



FOR RELEASE
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KWANLIN DÜN FIRST NATION COMMUNITY SAFETY OFFICER PROGRAM OPERATIONAL

Whitehorse – Kwanlin Dün First Nation Chief Doris Bill announced today the operational launch of the Community Safety Officers Program; a key component to the nation's Community Safety Initiative.

After a robust recruitment process and the completion of five weeks of training, two Community Safety Officers (CSOs) and a Land Steward have been hired.

"Council and citizens are extremely pleased this day has arrived," said Chief Doris Bill. "The security and safety of our community is a priority for our citizens and Kwanlin Dün leadership. We know the implementation of the Kwanlin Dün Community Safety Initiative is the way forward and the Community Safety Officers program is central to moving forward. The safety officers and land steward will play an important part in the security and safety of our people, our community and our lands."

The \$1.4 million in funding over three years for the Community Safety Officer program was announced in May 2016 with the Government of Yukon.

"Congratulations to the new recruits for the Kwanlin Dün Community Safety Officer and Land Steward program," said Minister of Justice and Attorney General Tracy-Anne McPhee. "This innovative program is based on teachings and shared knowledge of the people of Kwanlin Dün and supports a culturally-sensitive and preventative approach to community safety. The Government of Yukon is committed to strengthening relationships with our partners to enhance community safety and is pleased to support this innovative program."

The CSOs and the Land Steward will be active, visible and involved in the community. Their role is to work proactively with citizens, build safety and security partnerships, respond to incidents and support enforcement agencies. They will be the eyes and ears of the community and act as a referral to external partners such as Bylaw, the RCMP and other community supports as appropriate. The CSOs and Land Steward will also support investigations and enforcement.

The safety officers and land steward have completed five-weeks of training through the Justice Institute of British Columbia (JIBC) and were awarded an *Associate Certificate in Community Safety*. The training was developed in collaboration the Kwanlin Dün Department of Justice and included a basic understanding of conflict resolution, restorative justice, intergenerational trauma, mental health issues, critical incident stress management, bylaw interpretation and more.

"Studies have demonstrated that justice, safety and security are more effective when delivered by our people for our people," added Chief Bill. "Though the CSOs and Land Steward are not police officers, they will be very visible in the community and will work closely with external enforcement officers."

The Community Safety Officers and Land Steward do not carry weapons and are not medically trained. **For all emergencies citizens are to call 9-1-1** and the RCMP will connect with the Community Safety Officer on duty or on-call. For non-emergency incidents the Community Safety Officers and Land Steward can be reached at (867) 332-9551.

- 30 -

Media contact:

Marie-Louise Boylan, Communications Manager
Kwanlin Dün First Nation
867-633-7800 ext. 112
marie-louise.boylan@kdfn.net



PHOTO attached:

CSOs and Land Steward (L-R): Elias Park, Community Safety Officer & Team Leader, Jesse Ryder, Community Safety Officer and Tyler O'Brien, Land Steward.