



TORONTO POLICE ASSOCIATION

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NEWS RELEASE

Toronto Police Association warns against private policing

President Dave Wilson says Police Services Board is "missing in action"

Toronto, August 19, 2008 – The President of the Toronto Police Association, Dave Wilson, says the growth of private policing shows the Toronto Police Services Board is "missing in action" on two counts: public safety and human resources.

Wilson says recent media reports about private security guards hired by local businessmen to patrol along Spadina Avenue are symptoms of the problem that the Police Services Board has allowed to develop.

"Toronto's police officers are committed to our city and have the knowledge, skills, ability, and training to best "serve and protect" the citizens of Toronto," he says.

"It's unacceptable when citizens feel they have to turn to private police who are not accountable to the public under the Police Act, not subject to standards of discipline and rules of professional conduct and over which there is no civilian oversight."

"The thin edge of the private policing wedge will only get wider unless Toronto is able to attract and retain the best police officers in the country. The Toronto Police Services Board seems unconcerned about that," notes Wilson, who points out:

- Toronto police pay and benefits now lag significantly behind other police forces in Canada
- 800 out of 5500 Toronto officers are eligible to retire immediately: that's 15% of the force, but the Police Services Board refuses to seriously tackle this human resources issue despite the fact that the loss of 800 seasoned officers would be a disaster
- This year, Toronto is losing police officers to retirement at twice the rate it did last year: during the first six months of 2008, approximately the same number retired, (about 250), as during all of 2007

"The citizens of Toronto have the right to expect professional, properly-funded public policing throughout the city," says Wilson.

The TPA began negotiating for a new contract with the Police Services Board in October, 2007. Talks broke down August 10, 2008 and the contract has been referred to arbitration.

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