



Justice Taliano, Members of the Board, Honoured head table guests, Service members, family and friends.

Let me start by saying that this is the most treasured moment of my professional career to have the honour of leading the members of the Niagara Regional Police Service and delivering police service to the citizens of the greatest Region.

Today is the start of a new team working together to accomplish common goals.

The team consists of the Police Services Board, the members of Senior Management, Senior Officers Association, the Sworn and Civilian members of the Service, Niagara Region Police Association, the volunteers, such as the Auxiliaries, the Chaplains, the Community Policing Committees and Niagara Victim Crisis Support Service, the elected representatives and the citizens of Niagara.

The Niagara Police Services Board is the governing body responsible for the provision of adequate and effective police service. The members of the Board have responsibilities pursuant to the Police Services Act and play a significant and often unrecognized role in policing. They are required to give an extraordinary amount of time over and above their municipal roles, their professional roles, their community involvement and their personal lives. The Board members represent a wide range of political, business, municipal experience and financial experience. Chair Iggulden, Vice Chair Brunton, Members – Bentley, Smeaton, Martin and Tufford, thank you for your contribution to our community and for your oversight of the Service. I want to express my profound appreciation for your confidence in appointing me the seventh Chief of the Niagara Regional Police Service. I look forward to an excellent working relationship in the future.

As an important member of the new team and an established member of previous teams, I want to express my appreciation to Deputy Chief Donna Moody for her more than 30 years of dedicated service. Donna, you have been required, especially in the last few months, to lead the Service often sacrificing your personal life to serve. You have done an excellent job. I am looking forward to working with you as a key member of the Executive Team.

To the senior leaders of the team, the Executive members and the sworn and civilian members of the Senior Management Team, I will be turning to you to assist, offer advice and to introduce new innovative ideas.

I have worked with all of you for the past five years and have the greatest respect for your expertise in your areas of command.

As senior leaders you set the example for the other members. Your actions and your comments will be constantly observed by the more than 900 members and by the community. There are simple expectations: be honest, communicate professionally, and respect your supervisors, peers and subordinates. That respect will be returned. Remember, as the Senior Management Team that you are also responsible for providing leadership, improving morale and obtaining the respect and confidence from the community. Based on my past experience with all of you, I know you are up to the task.

To the sworn members of the team. The frontline officers are the heart and soul of the team. The front-line answers approximately 140,000 calls for service to approximately 420,000 residents and 15 million visitors annually. It is extremely important that our front-line is resourced to provide a swift response to our community, to participate in community policing initiatives, support victims of crime and display compassion when required. You are the community relations arm in your daily contacts with the community.

To the Administrative, Executive, and Support Services sworn members, your knowledge and skills are required. The public expects the delivery of diverse services such as the Child Abuse and Sexual Assault Units, to address senior and youth issues, major crime investigation, border issues and the challenges faced by terrorism.

Each and every sworn member chose a distinguished career of serving the community notwithstanding the personal danger to yourself and at times sacrificing your family responsibilities. There will always be difficult and challenging days, but remember that you are appreciated and supported. I ask that you continue to serve with pride and integrity and I know you will.

To the civilian members of our Service. The support role that you play in areas such as providing records information, technology, human resources and financial support, and communications, is crucial. The team cannot operate without all the best support and equipment. Many of our civilians are the first contact with the public and are excellent public relations representatives as well. I want to first ask all members to recognize the importance of our civilian complement. I ask all civilians to think back to your date of hire. Remember how hard you worked to get hired, how excited you were to be offered a position and I'm certain, how proud you feel today when you tell people that you work for the

Niagara Regional Police. Respect and support each other and that will lead to recognition and respect from the entire organization.

To our volunteers, the Auxiliary members, the Chaplains, the Community Policing Committees and the Niagara Victim Crisis Support Services. With the complex policing issues we face, we could not survive without the support of our volunteers. I marvel at the time and effort provided by all volunteers and certainly recognize your importance. I look forward to growing with you in the future.

The Niagara Regional Police Association and the Senior Officers Association represent all of our members. I have dealt with the Associations in different roles for approximately 14 years and certainly understand the important and challenging role you have in not just representing your association members but in dealing with all the other members of our team.

I consider that our goals are the same, that being a safe, satisfying and fair work environment for our members. I believe with that same goal and open communications we can resolve most issues. Mike, I have enjoyed working with you and I know that together we can bring progressive and positive change. Rick, as the newly appointed president of S.O.A. I look forward to working with you in the future.

Our relationship with other police services will contribute significantly to the success of our Niagara team. In the future we face many of the same challenges both operational and administrative. For the past five years I have worked with outside agencies on collaborative projects. In that time I have established many great relationships. Niagara will call on you for support and we will be there to offer support. I look forward to new partnerships amongst other services and will draw upon many of you for advice. I have recently received numerous phone calls from Chiefs of other police services who all said the same thing, "being at the top can get lonely but remember we are there to provide you support".

To the municipal, regional, provincial, and federal government representatives. I am committed to ensuring not only a good working relationship but providing you with insight on what we do. You will always be provided with accurate and timely responses, however your support can assist us greatly in ensuring public safety to the community and our visitors.

And last but not least to the citizens of Niagara, we are here to service your policing needs. I look forward to discussion at community forums and events to discuss and identify your needs and issues and ensure that your needs become part of our prioritization process.

My role on the team will be to communicate with all other members of the team to clearly understand the issues and then decide on what changes need to be made. There are already a number of critical issues and tasks to be performed.

First - keeping our streets safe in a cost effective manner with innovative changes

Second - implementing the new Computer Aided Dispatch system integrated with our Records Management System. This superior system will require total business re-engineering for the next two years but will result in streamlining current practices.

Third - ensuring that we maintain financial credibility in reporting and balancing our budgets and ensuring that we openly communicate on both our budget requests and on our ability to find efficiencies.

Fourth – identify our need for adequate facilities.

Fifth – develop fair policies with respect to job postings, promotions and rewards. Ensure policies are followed and that fair and consistent decisions are made.

Sixth– lead with honesty and integrity, expect honesty and integrity, reward for integrity

Seventh – recommend the services required to meet the adequacy regulations set by the Province.

Eighth – build a team for the future by mentoring and encouraging continuous learning.

In summary, I know that our team, the Board, the members, the associations, the elected representatives and the public will make positive changes.

An individual cannot achieve success without the support of family and friends. I thank my mother and my deceased father for instilling important values. Bob, Erin, Mike, Molly, Brent and Stephanie, thank you for your encouragement and support. One of my greatest personal achievements is the wonderful and successful children I have. They have excelled in both their professional and personal lives and I know that Miss Molly will always keep me smiling.

To my close personal friends, you know who you are. In very special ways you have contributed significantly to my successes along the way and you are an integral part of my life.

I want to thank Chief Nicholls for his kind words and I wish he and Margaret a happy and healthy retirement.

A special recognition to my Executive Assistant Joyce Collings for organizing my life, finding lost papers, glasses and keys and for being a loyal and supportive friend.

As well, I want to express my sincere thanks to the people responsible for the planning of today's event:

Deb Morton – Executive Director to the Board
S/Sgt Geoff Skafffeld
Acting S/Sgt Chris Cincio
Sgt. Jackie Davey
Constable Paul Lewis
Constable Ralph Malcolm
Jim Smit
Retired Constable Jim Caddis
The NRPS Colour Party
The NRPS Mounted Unit

What started as a small reception, because of the Board's desire to include the public, today became a wonderful event for all of us. I am humbled by your attendance.

Thank you – I am extremely proud to serve as the next Chief of the Niagara Region Police.