

Report to / Rapport au:

**OTTAWA POLICE SERVICES BOARD
LA COMMISSION DE SERVICES POLICIERS D'OTTAWA**

22 January 2024 / 22 janvier 2024

Submitted by / Soumis par:

Chief of Police, Ottawa Police Service / Chef de police, Service de police d'Ottawa

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**SUBJECT: 2023-2025 DRIVE² (DIVERSITY, RESPECT, INCLUSION, VALUES,
EQUITY AND ENGAGEMENT) STRATEGY UPDATE**

**OBJET: MISE À JOUR – STRATÉGIE DEVENIR (DIVERSITÉ, ÉQUITÉ, VALEURS,
ENGAGEMENT, INCLUSION ET RESPECT) 2023-2025**

REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Ottawa Police Services Board receive this report for information.

RECOMMANDATIONS DU RAPPORT

Que la Commission de services policiers d'Ottawa prenne connaissance du présent rapport a titre d'information.

BACKGROUND

The 2023-2025 DRIVE² (Diversity, Respect, Inclusion, Values, Equity and Engagement) Strategy was approved by the Ottawa Police Services Board (Board) in April 2023 and serves as the Ottawa Police Service's (OPS) roadmap for transformative change to improve service response and internal culture in terms of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) through multiple approaches.

The DRIVE² Strategy was developed in collaboration with the Community Equity Council (CEC) and is reflective of inputs from both community and OPS members, as well as feedback received through multiple stakeholder engagements and third-party reviews or audits that identified changes needed to improve OPS culture and service delivery.

The OPS will provide mid- and end-year updates on the DRIVE² Strategy to the Board to ensure continued progress of priority goals and deliverables.

DISCUSSION

The DRIVE² Strategy embeds EDI as a shared responsibility across the Service and sets the organization in the direction of continued growth and progress. The Strategy is a comprehensive human rights organizational change strategy with shared responsibility across OPS.

The DRIVE² Strategy includes defined and actionable deliverables that fully support the Board's new strategic priorities which were approved at the November 27, 2023, Board meeting and focus on EDI and human rights as key elements to improving both workplace culture and service delivery. Action items identified within the DRIVE² Strategy are categorized under one of four key focus areas: (1) Community - Service Delivery, (2) Members - Work Environment, (3) Leadership and Accountability, and (4) Connecting and Learning.

The DRIVE² Strategy update provides the Ottawa Police Services Board with an account of activities and initiatives undertaken by the OPS in Q2-Q4 of 2023 to further advance EDI both within the organization and in service delivery to the many communities the OPS serves and protects.

Focus Area 1: Community – Service Delivery

The OPS worked diligently throughout 2023 to build relationships with community members and partners, address potential systemic discrimination in programs and services, and support improved methods to address violence and victimization.

In response to the 2020 Use of Force race-based data report recommendation to create a community review panel to improve use of force procedures and training, the Service engaged the Community Equity Council to support design of the review panel, drafted an associated Terms of Reference, and is currently developing review panel procedures and an orientation plan for panel members. Community outreach for recruitment of the new panel is also under development.

The OPS also dedicated an additional officer to its Hate and Bias Crime Unit, which has been working closely with internal and external partners to promote awareness, prevention, and reporting of hate crimes and incidents. To support these efforts, the unit delivered presentations and participated in panel discussions on hate with various local stakeholders and community groups. A proposal for an anti-harassment and 'report hate' campaign is also under development.

Additionally this past year, the Service hired dedicated resources to develop a race data strategy, as well as policies and procedures, to identify racial disproportionalities and systemic racism in police encounters, specifically Use of Force and traffic stop interactions.

A Director of Community Safety and Well-Being (CSWB) was also hired in 2023 to lead CSWB partnership work across OPS, and the Service initiated the development of a District Model of policing to better engage with and respond to the varied and unique needs of the many communities served by the OPS.

To improve service delivery to local Indigenous communities, the OPS began working with the Ottawa Aboriginal Coalition to develop a job description for a full-time Indigenous Women's Safety Advisor position. The Service also participated in Indigenous cultural awareness sessions with community participants, and initiated monthly meetings to focus on a nine-outcome workplan created by the Indigenous Women's Safety Table Police Working Group.

This past year, the Service continued important work to support community partners and ensure adequate and timely support for victims of violence against women and intimate partner violence. The OPS engaged with Western University to develop a risk template and is in the process of hiring two risk navigators.

On December 7, 2023, the OPS hosted its 8th Annual Human Rights Learning Forum, focused on the theme of "A Journey of Healing and Restoration", with over 200 community members and OPS employees in attendance. The annual forum provides attendees with the opportunity to gain insights into human rights issues impacting communities and offers a discussion platform to encourage positive change. Guest speakers included Ottawa's Guiding Council for Mental Health and Addictions, the Canadian Institute for Conflict Resolution, Forgiving ForRestoring Canada, and Dr. Donna Hicks, an associate at Harvard University who provided a presentation from her international peacebuilding work focused on dignity. In addition to DRIVE² Strategy related initiatives, over the course of the reporting period the Chief engaged in multiple discussions with community members and organizations throughout the city's rural, suburban, and urban neighbourhoods. The focus of these discussions has been to build partnerships, trust, and understanding.

The Chief conducted consistent outreach with Indigenous communities, including visits to Kitigan Zibi to meet with community leaders, attending numerous Inuit events, and discussions with the Ottawa Aboriginal Coalition and the Wabano Centre for Aboriginal Health. Ongoing community outreach also includes discussions with Mosque leaders, and discussions with Jewish, Sikh, South Sudanese, Congolese, Somali, Lebanese and 2SLGBTQQIA+ communities.

Focus Area 2: Members – Work Environment

The OPS remains committed to providing an equitable and inclusive work environment for all members. In 2023, the Service continued to identify and address systemic barriers, increase equitable access to opportunities, and foster a culture of respect that leverages the talents of all individuals who join the Service.

The OPS initiated an Employment Systems Review (ESR), which is a large-scale undertaking, innovative in the policing field and designed to be implemented in a multi-phased approach - with Phase 1 (assessment of recruitment, selection and hiring practices) currently underway. An ESR examines Human Resources systems from an employment equity perspective, assessing current processes and practices across nine employment systems¹ to ensure equity in employment opportunities for all employees. The end result will be changes to, and/or removal of, policies and practices that negatively impact employment-related equity within the Service.

The Service also worked closely with City of Ottawa counterparts on upcoming implementation of internal functionality to collect member self-identification data, which will better inform EDI-related initiatives through current and autonomous data capture and analysis capabilities. This functionality will allow the organization to identify potential systemic issues through examination of employment equity related representation rates to better guide employment initiatives and address employee needs.

Throughout 2023 the OPS also continued to focus on improving the Safe Workplace Program, implementing a centralized triage system and committee structure for equitable and appropriate response, resolution, and restoration processes. Additionally, the OPS implemented significant policy changes to support its commitment to upholding employment equity and respect for human rights throughout its employment and service delivery practices. Along with an updated Workplace Harassment, Violence, Discrimination and Reprisal Policy which both streamlines and strengthens content previously contained within two separate workplace-related policies (the former Respectful Workplace Policy and the previous Violence & Harassment in the Workplace Policy), the Service also updated its Equitable Work Environment Policy to more effectively address legislative obligations and support the goals of the Board's new strategic plan. To support this important work, the OPS also introduced a new Human Rights Core Policy, which ultimately defines the Service's commitment, as both a public service organization and an employer, to upholding the fundamental rights of all persons as enshrined in various legislation by which the

¹ The nine employment systems reviewed as part of an ESR include: Recruitment, Selection, Hiring, Promotion, Retention, Training, Development, Termination, and Accommodation.

organization is governed, including the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the Ontario Human Rights Code. The core policy clearly defines the organization's legislative responsibilities under the Code as both an employer and a service provider.

The OPS also continued to support Employee Resource Groups in 2023, providing the three existing groups (Women's Internal Network & Support, LGBTQ2+, and Ethno-cultural & Religious Diversity) and a new ERG (the Asian Association) with the supports, structure, and funding needed to deliver on ERG group specific initiatives including awareness-raising events, growth opportunities, and other initiatives to impact change within the organization.

In 2023, the Champions of Professional Practice (COPP) hosted a second program session to encourage additional members and further related program objectives. Established as a resource in the Fall of 2021, the COPP program is designed to assist in the identification of problems associated with fostering a respectful and inclusive work environment within the OPS.

In June 2023 the OPS also introduced its first dedicated Interfaith Prayer Space for employees, with additional dedicated spaces planned across OPS locations. The rooms recognize and support employee needs based on Creed (a protected ground under the Ontario Human Rights Code) and promote more inclusive workspaces by respecting individual needs and the diversity of OPS's workforce as an asset to the organization.

Additionally, the OPS continued to maintain a comprehensive Wellness Strategy, Employee Assistance Program, and Peer Support Program. Critical elements of wellness initiatives at OPS include supporting and coordinating the delivery of the Peer Support Program for members and their families, following critical / traumatic incidents, promoting wellness initiatives within the OPS as a key part of resiliency for both active and retired members and their families, and promoting a positive environment for open discussion about mental health through strategies to reduce stigma.

In addition to DRIVE² Strategy related initiatives, significant work to improve employment equity within the organization continued to unfold in 2023. EDI related subject matter expertise was incorporated into promotional processes at all ranks as well as to revised performance management processes, candidate assessments, acting assignments, and other employment related opportunities. The Service continued and in fact expanded use of its tailored EDI & Engagement Lens into strategy, planning, major initiatives, policy revisions, and various Human Resources processes including employee movements and other candidate selection processes, further ensuring equitable processes and decision-making practices within the OPS workplace.

Focus Area 3: Leadership and Accountability

The introduction of the DRIVE² Strategy supported further leadership implementation of related practices to ensure intersectional and anti-racism approaches in OPS programs, policies, and decision-making. In terms of governance, this was a foundational year to develop the supports and structures that will be necessary to ensure the success of the strategy.

Development of a sophisticated governance and accountability framework was initiated and will continue into early 2024, including an implementation and monitoring plan as well as a detailed measurement framework identifying DRIVE² Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).

Additionally, the important policy work undertaken in 2023, and identified earlier in this report, provides the foundational elements necessary to support OPS/Board strategic priorities and better positions the OPS to meet upcoming obligations under the new Community Safety and Policing Act, which will come into force in the Spring of 2024.

Focus Area 4: Connecting and Learning

As a roadmap to meeting the objectives of the Service and the Board, the DRIVE² Strategy encourages all OPS members to continually engage in ongoing professional development on EDI related matters and best practices.

During this first year of the DRIVE² Strategy, regular efforts to communicate DRIVE² objectives and deliverables were implemented, including Office of the Chief messages to all OPS members, presentations to various internal and external committees and groups, development of a one-page infographic overview, release of a promotional video to all members, and promotional item giveaways at various events and meetings to further increase awareness.

Additionally, continued implementation of training across OPS included: Active Bystandership training, Indigenous Cultural Awareness workshops, and Anti-Black Racism sessions.

CONSULTATION

The DRIVE² Strategy was developed in collaboration with the Community Equity Council and is reflective of input from both community and OPS members, as well as feedback received through multiple stakeholder engagements and third-party reviews or audits that identified changes needed to improve OPS culture and service delivery.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

While some major action items are identified in the approved OPS Budget, others are captured by the directorate leads in their respective annual budget and operational work plans.

Financial impacts will be identified and monitored closely throughout the three-year strategy and when priorities are being identified for annual work plan and budget planning cycles

CONCLUSION

The OPS is committed to upholding human rights and the principles of equity, diversity, and inclusion, as we strive for organizational change. The organization is dedicated to improving equitable practices and decision-making throughout both service delivery and the internal workplace environment. The DRIVE2 Strategy provides a clear and concise approach to effecting change at OPS. It engages all members and envelops both workplace and service delivery practices and processes.

In collaboration with community, partners, stakeholders, and OPS members, the Ottawa Police Service will continue to improve programs, services, practices, and decision-making to drive change at OPS and achieve a more equitable, diverse, and inclusive police service.