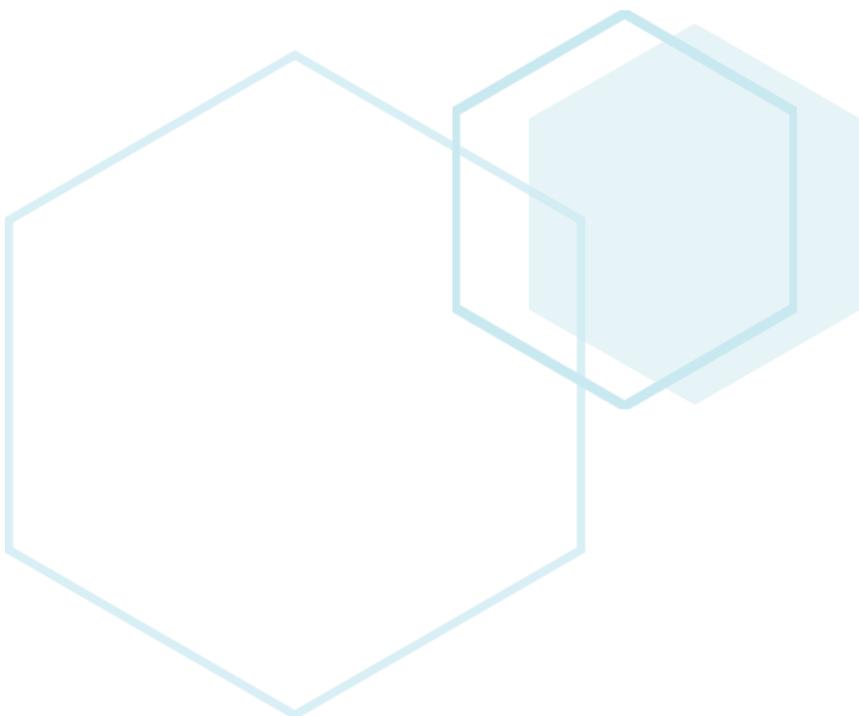


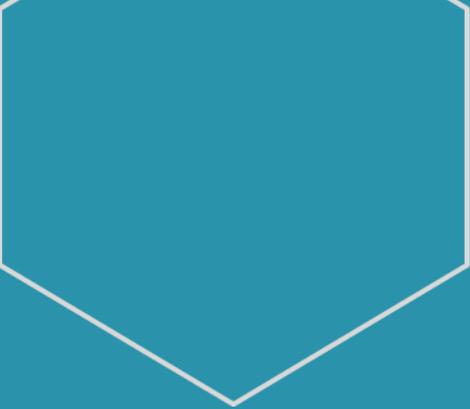


Public Safety Insights:

Summary of the Day of Dialogue on Situation Tables

March 2018





The Office of Crime Reduction and Gang Outreach respectfully acknowledges that the Day of Dialogue on Situation Tables was held on the traditional territory of the Semiahmoo people.



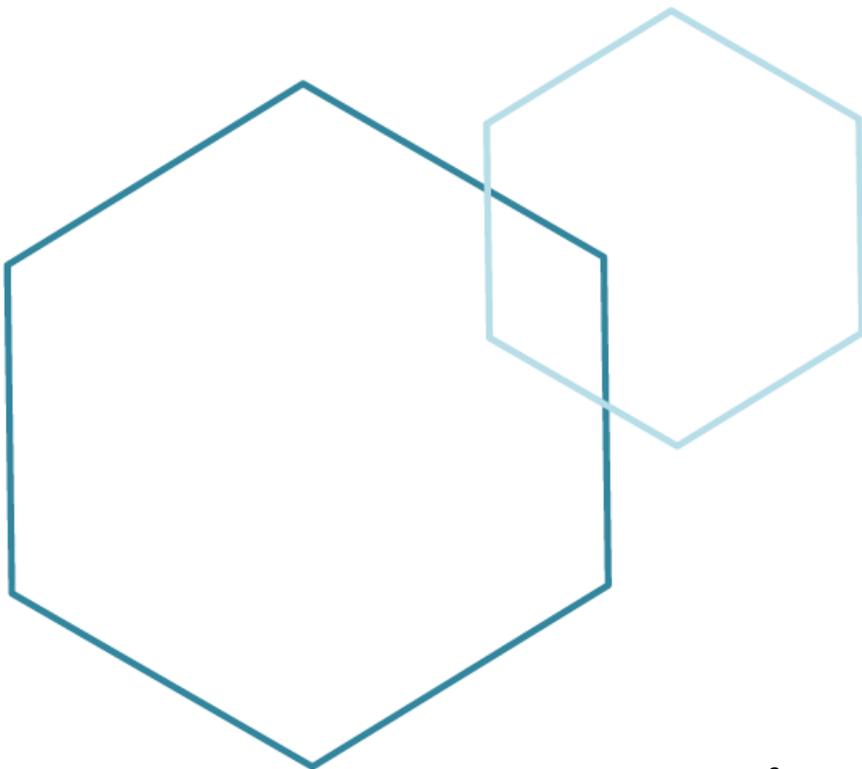


About the Office of Crime Reduction and Gang Outreach

Crime and community safety issues when left unaddressed can undermine the sense of safety and wellbeing in a community. Many of the factors that contribute to these issues require collaboration across sectors to preserve and promote public safety and in turn improve quality of life for citizens.

The Office of Crime Reduction and Gang Outreach (OCR-GO) works with government ministries and departments, police agencies, local and Indigenous governments, academics, and communities to improve wellbeing and safety and enhance responses to pressing community safety challenges. The OCR-GO supports efforts to enhance wellbeing and safety by promoting the use of best practices, supporting operational community safety initiatives, prioritizing issues and communities, and conducting research that informs evidence-based decision making.

The OCR-GO is a multi-disciplinary team led by the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General's Policing and Security Branch in partnership with the provincial police force (Royal Canadian Mounted Police "E" Division) and the Combined Forces Special Enforcement Unit – British Columbia (CFSEU-BC).



INTRODUCTION

Many of the issues that negatively impact community wellbeing and safety, such as chronic social issues, public health concerns, and crime require collaborative multi-agency responses that recognize the police as only part of the response or solution. The Office of Crime Reduction and Gang Outreach (OCR-GO) was created to work with other government ministries, police agencies, local and Indigenous governments, and community partners to promote and support the adoption of promising and proven practices that can improve the safety and wellbeing of British Columbians.

One practice that has a record of enhancing community safety is a Situation Table. A Situation Table is a multi-sector collaboration that enables frontline workers from public safety, health, and social service agencies to proactively identify and mitigate risks that are associated with criminal offending, victimization, and personal crisis (e.g., overdose).

Over the last few years, Situation Tables have been established in communities across Canada, including the Surrey Mobilization and Resilience Table (SMART) and the Mission Active Support Table (MAST). Additionally, several communities have expressed an interest in introducing Situation Tables to their jurisdictions over the last year. In recognition of these developments, the OCR-GO hosted a Day of Dialogue, as a first step towards building a community of practice among Situation Table partners in BC, and to support the learning objectives of community safety partners.

During the Day of Dialogue, it became evident that the actions taken by Situation Tables in Surrey and Mission to provide holistic and timely services were not only helping vulnerable people to meet their needs, but were also helping these people to feel safer and to develop a sense of belonging, self-esteem, and resilience.

The experiences of Surrey and Mission demonstrate that Situation Tables can empower agencies to make real and tangible improvements in the lives of vulnerable people when they are most in need of support. The OCR-GO looks forward to working with communities to create and enhance Situation Tables in order to improve community safety and the wellbeing of British Columbia's most vulnerable people.

Jamie Lipp

Director

Office of Crime Reduction and Gang Outreach

SITUATION TABLE OVERVIEW

What is a Situation Table?

Situation Tables are a forum for front line workers from the health, social service, and public safety sectors to leverage community assets and relationships to rapidly connect clients living with **acutely elevated risk** to a holistic group of protective services in order to prevent a crisis and help clients to better manage and reduce the risk factors in their lives.

Situation Tables empower participating agencies to mitigate risks that extend beyond the mandates of multiple agencies in order to connect people living with acutely elevated risk to the supports and services they need to increase their personal wellbeing. Situation tables enable participating agencies to connect the most vulnerable citizens to the services they need, when they need them.

By the time a case is referred to and accepted by a Situation Table the person in question is not only in need, but requires an immediate response in order to prevent a traumatic event or crisis from occurring (e.g., victimization, apprehension, or an emergency room visit).

What is Acutely Elevated Risk?

Acutely elevated risk exists in situations where the risk factors present in a client's life cross the mandates of multiple agencies and recent events suggest a high probability that the client could experience a crisis.

Surrey Mobilization and Resilience Table Meeting; Photo Credit: City of Surrey

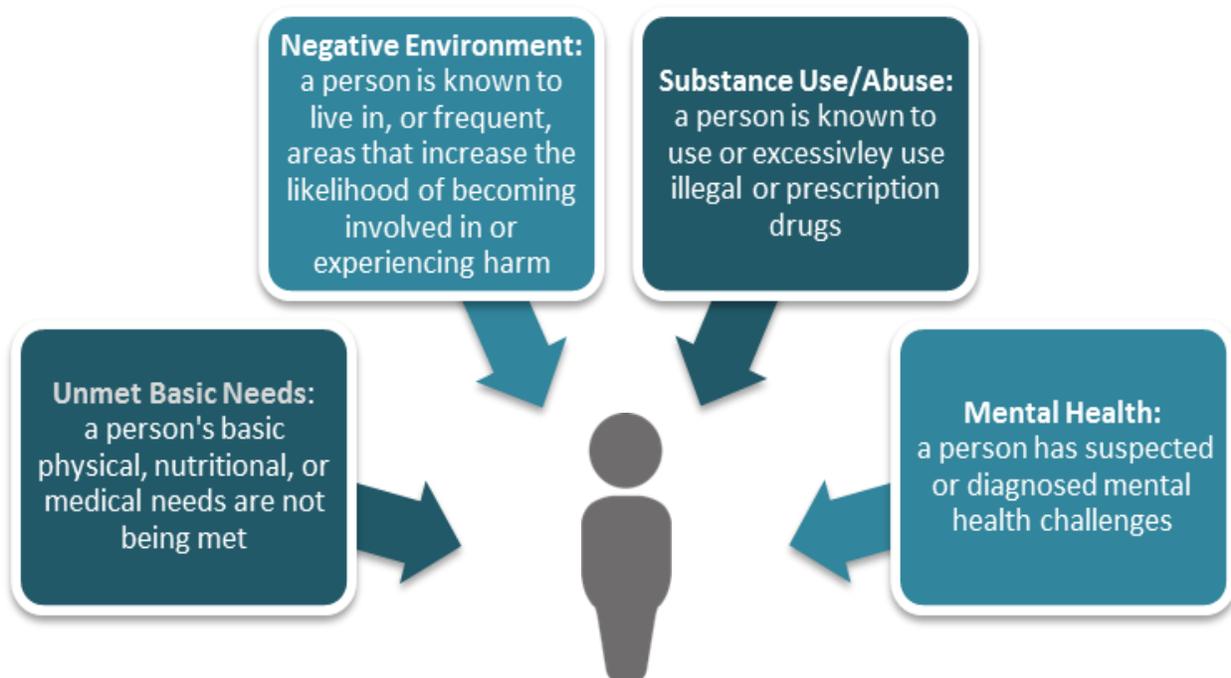


Situation Tables use an information sharing protocol that enables participants to determine if a person is living with acutely elevated risk. The Situation Table partners make this determination when they are aware of existing risks in a person's life, the risks cross the mandates of multiple agencies, and recent interactions suggest that it is likely the person could experience a personal crisis or trauma.

Common factors among Situation Table clients include the clustering of multiple risk factors, which makes it difficult for a person to address a single risk (e.g., substance abuse) because an unaddressed risk (e.g., homelessness) can undermine their access to, and use of, available services and supports.

By providing a comprehensive set of services and supports that address the client's immediate and chronic needs, a Situation Table intervention starts a process to change the trajectory of a vulnerable person by preventing the risk factors present in their lives from undermining their efforts to improve their safety and wellbeing.

Most Common Risk Factors Impacting Surrey SMART's Clients



Source: Rezansoff, et al. "A Hub Intervention in Surrey, Canada: Learning from People At Risk." Evaluation, 2017

MEETING BACKGROUND

On March 14, 2018, the Office of Crime Reduction and Gang Outreach (OCR-GO) hosted 35 participants in a Day of Dialogue on Situation Tables at the Royal Canadian Mounted Police “E” Division Headquarters in Surrey, BC.

The participants represented Indigenous, municipal, and provincial governments as well as the academic, health, social service, and public safety sectors (Appendix 1). The participants had different levels of experience with Situation Tables, but were united in their desire to share and learn from the experiences of others.

The purpose of the Day of Dialogue was to provide a forum for Situation Table practitioners to share their experiences and for participants to explore issues associated with the creation, operation, and enhancement of Situation Tables in British Columbia. The Day of Dialogue represented the first time in BC that service delivery practitioners from multiple communities were brought together to discuss Situation Tables.

The day included presentations that acknowledged the work and results of Surrey SMART and Mission MAST as well as presentations from provincial staff about emerging approaches to public safety and public health challenges. Additionally, facilitated group discussions occurred throughout the day, which provided opportunities for participants to delve into greater detail about the realities of service delivery, collaboration, and confronting systemic barriers to service improvements.

Topics of Discussion:



KEY ACTIONS DISCUSSED

During the Day of Dialogue, provincial staff worked as facilitators and kept detailed notes on the conversations that occurred at their tables and the questions that were asked of the presenters. The OCR-GO then reviewed the comments and ideas and organized them into the following key actions, which are summarized below and expanded upon in the remainder of this report.



Frame Situation Tables as a community safety approach that improves the personal well-being of vulnerable people



Increase Situation Table partners' commitment to implementing the model



Embed Situation Tables into a broader vision of community safety and wellbeing



Build local service capacity to support Situation Table interventions



Collaborate to enhance the existing Situation Table model



Create a Centre of Responsibility to support the creation and enhancement of Situation Tables

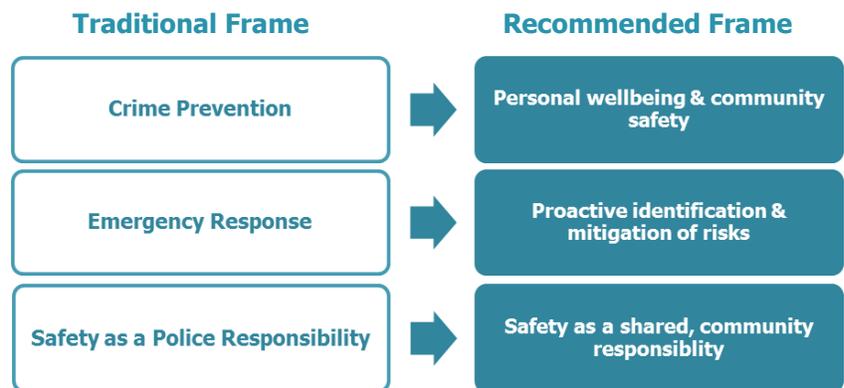


Frame Situation Tables as a community safety approach that improves the personal wellbeing of vulnerable people

- ◆ Situation Tables are often understood as a crime prevention initiative by community safety partners. While Situation Tables can impact crime rates among people whose offending is driven by underlying issues (e.g., substance abuse or mental health challenges), the purpose of the model is to improve the wellbeing of vulnerable people, which ultimately helps to improve community safety.
- ◆ Data from Surrey SMART shows that the most frequently occurring risks among the people referred to Situation Tables are unmet basic needs, negative environment, substance use/abuse, and mental health.
- ◆ The needs of people living with these risks require that public safety, health, and social service agencies recognized that ongoing collaboration is critical to improving the personal wellbeing of vulnerable people - no single agency has the resources or expertise to respond to the multiple risks present in the lives of vulnerable people.

“[Because of the needs of their clients], Situation Tables should be police supported, not police led.”

-Day of Dialogue Participant



Source: Russell & Taylor, Gaining Momentum: Multi-Sector Community Safety and Well-being in Ontario, 2015

Advocates for Situation Tables can:

- ◆ Highlight the impact of interventions on personal wellbeing and community safety and emphasize that Situation Tables primarily help agencies to re-connect vulnerable people to health and social services.
- ◆ Identify allies from local and Indigenous governments and the health and social service sectors to also champion Situation Tables.



Increase Situation Tables partners' commitment to implementing the model

- ◆ Situation Tables are an effective practice. However, experiences have shown that participation in Situation Table meetings and interventions can generate additional work for partners who already consider their staff and resources to be operating at or beyond capacity. As a result, several frontline workers have expressed that they are fulfilling their Situation Table obligations "off the side of their desk."
- ◆ The effectiveness of a Situation Table intervention is limited if key services are not made available to a vulnerable person because a partner agency is not present and an alternative representative is unavailable or not sufficiently trained to share information and participate in interventions. These delays can result in a vulnerable person living with acutely elevated risk for an extended period of time, thereby increasing their risk of a crisis or trauma.

Agencies can increase their commitment to Situation Tables through several actions:

- ◆ Revise their representative's work-plan to include attendance and participation in meetings and interventions.
- ◆ Ensure that alternative representatives are trained in the Situation Table model and capable of attending and participating in Situation Table meetings and interventions when needed.

Situation Table Steering Committees can increase commitment by:

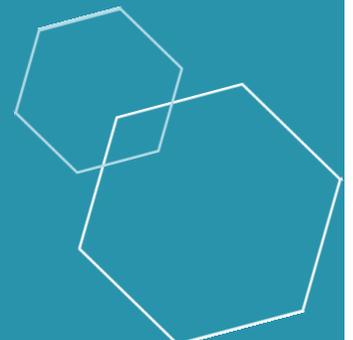
- ◆ Identifying opportunities to facilitate participation by key agencies that lack the capacity to regularly participate in Situation Table meetings and interventions.

Ambulatory Care Unit; Photo Credit: Ministry of Health



A successful intervention in Mission:

A pregnant woman, living homeless in the bush, using substances who had experienced two assaults while pregnant was connected to services by the local RCMP and Women's Resources and was able to enter a treatment facility. As a result of the work that she put in at the treatment facility, she was clean and sober and did not have to give up her baby when she gave birth.



Ontario's Community Safety and Well-being Framework:

The Ontario government promotes the creation of local Community Safety and Well-being Plans in order to help communities become more proactive in their efforts to improve well-being and community safety.

This approach requires significant multi-agency collaboration and local government leadership to design and enable social development, prevention, and risk reduction and mitigation to serve residents.



Embed Situation Tables into a broader vision of community safety and wellbeing

- ◆ Situation Tables are not a “panacea”; they focus on vulnerable people who are at-risk of, or currently experiencing, a crisis or trauma. Situation Tables only work with clients who meet the strict criteria of acutely elevated risk.
- ◆ Once the Situation Table deems a vulnerable person to no longer be living with acutely elevated risk, it disengages from that client.
- ◆ Communities can develop proactive approaches and collaborations that are capable of supporting vulnerable people and preventing the elevation of risk to the levels experienced by Situation Table clients.
- ◆ These proactive approaches should focus on particularly vulnerable or marginalized groups such as youth, seniors, and Indigenous peoples.

Communities can embed Situation Tables into a broader vision of community safety and wellbeing:

- ◆ Develop personal wellbeing and community safety plans that bring together community partners to identify how to proactively support vulnerable peoples’ efforts to improve their quality of life and enhance public health and safety.
- ◆ Create or align other multi-sector collaborations that promote personal wellbeing and safety to complement the work of Situation Tables and provide longer term support to vulnerable people.

Example of modular housing; Photo Credit: Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing





Build local service capacity to support Situation Table interventions

- ◆ Situation Tables place additional pressure on community-based services that may already be operating at capacity, by working to rapidly connect vulnerable people to services.
- ◆ When Situation Tables are unable to connect clients to needed services, it is a sign that there is not enough capacity in the local service delivery system.
- ◆ Additionally, as a result of underlying social issues (e.g., Indigenous overrepresentation in BC's criminal justice system and homeless population), Situation Tables interact frequently with Indigenous people.

Service Providers can support Situation Table interventions by taking action to:

- ◆ Provide priority access to available services for clients referred by a Situation Table.
- ◆ Invest in “pain points” to build service capacity in communities with Situation Tables.

Situation Table practitioners can help build local service capacity by working to:

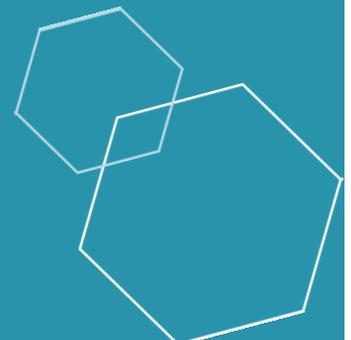
- ◆ Identify opportunities to share their experiences and evaluations with local decision makers and community leaders.
- ◆ Include local Indigenous community leaders in efforts to identify culturally relevant services and supports they can make available to Indigenous clients.
- ◆ Create learning opportunities that enable Situation Tables to deliver trauma informed services that recognize the relationship between trauma, mental health, and substance use.

135A Street, Surrey; Photo Credit: City of Surrey



Mission Active Support Table: Local service capacity challenges

Representatives from Mission shared their experiences working with people with substance abuse as a risk factor. More specifically, the challenge involved in helping a person meet their short-term goal of detoxing but not being able to support the long term goal of recovery because of a lack of accessible treatment beds to provide the intermediate support needed to prepare clients for recovery programs (e.g., medical and clinical services, counselling, etc.).



Surrey Mobilization and Resilience Table:

“They put me in a place – a sort of transit never-never land. It took me an hour to walk to Newton. Sometimes you just can’t.... that was a huge problem for me with my cellulitis, right?...

I was suppose to go to the doctor’s office for IV treatment, 3 hours a day. But I couldn’t get there – I couldn’t walk to the Skytrain because my legs were... And so the ambulance guys – the EMTs that are on the strip now – they insisted on taking me, like every three days”

-Surrey SMART Client

Source: Rezansoff, et al. 2017



Collaborate to enhance the existing Situation Table model

- ◆ Communities and service providers are confronted with new and growing issues; the Situation Table model must evolve to ensure that they are responsive to these challenges.
- ◆ Situation Tables are challenged to understand which of their interventions are successful and whether there are any follow-up actions that can be undertaken to keep vulnerable people connected to services after an intervention.

Situation Table practitioners can collaborate to:

- ◆ Improve upon the existing Situation Table referral and follow-up processes to provide a more robust understanding of the risks experienced by vulnerable people to capture emerging risks, and to determine which provided services vulnerable people are accessing.
- ◆ Improve the ability of Situation Tables to follow-up with and track clients for a defined period of time after an intervention to address issues that could impact their sustained access to the services to which they have been referred.

Overdose Emergency Response Centre; Photo Credit: Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions





Create a Centre of Responsibility to support the creation and enhancement of Situation Tables

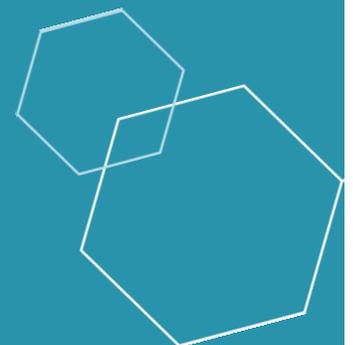
- ◆ Systemic issues can contribute to vulnerable people experiencing acutely elevated risk and undermine the ability of a Situation Table to quickly connect a person to services (e.g., the process and wait times that people living with fetal alcohol syndrome experience while applying for, and waiting to receive, income assistance in some communities).
- ◆ In some jurisdictions, Situation Tables are supported by a Centre of Responsibility (COR) that helps to translate the experiences of Situation Tables into information and insights that can improve service delivery to vulnerable people.
- ◆ CORs are usually led by a provincial agency that works with its strategic provincial, regional, and local partners (e.g., other provincial agencies, crown corporations, health authorities, police, and hospitals) to promote and facilitate systems change.

A Centre of Responsibility could:

- ◆ Develop communications materials that help local leaders raise awareness of Situation Tables and promote adoption of the model.
- ◆ Provide training resources and opportunities to facilitate the onboarding of new practitioners to existing Situation Tables and to improve the ability of tables to respond to emerging issues.
- ◆ Work with Situation Table partners to identify, introduce, and test enhancements to the data management and evaluation processes embedded in the Situation Table model (e.g., identify key performance indicators and the social benefits associated with a successful Situation Table intervention).
- ◆ Lead activities (e.g., information sharing agreements, regulations/legislation) that help Situation Table partners overcome barriers to collaboration and formalize service delivery improvements that increase the wellbeing of people living with acutely elevated risk.
- ◆ Identify and work with decision makers from relevant agencies and organizations to address systemic issues identified by Situation Tables.

Situation Table Learning Package:

The Centre for Public Safety and Well-Being at Wilfred Laurier University provides educational materials that can help people learn about Situation Tables and how they operate.



Appendix 1

Day of Dialogue on Situation Tables: Participating Organizations

The OCR-GO would like to thank all of the presenters and meeting participants for sharing their experiences and ideas.

- ◆ City of Surrey
- ◆ City of Williams Lake
- ◆ District of Mission
- ◆ Fraser Health Authority
- ◆ Lookout Society
- ◆ Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions
 - ◇ Problematic Substance Use
 - ◇ Overdose Emergency Response Centre
- ◆ Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General
 - ◇ Community Corrections
 - ◇ Office of Crime Reduction and Gang Outreach
 - ◇ Public Safety Initiatives
- ◆ Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction
 - ◇ Local Office Services and Outreach
- ◆ Pacific Community Resources
- ◆ Options Community Services
- ◆ Royal Canadian Mounted Police
 - ◇ Coquitlam Detachment
 - ◇ "E" Division — Crime Prevention Services
 - ◇ Mission Detachment
 - ◇ Penticton South Okanagan Similkameen Regional Detachment
- ◆ Safe Schools WRAP
- ◆ School District 27 (Cariboo-Chilcotin)
- ◆ School District 36 (Surrey)
- ◆ Simon Fraser University
 - ◇ School of Criminology
- ◆ Tl'etinqox (Anaham) First Nation
- ◆ Williams Lake Integrated Community Safety Initiative
- ◆ Xat'sull (Soda Creek) First Nation



**For more information on Situation Tables
Contact the Office of Crime Reduction and Gang Outreach at:
OCRGO@gov.bc.ca**