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Undercover Operations



Undercover operations are an essential component in the RCMP's efforts to investigate criminal activities of various types. These can range from investigations relating to homicides, drugs or the sex-trade to organized crime, national security or financial crimes. Launched in 1972, the RCMP's Undercover Program has built an international reputation as one of the best of its kind and is internationally recognized for leadership in safety standards.

Officers who meet the high application standards of the program are required to successfully complete very specialized and challenging training. By nature of the covert work of officers with the Undercover Units, the content of the training is confidential.

The objective of an undercover operation can range from collecting information and evidence to obtaining a truthful admission. RCMP procedures and policies governing undercover activities are continually reviewed to ensure the techniques and methods do not jeopardize investigations or the safety of our members, the suspect, their families or the public. All undercover operations are subjected to extensive planning, review, monitoring and approval processes.

Major crime homicide technique

One of the several undercover techniques used by the RCMP to obtain information critical to the investigation is the major crime homicide technique, often called "Mr. Big" by the media. The RCMP has been very successfully using this technique since the late 1980s. At the core of this undercover technique is the creation of an environment where suspects disclose certain past activities that they may not talk about otherwise.



The RCMP major crime homicide technique is a successful program recognized by Canadian Courts. The Supreme Court of Canada decision in *Regina v. Rothman*, [1981] 1 S.C.R. 640 recognized certain undercover methods, such as deceit, as a legitimate and lawful way to get to the truth.

The objective of this technique is the truth. In the event there is an admission of the commission of a crime, RCMP undercover operators are trained to apply a series of techniques to determine the reliability of an admission.

The technique has been used more than 350 times across the country as of 2008. The majority of those operations have resulted in either clearing a person of interest, or in laying charges. Charges are always supported with corroborating physical evidence and/or compelling circumstantial evidence, in addition to any admission that may have been obtained through the undercover operation. Of the cases prosecuted, 95% have resulted in convictions.

This technique is not only important in bringing criminals to justice but often leads investigators to bodies of missing persons - bringing closure to families of victims. It can also be just as successful in clearing a person of interest as it is in convicting them.

Want to learn more about the program?

Read our [Questions and Answers section](#).

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