

Report to / Rapport au:

**OTTAWA POLICE SERVICE BOARD
LA COMMISSION DE SERVICE DE POLICE D'OTTAWA**

24 February 2025 / 24 février 2025

Submitted by / Soumis par:

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

Contact Person / Personne ressource:

**John Steinbachs, Executive Director of Strategy & Communications
SteinbachsJ@ottawapolice.ca**

SUBJECT: 2025 INTERNAL AUDIT WORK PLAN

OBJET: PLAN DE VÉRIFICATION 2025

REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Ottawa Police Service Board approve the 2025 Internal Audit Work Plan as endorsed by the Finance and Audit Committee.

RECOMMANDATIONS DU RAPPORT

Que la Commission de service de police d'Ottawa approuve le plan de travail de vérification interne pour 2025, tel qu'approuvé par le Comité des finances et de la vérification.

BACKGROUND

The Community Safety and Policing Act (CSPA), specifically Section 11 and Ontario Regulation 392/23 Adequate and Effective Policing, establish the foundation for Quality Assurance. This framework is further reinforced through regulations, ministry standards and oversight by the Ottawa Police Service Board (OPSB).

- CSPA Section 11: Requires police services to maintain adequate and effective policing, ensuring continuous assessment of practices to meet evolving community needs.
- O. Reg 392/ 23: Mandates that police services and Police Service Boards establish and maintain a Quality Assurance Process to reinforce compliance, effectiveness, and efficiency in service delivery.

- Adequacy Standard LE-020 (Collection, Preservation, and Control of Evidence and Property): Requires an annual independent audit of the property and evidence control function.

As per the OPSB CR-9 Audit Requirement Policy, the Internal Audit Work Plan will be reported to the OPSB annually. The process requires the endorsement of the Finance and Audit Committee (FAC) before the Work Plan is presented to the Board for approval.

- OPS Audit Policy 1.06: Defines internal audit responsibilities in compliance with OPSB requirements.
- OPS Internal Audit Charter: Establishes the internal audit function's authority, purpose, and responsibilities.

The OPS is adapting to the CSPA, incorporating expectations from the Inspectorate of Policing (IoP). The Inspector-General has consistently emphasized the importance of high-quality data to fulfill their mandate of monitoring the delivery of adequate and effective policing. Multiple data requests this fall were a first step in establishing baseline results across all police services in Ontario.

Quality Assurance Framework

The OPS Internal Audit function is one component of a broader quality framework to ensure accountability, compliance, and continuous improvement of policing operations. Multiple levels of oversight and assessment mechanisms are in place, reinforcing adherence to legislative requirements and best practices, including the Inspectorate of Policing and the City of Ottawa Office of the Auditor General.

Inspectorate of Policing

Under the CSPA, the Inspectorate of Policing (IoP) has the authority to conduct inspections, investigations, and reviews to ensure compliance with policing standards. The following three inspections are scheduled in the current cycle:

- Follow-up on the Major Case Management Inspection – Evaluating the implementation of prior recommendations.
- Part VIII Investigation of Certain Incidents by the Chief of Police – Reviewing compliance with statutory requirements.
- Annual Report to the Police Service Board – Assessing overall operational and governance performance.

City of Ottawa Office of the Auditor General

Through a risk assessment conducted in 2023, the Office of the Auditor General (AG) has identified three audit priorities. These include an audit of staffing, project management, and equity diversity and inclusion. Work on the staffing audit is already underway, with active engagement from the police service. The scope of these audits will focus on financial, operational, and governance to strengthen risk management and service delivery.

External Financial Audit

As part of the City of Ottawa Budget, an independent external agency audits the consolidated financial statements annually to ensure compliance with the Canadian public sector accounting standards established by the Public Sector Accounting Board of the Chartered Professional Accountants of Canada.

OPS Quality Assurance and Internal Audit

Internal Audit is central to OPS's quality assurance process, providing independent assessments of internal controls, risk management practices, and governance processes. The goal is to identify operational improvements while ensuring the delivery of adequate and effective policing services. Internal Audit maintains a positive organizational relationship by working closely with management. Findings and recommendations are shared in a manner that promotes continuous improvement.

DISCUSSION

2025 Audit Work Plan & Preliminary Objectives

The selection of audit engagements for 2025 reflects both strategic priorities and high-risk areas for OPS operations. In addition to the mandated Property and Evidence Control Audit, as required by the LE-020 Standard above, two additional engagements have been prioritized: Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) and Youth Crime Investigations.

The focus on violence against women and girls (VAWG) is a strategic priority that intersects all pillars of the Board's Strategic Plan. IPV is a serious public safety issue with far-reaching consequences for victims, families, and the broader community. It is also a high-risk area for police operations due to the complexity of investigations, victim protection requirements, and the need for coordinated responses with community partners. Given the high-risk nature of IPV investigations, strict adherence to extensive policies is required to ensure compliance, consistency, and effective response. An audit of IPV will provide insights into investigative protocols, response effectiveness, and

support services for victims, ensuring compliance with best practices and legislative requirements.

Youth Crime Investigations represent a high-risk and high-impact area in policing. Effective intervention in youth crime is essential to public safety, crime prevention, and long-term community well-being. This audit may include examining investigative approaches, adherence to the Youth Criminal Justice Act (YCJA), and the effectiveness of diversion programs to reduce recidivism and support at-risk youth.

Victim assistance remains a top priority for Senior Management and the Board, further reinforcing the importance of these engagements. Reviewing these areas allows for an in-depth assessment of victim services, ensuring compliance with standards and best practices while strengthening OPS's commitment to victim-centred policing.

Preliminary Objectives:

- **Property and Evidence Control Audit (LE-020 – Collection, Preservation, and Control of Evidence and Property):** Assess whether evidence is collected, stored, and managed in compliance with regulatory standards and OPS policies, ensuring integrity and accountability in evidence handling.
- **Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) Audit (LE-024 – Domestic Violence):** Evaluate investigative protocols, resource allocation, response times, and the effectiveness of support provided to victims. Ensure alignment with best practices in trauma-informed policing and victim services.
- **Youth Crime Investigations Audit (LE-044 – Youth Crimes):** Assess compliance with relevant legislation, including the Youth Criminal Justice Act (YCJA) and OPS policies. Evaluate the effectiveness of diversion programs and intervention strategies to support at-risk youth and reduce reoffending.

Audit Follow-Up and Emerging Priorities

In addition to these audits, ongoing monitoring of past management action plans ensures the implementation of previous recommendations. Quarterly reports are provided to the Senior Leadership Team to track progress and ensure continuous improvement. The Police Service is actively working with the OPSB Executive Director on a reporting framework that will include quarterly updates presented through the Finance and Audit Committee on quality assurance activities.

The Work Plan also maintains flexibility to address emerging priorities directed by the Chief of Police, including resource allocation to meet the requirements of the Office of

the Auditor General (OAG), the Inspectorate of Policing (IoP), and other independent reviews of processes and systems as required.

CONSULTATION

The Plan was presented to the OPSB Finance and Audit Committee for input and endorsement before being forwarded to the Board for approval.

Additionally, the police service is working with the OPSB Executive Director to enhance quality assurance reporting and ensure it aligns with Board expectations and compliance with the Community Safety and Policing Act (CSPA). This will include more frequent updates through the Finance and Audit Committee. These efforts will continue to enhance transparency, accountability, and operational effectiveness in audit and oversight processes.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Subject to potential outcomes from audit recommendations, no immediate financial implications are forecasted for the 2025 Audit Plan.

CONCLUSION

The OPS continues to adapt to evolving regulatory requirements under the CSPA, ensuring Quality Assurance and Internal Audit functions align with oversight expectations. Internal Audit is a critical function that supports the organization's vision of being a trusted partner in building an inclusive, equitable, and safe Ottawa. This plan aligns with the organization's strategic goals, demonstrates commitment to regulatory compliance, and supports the delivery of adequate and effective policing.