

particular concern is that, as the system is used to determine what use of force training has already been provided and what training is left to be provided, inaccuracies may result in a situation where a member may not receive all of the necessary use of force training.

- Although the Use of Force Review Board is required to review all instances of use of force, the Board has not met since October 2002. Furthermore, although all Board members used to receive copies of the use of force reports, this practice was discontinued after May 2002. Instead, only one member of the Board, the Firearms and Use of Force Instructor, receives the reports. There were 494 use of force incidents reported between 1 November 2002 and 31 August 2003. Of these 494 incidents, 40 related to firearms, 37 of which involved drawing and/or pointing a firearm at a person while the remaining 3 involved the discharge of a firearm regarding animals.

Select Committee of the House of Assembly

The arming policy of the RNC is to be reviewed at the end of five years by a Select Committee of the House of Assembly, i.e. March 2003. As at November 2003 the arming policy has not been reviewed.

2.29 Mining Act

To commence a mining or quarry project in the Province, a lease has to be obtained from the Department of Mines and Energy. At 31 March 2003, there were 38 lessees holding 66 active leases. After obtaining a lease, the lessee must comply with the requirements of the *Mining Act* in carrying out these operations.

The Department is not obtaining all of the information required under the *Mining Act* and *Mining Regulations* necessary to monitor mineral development in the Province.

Twenty-one lessees holding 31 active mining and quarry leases have applied for designation as a small scale operation which would exempt them from the requirements of the *Mining Act*. However, as

at 31 March 2003, the Department had not completed its evaluation for any of the 21 lessees relating to these 31 active leases and therefore, it had not determined whether the lessees were required to provide the information outlined in the *Mining Act* and *Mining Regulations*. Although the remaining 17 lessees holding 35 active leases were required to comply with the *Mining Act* and *Mining Regulations*, all were in violation of the *Act* and *Regulations* in that the Department has indicated that not all of the required information had been obtained.

As a result, the Department has not determined the potential environmental impact for all 66 active leases held by 38 lessees in the Province and the potential liability to the Province of any future remediation and rehabilitation costs.

2.30 Debt Relief Program

In 1996-97, the Department of Municipal and Provincial Affairs introduced a Debt Relief Program to assist municipalities in debt refinancing or debt restructuring.

In 1997, the Department estimated there were 170 municipalities which should be reviewed to determine whether they required assistance under the Debt Relief Program. The Department targeted municipalities which spent 30% or more of their municipal operating grant and tax revenues on debt servicing costs. In May 1999, the Department estimated that it would complete its review of the 170 affected municipalities by 31 March 2000.

As of July 2003, 39 months after the Department's target date of 31 March 2000 to prepare a plan and provide the necessary assistance for the estimated 170 municipalities, only 114 of the 141 municipalities meeting the 30% debt servicing cost to revenue ratio identified in 1997 had been reviewed and assisted. Of the remaining 27 municipalities in this category, 22 had reviews at various stages of completion while 5 have not been reviewed. However, 13 municipalities were reviewed and assisted even though they did not meet the 30% debt servicing cost to revenue ratio identified in 1997. Of these 13 municipalities, 6 received financial assistance while 7 received non-financial assistance. Three of the 6 municipalities which received financial assistance still had a debt servicing cost to revenue ratio of less than 30% when they received assistance.