

ALERT



ALERT



**ALBERTA LAW ENFORCEMENT RESPONSE TEAMS
ANNUAL REPORT • 2017-2018**

ABOUT ALERT



ALERT WAS ESTABLISHED BY THE ALBERTA GOVERNMENT IN 2006 to bring together the province's most sophisticated law enforcement resources to combat organized and serious crime.

Nearly 300 municipal police and RCMP work together to investigate everything from drug trafficking to child exploitation to gang violence.

The strength of the ALERT model lies in the integration of members from various agencies who have expertise in intelligence, enforcement, and support services.

ALERT is the overarching umbrella organization of integrated, provincially focused law enforcement activities that promote safe and secure communities in Alberta.

GOVERNANCE

ALERT's governance structure has transitioned authority to Alberta's Police Chiefs and a new Civilian Advisory Committee has been created.

Effective April 3, 2018, the Alberta Association of Chiefs of Police (AACP) Directors began sitting as the ALERT Board of Directors. The change ensures

representation from all of the province's police agencies, including an appointment from Justice and Solicitor General.

Meanwhile, the Civilian Advisory Committee will focus on providing community engagement and public stakeholder relations. The advisory committee will include representatives from police commissions, Indigenous communities, and other organizations with an interest in ALERT.

PARTNERS



SUMMARY

ALERT BRINGS TOGETHER Alberta's most sophisticated law enforcement resources and is an overarching umbrella organization of integrated, provincially focused law enforcement activities that promote safe and secure communities in Alberta.

Through integration with ALERT's partner agencies, ALERT serves five distinct goals:

1. Promote intelligence-led policing
2. Disrupt and dismantle organized crime
3. Support safe communities
4. Reduce harm and help vulnerable victims
5. Enhance law enforcement capacity

In 2017-18, ALERT conducted more than 680 criminal investigations in communities big and small across Alberta. With its partner agencies, ALERT is keeping Alberta safe from serious and organized crime.

Here are some of the highlights from the past year:

- ALERT's integrated model facilitates the promotion of

intelligence-led policing. Criminal Intelligence Service Alberta was able to assess 75 organized crime groups and 2,310 individuals for its 2018 Provincial Threat Assessment.

- Two ALERT operations put major dents in drug trafficking in Calgary. Project Offshore resulted in the seizure of \$4.1 million worth of drugs, including an Alberta-record 28 kilograms of methamphetamines and more than 15,000 fentanyl pills. Meanwhile, Project Arbour shut down a cross-border drug smuggling ring and two clandestine drug labs.
- ALERT worked in other communities around Alberta to keep them safe. The Medicine Hat team made a city record seizure of over 1 kg of methamphetamine in December 2017.
- Internet Child Exploitation and Integrated Threat and Risk Assessment Centre teams continued to protect society's

vulnerable victims. ICE teams arrested 96 suspects and forensic technicians analyzed 308 terabytes of data – the equivalent of more than 46,000 DVDs. ITRAC completed 222 threat assessments for domestic violence and stalking cases.

- ALERT enhances the capacity of provincial law enforcement by providing elite training to enhance the ability of officers. Nearly 2,800 candidates received specialized law enforcement training.

The results achieved in 2017-18 were made possible by the support of the Alberta Government, specifically the Ministry of Justice and Solicitor General; Public Safety Canada; and our partner agencies: Calgary Police Service; Edmonton Police Service; Lethbridge Police Service; Medicine Hat Police Service; and RCMP.

Since being formed in 2006, ALERT teams have made more than 10,000 arrests, seized \$600 million worth of dangerous drugs, and have taken 1,200 guns out of criminals' hands.



1,714
charges laid



\$9.95M
value of
seized drugs



23
child interventions



336
people charged



31,658
grams of
cocaine seized



297
agency assists



\$301K
civil forfeiture
applications



21,845
fentanyl pills seized



71
firearms seized

2017-2018 HIGHLIGHTS



PERFORMANCE MEASURES

GOAL 1: PROMOTE INTELLIGENCE-LED POLICING

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2017-18
CRIMINAL NETWORKS IDENTIFIED	-	-	1	74	75
ACIIS ENTRIES	230	137	32	26	425
INTELLIGENCE REPORTS DISSEMINATED	576	586	1,202	950	3,314

GOAL 2: DISRUPT AND DISMANTLE ORGANIZED CRIME

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2017-18
CRIMINAL NETWORK INVESTIGATIONS	161	33	238	249	681
CHARGES LAID	521	260	473	460	1,714
PEOPLE CHARGED	112	59	73	92	336
CIVIL FORFEITURE	\$175,897	\$42,000	\$56,580	\$26,580	\$301,057
SPECIALIZED TECHNIQUES	146	130	422	568	1,266

GOAL 3: SUPPORTING SAFE COMMUNITIES

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2017-18
COMMUNITIES WORKED	19	35	47	105	206
FIREARMS SEIZED	12	5	28	23	71
SUPPRESSION INITIATIVES	45	43	3	3	94

GOAL 4: REDUCE HARM AND HELP VULNERABLE VICTIMS

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2017-18
CHILD INTERVENTIONS	12	5	2	4	23
CHILD EXPLOITATION PHOTOS/VIDEOS ID'd	24,539	9,818	24,456	75,567	134,380
DRUGS SEIZED	\$1,260,540	\$1,363,027	\$4,359,138	\$2,963,812	\$9,946,558
I-TRAC THREAT ASSESSMENTS	78	67	51	26	222

GOAL 5: ENHANCE LAW ENFORCEMENT CAPACITY

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2017-18
AGENCY ASSISTS	37	43	127	90	297
COURSES OFFERED	19	6	33	22	80
CANDIDATES TRAINED	1,052	224	1,101	519	2,896
PREVENTION ACTIVITIES	51	48	14	25	138

PROMOTE INTELLIGENCE-LED POLICING

GOAL 1: Integrated, intelligence-led policing is supported by strategic and actionable intelligence on provincial and transnational organized and serious crime.

Strategic analysis and intelligence sharing are the cornerstones of success in fighting organized crime. ALERT promotes an integrated, intelligence-led approach to combating this issue by bringing together intelligence and enforcement teams to share information and work closely on serious and organized crime investigations around the province.

MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS

PROVINCIAL THREAT ASSESSMENT

In its 2018 Provincial Threat Assessment (PTA), Criminal Intelligence Service Alberta (CISA) collected enough information on 75 criminal organizations to properly assess them and rank them as low-, medium- or high-threat groups. It also collected information on 2,310 individuals.

With the help of the School of Criminology at Simon Fraser University in Burnaby, B.C., CISA also incorporated Social Network Analysis (SNA) into the PTA for the first time this year. The total network observed included 1,667 people and 3,098 dyads, or connections between two people.

SHARING INTELLIGENCE

- Intelligence sharing between provincial agencies is credited with disrupting the flow of fentanyl into a Saskatoon drug network. ALERT Edmonton targeted and arrested the suspected Alberta-based supplier after CFSEU-Saskatchewan had arrested several street-level dealers. More than 120 grams of fentanyl powder and 500 pills were seized in April 2017.

- With fentanyl continuing to take lives throughout Alberta, intelligence sharing on opioid trends was even more vital. ALERT Lethbridge, Blood Tribe Police and Fort MacLeod RCMP routinely worked together to disrupt fentanyl trafficking in the community. These intelligence-led suppression initiatives included the arrest of three drug dealers in August 2017.



75

criminal networks identified



3,314

intelligence reports disseminated



425

ACIIS entries

ACIIS is the national database for sharing criminal information and intelligence on organized crime.

- Lethbridge Police and ALERT worked together on Project Street Sweeper in July 2017, which targeted property crime offenders. The ensuing investigation resulted in 45 arrests and more than \$400,000 in stolen property recovered. The project highlighted the link between stolen property and the drug trade.

PROMOTE INTELLIGENCE-LED POLICING

THE OTHER SIDE OF INTELLIGENCE

CISA looks to demonstrate its value to police partners

Barry Balerud knows the important role intelligence can play in fighting crime. Now he and his team are working hard to make other law enforcement officials see it the same way.

Balerud has been the director of Criminal Intelligence Service Alberta (CISA) for about two and a half years now. But his relationship with the agency goes back much further to his days with the Calgary Police Service, most recently as an Inspector with the Criminal Operations Section. On that side of police work, Balerud had good experiences with CISA as he worked files from the street level to the organized crime level.

Now that he's on the other side, working with CISA, Balerud wants to help other law enforcement officials see the value in what his team is doing.

"Historically, operational teams have been critical of intelligence; they'll challenge intelligence. It's not easy being responsible for intelligence, but I take it seriously. It's a big responsibility," he says. "We want to make sure we're getting the best intelligence and information out there for the operational teams."

CISA has roughly a dozen employees, including strategic intelligence analysts, information facilitators, security intelligence officers seconded from Correctional Services Canada, and two people who deal with the Automated Criminal Intelligence Information System (ACIIS). Together, they monitor and assess organized crime in Alberta, relying on reports submitted by partner agencies ranging from city police departments and RCMP detachments to Alberta Fish and Wildlife, the Alberta Gaming and Liquor Commission and the Canadian Border Services Agency.

"Their job is really to analyze and establish the identities of those criminal networks, to identify who the police should



be looking at," Balerud says.

"In a perfect world, we're getting information in real time that's relevant, but that's a challenge," he adds. "Raw information flows through CISA daily, but we typically get a lot of our intelligence products from our police partners all at once, in a collection plan, near the end of the year."

Information from those reports – including the scope of an individual or group's operations and the markets they're involved in – can be disseminated throughout the year via intelligence reports, but much of CISA's efforts go

into producing a Provincial Threat Assessment each April. The PTA outlines low-, medium- and high-threat organized crime groups operating in the province, and identifies individual Persons of Intelligence Interest who may be influencing crime trends in the province.

"The PTA is for their awareness, and hopefully police will use it to devise strategies against the more serious targets," Balerud says. "Historically, the PTA was produced for very senior management, the Chief level, to use strategically, to determine if they want to allocate resources

to target groups. But I think it's transitioning more to an operational tool. When they're looking for targets, it's another tool that's available to them."

Reports mostly come from partner agencies within Alberta, but CISA's scope is much broader. Each province in Canada has its own criminal intelligence service and produces its own PTA, which CISA receives and cross-references. The federal government also operates Criminal Intelligence Service Canada, which produces a National Threat Assessment.

Aside from producing intelligence reports and the PTA, though, Balerud also sees his role as one of advocating for CISA and educating partners on the value of its intelligence products. He hopes that will increase the flow of information to CISA and make those products even more comprehensive in the future.

"CISA needs to be embedded within our partner agencies' intelligence models," he says. "With the larger police agencies in Alberta, each one already has intelligence models in place. CISA needs to be part of that whole process, so when those agencies are collecting intelligence in their jurisdiction, as part of that intelligence sharing process, that is naturally shared with CISA."



DISRUPT & DISMANTLE ORGANIZED CRIME



GOAL 2: Organized and serious crime in Alberta is reduced.

Integrated policing is one of the most effective ways to battle organized crime because it encourages and fosters collaboration between investigators, intelligence analysts and experts. ALERT can then expertly perform dedicated investigations that span multiple jurisdictions and target the highest threat groups and individuals. Historically, organized crime has been synonymous with drug trafficking; however, organized crime is becoming increasingly complex, is multi-faceted, and is always evolving.

MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS

PROJECT OFFSHORE

ALERT investigators concluded a year-long investigation into drug trafficking in Calgary in November 2017. In total, \$4.1 million worth of drugs were seized, including 28 kilograms of methamphetamines – an Alberta record.

More than 15,000 fentanyl pills were also seized, along with 8.2 kilograms of cocaine, 11 handguns and various other weapons. Eleven people were charged with more than 125 criminal offences. ALERT was also able to seize more than \$523,000 in cash proceeds of crime and restrain a \$1-million home located in north Calgary.

PROJECT ARBOUR

ALERT announced in March 2018 that – alongside the Calgary Police Service, RCMP and the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration – it had dismantled an alleged criminal organization operating out of Calgary that was suspected of cross-border drug trafficking and had ties to a double homicide case in the city in May 2017.

Search warrants were executed, and investigators found suspected clandestine labs in two homes in residential neighbourhoods. One lab had a pill press that was capable of producing 18,000 pills an hour, and it is believed both fentanyl and steroid pills were being made here. The other lab was allegedly being used to make cannabis resin, a dangerous process involving flammable gases.



336

people charged



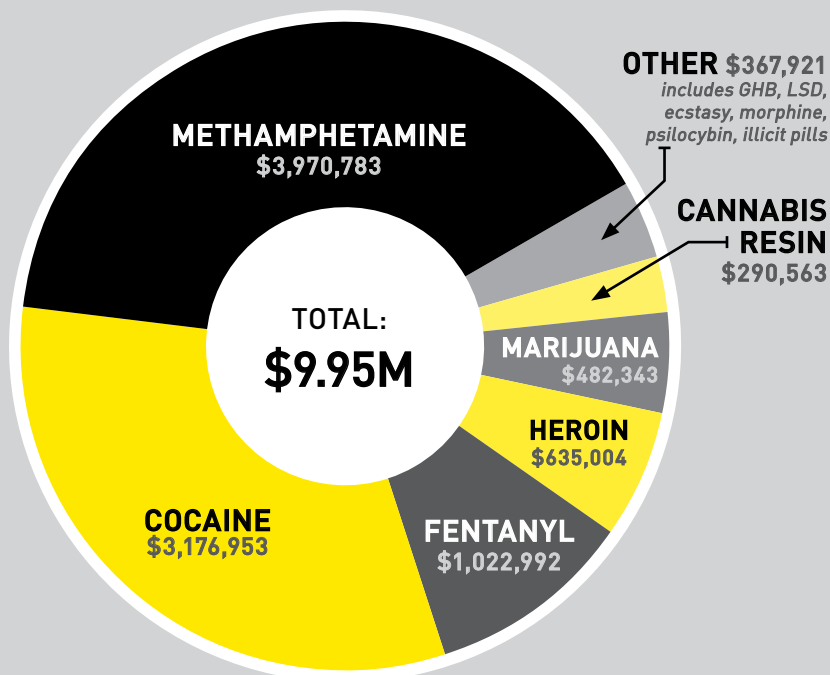
1,714

charges laid

Five people were arrested and charged with 46 criminal offences. One of those arrested was also suspected of helping another person obtain a weapon that was used in the May 2017 homicides. ALERT worked closely with the CPS homicide unit to share information and evidence on this suspect.

DISRUPT & DISMANTLE ORGANIZED CRIME

DRUGS SEIZED - BY TYPE



BIG SEIZURE IN GRANDE PRAIRIE

What is believed to be one of Grande Prairie's largest drug seizures ever occurred in September 2017 when ALERT's organized crime and gang team there searched four homes in the city.

In total, more than \$250,000 worth of drugs were seized, including 1.3 kilograms of powder and crack cocaine; 573 grams of methamphetamines; and 1,476 fentanyl pills. Proceeds of crime, including two vehicles and nearly \$2,000 cash, were also seized.

Two men were arrested and charged with a number of drug-related offences. One of the men was re-arrested in January 2018 after another drug bust in Fairview, Alta.

PAIR OF COCAINE BUSTS

Six people were arrested in two separate investigations in Fort McMurray in May 2017 that took nearly a kilogram and a half of cocaine off the streets of the northern Alberta city.

All told, the estimated value of the drugs seized was \$150,000. The operations were part of a concerted joint effort between ALERT and Wood Buffalo RCMP to disrupt drug trafficking activity in the community.

In one of the investigations, 612 grams of cocaine were seized, along with one kilogram of a cocaine buffing agent and \$2,000 cash proceeds of crime. In the other, investigators searched two homes and a vehicle, seizing 860 grams of cocaine, a shotgun and \$10,000 cash proceeds of crime.



1,266
specialized
techniques



\$301,057
civil forfeiture
applications value



\$1.41M
value of proceeds
of crime seized

DISRUPT & DISMANTLE ORGANIZED CRIME

BRAKES PUT ON DRUG RUNNERS

Investigation into cross-border drug ring a true example of ALERT meeting its goals

When reports connecting a seizure of 100 kilograms of methamphetamine in Utah to drug dealers in Calgary began to cross Staff Sgt. Barry McCurdy's desk in late 2016, he wanted to know more about the group's Canadian connection. So he and his team started an investigation – and it turned into one of ALERT's biggest success stories of the year.

In March 2018, ALERT announced the results of Project Arbour: 46 charges laid against five individuals; the seizure of fentanyl, buffing agent, seven kilograms of methamphetamine, two kilograms of cocaine and 8.5 kilograms of cannabis products; the dismantling of two clandestine labs located in Calgary residential neighbourhoods; and a link to a double homicide in May 2017.

With such a long list of positive outcomes, McCurdy believes this operation exemplified ALERT's stated goal of disrupting and dismantling organized crime in the province.

"With all the different components of the investigation ... I would say Arbour is a case where we truly disrupted and dismantled this organized crime group," he says. "Between ALERT and CPS Homicide, we basically charged all the people who were involved in this organization."

After the Utah seizure occurred in October 2016, McCurdy and his team began looking into the alleged leaders of the drug ring to see how involved they were in drug trafficking. They soon found fentanyl and heroin being transported into Canada, and the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration became more heavily involved.

"We truly disrupted and dismantled this organized crime group."



This industrial pill press, capable of making 18,000 fentanyl pills an hour, was seized in Project Arbour.

CLICK
FOR
VIDEO

Then, over the May long weekend in 2017, Colin Reitberger and Anees Amr were shot and killed in a southeast Calgary parking lot. ALERT was able to provide Calgary Police Service homicide detectives with what they knew about the recent activity of the organized crime group that allegedly committed the murders.

"We've developed – not just with homicide, but with a lot of the units here – a very good working relationship where we're able to work hand-in-hand on investigations," McCurdy says.

When ALERT executed its search warrants for Project Arbour in February 2018, the main goal was to locate and shut down a pill press that investigators believed the group was using to manufacture fentanyl pills – up to 18,000 per hour. The press was found in a garage in the Rossbarrock neighbourhood, and had to be destroyed due to the amount of fentanyl contamination.

"With all the deaths that are caused

by opioids and fentanyl, a high-capacity pill press is a substantial danger to the public," McCurdy says. "Combined with the knowledge and skill of the people using the press, that would definitely add to the danger to the public."

Another lab found in the Cougar Ridge neighbourhood was producing cannabis resin, also known as shatter. McCurdy says this was the first time ALERT has dealt with such an operation in Calgary; most similar products they've seen so far have been brought in from British Columbia. The process of extracting cannabis resin uses highly flammable gases like butane. "We were aware of a couple of cases in B.C. where shatter labs had blown up or burned down. So it was a priority to make sure we took the shatter lab down and ensure that didn't happen here in Calgary."

Even though there were positive results on this file, McCurdy says he and his team aren't ready to rest on their laurels.

"Arbour was a great file, and it's hard to live up to," he says, "but it certainly motivates us to look for other targets like [this group]."

DISRUPT & DISMANTLE ORGANIZED CRIME



CLICK
FOR VIDEO

WORKING THEIR WAY TO THE TOP

Project Offshore a big feather in ALERT's cap – thanks to investigators who stuck to following the evidence

When Const. Nicolas Laforge went to his staff sergeant proposing an investigation into Simon Yuen and his organized crime group, he had no idea how big it would be.

But, a year later, in November 2017, there he was along with other members of ALERT Calgary's Organized Crime Team (OCT) as media gathered video and photos of the firearms and drugs seized during what had become known as Project Offshore. All told, the operation netted \$4.1 million worth of drugs – including an Alberta-record 28 kilograms of methamphetamine – vehicles, bank accounts, weapons and a home valued at more than \$1 million. Eleven people were charged with 127 offences.

Laforge was familiar with Yuen and his operation thanks to his time working with ALERT Calgary's Street Enforcement Team (SET), which targets street-level drug traffickers. But that team had neither the resources nor the time to go any higher than the bottom rung of the group's ladder. When Laforge transferred to the OCT, though, he saw an opportunity.

But he didn't have any inkling that this

investigation would turn into a multimillion-dollar headline-grabber.

"I would be lying if I said I did," Laforge says. "We just started at the bottom of the ladder and we worked our way up. We followed the evidence. We didn't really reinvent the wheel in that respect."

As the investigation progressed, the OCT had to remain focused on the task at hand – Laforge says there were tough decisions made behind the scenes not to pursue certain avenues in order to maintain that focus. But, at the same time, there had to be some flexibility. Focusing too narrowly could have been just as detrimental as going too wide.

"You have an idea where you want to go, but the biggest mistake we could have made is to stick to that idea and not go where the evidence is leading us," Laforge says. "Our primary objective was to target the criminal organization of Simon Yuen, but at the end of the investigation, Simon Yuen is ultimately the only individual who is not charged with

the offences we were investigating at the onset. Had we stuck strictly to him and not followed the evidence, the outcome would have been different.

"That said, there is a form of blueprint with respect to drug investigations, which is to investigate a certain target until that target led us to whoever was the next one in line above that person."

As media captured pictures of weapons and drugs laid out on tables and dignitaries offered congratulations, Laforge says he couldn't help but feel proud of his team and their accomplishment.

"It's a good feeling," he says. "As much as the evidence on the table, a statement that made the team realize the success of the investigation was the individuals who came to the press conference: [Alberta Justice Minister Kathleen Ganley], who had words for us, and all the members of the [ALERT] Joint Management Team that were present. I think that was also a testament to the success of the investigation. It was a true moment where the team saw what our efforts led to."



SUPPORT SAFE COMMUNITIES



GOAL 3: Alberta communities big and small are made even safer by targeting organized and serious crime offenders.

Specialized investigative support means ALERT has the capacity to target the gangs, drugs, organized crime groups, child sex predators, and the highest-risk domestic abusers who seek to undermine the safety of our neighbourhoods. Organized crime is directly tied to much of Alberta's serious and violent crime. By targeting organized crime groups, ALERT can significantly lower rates of victimization related to drugs, weapons, and fraud offences.

MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS

RECORD METH SEIZURE

ALERT's organized crime and gang team in Medicine Hat had a major victory in December 2017, seizing more than a kilogram of methamphetamines from a vehicle on Highway 3, just inside city limits. The amount of methamphetamine seized is believed to be a record for Medicine Hat.

More than 200 grams of cocaine were also seized from the same vehicle, making the value of the bust an estimated \$125,000. The driver of the vehicle, a 47-year-old woman, was arrested along with a 28-year-old male associate in Lethbridge.

GUNS & AMMO SEIZED

Search warrants were executed at a gun store in Cardston, Alta., in May 2017, concluding a five-month investigation into firearms trafficking by ALERT investigators based in Lethbridge and the RCMP National Weapons Enforcement Support Team (NWEST). The store's entire inventory of 1,000 guns and 1 million rounds of ammunition was seized.

Investigators allege the shop's owners were failing to ensure gun buyers were providing valid Possession Acquisition Licenses.

The store's inventory included 49 handguns; 972 long guns; 270 kilograms of gun powder; 446 kilograms of Tannerite, a binary explosive material; and 12,000 firearm primers.



206

communities where investigations took place



71

firearms seized



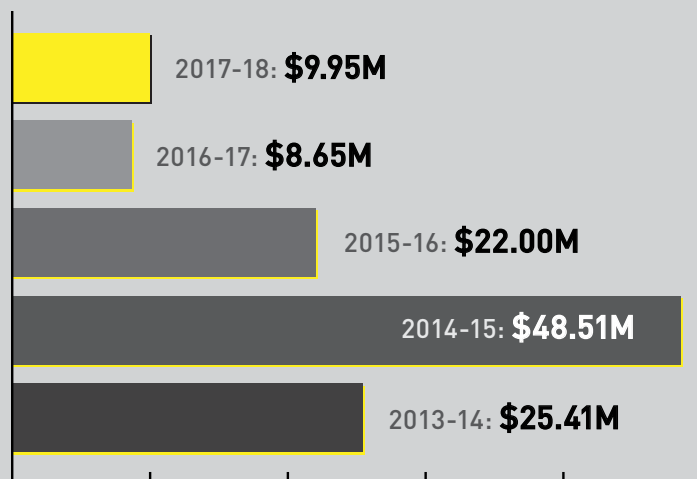
94

suppression initiatives

Includes bar walks, outlaw motorcycle gang enforcement, and overt activities.

SUPPORT SAFE COMMUNITIES

DRUG SEIZURES



ARRESTS

	ARRESTS	CHARGES
2017-18	336	1,714
2016-17	498	3,014
2015-16	381	2,184
2014-15	503	2,761
2013-14	609	2,172
2012-13	572	2,013
2011-12	534	1,518

JOINT INVESTIGATION TURNS UP WEAPONS, COCAINE

ALERT investigators seized two firearms, along with a host of replica weapons and half a kilogram of cocaine, during an investigation in Fairview, Alta., in January 2018.

Three people were arrested and face a total of 34 charges between them. One of those arrested had previously been arrested by ALERT during a \$250,000 drug bust in Grande Prairie just a few months earlier.

SIX FIREARMS SEIZED IN BUST

ALERT Lethbridge's organized crime and gang team arrested four people, including a man wanted on a Canada-wide warrant, in June 2017 and seized six firearms, \$2,600 worth of drugs and \$10,000 cash proceeds of crime.

The guns were found in a home in Coaldale, and included two sawed-off shotguns and a rifle that were loaded and improperly stored.



SUPPORT SAFE COMMUNITIES

CARFENTANIL STARTS CREEPING INTO ALTA.

But with co-operation from neighbouring police forces, Lethbridge ALERT teams commit to combating the drug

Ten times more potent than fentanyl. Five thousand times more potent than heroin. Ten thousand times more potent than morphine. A dose the size of a grain of sand can be fatal.

The statistics surrounding carfentanil, the newest and most powerful opioid to emerge in the Alberta drug market, are alarming. And so far, most of it is popping up in Lethbridge and southern Alberta; seized drugs in three ALERT operations between January and May 2018 are suspected of containing carfentanil.

Staff Sgt. Jason Walper of ALERT Lethbridge's organized crime and gang team says carfentanil began showing up on the street level in southern Alberta during the summer of 2017, and since then, it has only become more prevalent, turning up alongside fentanyl in traffic stops and other investigations.

"When our teams talk to users and addicts, people who were arrested and involved in trafficking or in possession of these drugs, they ask them regularly, 'Why are you taking this, knowing the potential for overdose and death?'" Walper says. "And the response they're receiving is, 'Because this is what's available.'"

Aside from the risks to drug users, though, Walper says that the emergence of carfentanil and fentanyl has contributed to a spike in property-related crimes in Lethbridge, including break-and-enters and theft. "Whether they trade that property to convert it to money or trade it straight across to obtain drugs, certainly it causes concerns for the community as a whole," he says.

To that end, ALERT partnered with the

Lethbridge Police Service between May and July 2017 for Project Street Sweeper, which was successful in targeting chronic property crime offenders. Dozens of people were arrested, hundreds of charges were laid and over \$400,000 in stolen property, including 24 stolen vehicles, was recovered.

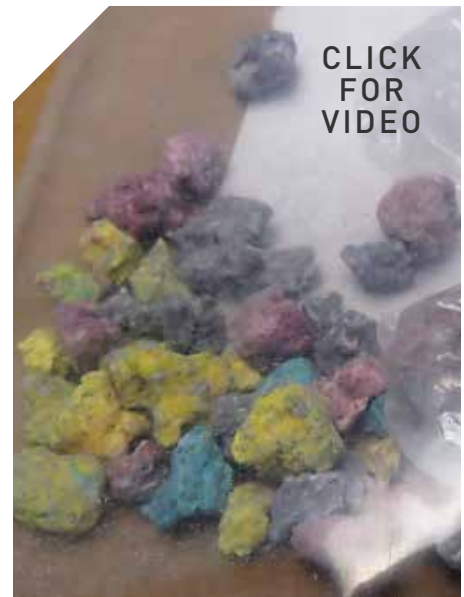
But it's not just the community of Lethbridge that is affected. ALERT investigations have linked the drug to the Blood First Nation Reserve and several other southern Alberta communities. Alberta Health Services reported a large increase in opioid overdoses in its South Zone last year.

"It just comes back to the fact that these users don't know what they're taking," Walper says. "They're taking a cocktail of mixed drugs that may contain carfentanil. Sometimes the dosage is something they're able to consume and not overdose. But because the fentanyl and the carfentanil

is not mixed and produced to the same standards of a commercial drug, it could cause them to overdose when they take another dose of the same size that has a greater concentration."

But he adds that ALERT's integrated model

allows his team to work collaboratively with RCMP detachments, the Blood Tribe Police Service and other law enforcement agencies to combat complex issues like this. "It gives us a better understanding of the local issues and priorities for these different agencies. Criminals don't have any boundaries as far as where they operate; if they find it tougher to operate within the city of Lethbridge because of enforcement action, then they're going to reach out and move into some of the outlying areas like



the Blood First Nation or Fort Macleod or Cardston. As long we're all working together, they're not going to be able to hide in these outlying regions."

Meanwhile, the prevalence of firearms is also on the rise – not specifically because of carfentanil, but more due to the drug trade in general. Traffickers use guns to protect themselves, to intimidate rivals, and even to carry out robberies.

That concerns Walper, because it poses an inherent risk to law enforcement personnel trying to execute search warrants on these subjects. "These drug traffickers are also potentially drug abusers, and if they're consuming drugs, that increases the unpredictable behavior when we go to arrest or have to do surveillance on them," he says.

But, he adds, that's not going to stop ALERT and its partners from cracking down on those traffickers, especially when it comes to potentially deadly drugs like carfentanil.

"We're seeing a lot more information regarding carfentanil and fentanyl. Any time our teams are looking toward new investigations, and doing risk assessments on which investigations we should undertake, we certainly give more weight to those files that involve carfentanil and fentanyl," he says. "Those files are worth taking a look at because of the significant risk to the public."

SUPPORT SAFE COMMUNITIES

COMBATING METH IN MEDICINE HAT

Community safety is the driving factor in targeting drugs in southeast Alberta

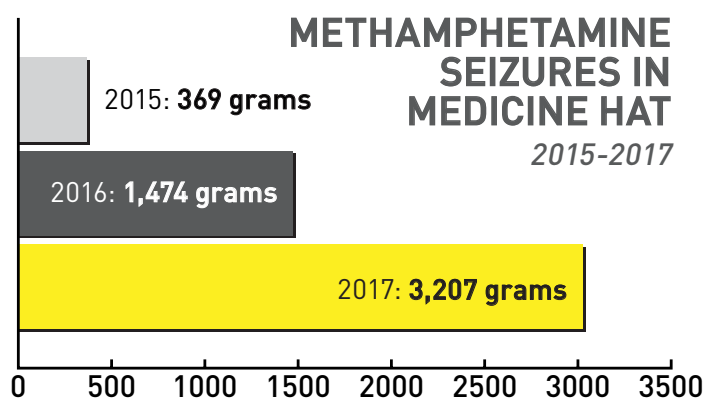
The numbers look alarming: Statistics from ALERT's organized crime and gang team in Medicine Hat show a nearly tenfold increase in the amount of methamphetamine seized each year from 2015 to 2017.

But, according to Staff Sgt. Cory Both, it's not bad news. In fact, it's an aggressive enforcement response to a trend that police noticed was escalating in the southeast Alberta city three years ago.

"It's not that there's more methamphetamine here than anywhere else; that's not the case," Both says. "It's just that, when methamphetamine showed up on the scene, we made a concerted effort over the last [three] years to attack it."

Targeting methamphetamines isn't only about arresting dealers and keeping drugs out of the hands of users, though – it's an issue of overall community safety. Both points out that methamphetamine use is a primary contributor to other crimes, including firearms offences and property crimes.

Over the same time period, Both notes there has been a noticeable increase in the presence of firearms, and that poses a major problem for investigators: "There's the unpredictability and volatility of people who are on methamphetamine, and now the fact that they are obtaining firearms and using firearms in their daily business ... for our patrol members particularly, it's a different ballgame out there."



Meanwhile, drug users are likely to commit property crimes, including breaking into homes and vehicles throughout the community to steal goods that they can pawn to get money to buy their next hit. "Anecdotally, we know that almost 100 per cent of the [break-and-enters] and property offences we see locally are tied to those involved in the drug community, and specifically in the methamphetamine trade," Both says.

ALERT teamed up with the Medicine Hat Police Service in September 2017 for Operation Suppression, which focused on



applying pressure to street-level drug traffickers and curbing property crime in the city. In total, 20 people were arrested and charged with drug-related offences, while 29 people faced charges relating to stolen property.

Such cooperation between law enforcement agencies is "absolutely necessary," Both says, both with local police and with police in other areas of the province. "To be able to extend past our municipal borders and into other communities is an absolute key," he says. "We have to follow the supply lines and take out the dealers at their bases of operation."

In December 2017, ALERT investigators made a record seizure of methamphetamine for Medicine Hat, seizing just over a kilogram of the drug from a vehicle as it entered city limits along Highway 3. Adding in 226 grams of cocaine that was also found in the vehicle, the value of the drugs seized was estimated at \$125,000.

"That was a textbook investigation, the way ALERT was designed to work," Both says. "We started off at the street level, the bottom tier; we identified the hierarchy, the structure of the group; and we worked our way up to the top tier, the supplier. We got some lucky bounces, but ultimately we got the results we wanted in an expedited fashion."

And while he and his team are proud when they look back on how that particular investigation played out, Both says it motivates them to look ahead at the work that still needs to be done.

"These guys love what they do," he says, "and when they get something like that, it validates their enthusiasm and passion for the job. It solidifies in their minds that the ALERT concept works and they're able to get the job done."

REDUCE HARM & HELP VICTIMS



GOAL 4: Law enforcement activities reduce harm and provide necessary supports to vulnerable victims, including the drug addicted, sexually exploited children, and victims of domestic abuse.

[CLICK FOR VIDEO](#)

ALERT teams work to protect Albertans, reducing harm, and taking measures to better ensure the safety of our province. They get harmful drugs off the street, intervene in the lives of children being abused or drug-endangered, and protect children from online sexual exploitation offences.

MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS

OPERATION ICE BREAKER

ALERT's Internet Child Exploitation (ICE) Unit undertook Operation Ice Breaker in 2017, a three-month investigation that resulted in 56 child pornography-related charges being laid against 16 men from communities across southern Alberta, including Calgary, Red Deer, Airdrie and Strathmore. Two underage luring victims were also identified.

More than 500 electronic devices were seized over the course of 25 search warrants carried out in those three months. Those devices equate to 28 terabytes of data for ICE forensic technicians to examine.

Operation Icebreaker utilized information from a variety of agencies and partners during the course of the investigation, including the RCMP's National Child Exploitation Coordination Centre; Cybertip; Kingston (Ont.) Police; Bartlett (Tenn.) Police; the U.S. Department of Homeland Security; the U.S. National Centre for Missing and Exploited Children; numerous RCMP detachments; and various social media providers.

GRANDE PRAIRIE MAN ARRESTED

Child exploitation charges were laid against a Grande Prairie man in January 2018 after he allegedly lured and attempted to sexually assault a local boy. ICE investigators believe, however, there may be other victims in northern



23

child interventions



134,380

child exploitation photos/videos ID'd



222

I-TRAC threat assessments

I-TRAC provides specialized threat assessments for high-risk domestic violence cases.

Alberta, the Northwest Territories, northern British Columbia and Australia.

ICE alleges that the 34-year-old accused would pose as a teenage girl online in order to lure teenage boys.

REDUCE HARM & HELP VICTIMS



1,986
exhibits and
devices seized



308
terabytes of
data analyzed

FATHER ARRESTED

A 41-year-old man from a small town west of Edmonton made his first court appearance in June 2017 after he was arrested by the ICE unit for alleged sexual offences committed against his own daughters.

ICE investigators allege that the man sexually abused his daughters multiple times over a period of six years. One was procured for sex on multiple occasions, some of which were video recorded by the father.

He has been charged with 23 offences including human

trafficking, incest, sexual assault, sexual exploitation, and making child pornography. He also faces a number of firearms-related offences after numerous restricted handguns and rifles were seized when a search warrant was executed on his rural property in November 2016.

The victims have received help and support through a number of ICE's partner agencies, including the Zebra Child Protection Centre.

OTHER ICE HIGHLIGHTS

- The ICE unit laid charges in July 2017 against a 33-year-old Edmonton man in relation to alleged incidents of child exploitation involving two teenage boys. The man purported to be and identified in public as a member of the Catholic clergy, but has no affiliation with the Catholic Archdiocese of Edmonton or any other diocese in Canada or the United States.
- A Calgary Police Service officer was arrested and charged with child pornography-related offences in March 2018.
- An elementary school teacher in Brocket, Alta., west of Lethbridge,

was charged with child pornography-related charges in January 2018.

- ICE investigators partnered with police in Bartlett, Tenn., to arrest a 32-year-old Calgary man after he allegedly lured a 13-year-old girl from Tennessee over the Internet.
- An interprovincial investigation resulted in the arrest of a 50-year-old Edmonton man for multiple sexual offences allegedly committed against family members. The six-month investigation identified four child victims in Alberta, Manitoba and Nova Scotia.

ITRAC ASSESSMENTS

The Integrated Threat and Risk Assessment Centre (ITRAC) develops risk reduction plans for domestic violence and stalking cases, as well as provides expert advice and training.

In 2017-18, ITRAC conducted 222 threat and risk assessments based on referrals from police, government agencies, school boards, and universities. Threat assessments are commonly used in consideration for bail applications and sentencing hearings.



REDUCE HARM & HELP VICTIMS

BREAKING THROUGH

Operation Icebreaker was a sight to behold

Inside ALERT's Internet Child Exploitation (ICE) Unit office in Calgary, there's a whiteboard on which investigators write down the status of files they're working on. Between April and June 2017, though, as ICE was carrying out Operation Icebreaker, that whiteboard was fuller than usual.

"We were taking photos [of the whiteboard] because there were just so many search warrants on there," says Det. Sean Spence, one of the members who spearheaded Operation Icebreaker. "It was quite something to look at."

Operation Icebreaker consisted of 25 search warrants being carried out in those three months, and resulted in 56 charges being laid against 16 men from across southern Alberta.

The operation started as a means to address the large file load being managed by ICE investigators in Calgary. The tempo of search warrants executed increased over the course of the project to address high-priority files that could be dealt with in an efficient, expedient manner. "That kind of output we had back then was all hands on deck," Spence says, noting that the camaraderie in the office allowed

them to pull together to reach a common goal.

Some of the files given the highest priority did not just involve the transfer of digital files. In addition to the large number of arrests, the unit was able to identify underage victims of online luring and prevent potential abuse.

"Identifying victims is always our priority," Spence says, adding that, in most instances, the victims in these crimes remain unidentified.

From the 25 warrants, 510 electronic devices and other exhibits were seized, giving ICE forensic technicians more than 28 terabytes of data to sift through to identify child exploitation images and videos.

"[Their work] is incredible. The techs don't get nearly enough credit," Spence says. While the volume of work can sometimes be daunting, the information that the technicians provide is a valuable tool in helping to uncover the truth. They are an essential part of ICE's operations.

When a media conference was held in July to announce the results of Operation Icebreaker, it garnered lots of media attention, both from Calgary outlets and across Canada. "I wasn't really expecting much; I didn't think it was newsworthy because it's just what we do every day,"

16	number of people arrested during Operation Icebreaker
56	number of separate criminal charges laid
25	number of search warrants executed from April to June 2017
2	number of underage online luring victims identified
27	number of production orders executed
4	number of communities where arrests were made

Spence says.

The bulk of the office's work takes place in Calgary, but Spence says there's plenty of work to do in rural areas – not only catching predators, but also advising local police and educating them about charges that can be laid related to online communications.

Looking back on Operation Icebreaker, Spence says there were a few lessons that the team learned that will help in future investigations, the biggest being time management. "We need to manage between each investigator's needs, each investigator's triaged files, what they deem as a priority, and the tech resources. After Icebreaker, we've become a lot more cohesive and aware of each other's needs."

But a successful operation like this also motivates the investigators to keep going – to keep crossing files off that whiteboard.

"You feel like you're giving the public a service," Spence says. "We're in our little office here and you lose touch with society sometimes, and the rest of the policing world. But when you get out there and start telling your story and how many files you do, their eyes are opened a bit. And you realize there's a lot more work to do."

Over three months, Operation Icebreaker seized
28 TERABYTES OF DATA
 from suspects in southern Alberta. That's roughly equal to:

a stack of CDs
224 FEET TALL



or **4,200**
 DVDs



7 BILLION double-sided printed sheets of paper; stacked in a single pile, they would reach **450 KM** high

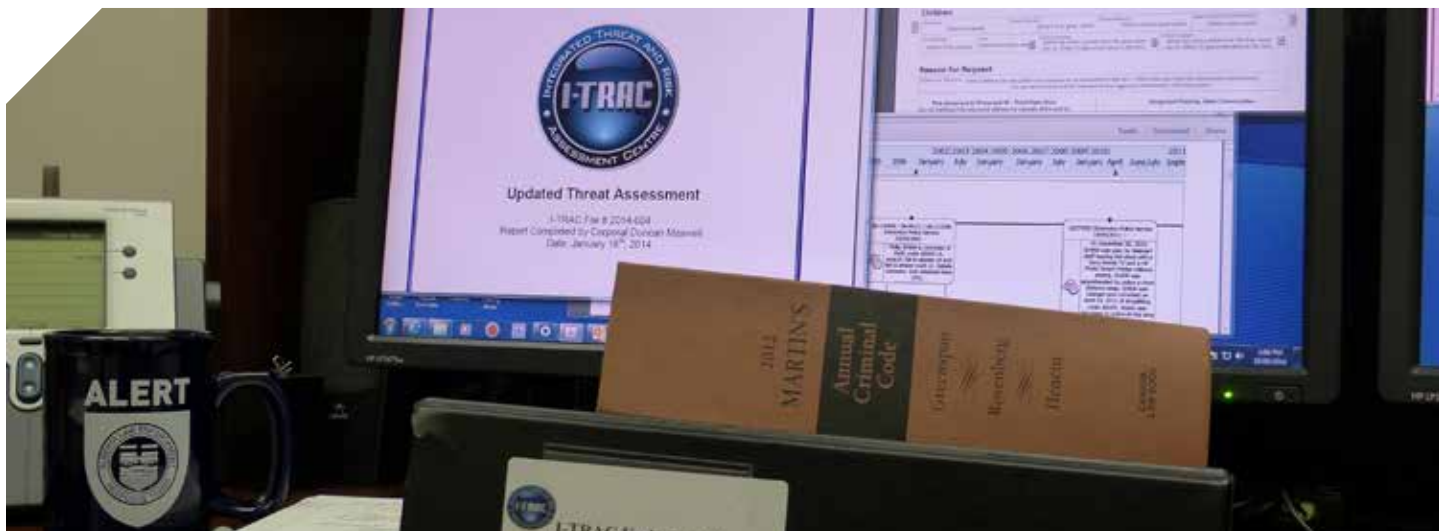


The International Space Station orbits Earth at an altitude of 400 kilometres.

7,000,000 MP3 song files, which could play non-stop with no repeats for **56 YEARS**



REDUCE HARM & HELP VICTIMS



ASSESSMENTS ON THE RIGHT TRAC

ITRAC team knows the value of its work thanks to experience on the front lines

Sgt. Colette Zazulak and many of her colleagues at the Integrated Threat and Risk Assessment Centre (ITRAC) know just how hectic it can be on the front lines of law enforcement. That's why they are proud of the role they play behind the scenes.

Zazulak is a certified threat assessor and the operations manager at ITRAC, which works to assess threats and develop risk reduction plans for domestic violence and stalking cases in Alberta, as well as provide expert advice and training to police agencies across the province.

Zazulak herself served at several RCMP detachments before joining ITRAC, and many of her colleagues are also law enforcement veterans. That gives them an understanding of how many domestic violence files police officers are dealing with, and ITRAC's work helps them prioritize and manage those files.

"We've been there, and we know how overwhelming it is to have all these files that a person is trying to manage," she says. "Ideally, best practices dictate that you pay more attention to the higher-risk ones; you want to be able to triage your files. Our work is important because we're letting police know which [files], scientifically speaking, are the most dangerous and will require the most resources."

A typical day at ITRAC usually involves threat assessors at the central office in Edmonton – as well as in satellite offices in Lethbridge, Medicine Hat and Calgary – poring over raw data from a variety of sources to compile threat assessments and case management suggestions for police services to implement.

Threat assessment requests are only accepted from police

departments in Alberta on current domestic violence or stalking charges before the courts; ITRAC completes roughly 250 each year. The assessments are then used in court to determine next steps.

"We're trying to prevent another violent act from occurring," Zazulak says. "We do know that the best predictor of future violent behaviour – though not the only one – is past violent behaviour. We're looking at what we can implement so everyone can work together to prevent future violent acts."

ITRAC also does rush assessments that can be used in bail hearings after an alleged abuser has been arrested.

While ITRAC is headquartered in Edmonton, Zazulak says it's important to have threat assessors in other parts of Alberta to build bridges with local police. One of the assessor positions in Lethbridge is funded through the Government of Alberta's Victims of Crime Fund.

As well, graduate students from MacEwan University, the University of Alberta, Carleton University in Ottawa and other institutions work with ITRAC on research projects that help direct the centre's work. "They love coming here –

they're super-enthusiastic – and it's really rare that they can get a placement that gives them this much access to police files and good data," Zazulak says.

Members of ITRAC have also presented at international conferences and published research papers, some of which have earned provincial and national recognition. Zazulak says those papers and presentations are not only educational tools in a "rapidly evolving field," but also a great way to let people know about ITRAC and what it does. And the accolades are a reflection of the entire team. "It's a team effort, and we work together on those types of goals. Those accomplishments, we all share."

"We're letting police know which files, scientifically speaking, are the most dangerous."

ENHANCE LAW ENFORCEMENT CAPACITY



GOAL 5: Law enforcement officers possess an advanced level of expertise, skills, and knowledge to effectively and efficiently target gang, organized crime and serious crime in Alberta.

ALERT intelligence and enforcement officers conduct sophisticated, long-term criminal investigations that require advanced training and knowledge. ALERT supports police by providing elite training to enhance the ability of officers to detect and disrupt organized crime in Alberta.

MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS

ASLET HIGHLIGHTS

Alberta Specialized Law Enforcement Training (ASLET) enjoyed another successful year, with 80 courses offered and 2,896 candidates trained. The courses covered a myriad of topics, from drafting search warrants to civil forfeiture and case law.

A highlight was a two-day homicide conference held in Red Deer in November 2017. More than 230 law enforcement personnel and Crown prosecutors attended from B.C., Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Ontario. Experts presenting included Christina Telizyn from the Ontario Centre for Forensics and John Marshall from RCMP National Forensic Laboratory Services.

HANDMADE MACHINE GUNS

ALERT's specialized Guns and Gangs unit based in Edmonton had a big win in August 2017 when it arrested a man and a woman on a number of firearms-related charges. They allege that the man was manufacturing semi-automatic and fully automatic weapons in a machine shop in Parkland County, just west of Edmonton, and together they were selling those firearms.

During the eight-month operation, investigators were able to seize a Beretta handgun equipped with a suppressor; a modified Suomi submachine gun with two oversized magazines; and two homemade MAC-11 submachine guns outfitted with suppressors and oversized magazines. The MAC-11s were capable of firing all 30 rounds in



297

agency assists

ALERT provides assistance to policing partners, corrections, government, schools, and NGOs.



80

courses offered



2,896

candidates trained

their magazines in a matter of seconds.

At the time, investigators were attempting to determine exactly how many guns had been manufactured and if any of them had made their way into the criminal market.

ENHANCE LAW ENFORCEMENT CAPACITY

OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS

Handmade machine gun case shows versatility of ALERT Guns & Gangs unit

After 17 years as a police officer, not much crosses Det. Kris Bombier's desk that is unfamiliar to him. But when he was handed the file for a case of a man suspected of manufacturing machine guns in a shop just west of Edmonton, it was a rare occurrence.

Bombier is a member of ALERT's Guns and Gangs unit in Edmonton, which was established in 2016 and specializes in determining how organized crime groups in Alberta source and acquire the firearms they use to protect themselves and intimidate their rivals.

When this case landed on Bombier's desk, he knew it was a unique opportunity to make an impact.

"The excitement of this file was that it was completely different, a different type of approach to an investigation and a different type of investigation that often doesn't get done in Canada. And when it does, you have to jump at the opportunity, so we weren't going to pass it up," he says.

In August 2017, search warrants were executed at two Edmonton homes and a rural property in Parkland County. Two people – Jacob Balan and Amy Brogden – were arrested and jointly charged with 62 firearms-related offences. Investigators seized four prohibited firearms: a Beretta handgun equipped with a

suppressor; a modified Suomi submachine gun with two oversized magazines; and two homemade MAC-11 submachine guns outfitted with suppressors and oversized magazines.

Prior to joining the Guns and Gangs unit, much of Bombier's professional background was in drug work. He says the links between guns and drugs have become closer in recent years.

"When I first started out, it was rare to get a gun with drugs; as my career has progressed, it has become more and more commonplace," he says.

However, the big difference is that it's not necessarily illegal to simply possess a gun, even a restricted one, if you have a license for it. So, when it came to this investigation, many questions had to be answered before the unit could move in on the suspects.

"We didn't know necessarily why the person was making the guns. It's that who, what,

when, where and why," Bombier says. "We had information that this person had a machining background, was manufacturing fully automatic firearms and trafficking fully automatic firearms. But why was he doing that? We didn't know; that was part of the investigation. It was a unique file in that respect."

Eventually, though, a plan came together and was executed with the help of several partner agencies and departments. Organizing something that complicated wasn't daunting to Bombier, though, because the whole operation could be broken down into smaller pieces and everyone took care of their roles as assigned.

"Every person on the team does an amazing job, and they care about what they're doing," he says.

"There's an element of, and it sounds hokey, but there's an excitement behind being part of a newer or unique investigation. Being a team that successfully completes that, there's an excitement to it; there's a high-five factor to it."

8 length of investigation in months (Jan-Aug 2017)

4 illegal guns seized: 2 MAC-11s, a Suomi and a Beretta handgun

62 separate criminal charges laid against two people arrested

30 rounds of ammo held by each MAC-11's oversized magazine



CLICK FOR VIDEO

Handmade copies of a MAC-11 submachine gun are displayed during a media availability on Aug. 23, 2017.

KEEPING ALBERTA SAFE

AGENCIES ASSISTED

LAW ENFORCEMENT

Alberta Serious Incident Response Team • Blood Tribe Police Service • Canadian Border Services Agency • Calgary Police Service • Crime Stoppers • Criminal Intelligence Service Alberta • Cybertip • Edmonton Police Service • FINTRAC • Lacombe Police Service • Lethbridge Police Service • Medicine Hat Police Service • National Child Exploitation Coordination Centre • NWEST • RCMP • Prince Albert (Sask.) Police Service • Saskatchewan ICE • Saskatchewan-CFSEU • Taber Police Service • Vancouver Police Department • Zebra Child Protection Centre

INTERNATIONAL

Bartlett (Tenn.) Police Department • Interpol • Kansas City (Mo.) Police Department • U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration • U.S. Federal Bureau of Intelligence • U.S. Department of Homeland Security

GOVERNMENT

Alberta Human Services • Alberta Justice • Alberta Sheriffs • Alberta Solicitor General • Alberta Gaming and Liquor Commission • Alberta Child and Family Services • Civil Forfeiture Office

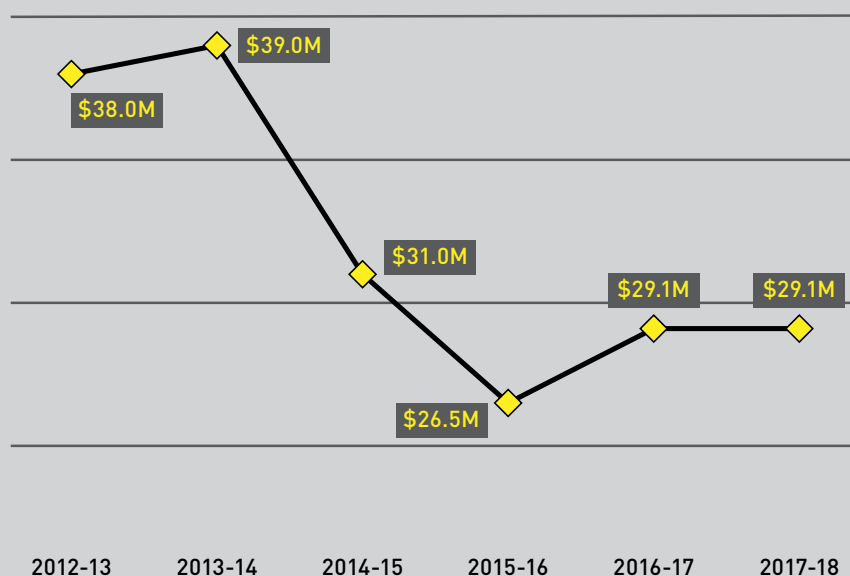
COMMUNITIES WORKED



FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

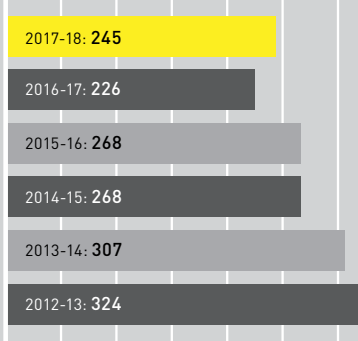
ALERT WAS ESTABLISHED IN 2006 AND IS FUNDED BY THE ALBERTA GOVERNMENT. ALERT'S FUNDING REMAINED CONSISTENT IN THE 2018-2019 PROVINCIAL BUDGET, WITH \$29.1 MILLION EARMARKED FOR THE AGENCY. GOVERNMENT CONTRIBUTIONS FUNDED 245 POSITIONS.

PROVINCIAL FUNDING



POSITIONS

GOVERNMENT FUNDED



POSITIONS BY AGENCY

RCMP Provincial	111
RCMP Federal	19
RCMP Municipal	18
Lethbridge Police	18
Edmonton Police	60
Medicine Hat Police	15
Calgary Police	40
ALERT Corporate	34
PPSC	2
TOTAL	317



\$46.1M

ALERT 2017-18
budget



241

government-funded
positions at ALERT

Alberta

\$29.1 million

amount ALERT received
from the Alberta government
in the 2018-2019 budget



ALERT



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