

York Region police join protest against province

JULIE CASPERSEN
Staff Reporter

Police are already being "reported to death," according to the head of the York Region Police Association

after officers voted unanimously to join in the job action started by Metro Toronto officers. "We're being reported to death and the government

just won't listen," said association president Paul Bailey in an interview. Bailey was among the thousands of officers from across Ontario demonstrating at Queens Park last Wednesday against new use

of force regulations that requires officers to file reports each time they draw their guns in public. Police also want to replace their .38-calibre weapons with 9 mm guns to "better protect our communities and

ourselves." The membership of the local police association voted Wednesday to throw their strength behind the Metro protest by wearing baseball caps in place of regulation hats and ignoring some traffic offences.

Bailey said the hats have been ordered and should arrive in York Region this week to be worn off duty until the provincial police association decides on how the protest should continue.

"Our action will in no way deprive the public of our protection," Bailey said.

York Region police now file a report each time they fire their guns, use their nightsticks or use any type of force during an arrest.

Markham MPP Don Cousens said the police are being "handcuffed" by the province's refusal to set up a meeting.

"The real thing at stake is lack of confidence. The police are trying to be heard but nobody's listening."

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