

Chief's verbal report for the June 26, 2023 OPSB meeting

I'll start with a serious event that occurred yesterday afternoon near the Byward Market. The public reported a male with a knife and 4 of our members located him on St. Patrick St. The male was shot by police and he is deceased. Of course, SIU is involved and we'll be cooperating with their investigation. We'll also be supporting our members during this difficult time. While I don't know the exact issues related to the subject we encountered, be it mental health, addictions or something else but our members on the ground are being called on a daily basis with people carrying weapons and acting erratically. They resolve almost all of them without using this level of force. I hope the public realizes how challenging and dynamic these calls can be.

Canada Day

In regards to this coming weekend, we continue to work with Canada Day organizers and our policing and municipal partners to implement a public safety plan that allows all Canadians and visitors to freely and safely enjoy the capital during this celebration.

There will be significant road closures and an increased police presence throughout the downtown core from Friday June 30 to Sunday July 2.

We will share the City of Ottawa's messaging so residents can check their online [traffic map](#) and traffic twitter account for up-to-date information on traffic delays.

We understand the effects road closures have on local residents in the downtown area and we will do our best to minimize the impact on them.

Additional police resources will come to Ottawa to assist us with security and we have developed scalable operational plans for any unexpected events.

Lastly, we ask the public to be vigilant and report any suspicious activity.

OPS Annual Report – Verbal

I also want to highlight the 2022 Ottawa Police Service Annual Report, which is on the agenda today.

It lays out the efforts of our police service and partners to serve and protect our community. I want to thank our team at OPS for compiling the information and statistics contained in the report.

But, I'll speak to it later when it comes up on the agenda.

Guiding Council report

On June 16th, we saw the release of the Safer Alternatives for Mental Health and Substance Use Crisis Response report by the Guiding Council on Mental Health.

We want to express our thanks to the Guiding Council for this important report.

The right partners were at the table to develop an informed approach. We believe the strategies and actions proposed in this report will support a desired outcome of fewer calls for service handled by the OPS when people are experiencing a mental health crisis.

There is still a significant amount of work to be done but this is a great start. OPS will continue to work with the Guiding Council, its Implementation Working Group and City Hall to develop an action plan.

City-wide shootings

In mid-June, we had a series of shootings at multiple locations across the city. One of those shootings was on June 10th in the Byward Market at about 1:30 a.m. and discovered four wounded men who were taken to hospital. Two of them suffered life-threatening injuries but are expected to recover.

Two other shootings occurred at homes in Centretown and the west end over that same weekend, where thankfully no one was injured, but police recovered shell casings.

Another incident occurred in the area of Somerset and Lyon streets, where police were dispatched after gunfire was heard.

Market Safe Initiative

One of the ways we are looking to reduce incidents of violence in our city is with our Market Safe Initiative.

We have partnered with provincial bodies like the Alcohol and Gaming Commission and Service Ontario's licencing services to ensure compliance at area bars. These partners along with police can revoke patio permits if bars are not in compliance, if they are over capacity, or overserve a patron.

We have also engaged City By-Law and OC Transpo Special Constables to be on site at Rideau Centre transit locations as bars close down in the area to ensure that everyone gets safely home at the end of the night. We continue to work with the City Councillor for the Ward, Stephanie Plante, and keep her updated on all of our ongoing initiatives.

More importantly, we are increasing our presence in the Byward Market between the hours of 8 p.m. to 3 a.m. on weekends to ensure that we can respond quickly and effectively to any issues of public safety.

We are taking these measures very seriously. We want both residents and visitors to our city to have a safe experience in our downtown core, and Market Safe will help to coordinate our efforts Service-wide.

School lockdown response

On June 7 Ottawa Police officers in our west division responded to a call from Holy Trinity Catholic School in Kanata about a possible weapon on campus.

It resulted in a lockdown where students and teachers remained in place as our officers went room by room to determine if any threat existed. By 3 p.m. they cleared the building and no weapon was found.

As you can imagine this was a very stressful event not only for the students and teachers inside the school, but also for worried parents.

In the days that followed, we began to receive a number of emails from grateful teachers and parents. These emails have been included in this month's Commendation report, but I wanted to read you a few excerpts.

- 1) I am so eternally grateful for the work the police and teachers did when my child's school went into lockdown. Phones are often taken and people were asked not to text because it can create confusion and rumours which I understand completely. I actually feel better now knowing the police have our kids' backs and the teachers were following lockdown rules
- 2) When I finally heard from my son when his school went into lockdown I asked him later if he was scared he said no, the police were there and he knew they could handle it. Having taught in the USA, I can say that this is a huge statement from a teenager! Trust in our police is a truly wonderful thing.
- 3) As a teacher at the school that went into lockdown, I wanted to extend my thanks to the officers who responded to our emergency calls yesterday. As you can imagine, the staff and students were incredibly alarmed and frightened. When we knew that the police had arrived and we could hear their presence in the hallways, we felt so relieved. I can't imagine what it is like to respond to a call like that, and I am eternally grateful for your bravery and dedication. Please

know that the work you do does not go unnoticed or unappreciated.
You made an incredible difference in our lives yesterday

Our job as police professionals is to ensure the safety of our community, and in particular, vulnerable populations like our city's youth. What students witnessed that day was that when there is an emergency, the police are there to help. We thank the team at the Ottawa Catholic School Board for their support and to the school administrators and teachers at Holy Trinity.

Human Trafficking File

I want to bring to your attention a complex Human Trafficking investigation. It was reported in the news last week.

In 2018, a victim came forward to the Ottawa Police Service, which ultimately led to police locating additional victims, some of which were still being exploited by the accused. A total of seven (7) women were interviewed. Sgt. Sarah Standing, was the lead investigator at the time.

The prosecution was lengthy and spanned from May 2021 to October 2022. In February 2023, the accused was found guilty of trafficking offences on all four (4) survivors that testified. He was sentenced to fifteen years in prison.

This was an incredibly difficult file and I'm extremely proud of our team in Human Trafficking. We had key partners on our team that included the Crown's office and many agencies that assisted us with victim management

Now, after reading about this file in the media, another victim has come forward who was trafficked by this offender 20 years ago. He is now facing additional human trafficking offences.

I thank our incredible investigators in Human Trafficking, all our partners and of course the courageous victims who trusted us.

Gala beneficiaries announced

I am looking forward to attending our Ottawa Police Service Gala in November.

And I was pleased to see two non-profits that will benefit from the funds raised at the event that both focus on helping the youth in Ottawa.

The first one is The Door Youth Centre that offers a drop-in space for youth in the downtown core and provides opportunities to learn new skills like photography and art, or even get help with their homework.

The second agency, The Roberts Smart Centre, offers a secure treatment facility for youth struggling with complex mental health challenges and offers programs for reintegration to support their families as their children recover.

The work these charities do is an important investment in our future, to ensure that we are providing the necessary supports to help our children succeed.

Tactical Team helps with Make a Wish

I would like to end my verbal report with a story about how our Tactical Team made one child's dreams come true.

As part of the Make a Wish program, officers assisted a young boy named Kaden in a police project called Operation Seaweed. The goal was to recover a secret recipe for Krabby Patty burgers which was stolen from Sponge Bob, Kaden's favorite TV show.

Kaden wore his own Tactical uniform and started his day by doing physical testing to ensure he was fit for duty. He passed with flying colours.

Next he did some preliminary training by rappelling off the side of our Elgin Station several times. I'm told he was nervous the first time he went down, but our Tac team said he became a natural after that.

Operation Seaweed involved a full briefing, where he was sworn in as a Tac team officer, and information was shared with the team, just like on a real call for service. Kaden was updated about the theft and the location of the suspect.

Kaden and the Tac team drove over to the location in an armoured vehicle and located SpongeBob after a search of an OPS training facility building.

At the end of the day, the Tac team took Kaden out for dinner to celebrate the heroic rescue and the successful conclusion of Operation Seaweed.

I'm not sure who had the most fun...Kaden or the Tac Team but it was a great day for everyone.

Thank you.

OPS Annual Report – Verbal

The 2022 Ottawa Police Service Annual report documents the efforts of our police service and partners to serve and protect our community.

It offers insights into the demands for policing services, crime rates, victimization statistics, and financial and workforce data.

As you'll read, a number of the key crime statistics are on the rise. This reflects what I have seen in my first 7 months here.

- We are a busy police service
- We need more people
- We need to effect positive change in a number of areas.

I see a lot of our civilian and sworn members and teams struggling to keep up with their work load.

We are being pulled in many directions. Despite that workload, I'm so impressed with the level of passion and dedication that I witness every single day – from our members, from our community and from our partners.

As we transition out of the pandemic, it is important to acknowledge the impact on year-over-year statistics and consider longer-term trends and some of the results presented in this report.

The unlawful protests were also a major factor.

This data and crime stats provided in the Annual report is important for our community and partners as we work together to foster a safer environment.

Mayor and Councilors need this information more frequently than once or twice a year.

It's why we are actively working to create the Community Safety Data Portal where almost real time information will be available to all.

By leveraging this platform, we aim to empower the community with greater transparency and enable a more informed dialogue on matters of public safety. We are scheduled to launch this program in the fall.

By carefully monitoring these statistics and the trends that surface, **along with community feedback**, we are well-positioned to assist the Board in developing a new strategic plan for our police service.

This information will support the Board in identifying key areas of focus and initiatives that will enhance community safety and well-being in Ottawa.

And....as we state often, we recognize that trust is the cornerstone of effective policing.

We are committed to fostering open lines of communication, encouraging dialogue, and collaborating with the community to achieve our shared goals.