

Chief's Verbal Report

February 2026

ISOBEL GRANGER & BLACK HISTORY MONTH

I want to begin by thanking Retired Superintendent Isobel Granger for her pending comments that she'll make in a few mins. I didn't get a chance to work with Isobel but have met her. She's a great lady who had a distinguished career with the Ottawa Police Service. Her leadership reminds us that progress does happen because people step forward with conviction. On behalf of the Service, I want to thank her for the lasting impact on the OPS.

And to June Gurvin, she is someone that I have gotten to know very well over the past 3 years having met her in my first week of work. And since that time, June has been a **very trusted friend** and a steady partner to us.

We truly value her perspective, I'm so pleased that the board invited her here. Thank you, June, and if you are still listening, I do owe you breakfast or lunch soon.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Of course, given it's Black history month and 30 years since it was formally recognized in Canada. That's significant and we can reflect on the incredible contributions that the Black Community makes to our community.

At the start of the month, Deputy Chief Burnett and other members from our team, joined community leaders at the Black History Ottawa opening ceremony. We've attended a number of events this month. As the Chair mentioned, this past weekend at the African on the Hill Gala and I was at Christ's Chapel Bible Church yesterday morning. Both great events...and great people who were there.

I have to say, the communication and interaction we have with the Black communities in Ottawa have been so positive,

C'est une source d'inspiration et quelque chose que moi, en tant que chef, ainsi que toute notre équipe, apprécions énormément.

We know that strengthening relationships with Black communities is year-round work, not just in February. I and the team, will continue to meet and work with Black communities throughout the city.

I also want to acknowledge Lunar New Year celebrations across our Service and community. We will be attending a Chinese New Year's Event this weekend and I always look forward to that event....and of course...the food!

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Ramadan is now underway. We'll be attending a number of EIDs. To those observing, I wish you a peaceful and meaningful month. Ramadan Mubarak.

OPERATIONAL POLICE WORK

Homicides

So far this year, unfortunately, Ottawa has experienced four homicides — two fatal stabbings in Carlington, one shooting in Manotick and one in Ottawa's downtown last week. None of them linked to each other and are isolated incidents.

In each case, arrests were made quickly and charges laid against multiple suspects. I want to recognize the work of our Homicide Unit and all members involved. These investigations are complex and demanding, and our teams continue to handle them with professionalism and care.

Our condolences remain with the families and friends of the victims.

Nos condoléances vont aux familles et aux amis des victimes.

We know these incidents affect the broader community, and we remain committed to public safety and support.

Road and Trail Safety

Throughout January, our Road Safety Unit, District Traffic officers, and policing partners targeted high-risk driving behaviours across the city.

Over four focused weeks in January, officers addressed speeding, stunt driving, seatbelt violations, suspended and uninsured drivers, and commercial vehicle compliance. There was also a focus on distracted driving that resulted in 27 handheld devices charges.

One week, the team focused on commercial vehicle inspections and winter driving compliance during a snowstorm. Officers laid 48 Provincial Offence charges, 3 criminal charges, and completed 7 commercial vehicle inspections. Two vehicles were removed from service for safety concerns.

To date in 2026, they have already issued over 6,000 traffic tickets and warnings.

Our Marine, Dive, and Trails Unit also conducted enforcement operations, including snowmobile checks in Osgoode that resulted in licence suspensions.

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Sadly, on Family Day weekend, officers responded to a serious ATV collision involving a rider who remains in intensive care. The investigation continues.

Drug Enforcement

Following a two-month investigation, our Street Crime Unit executed a search warrant on Baseline Road, seizing cocaine, oxycodone, MDMA, crack cocaine, and cash. Two individuals have been charged with trafficking-related offences. This is strong, focused work aimed at disrupting illegal activity and protecting neighbourhoods.

Hate and Bias Crime

In 2025, the Hate and Bias Crime Unit received 358 reports — a 23% decrease from 2024. Of these, 263 were criminal offences and 95 were hate-motivated incidents.

Fifty individuals were charged with 163 offences, and four youths were charged under the Youth Criminal Justice Act. The most affected communities were Jewish, Black, LGBTQ2+, and Muslim residents.

Hate crimes remain underreported. We encourage anyone who experiences a hate-motivated incident to contact our unit or report online. **Nous prenons ces enquêtes au sérieux et nous voulons soutenir les victimes et assurer la sécurité et l'inclusion à Ottawa.**

School Safety

We were deeply saddened by the tragic incident at Tumbler Ridge Secondary School in British Columbia. Our thoughts are with the families and community affected. Personally, I also have a soft spot for that community after having worked in the area a number of years ago. I'm very proud of the RCMP members who did their jobs with a quick response, and entering the school very quickly.

Here in Ottawa, school safety remains a priority. We work closely with school boards and regularly support lockdown exercises as part of the overall School Safe program.

Having a more visible presence in the schools, re-establishing our relationships with their administration and teachers is so crucial. Clear protocols and strong partnerships make a difference in protecting students and staff.

Toronto Corruption File

Last month, we learned of a very concerning incident in Toronto related to some corrupt police officers. I'm pleased that the Toronto Chief and his team, secured York regional police to conduct investigation to root out the members who were participating in this behavior. Of course, that will have their day in court to respond to these allegations.

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I did a number of media interviews following the announcement of these allegations. I was clear that I and the OPS team support the Inspectorate of Policing's review of all municipal police agencies in Ontario. The Ottawa Police will fully participate with the IoP and of course, look forward to the recommendations and strengthening our systems in the 5 review areas.

CUSTOMER OUTREACH & SERVICE IMPROVEMENT

We realize that our online reporting program needed to be modernized and make it more user friendly. With that in mind, the OPS will be launching **RubiconREPORT**, a best-in-class online incident reporting system built specifically for public safety agencies.

RubiconREPORT provides a user-friendly, accessible platform in multiple language options that allows residents to report non-emergency incidents — such as theft, vandalism, and driving complaints — through any computer or mobile device. Information submitted by community members automatically interfaces into our internal systems, improving data accuracy and reducing manual processing time.

This system will strengthen accessibility, streamlines reporting, and allows us to allocate officer resources more effectively by diverting appropriate calls from emergency lines. It also enhances our ability to identify trends in minor incidents, supporting more proactive and intelligence-led policing.

We will be launching the platform to the community next month, accompanied by information sessions that will include a live demonstration and a Q&A to ensure the Board, Councillors, and residents understand how and when to use the system.

DOWNTOWN SAFETY

Last week, I spoke at an Ottawa Board of Trade event that focused on revitalizing the Downtown Core. The message I received from participants was very clear, with a lot of support for increased presence and enforcement.

Right now, Deputy Chief Burnett and his team are leading the development of a comprehensive Downtown Core Safety Plan, with particular attention to the summer months when activity peaks. We are strengthening enforcement in high-impact areas, expanding visible foot patrols, and working closely with City partners, health agencies, and community organizations to address both crime and the underlying social challenges that contribute to disorder.

I expect to announce details to the Board and the public of the Downtown Core Safety Plan in 4-6 weeks, when we have finalized all the components of the Plan.

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Project Pantry – Member Carr made some comments during a delegation. She covered off some the information on the people that were arrested.

I'll add the following:

Over the last six months (July 2025 to January 2026), **60%** of the reported incidents for the Bank Street corridor were attributed to that particular Independent Grocery. Incidents at this location were predominately shoplifting / theft under. This represented **86%** of those reported incident during that six months. Needless to say, it was a very obvious hot spot, statistically and right from what the officers were hearing directly from staff and customers. Historical data further demonstrated a notable escalation in theft-related incidents at this location increasing from **502** reported thefts in 2024 to **671** in 2025 (34% increase). Any commentary that we should disregard that level of theft and not support that business is simply something we won't and can't ignore. Again, projects similar to this one will continue at other business locations throughout the year.

I will say, the public support is overwhelmingly positive as it relates to any efforts that police can make to decrease retail theft in Ottawa.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Polar Plunge

This past weekend, we held our annual Polar Plunge for Special Olympics Ontario at the Hard Rock Hotel and Casino.

It was great to see Mayor Sutcliffe, Councillor Donaldson, and Chair Fakirani supporting the event. 226 participants took the plunge, raising over 60K for Special Olympics Ontario.

I want to recognize Acting Staff Sergeant Megan Arbuthnot and the Law Enforcement Torch Run committee for their leadership and planning. Events like this reflect the spirit of our Service and the generosity of our community. Thank you to all the participants, the volunteers and especially the athletes, who inspire us every year.

Merci à tous les participants, aux bénévoles, et particulièrement aux athlètes, qui nous inspire chaque année.

I also want to thanks Hard Rock President Christine Crump who, with her team, went above and beyond to ensure this event was a success.

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Christine was incredible...she was the first to jump with me....then got out and jumped for a second time when it was her Hard Rock's teams time to jump. Pretty impressive.