

Report to / Rapport au:

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

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Submitted by / Soumis par:

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**SUBJECT: ADVANCING CULTURE — SAFER WORKPLACE PROGRAM UPDATE
OBJET: AVANCEMENT CULTUREL — MISE À JOUR SUR LE PROGRAMME
DU MILIEU DE TRAVAIL PLUS SÛR**

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 à titre d'information.

BACKGROUND

On January 24, 2022, the Ottawa Police Service (OPS) introduced and presented the future-state Safer Workplace Program. As a summary, the Safer Workplace Program is a direct outcome of the two-year OPS and Ottawa Police Service Board (Board) Joint Strategy on Workplace Sexual Violence & Harassment project (JS-WSVH).

This project was designed to address sexual violence, harassment, and intersectional systemic issues such as gender-based discrimination, racism, and homophobia at the OPS. The project included securing an independent law firm (Rubin Thomlinson LLP) to pilot a third party intake and investigation process of workplace complaints and to

conduct an assessment of OPS workplace culture, practices, policies, and procedures relating to workplace harassment and discrimination.

The Safer Workplace Program adopted a program-design approach that included significant collaboration and co-production of activities with members and leading experts from community agencies in both private and public sectors and addresses all recommendations set forth in the Rubin Thomlinson Report.

STRATEGY

The established JS-WSVH strategy was designed to include four foundational pillars. These are:

- 1) **Sustained leadership commitment** - The strategy requires clear leadership and a commitment to sustained engagement over the span of multiple years. Joint strategic plans between the OPS and the Board will improve gender parity in leadership positions, address a lack of diversity in the Service, and support activities related to sexual violence, harassment and discrimination.
- 2) **Strengthening the Respectful Workplace Program** - The strategy requires a redesign and rebuild of the existing program to respond to critical systemic barriers. To build a cohesive and integrated program that focuses on: how to prevent these issues from occurring; how to keep informed on the scale, magnitude and progress of the issues and efforts to eliminate; how to provide meaningful and timely supports to complainants, respondents, bystanders and those impacted by these issues; how to effectively, timely and confidentially respond to complaints of this nature, and; how to restore a member's confidence and trust in the workplace once a complaint has been responded to and resolved.
- 3) **Enhanced partnership alignment** - The strategy requires partnerships and joint commitments to see meaningful change and successful implementation, particularly relating to support from the Board, the Ottawa Police Association (OPA), and the Senior Officers Association (SOA). Obtaining commitment and key action from the OPS, the Board, and both associations (OPA & SOA) to review, reflect and transform processes, systems, practices within their own structures will contribute to resolving these issues.
- 4) **Advancing culture** - The strategy requires significant change within current processes, structures, and business practices. This includes working, aligning, and supporting the broader efforts to foster an equitable, diverse, and inclusive (EDI) culture within the OPS and remove systemic barriers to reporting,

responding to, and resolving workplace complaints. As such, the Safer Workplace Program will integrate with EDI initiatives addressing various aspects of the OPS workplace culture, including gender and racial equity in promotions, training, and recruitment. The strategy will also prioritize internal training and capacity building to champion change that addresses harassment and discrimination.

Directly following the January Board meeting, the OPS initiated the planning and implementation of activities, and to-date has made significant progress on several fronts.

DISCUSSION

Independent Office of Workplace Investigations

One of the most significant changes includes how we will be responding to complaints, and an Independent Office of Workplace Investigations (IOWI) will be established in the coming months. This IOWI will offer a wide range of services to members and management, including: a centralized complaint intake process, complaint assessment and triage, complaint investigations, findings and recommendation reports, as well as monitoring and measuring progress against findings and recommendation reports. In addition, the IOWI will offer independent workplace assessment and mediation services to those involved in the complaint process or experiencing conflict in the workplace.

It was envisioned that this office operates as independently as possible — this includes hiring resources with no prior working history with the OPS, securing a location outside of the OPS' main facilities, and introducing streamlined and lean business practices and processes that ensures this office remains removed from OPS culture and operates independently. The IOWI will be staffed with two Safe Workplace Investigators (with expertise in employment law, labour law, and/or human rights), a Safe Workplace Administrator, and a Mediator & Workplace Assessment Specialist.

Progress to-date includes:

- Recruitment efforts for the Safe Workplace Investigator positions have been extended and remain ongoing. The current tight labour market conditions are directly impacting our search for this role. Through discussions with the external recruitment firm supporting the OPS in this search — the Service will be modifying several requirements of the recommendations put forth in the Rubin Thomlinson Report. These modifications are needed to attract candidates with the right credentials, experience, and expertise. It is important

to note that timelines associated to the launch of the IOWI are solely dependent on the search and successful hiring of these resources.

Aside from this delay, progress remains steady on the following fronts:

- Recruitment of the Safe Workplace Administrator has been completed;
- Recruitment efforts are underway for the Mediator and Workplace Assessment Specialist
- Office space has been secured and outfitted;
- Identification and customization of a Case Management System (with necessary system changes identified and discussed with the vendor);
- Development of a Communications Plan and content to support the launch of the Safer Workplace Program; and
- Development of business processes and workflows for the IOWI.

Prevention Strategy

The Safer Workplace Program includes a Prevention Strategy that focuses on building awareness and understanding of the issues and serves to strengthen and advance the OPS' culture. These initiatives are focused on providing training, mentorship, and coaching for our members so that they are equipped with the insights and the tools required to build a healthy work environment for all.

Progress to-date includes:

- The development of a Safer Workplace Policy in consultation with internal and external stakeholders. This Policy will be presented to the OPS Policy Committee in June. The introduction of this policy will streamline two existing policies into one user-friendly and clear policy.
- Development of a Code of Professional Ethics is underway and has included consultation reviews with internal and external stakeholders. To shape the importance related to this Code, the OPS has embedded an "acknowledgment of review" into the OPS' Talent Management System. The Service will also be adopting new practices in relation to the Performance Management process, which includes Managers/Supervisors reviewing and discussing the Code of Professional Ethics with members at the start of each performance cycle, completing quarterly reviews, providing clear and concise performance expectations with supported ratings on universal competencies

which will support OPS' decision-making process on promotional, training and acting eligibility opportunities.

- Completion of the recruitment and interview process for a Curriculum Designer. This incumbent will be focused on reviewing the OPS' current instructional and course offerings regarding workplace sexual violence, and harassment and discrimination, and will put forward a cohesive and progressive training program that contains key objectives, relevant and critical learning content, learning experiences, and an evaluation strategy.
- Completion of a training and development session for the Professional Standards Unit's investigators, Legal Services, and Hearing Officers in May. The "Sexual harassment, sexual assault, and sexual misconduct investigations and prosecutions" training session were delivered by: Fara Rupert, Regional Sexual Violence Counsel – Ministry of Attorney General; JoAnn Meloche, Workplace Sexual Harassment investigator; and Vanessa Stewart, Legal Counsel at the OPS. The training covered substantive topics on human rights, the Occupational Health and Safety Act, sexual assault, and sexual misconduct legal principles. The training also covered practical topics like report-writing best practices, as well as victim-centered and trauma-informed approaches to interviewing, investigations, and prosecutions.
- Ongoing training and presentations on Ethical Leadership have been given to new recruits and new Communications Centre staff by our Respect, Ethics, Values Branch.
- Train-the-trainer sessions for Active Bystander Training for Law Enforcement (ABLE) have been held in February and March 2022.
- The OPS has scheduled of Active Bystander Training for Law Enforcement Pilot training for members of our Champions of Professional Practice (COPP) and middle management by the end of June.
- To augment the communications launch of the Prevention Pillar, focus groups with COPP are being prioritized to socialize these Champions to the membership, and increase their capacity as force multipliers, during the month of June.

Foundational to the Safer Workplace Strategy is strengthening our support services for members experiencing issues of sexual violence, harassment, and discrimination. With the Health, Safety and Wellness (HS&W) Branch's 2022 workplan and recommendations brought forward through the Safer Workplace Program, the Service

will be focused on improving the accessibility of information and support services, broadening the type of information and services offered, and onboarding an in-house psychologist. Progress to-date includes:

- The launch of the Wellness Portal on April 1, 2022. The portal expanded accessibility to information and support services for members, their families, and retirees, and was well received.
- The HS&W Branch continues to update and build information and resources on the portal for our members, families, and retirees. Updates include the addition of external resources such as Lifespeak (a wellness video library), the Employee Family Assistance Program (EFAP), as well as internal resources for members who require support related to sexual violence, harassment, and discrimination.

Evaluation

Now that the OPS has moved into the implementation phase of the Safer Workplace Strategy and Program, the evaluation plan is well underway. The evaluation is currently in the planning and design phase.

Progress to date includes:

- Development and refinement of a draft Logic Model and Evaluation Plan by OPS subject matter experts.
- At various stages throughout this project, an External Advisory Group (EAG), comprised of external subject matter experts from both the public and private sectors, has provided invaluable insights and feedback on the overall strategy and program build. The OPS will continue to leverage their expertise to provide input and guidance on the logic model, evaluation plan, data collection methods, and instruments, as well as findings. A series of meetings have been organized with the EAG at key time points in the evaluation planning phase to gather input and recommendations to ensure the evaluation is comprehensive, meaningful, and rigorous. It is anticipated that the evaluation plan and instruments will be finalized and implemented by the time the Safer Workplace Strategy launches the coming months. As envisioned, there will be ongoing quarterly reporting of evaluation results to the EAG, Command Team, and the Board to ensure that lessons learned from the evaluation are leveraged and that the Safer Workplace Strategy is continuously improved.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no variances to report; the program is operating within its approved budget.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

For a more fulsome review of the Safer Workplace Program and how it developed from a series of recommendations for action, please refer to the report presented to the Board at its January 24, 2022, meeting.

CONCLUSION

The OPS and the Board have taken unprecedented steps over the past two years to understand, assess, and build a strategy and program that address issues of workplace sexual violence, harassment, and discrimination.

The Service is committed to translating this vision into reality through clear, purposeful, and demonstrated action - all designed to prevent, understand, support, and respond to these issues and to restore OPS' environment to a safe, healthy, and equitable workplace for all members.