



## MANITOBA FIRST NATIONS POLICE SERVICE (DAKOTA OJIBWAY POLICE SERVICE)

### History

The original establishment of the Dakota Ojibway Tribal Council Police Department, now known as the Dakota Ojibway Police Service, dated December 1974, was prepared and agreed to by all Chiefs of the D.O.T.C. After three years of negotiations, funding was approved by the different levels of government. In November of 1977, the police department commenced operations with one Chief of Police and nine members. The program was funded by Indian & Northern Affairs Canada from 1977 to 1993. The development of the Police Service was to establish local control and accountability to the First Nation communities.

In November of 1993, the Police Service ceased operations due to a lack of funding commitment from the Province of Manitoba. Tripartite negotiations reconvened in 1994 and technical meetings took place as follows: March 10, May 12, May 26 and June 23, 1994. On May 19, 1994, the D.O.T.C. Council of Chiefs and representatives from both levels of Government, Manitoba Justice and Public Safety Canada were able to secure an Interim Policing Service Agreement which saw the restoration of joining policing services (D.O.P.S./R.C.M.P.) to (7) seven of the (8) eight D.O.T.C. Member First Nation communities, with the effective start date of June 1, 1994. On December 31, 1994, a long-term Tripartite Agreement was finalized and on February 1, 1995, the Dakota Ojibway Police Service resumed full-time policing services to (6) six D.O.T.C. First Nation communities: Birdtail Sioux First Nation, Dakota Plains Wahpeton Nation, Long Plain First Nation, Canupawakpa Dakota Nation, Roseau River Anishinabe First Nation and Sioux Valley Dakota Nation.

The original Tripartite Agreement was for 5 years with an annual budget, along with an Implementation Plan that consisted of three (3) phases:

**Phase I** – February 1, 1995, to March 31, 1996. Phase I included the secondment of (7) seven R.C.M.P. members: 1 Staff Sergeant; 1 Sergeant; 5 Corporals. The Staff Sergeant was in charge and mentored the Chief of Police; the Sergeant was in charge of the operation and mentored the Deputy Chief – Operations; the Corporals were in charge at the detachment level and were in charge of detachment operations and mentored potential D.O.P.S. Corporals.

**Phase II** – April 1, 1996, to March 31, 1997. The D.O.P.S. members took control both at Headquarters and detachment level, with the R.C.M.P. staying on in a coaching role.

**Phase III** commenced on April 1, 1997, where D.O.P.S. became a standalone police service and all R.C.M.P. positions were returned to R.C.M.P. Before moving from one phase to another, an evaluation was completed.



On July 10, 1997, the D.O.P.S. Police Commission was empowered by the Council of Chiefs of the Dakota Ojibway Tribal Council. The D.O.P.S. Police Commission consists of one member from each of the communities serviced by the Dakota Ojibway Police Service. In addition to this, the Dakota Ojibway Police Service is the only police agency in Manitoba governed by a Police Commission.

The Manitoba First Nations Police Association was established and commenced negotiations in February 1995 for a collective bargaining agreement for the staff and members of the Dakota Ojibway Police Service except for the Chief of Police, Inspector, Executive Administrative Assistant, Finance Administration Clerk and Crime Prevention Coordinator.

### **D.O.P.S. Chiefs of Police – Past to Present**

The following is a list of the past and present Chiefs of Police for Dakota Ojibway Police Service:

1977 – 1981: Frank McKay  
1981 – 1983 Keith York  
1983 – 1989: Bart Hawkins  
1990 – 2003: Frank McKay  
2003 – 2006: Bill James  
2006 – 2009: Dennis Bercier  
2009 – 2015: Doug Palson  
2016 – 2017: Conrad DeLaronde  
2018 – Current: Rick Head

As one of the oldest operating First Nation Police Services in Canada, D.O.P.S. is a recognized stand-alone police agency located in southern Manitoba, providing policing services to the following First Nation Communities:

Birdtail Sioux First nation – south of Birtle, MB  
Canupawakpa Dakota Nation – south of Virden, MB  
Long Plain First Nation, MB – southwest of Portage la Prairie, MB  
Roseau River Anishinabe First Nation- north of Emerson, MB  
Sandy Bay Ojibway First Nation – north of Portage la Prairie, MB  
Swan Lake First Nation – southwest of Portage la Prairie, MB  
Waywayseecappo First Nation - east of Russell, MB

On June 1, 2018, the “Dakota Ojibway Police Service” officially changed its name to “Manitoba First Nations Police Service”, to encompass any added First Nations communities in Manitoba.

Through local control and accountability to its First Nations communities, the Manitoba First



Nations Police Service continues to provide a quality of professional service. The Police Service now employs forty-six (46) sworn officers and fourteen (14) civilian staff; who understand, honour, and respect the cultures, beliefs, traditions and history of their First Nations people.

The future of the Manitoba First Nations Police Service is defined within its three-year strategic plan for the development of “best practices” in policing and ensuring that the Service and the Community work together in resolving issues and providing a safe environment for community members.

It is the goal of the Manitoba First Nations Police Service to position itself as the Police Service of choice to First Nation’s communities in the Province of Manitoba seeking alternatives in policing. In doing so, the Police Service’s strategic plan is designed to build upon the capacity and sustainability of the organization. This will ensure that when the expansion of the Service occurs, a quality product will be available for delivery to our new communities.