

RCMP Corporate Identity Program

by Mrs. Rita King
Public Affairs and Information Directorate

A “corporate identity program,” as generally defined by the Treasury Board of Canada, is a management technique that communicates the unique characteristics of an organization in a memorable manner. A corporate identity program is based on the premise that an organization must be perceived accurately, and in a positive and consistent manner, if management objectives are to be achieved. The program should reflect the organization’s purpose, the services it provides, what it owns and what its goals are. A formal corporate identity program encompasses more than simply an adoption of graphic symbols, type styles and colour schemes. While the ultimate aim of a corporate identity program is to establish a graphic image that is not only aesthetically appealing and recognizable, but it must also be a clear and concise reflection of how an organization wants to be perceived.

Therefore, before any design work even begins, the objectives, goals and communication strategies of the organization must be clearly defined. Should an organization be mindful of its traditions and history, or is there perhaps a need to reflect modern views and futuristic innovative initiatives? Is there maybe a requirement to be seen as large or small, international or domestic? Is there a need for symbols? If so, should new ones be developed, current ones preserved, or altered, to meet a revised image? These questions and the ensuing decisions can



RCMP 1994 Ford Explorer with new markings.

Photo by Danny Robins

only be reached by careful analysis, long-range planning and projection.

It is indeed a misconception to assume that when graphic designer’s recommendations have been approved, that the job is completed. Initial design recommendations represent only the beginning of a procedure that will impact on all communication applications throughout the entire organization. In fact, it is at this stage that very complex problems can surface, which may require adjustments to the designs or even, literally, a return to the drawing board.

Once the majority of the problems have been ironed out and the communication goals and the designs (symbols, letter styles, colour schemes) are finally decided upon, the next vital step is the consistent application of the goals and designs throughout the entire organization. This is where it is of the utmost importance that the program be followed through with the full support and cooperation of all the policy