. The SCBCTAPS is responsible for the law enforcement and the investigation of unlawful activity in and around the transit system (predominately the SkyTrain/Canada Line) in Metro Vancouver. Including the West Coast Express, SCBCTAPS is responsible for 133.5 kilometres of tracks (SkyTrain/Canada Line/West Coast Express), 57 stations, three bridges and three tunnels as well as the SeaBus ferries and the Coast Mountain buses in the 1800 square kilometres in the Metro Vancouver area.

Because of a desire for proactive policing and its deterrent effects, SCBCTAPS identified a need for the implementation of dogs for explosive detection. Considering the potential devastation and disruption associated with bomb threats on a major transit system like that in Metro Vancouver, it is imperative that SCBCTAPS is proactive in deterring individuals from threatening the safety of the users of the transit system, minimizing the injury and damage of any potential explosives that are used, reducing the fear of such crime amongst the ridership and reducing any potential disruption of service to the critical infrastructure associated to the transportations system.

The SCBCTAPS implemented a Police Service Dog pilot program in late 2010. The single purpose, explosive scent detection dog is deployed to supplement the daily primary duties of the patrol officer. The responsibilities of the police service dog handler include monitoring and attending calls for service where the deployment of an explosive trained dog can be utilized, as well as providing a very visible presence and deterrence on the transit system through regular foot patrols and preventive searches. Transit Police deployment statistics can be found in the Transit Police Five Year Trend Report, located at:

http://www.translink.ca/~media/documents/transit_police/about/foi/transit%20police%20five%20year%20trend%20report.ashx

	2010	2011	2012
Start-Up Costs			
Training ¹	31,342	4,762	
Purchase/Sale of Dog	14,688 ²	(6,650 ³)	
Vehicle Outfitting ⁴	8,110		
Annual Costs			
Care (Food, Kennel, Vet)	2,530	6,645 ⁵	1,813
Other	1,252	1,241	73
Vehicle ⁶	6,000	6,000	6,000

The total cost for the SCBCTAPS to operate one explosive scent detection dog in 2012 was \$7,886.00.

Under s.52 of the Act, you may ask the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner to review our response to your request. You have thirty (30) days from the receipt of this letter to request a review by writing to:

Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner
P.O. Box 9038, Stn Prov Govt
Victoria, B.C. V8W 9A4
Telephone (250)387-5629 Fax (250)387-1696

If you have any questions or require clarification on the information that has been sent to you, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Original signed by

Johanne Howsham
Information Management Coordinator

¹ two Constables trained
² two dogs purchased
³ sale of one dog
⁴ two vehicles fitted
⁵ extra kenneling fees
⁶ Handler resides in Chilliwack