

## **DOCUMENT 6A: Internal Member Needs Survey**

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The Ottawa Police Services Board (OPSB), in collaboration with the Ottawa Police Service (OPS), is in the process of developing the 2023-2026 Strategic Plan. As one of several inputs to inform this process, the OPS developed a mixed-method approach to gather ideas and insights from the organization's members. This included both an internal survey, focus groups, and one-to-one interviews to gather the perspectives of both sworn and civilian members.

The survey design and approach complemented previous surveys that had been completed to support the Board since 1995. Members were invited to share their perceptions on:

- Strategic direction and organizational performance
- Job satisfaction and professional growth opportunities
- Processes relating to promotions, transfers, and assignments
- Employee wellness and access to resources
- Information and communication
- Teamwork and ethical behaviour
- Engagement and external stakeholders and partnerships

The survey was conducted from July 1 to 27, 2023, with 581 responses, which is a 30 percent response rate. All data collected was completely confidential, and only aggregate results are shared.

It is important to note that the survey was voluntary, not scientifically randomized, and represents less than a third of the membership. However, results are helpful as a pulse check to identify themes for further analysis.

Most respondents generally agree with the strategic priorities that have been guiding the OPS since 2019. Additionally, most members report that their work is challenging and rewarding, are happy with their work arrangements, and feel safe and secure at work. Over half of the respondents (52%) reported being able to balance work and home, and 50 percent of the respondents report that the stress in their jobs is manageable. As in recent years, job satisfaction is trending down; civilians are more likely than sworn members to indicate they are satisfied or very satisfied with their jobs (61% vs 42%).

## OPS Member Survey Respondents

The online survey was available to OPS members (sworn and civilian) from July 1 to 27. Over 600 individuals accessed the survey; 581 fully completed it. The sample of those who completed the survey is shown in the tables below. Notes on the survey and analytic process can be found in the appendix.

<b>Age</b>	
Under 25	1%
25-34	17%
35-44	32%
45-54	39%
55-64	11%
65 and older	1%
<b>Gender</b>	
Male	59%
Female	25%
Other	3%
Prefer not to answer	14%
<b>Ethnicity/Nationality</b>	
White	66%
Indigenous	4%
East Asian/Southeast Asian	3%
Black	2%
Middle Eastern	2%
South Asian	1%
Latin/Hispanic	1%
Other	3%
Prefer not to answer	21%
Person with a disability	7%
Prefer not to answer	16%

\*Age responses, n=575; Gender responses, n=573;

Ethnicity responses, n=572; Disability responses, n=573

Of those who completed the survey, 79% were sworn members, 21% were civilian. (Civilians make up just under 30% of the OPS membership.) Almost three-quarters of respondents (71%) indicated they are not supervisors.

<b>Directorate</b>	
Frontline Operations	42%
Criminal Investigations	23%
Support Services	13%
Community Relations and Frontline	11%
Specialized Support	
Corporate Support	4%
Human Resources	3%
Executive Services / RVI	2%
Strategy and Communications	2%
<b>Years of service</b>	
Less than 5 years	11%
5 to 9 years	17%
10 to 14 years	15%
15 to 19 years	21%
20 to 25 years	21%
25 years or more	16%

\*Directorate responses, n=563; Years of service responses, n=575

## OBSERVATIONS

### Strategic Direction

Five strategic priorities were identified in 2019 to guide OPS programs and initiatives. Among respondents, there was an overwhelming endorsement of the strategic priority ‘Support our members.’ However, other priorities had diminishing support (see Table below).

<b>Strategic Priority</b>	<b>Important/ Very Important</b>	<b>Not at all Important/ Slightly Important</b>
Support our members	98%	0%
Build trust with the community	70%	10%
Modernize the work environment	66%	11%
Advance community policing	49%	18%
Make meaningful progress on EDI	27%	46%

### Strengths

When asked to identify the organizational strength, responses heavily focused on OPS members, particularly their work ethic, professionalism, dedication, and resilience. This suggests that OPS members are proud of their colleagues and of their own commitment to their job.

Of the 552 open-text responses to this question, 82 percent focused on the qualities of OPS members. (Note that each response could have more than one coded theme.)

Examples of comments citing membership as a key strength include:

- Its members!
- Dedicated and passionate employees.
- Our foundation should and always will be our frontline patrol members.

However, it is notable that while respondents praised their colleagues, comments relating to resiliency and work ethic often noted that members are working hard despite challenging conditions.

Slightly less than half (46%) of the responses about OPS strength discussed aspects of the organization, such as its leadership and strategic direction; its delivery of services including law enforcement, criminal investigations, and event management; diversity within the organization; members wellness, and professional development.

Examples of organizational strengths include:

- Existing relationships in the community.
- Outreach and community engagement programs and strategies.
- We are a more diverse team now than ever.
- Stable leadership now.
- Wellness support and the desire to improve the organization.

In general, respondents to the Members' survey indicate appreciation for their colleagues and place the organization's

strength very much in the people who "show up to work" and serve their community.

### **Key Strength**

#### **Members**

Work ethic and professionalism  
 Resilience and adaptability  
 Care, motivation and dedication  
 Specific units (e.g., frontline)  
 Teamwork  
 Skills and knowledge of members  
 Members general

#### **Organization**

Leadership and strategic direction  
 Community engagement and communication  
 Service delivery and law enforcement  
 Equipment, resources, pay and benefits  
 Diversity  
 Member wellness  
 Professional development  
 Accountability, transparency, and reputation

### **Weaknesses**

Staff and workforce management issues dominated member responses when asked to identify the OPS's key weaknesses. Of the 618 open-text responses, almost half (49%) were concerned about inadequate staffing, and a similar number (48%) cited problems with workforce management.

### **Weaknesses**

#### **Staffing**

Inadequate staffing

#### **Workforce management**

Accommodations, transfers, and promotions; lack of professional development; recruitment process

**Leadership**

Leaders, executives and managers; strategic direction

**Culture**

Low morale; toxic culture; lack of diversity

**Supports**

Internal communication; member wellness and engagement

**Equipment**

Equipment, technology

**Accountability**

Lack of accountability and transparency

**Community and service**

Community relations; service delivery

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Comments relating to staffing were generally about low staffing numbers, which impact the organization's ability to meet expectations.

A third of respondents to the question on weaknesses identified leadership, including lack of continuity and stability, poor decision-making, and lack of strategic direction.

**Command Priorities**

When asked what areas the Command Team and Senior Leadership should prioritize, members focused on staffing and workforce management. From a total of 616 open-text responses, the following were the top five themes for prioritization:

**Top 5 Priorities**

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**Workforce management**

Accommodations, promotions, professional development, efficiencies, equipment, frontline, modernization, organizational structure, pay and benefits, training

**Staffing**

Increase staffing, and improve recruitment and retention.

**Membership**

Member wellness and engagement, morale, internal culture, and EDI

**Leadership**

Leadership, accountability, and consistency

**Community**

Community engagement, external communication, partnership and engagement, diversion

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Similar to what was seen in response to key weaknesses, 65% of respondents focused on issues relating to workforce management, such as professional development,

accommodations, transfers, and promotions. Staffing, including recruitment and retention, was a second key theme (62% of responses).

The theme of membership is noted in 27% of responses and includes comments relating to member wellness, internal engagement and communication, morale, culture and diversity within the organization.

Overall, suggestions to senior leadership mirror the concerns expressed with regard to weaknesses. Most respondents feel stretched, and their suggestions to focus on staffing, retention, and workforce management are directed toward reducing pressure on members on the frontline.

## **Community Trust**

OPS members were asked what the organization could do to improve community trust. There were 585 open-text responses that were grouped into the following five themes:

### **Top 5 Themes**

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#### **Community**

Partnership and engagement, community policing, proactive policing, focus on schools and youth, demonstrating respect.

#### **Internal**

Increase staffing, workplace management, internal culture, organization structure, diversion programs, EDI.

#### **Communications**

Communicate better to the public, engage media, listen, and stand up for members.

#### **Core policing**

Focus on core policing and enforcement, and keep doing the same.

#### **Transparency**

Be accountable and transparent, including body-worn cameras.

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Many responses (39%) focused on efforts directed toward the community, such as promoting community partnerships, bolstering community and proactive policing, demonstrating respect and engagement in interactions, and targeting efforts toward children and youth.

Almost one-third of responses (30%) focused on communications, which includes managing the narrative about policing better, listening to the public, and providing better information to the public.

The theme of better support for members, dominant throughout the survey, was also evident in responses on how to build community trust. Over a third of responses (37%)

were internally focused, particularly with regard to increasing staffing, better managing the workforce, and addressing internal culture and morale.

### **Job satisfaction**

A majority of respondents (60%) agree their work is challenging and rewarding. Roughly half of OPS members report having the support and resources needed to do their jobs well.

When asked how satisfied they are with their jobs, 46 percent report being satisfied. Job satisfaction has fallen 16 percent compared to previous member engagement surveys.

Over half of the respondents (59%) say they have access to the information they need, 49 percent to the materials and equipment they need, while 46 percent say they receive sufficient training and development to do their jobs well. Half (50%) also report having the support they need from supervisors and management, while 43 percent agree with the statement, “I have the right IT technology I need to do my job well,” and 40 percent agree they have the supervisory and management support to do their job well.

### **Job Satisfaction by Year**

	<b>Unfavourable</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Favourable</b>
<b>2018</b>	18	20	62
<b>2020</b>	21	21	58
<b>2023</b>	32	22	46

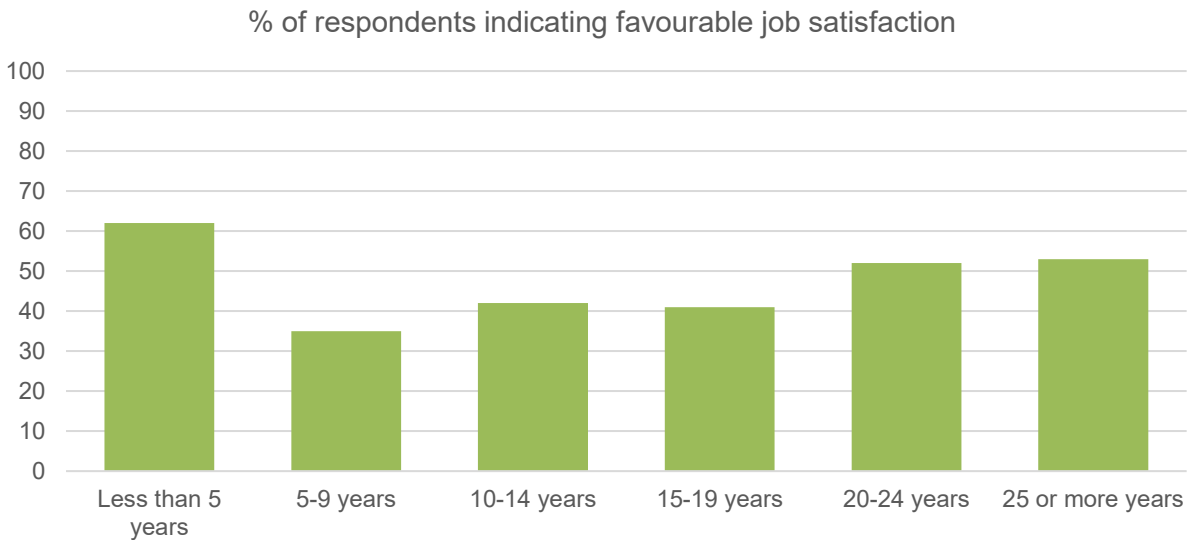
When comparing job satisfaction between civilian and sworn members, civilians are more likely to indicate job satisfaction. Women are also slightly more likely than men to indicate favourable job satisfaction (52% vs 47%).

### **Job Satisfaction by Membership**

	<b>Unfavourable</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Favourable</b>
Civilian	21	18	61
Sworn	35	22	42

When exploring satisfaction by years in the Service, those with the least (> 5 years) and the most (< 25 years) had the highest job satisfaction. Members with five to nine years of service had the least favourable assessment of job satisfaction (35%).

### **Job satisfaction by years of service**



### Professional development and recognition

OPS members want more professional development opportunities, and many don't feel as though their skills are valued. A third (32%) of respondents agree with the statement, "I have opportunities to learn and grow professionally. Half of the respondents (51%) feel their career aspirations cannot be achieved at OPS, nor that they receive sufficient training and development to achieve those aspirations. A third of respondents (29%) feel that OPS values and uses their skills effectively.

### Employee health and wellness

Employee health and wellness remain a priority for the membership. Approximately 70 percent of respondents are happy with their work arrangements and feel safe and secure at work. Over half of the respondents (52%) reported being able to balance work and home, and half of the respondents found the stress in their jobs manageable.

However, 20 percent of respondents agreed with the statement, "OPS is a workplace that prioritizes the health and well-being of its members." About one-third of members were satisfied with the internal and external wellness programs.

**OPS members trust their immediate supervisors, but their level of trust and confidence declines higher up in the chain of command.** While 64 percent of respondents agree with the statement "I have trust and confidence in the ability of my supervisor to achieve our Unit's priorities," that number drops to 43 percent when asked about middle managers, 18 percent for senior officers, and 25 percent for Executive Command as it relates their ability to achieve organizational priorities. There are also doubts that OPS management will use the results of this survey to improve the



organization. These results are consistent with previous internal member engagement surveys.

**There is a strong sense of team spirit within individual work units, but OPS members do not see this reflected across the organization.** While 62 percent of respondents cite “a strong feeling of team spirit, support and cooperation” in their units, 71 percent say the people in their unit are supportive and respectful of each other, and 73 percent say they work well together towards shared goals, fewer than 15 percent feel there is a strong feeling of team spirit across the organization. A majority of respondents (68%) also disagree/strongly disagree that teamwork is measured and rewarded across OPS.

**Communication within OPS needs improvement and could help members across the chain of command understand each other better.** A majority of respondents (65%) report that Senior Management does not understand the key issues they deal with on a day-to-day basis, while 56 percent say they also don’t understand the issues that the Executive deals with on a day-to-day basis. This may be a result of ineffective communication from members up through the senior ranks and vice-versa: Just 21 percent agree/strongly agree that essential information flows well across the organization.

**Negative perceptions persist internally about OPS’s performance as an organization.** Less than a quarter of respondents (20%) agree with the statement, “OPS is providing excellent service that represents good value for money to the community.” Compared to 12 months ago, 25 percent say the OPS is doing a better job achieving its organizational priorities, and 18 percent say it is more efficient overall. Just 10 percent of respondents agree/strongly agree with the statement, “We have a shared vision of what our organization will be like in the future.”

**Many members recognize the organization’s efforts to build relationships with external stakeholders.** Almost half of respondents (45%) report that OPS is doing a good job of building relationships with other public safety partners. More than a third say the OPS is doing a good job building relationships with the community/public, external community stakeholders and agencies, and diverse communities. Fifteen percent say they have the time to build relationships, and 16 percent say they have the tools and resources for relationship-building.

**OPS members feel their work makes a difference and gives them a sense of personal accomplishment but they are pessimistic about the future.** Forty-three percent of respondents report being proud to tell people they are a member of OPS and 62 percent believe their work is making a difference in keeping the community safe.

About a third of respondents (28%) would recommend the OPS as an employer to people they know. Just over a third (36%) can see a clear link between their work and the OPS mission. Almost half (49%) disagree with the statement, "I am optimistic about the future of my organization."