



NOVA SCOTIA

Justice

Hon. Michael G. Baker, Q.C.
Attorney General and Minister of Justice

17th Annual Atlantic Criminal Intelligence Workshop

Criminal Intelligence Service Nova Scotia

October 11, 2005
Westin Hotel

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Good morning.

Thank you very much for the chance to join you today.

I think I surprised my own communications director when I said that I'd be here this early in the morning to give opening remarks.

He used to say, "Minister, it's a great time to give a speech. You know, it's the early bird who gets the worm."

And my answer was, "Yes, but I don't like worms."

This is a great opportunity for me to thank you.

There can be no more important work than what you do on behalf of the public.

And I suppose it's somewhat ironic that while the public doesn't see what goes on behind-the-scenes in your line of work, they certainly see, and appreciate, the positive results.

Here in Nova Scotia, we are a strong supporter of the Criminal Intelligence Service.

As many of you will know, we announced a four-year investment of more than 6-million dollars in the Nova Scotia agency.

We know that law enforcement agencies are committed to doing all they can to make our communities safer and stronger.

And we were very pleased to provide funding that allows for even better co-ordination and analysis of intelligence.

Chief Beazley here in Halifax said at the time that the national trend toward intelligence-led policing is an important early-warning system.

It's pre-emptive and pro-active.

So to us, the long-term funding made perfect sense.

No one has to tell you about the extreme damage that can be done by organized crime.

And not just in the larger centres.

The collaboration of municipal and provincial police will be extremely valuable as we target criminal elements in rural and urban locations.

In fact, we've seen recent success stories in the Atlantic region with raids on marijuana grow-ops.

With every successful raid, we can point to effective intelligence as the reason.

Each raid also boosts public confidence in the fight against organized crime.

I can also tell you this morning, that the new sitting of the legislature, which begins on Thursday, will have a heavy focus on public safety.

In fact, when you read the media coverage, you'll probably think I stole your theme from this workshop!

I'll be making a number of public safety announcements, some to do with legislation, some with new programs, that will be of great interest to law enforcement.

I'll just mention a few, briefly:

- We'll be looking at ways to more effectively monitor offenders under conditional sentences.
- We'll bring in tougher provisions for dealing with people who breach their conditional sentences.
- There will be funding to help police more effectively track serial criminals.
- We will invest in new equipment to fight drunk driving.

And we will invest in better radio communications equipment to help with emergency response.

We have worked very closely with our law enforcement partners to consider best practices.

I'm confident that our agenda this fall will make a big difference in communities across Nova Scotia.

We're also going to reach out to those communities to help us with our agenda.

By consulting about dealing with youth in trouble with the law.

And by consulting about other matters that touch on public safety.

With that, I know you have a full agenda to get to.

I'd like to wish you a great workshop.

And also congratulate your new Bureau Director here in Nova Scotia -Superintendent Mike Bell from the Halifax Regional Police Service.

It's an exciting new beginning, and I know you have the support of your colleagues.

Thank you very much.