
SUMA Position Statement

Only a handful of urban municipalities currently receive fine revenue for traffic tickets issued by the RCMP within their municipal boundaries. Fine revenue for the remaining tickets goes directly to the province.

The current fine revenue distribution system is unfair and arbitrary. All urban municipalities should receive fine revenue for tickets issued within their municipal boundaries.

Key Messages

- The current fine revenue distribution system is unfair and arbitrary.
- All urban municipalities pay for their policing, including those under the provincial RCMP contract. They should therefore also receive fine revenue for tickets issued within their municipal boundaries.

Current Status

- SUMA has worked with SARM and the Ministry of Justice to develop a recommendation for a revised fine revenue distribution model.
- A resolution was passed at the 2014 SUMA Convention, calling on the Ministry of Justice to implement the recommended distribution model.
- SUMA and SARM continue to advocate with the Ministry of Justice on fine revenue distribution.

Background

- The province currently collects fine revenue from RCMP enforcement of *The Traffic Safety Act*.
- If the offense is noted as occurring in one of 108 grandfathered municipalities entitled to fine revenues, the province gives 75 per cent of the revenue to the municipality in which the offence occurred, retaining back 25 per cent for administration and court representation costs.
- The 108 municipalities were generally grandfathered on the basis of population (towns with a population above 500 at the time the new provincial contract was established).
- No other urban or rural municipalities who pay toward the provincial RCMP contract receive fine revenue.
- The inequality of fine revenue distribution has been a frequent topic for SUMA over the past decade. Member resolutions were successfully submitted in 2004, 2005, 2007, and 2008. Though the topic has proceeded to the provincial Treasury Board, it has been turned back due to other budget priorities.
- In 2014, SUMA consulted with members on a proposal to have all fine revenue collected within the province (except for fines collected for infractions taking place on provincial highways) put into a central fund, less a 25 per cent administrative fee. That pool would then be divided among all urban and rural municipalities that pay for RCMP-based policing under the provincial contract. The amount received would be proportional to the amount paid for policing. The response was overwhelmingly in favour of the proposed plan.

- The Ministry of Justice has put forward the fine revenue distribution model forward as part of its yearly budget submission for 2015/16, but it failed to gain traction at the Cabinet level.

Strategic Context

Policing costs make up a significant portion of municipal budgets—particularly in urban municipalities. A more equitable fine revenue distribution model would ease those costs and ensure that municipalities are receiving the financial windfalls, as well as the public safety benefits, that they are paying for.

Conclusion

SUMA is calling on the Government of Saskatchewan to accept and implement the new fine revenue distribution model, as proposed within the Ministry of Justice’s budget submission.

Contacts

Staff Contact:	Sean McKenzie	smckenzie@suma.org	306-525-4388
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