



Resolution No. 10 – 09

Amendment to the Identification of Criminals Act: Fingerprinting

WHEREAS fingerprinting is an invaluable tool in the investigation and prosecution of criminal offences, as well as the protection of society and the exoneration of the innocent; and,

WHEREAS the Supreme Court has noted (in *R. v. Beare and Higgins* [1989] 1 W.W.R. 97 (S.C.C)) that fingerprinting is universally accepted as reliable, efficient, and minimally intrusive on the accused; and,

WHEREAS until recently, it has not been possible for officers to fingerprint a suspect in lawful custody without taking him/her to a central facility, a process that is time-consuming and inefficient; and,

WHEREAS mobile identification technology has recently been developed which allows officers to fingerprint a suspect wherever they happen to be; and,

WHEREAS Canadian law makes it difficult to make use of this technology because under the Identification of Criminals Act, an individual cannot be fingerprinted until charges have officially been laid.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT

the Alberta Association of Chiefs of Police urge the Federal Government of Canada to move forward with proposed amendments to the Identification of Criminals Act, which would close a procedural loophole that distinguishes between arrest and charging, thereby allowing law enforcement to use modern technology to take and scan fingerprints from persons lawfully arrested or detained in the field for the purposes of confirming a suspect's identity.