

Chief's verbal report April 24, 2023

Ontario Police Memorial

Unfortunately, I want to begin my comments...**again**....by acknowledging the on duty deaths of Alberta RCMP **Cst. Harvinder Dham** and SQ **Sgt. Maureen Breau** this past month.

Tragically, that brings **to nine** the number of **Canadian police** officers who have died in service to their communities over the last seven months.

Many members of our service, including **myself and Deputy Ferguson**, attended **Sgt. Breau's** funeral in Trois-Rivieres last week. It was an **emotional and moving tribute** for this officer who left behind **a family, two young children** and many friends, colleagues and loved ones.

Too many of these funerals have occurred across Canada this year. It is important we come together to mourn and also to support the families of those who have passed.

This year's Ontario Police Memorial Foundation Ceremony of Remembrance will occur on Sunday May 7 at Queen's Park in Toronto.

The ceremony honours and pays tribute to Ontario's fallen police officers who died in the Line of Duty – these officers are Heroes.

PSAC Strike

As the **Public Service Alliance of Canada** strike enters its second week, I wanted to highlight **the work our members** are doing to help mitigate any impact on the city as thousands of PSAC employees have set up at multiple locations across Ottawa. **We developed a plan** that would ensure the safety of those picketing, while still respecting the rights of individuals living or working in the immediate areas.

Our officers have been on scene to manage traffic and we have been **updating the public** on our social media channels **to identify areas to avoid**.

We are working with our partners at the City to develop a fluid response to any emerging issues.

To their credit – the PSAC leaders and employees have largely **been very cooperative** and **we thank them for that.**

But the PSAC strike **isn't the only event** we are actively managing.

Today alone we are managing two other events.

- 1) Our officers were and are deployed to keep the peace at a demonstration **outside the Turkish embassy.** The last information I received was approx. 350 people are at the embassy.
- 2) As well, we are working with the RCMP and providing escort services to the **visiting German Prime Minister.**

And of course, We have already started **preparing for Canada Day celebrations.**

With the increase demand in this industry, the **development of an HR plan that addresses** this constant strain on the Service is addressed.

It's equally important that we **are putting a funding plan in place to support the type of scalable responses** needed for these demonstrations and events.

Drive 2 Strategy

I am pleased to be submitting our **finalized Drive 2 strategy** at this afternoon's meeting.

Last month we submitted the draft version of the report and asked for your feedback. We **have incorporated that feedback** into this final report, which is now ready for your approval.

This **builds on the important work** we have completed over the past several years to develop wide-ranging policies and practices that incorporate **Equity, Diversity and Inclusion** into everything we do.

I **appreciate the feedback** we received from **both the public and the Board** to help develop a framework that will guide us into the next few years and help establish best-practices that incorporate an EDI lens on

everything we do. Know that this is a fluid plan that will change as our environment invariable will during it's 3 year lifespan.

I want to thank Superintendent David Zackarias and his team for their work on developing this strategy.

Road Fatalities

It's concerning to report that there have been four fatalities and one serious injury accidents on our roads between April 8th to the 15th.

Of note, three of those collisions occurred in our city's west end, on days when the weather did **not impact the road conditions**.

Officers from the Fatal Collision Investigations Unit have been deployed to the scenes of these accidents and are working closely with the Coroner's office, the City of Ottawa, and our partners at **Safer Roads Ottawa to identify any opportunities to improve safety**.

This can include **engaging City engineers** to review these intersections and roadways to see if anything **can be updated or changed** to reduce any further fatalities.

It also includes **developing education campaigns** that help drivers and other road users to safely use our city's roads and highways.

On **the topic of Road Safety**, we have **received a number of complaints** related to **vehicles stunting, loud mufflers and speeding**.

Our Traffic Services Unit and Frontline are working to identify and hold accountable speeders, stunt drivers and those who are causing safety concerns on our roadways.

For example, this past weekend, officers issued 113 tickets for traffic violations that included stunt driving.

Unfortunately, with the shortages in our traffic unit, we are having a difficult time managing the volume of calls being received so they need to be strategic to ensure that our targeted and proactive enforcement resources are deployed in the most problematic areas.

I'll be meeting with the senior leaders responsible for the traffic unit in the coming week to discuss this issue in more detail.

Policing Awards

Next week we are hosting our Police Awards Ceremony that, after a 4 year break, will honor both our civilian and sworn members with their Long Service Awards. Members receive an award at the 20, 25, 30 and 35 year marks. During this ceremony, we'll be acknowledging 297 members of various ranks for their decades long dedication to this community.

Just as important to acknowledge those members is **to thank the family and friends that support our team** day in and day out. Over a 20 year plus career, there will, **undoubtedly, be some very difficult days** and they are there for our members.

Compassion and Care

I would like to highlight a few examples of great work by our team and in particular the compassionate approach taken by Sergeant Jeff Aylen and Constables Abdullahi Ahmed, Wayne Clayton, and Curtis Hebert.

These officers responded to the death of a young woman and had the tough task of informing her family.

We received an email from the family that is included in this month's Commendation Report:

"In the early morning Sergeant Jeff Aylen and his partner presented themselves at my door to execute the difficult task of informing my wife and I that our daughter had died a few hours earlier.

They did so with the utmost professionalism and empathy and provided us with the information they currently had and made themselves readily

available in the hours and days that followed to answer any queries we had.

Over the next 10 days or so, I had numerous interactions with Constable Curtis Hebert, who likewise, demonstrated professionalism and compassion as we conversed about the circumstances surrounding my daughter's death.

They also reflected the professionalism and concern that clearly is part of the Ottawa Police Service. I know more than most about how much police services care about keeping citizens safe, often in very trying and dangerous circumstances. I also know that these efforts don't get the public credit that is so richly deserved.

Please accept my family's deepest appreciation for the manner that these OPS members have executed their duties on my family's behalf in recent days, and for the extraordinary service-wide efforts each and every day in keeping our community safe."

These types of calls are part of every officer's job, and they are never easy. But it makes me proud to know that our Service has officers who show that compassion and empathy to these people during their darkest days.

Outgoing Chair.....Incoming Board Member

Finally, I wanted to make a quick comment on our outgoing Chair, Madame Valiquet.

Madame Valiquet joined the board at a very difficult and challenging time and became Chair just as I started in my current role as Chief. We spoke often about various issues and I appreciated her advice and guidance in the past 5 months.

Thank you Madame Chair.

At the same time, I want to welcome Dr. Beck to the board. I had a brief conversation with her last Friday and I'm looking forward to working with her in the coming years. Her experience and resume is extensive and

obviously the topic of mental health is a priority for her and I sense she will make sure it remains as such. Good luck to Dr. Beck and welcome.

Thank you Madame Chair.