

might ask, why then do government departments need visibility? The answer to this question was put forth to the Treasury Board of Canada task force, which was formed in the early seventies, to study the concept of corporate identity. The task force explained that if the public could not differentiate between government departments facilities and services, and those of the private sector, not only would this be frustrating to the tax payers but it could also be interpreted as the denial of Canadian citizens' right to see the government's work and to judge it. One could assume then that when the Federal role was not evident, that it could not be assessed. With more visibility, an organisation can be seen as involved in the search for the chance to take the credit, but at the same time, seen as being willing to shoulder the blame. Therefore, concern for visibility involves more than public relations for its own sake: a government that is not visible cannot be answerable.

As a result of the corporate identity study, the Federal Government instituted the Federal Identity Program (FIP), which is considered to be one of the most successful programs of its type, in the world. Everybody immediately recognizes the little red flag symbol which accompanies the title of every government department or agency, along with the Canada Wordmark, which is the word "Canada" with a red flag over the final "a".

Due to varying individual circumstances, many government departments including the RCMP were granted an exemption from

adhering to the FIP. However, the need for a corporate identity program for those exempt departments, did not go unheeded. In 1973, it was decided that the RCMP would create a comprehensive visual corporate identity program consistent with the Federal Identity Program (FIP). Unfortunately, from the early stages of adopting it's corporate identity, the RCMP displayed all the ingredients for failure: budget restraints, division of responsibility and lack of a single responsibility centre for the program. The program was divided between different responsibility centres and each produced their own designs, independently of the other. The graphic design of the program was based on the existing RCMP patrol car and building sign, which differed enough from each other to create a fragmentation of the program from the start.

The situation was rectified when responsibility for the corporate identity program, in its entirety, was transferred to the Public Affairs and Information Directorate. It was essential that the program report to only one authority, but that this authority be strong enough to be able to impose a consistent design scheme on all the different responsibility centres involved. Consequently, the objectives of the RCMP Identity Program were clearly defined and the program was put in place to:

1. improve services to the public by clearly identifying RCMP facilities and activities,

NEW LOOK Posing with their new police motor vehicles at Lunder Detachment (L-R): Cst. P.T. Leace, Sgt. D.M. Arbez and Cst. C.L. Garrard.

Photo by Ms. M. Kerbrat

