

Report to / Rapport à:

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

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Submitted by / Soumis par:

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SUBJECT: EQUITABLE WORK ENVIRONMENT ANNUAL REPORT

OBJET: ÉQUITÉ EN MILIEU DE TRAVAIL — RAPPORT ANNUEL

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 August 16, 2012, a female Ottawa Police Service (OPS) officer filed a human rights application with the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario against the Ottawa Police Services Board (Board), alleging discrimination in employment on the bases of sex and family status. The Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC) intervened as a party under section 37 of the Ontario Human Rights Code (Code).

As part of the 2015 settlement reached through the OHRC, the OPS agreed to undertake a series of actions to address inequities related to gender within the organization, with regular reporting at each phase of the project.

In the fall of 2017, the OPS concluded its obligations under the Minutes of Settlement in accordance with the prescribed deadlines. Out of the deliverables of the Minutes of Settlement, the OPS developed and approved the Equitable Work Environment Policy.

The Equitable Work Environment Policy reaffirmed the OPS' commitment to providing an environment that is inclusive and that is free of barriers based on the Code – age, race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex (including pregnancy), gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, record of offences, marital status, family status, and disability.

The Equitable Work Environment Policy established the following parenthod statement that, along with other Board and OPS human rights policies, has helped guide the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) work at the OPS:

The OPS will serve the community and create and maintain an equitable and adaptive work environment that ensures every employee can make a valuable contribution, free from systemic barriers and discrimination, throughout their OPS career. The OPS is committed to fostering a work culture that actively promotes equity, diversity and inclusion.

The Equitable Work Environment Policy commits the OPS to removing systemic barriers that cause discrimination in the employment relationship by identifying and eliminating discriminatory policies and practices. This includes all stages of the employment relationship, including recruitment, hiring, competitions, promotions, job placements, and training.

The Equitable Work Environment Policy establishes the requirement for regular audits and reviews to measure the performance of the Policy and to monitor and evaluate progress toward achieving an equitable workplace. The policy also establishes a requirement for the Chief of Police to provide an annual report to the Board.

DISCUSSION

The Equitable Work Environment Policy 2020 Annual Report provides the Board with an overview of activities and initiatives completed in 2020 in support of the OPS' Equitable Work Environment Policy. Highlights include the following accomplishments:

- The 2020-2022 Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Action Plan – Tabled in January 2020 and approved by the Board the following month, the strategic three-year plan is focused on removing barriers to equitable employment and improving service delivery and police relations, particularly with marginalized communities. The EDI Action Plan includes 10 priority action items for implementation in 2020, each of which have either been completed or are underway, with ongoing fulfillment in 2021.
- Respect, Values and Inclusion (RVI) Directorate – A new RVI Directorate was established in 2020 to advance OPS strategic priorities and foster a more progressive and inclusive police service. The Directorate is comprised of two sections – a Respect, Ethics and Values (REV) section focused on supporting professional, ethical, values-based behaviour within the OPS, and an EDI section, which is focused on supporting the Ottawa Police with proactive and responsive internal and external strategies to better serve our communities. The RVI

Directorate will incorporate a whole-of-service approach to harassment, discrimination, and human rights issues while promoting ethics and EDI principles, ensuring an EDI lens is applied to both internal processes and service delivery.

- Third-party Workplace Sexual Violence and Harassment Complaint Resolution Process – In December 2020, the OPS engaged the services of Rubin-Thomlinson LLP (a Toronto-based Canadian law firm with expertise in investigations, workplace harassment and misconduct) to conduct a six-month comprehensive review of the OPS Sexual Violence and Harassment program, as well as related policies and procedures. During this time, Rubin-Thomlinson will confidentially receive and investigate complaints about workplace harassment, discrimination, violence and reprisal.
- The 2020 Human Rights Learning Forum – For the sixth consecutive year, the OPS hosted a Human Rights Learning Forum on December 10, 2020, coinciding with International Human Rights Day. This year’s Forum theme, ‘We need to talk; It’s about systemic racism’ boldly addressed the topic of systemic racism with candid and respectful discussion among featured panelists and community participants.

The Equitable Work Environment Policy supports the Service’s commitment to fostering a work culture that actively promotes equity, diversity and inclusion. The policy encourages a workplace where all members are valued for the unique contributions they bring to their respective roles and supports members in this regard, through equitable treatment in all aspects of the employment relationship and the elimination of barriers to the contrary. This report provides the Board with an account of activities and initiatives undertaken in 2020 to further advance equity at the OPS.

- **Implementation of the 2020-2022 EDI Action Plan**

The 2020-2022 EDI Action Plan, a major deliverable of the Board’s Strategic Plan in the priority area to make “Meaningful Progress on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion,” was approved by the Board in February 2020.

The Plan is focused on creating meaningful and measurable progress towards a workplace culture that embraces EDI, and leverages significant police and community input as well as survey and report recommendations – including recommendations drawn from the [Ottawa Police Service 2019 Diversity Audit Report](#) conducted by Graybridge Malkam (presented to the Board on November 25, 2019).

The 2020-2022 EDI Action Plan included the following ten priority action items for 2020 (of which just over half were internally focused on equity within the workplace):

1. Create EDI Office to enhance EDI efforts and coordination across OPS.
2. Provide EDI Coaching and Mentoring to equip our leaders with culture change and EDI tools.

3. Develop EDI Lens Toolkit to improve our decision-making for internal and external systems and responses – i.e. missing persons/Indigenous women and internal transfer, promotions, and developmental rotation processes.
4. Reintroduce Hate Crime Section to improve response and support to impacted communities.
5. Enhance Community Policing including expansion of Neighbourhood Resource Teams.
6. Continue Anti-Racial Profiling efforts on addressing over and under policing concerns using a multi-stakeholder approach to policy, procedures, and accountability measures.
7. Update Outreach Recruitment and Background Check Processes to remove unintended barriers and increase competitive applications.
8. Initiate community dialogue and work with stakeholders for more effective mental health response (including training) with an interagency and intersectional approach – that addresses gaps, improves service delivery, builds collective action, and contributes to community safety and well-being.
9. Enhance Member Wellness supports and inclusion efforts - accommodations, early intervention, and formalizing Employee Resource Groups (ERGs).
10. Improve Complaint Resolution Process for members and supervisors– including a special project focused on addressing sexual violence. and harassment in the work place.

All above-listed EDI Action Plan priority items for 2020 have either been completed or are underway, with continued implementation in 2021. A more fulsome account of the status of each action item will be provided to the Board through separate reporting (the EDI Action Plan Update Report), however a brief synopsis of the activities undertaken in support of improving equity within the OPS workplace is included herewith.

- **Formation of the Respect, Values and Inclusion Directorate and EDI office**

The OPS established a RVI Directorate in 2020, to advance strategic EDI priorities and foster a more progressive and inclusive police service. The RVI Directorate will advanced the Board's strategic priorities and address major concerns raised by both OPS members and Ottawa community members for a more progressive and inclusive police service. Under this Directorate, a dedicated EDI Office was created to enhance EDI efforts and coordination across OPS. As part of the overall strategy, the team will provide guidance and subject matter expertise to foster equity and inclusion within the OPS workplace.

- **EDI Coaching and Mentoring**

In September 2020, OPS Senior Leadership participated in an “Agents of Change” EDI Leadership and Coaching workshop hosted by Peter Trevor Wilson, Global Human Equity Strategist with TWI Inc. and author of *The Human Equity Advantage*. Participants discussed the principles of effective implementation of EDI, including the essential role of leadership. Community Equity Council (CEC) Vice Co-Chair, Mr. Gérard Etienne, also facilitated an EDI awareness session with OPS Senior Leadership on September 8, 2020, that focused on EDI and systemic discrimination.

Fair and Impartial Policing course content and Use of Force requalification material were updated in 2020 to include elements of EDI, with the latter challenging participants with a scenario to recognize and address individual unconscious biases.

As a follow-up to the full-day “Towards Authentic Inclusion” training delivered to OPS Supervisors in 2019, a similar half-day training course for all sworn and civilian members was planned for 2020 but was postponed due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Additional development opportunities are planned for 2021 as Intercultural Developmental Inventory (IDI) assessments and a group session will be delivered to Senior Leadership. The IDI assesses intercultural competence — the capability to shift cultural perspective and appropriately adapt behaviour to cultural differences and commonalities. EDI staff at the OPS will also be trained and licenced as IDI Qualified Administrators in Q1 2021.

- **Development of a customized OPS EDI Lens Toolkit**

Development of a customized EDI Lens Toolkit began in 2020, in partnership with Global Affairs Canada - Centre for Intercultural Learning (CIL).

In order to strengthen understanding of EDI among OPS membership and weave EDI elements into the work of all functions at the OPS, CIL will leverage the Government of Canada’s [Gender-Based Analysis+](#) process and tool, adapting the material in consideration of the OPS work environment.

In addition to completing the contract and project scope, the first phase of research and best practices were developed and completed in 2020. A project team was also formed, including both police and CEC members, who contributed to initial discussions and who will continue to provide input and feedback throughout the design, development, and testing of the OPS-tailored Toolkit, which is expected to be implemented in 2021.

- **Updated outreach and recruitment processes**

In an effort to increase the diversity of candidates applying to the OPS, Human Resources introduced a number of measures in 2020 focused on removing barriers to recruitment for marginalized groups.

- In January a new, no-cost application process was introduced as a means opening opportunities to individuals who might in the past have been deterred by financial constraints.
- A new physical testing process was introduced to ensure that applicants can meet the standard required for graduation from the Ontario Police College, and background check practices were revised in consideration of EDI elements,
- A new self-reporting feature was added to the OPS application process, to demonstrate the Service's commitment to inclusiveness and provide applicants with the opportunity to voluntarily disclose individual characteristics including, but not limited to, ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation.
- Additionally, throughout 2020, the Outreach and Recruitment team continued to conduct virtual information sessions and meetings with potential applicants through online platforms, and further extensively engaged the community through social media. Members of the team continued the mentorship program that pairs potential recruits, particularly those from traditionally marginalized communities, with veteran officers to help guide them through the application process.

Coupled with new and creative promotional campaigns, these efforts led to a surge in applications received by the OPS in 2020 - from approximately 650 applications in 2019 (of which approximately 12% were from female applicants and 13% from applicants who identified with a racialized group), to almost 2,700 applications in 2020 (comprised of approximately 18% female applicants and 36% applicants from racialized groups). In fact, the December 2020 class of recruits is the most diverse class in the history of the OPS (40% are women, 6% identified as an Indigenous person, and 50% identified as a member of a racialized group). The class is highly educated, with many having achieved University and/or College degrees and, as a collective, they speak over 20 different languages.

To support retention of the new recruits, a pilot Recruit Mentorship Program was introduced in the latter part of 2020. The Recruit Mentorship Program has been specifically designed to match each new recruit with an OPS officer who can provide support and guidance on matters that may be of concern to the recruit which are unrelated to performance.

Recognition of the novel approaches taken by the outreach and recruitment team have led to the team being contacted for best practices by various federal, municipal and international police services.

- **Enhanced Member Wellness supports and inclusion efforts**
 - Continued accommodation of needs related to Code grounds

The OPS continues to share information about the availability of accommodations for applicants with disabilities during its recruitment process. Applicants selected for interview are notified that accommodations are available upon request, and successful applicants are advised of OPS accommodation policies. Any changes to these policies are communicated to existing employees in a timely manner.

In addition to Disability Management related accommodations, every employee has the right to equitable employment opportunities free from barriers and discrimination on the basis of Family Status and other Code grounds. While the OPS continually strives to identify and remove barriers that cause discrimination in various aspects of the employment relationship based on Code grounds, we recognize that, despite these efforts, individuals may nevertheless continue to require individual accommodations. All accommodation requests are taken seriously and in good faith. No employee is penalized for making an accommodation request, and such requests are provided to the point of undue hardship, as defined by the Code.

In 2020, the spread of COVID-19 and related restrictions led to a significant increase in requests for Family Status accommodations at the OPS. While the number of requests received in previous years (2017-2019) have typically been under 20 per year, for the 2020 reporting year the number of requests for Family Status accommodations was approximately six times that amount (over 120 requests received).

- Employee Resource Groups (ERG)

The OPS continued to build on three Employee Resource Groups (ERG), formed to provide mentoring, coaching and support for traditionally under-represented OPS members and various EDI initiatives.

1. Women's Internal Network and Support ERG
2. LGBTQ2+ ERG, and
3. Ethno-cultural and Religious Diversity ERG

Members continued to build their respective groups, provide internal support and guidance, and develop relationships with various external organizations and communities.

- **Revised Workplace Sexual Violence and Harassment complaint resolution process**

As part of a joint effort by the Board and the OPS to review the Service's sexual violence and harassment program, the Sexual Violence and Harassment (SVH) project was launched in March 2020 to develop a Service-wide strategy and framework for better understanding, support, response to, and prevention of sexual violence and harassment at the OPS.

The project adopted a collaborative approach and included a variety of internal and external working groups, as well as several OPS focus groups representing over 100 OPS members

and Ottawa community members. Based on resulting feedback, and as shared in the [October 26, 2020, project update to the Board](#), an independent third party was engaged to provide expertise. Rubin Thomlinson LLP (RT) was contracted to provide intake and investigation services for all OPS sexual violence and harassment complaints. RT will conduct a comprehensive review of all OPS sexual violence and harassment policies, procedures and practices.

RT formally commenced the intake and investigation pilot on December 9, 2020. For a six-month period, RT will receive and investigate complaints about workplace harassment, maintaining confidentiality of all parties.

To further support a more equitable work environment at OPS, a number of additional initiatives were implemented in 2020, including but not limited to the following:

- **Revised Competency Framework for all OPS roles**

In the latter half of 2020, the OPS contracted GP Strategies Corporation – a workforce transformation consulting firm - to review the Service's Competency Framework. The framework is used to establish the skill level required for 11 standard competencies which are applied to all roles at the OPS. The framework, last reviewed in 2007, is being redesigned with competencies that will be tailored to role and simplified to a maximum of five competencies per role type. The new Competency Framework is being reviewed with an EDI lens, and will have EDI elements incorporated into the foundational structure of the matrix.

- **Enhancements to Sworn Expression of Interest process**

To improve equitable opportunities for sworn members, a new Expression of Interest (EOI) process was developed in 2020, with implementation in early January 2021. Under the new process, sworn members will be asked to complete a self-identification questionnaire at the onset of the EOI process, to voluntarily indicate their gender identity and whether they identify as an Aboriginal or Indigenous person, a person with one or more disabilities, and/or a member of a visible minority (per employment equity designated group definitions provided in Canada's Employment Equity Act). Members must submit the questionnaire each time they complete an EOI. The new process will help to ensure that transfer opportunities are provided to all members on an equitable basis, and the information provided will be used to generate aggregate reporting in order to better-understand and identify any systemic barriers.

- **Awareness-raising opportunities**

In 2020, a multicultural calendar was added to the OPS intranet. The calendar highlights important dates and events that celebrate equity, diversity and inclusion within the OPS and the city of Ottawa. Members can add the calendar to their Outlook accounts to facilitate recognition of dates of significance while at meetings or during interactions with the

community. To further raise member awareness, all dates provide a brief explanation of their respective significance.

While majority of annual events and activities to celebrate and raise awareness of Ottawa's diverse communities could not be held in 2020 due to COVID-19, the OPS continued to virtually recognize several dates of cultural or religious significance, including Black History Month (February), International Women's Day (March 8), and International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia (May 17). The OPS also recognized Capital Pride Week (August 23-30), with messaging on internal OPS computer login screens and externally on social media platforms throughout the week. Additionally, the Progress Pride Flag was raised at four OPS locations, including Elgin Street, for the duration of the week.

The 2020 Human Rights Learning Forum was hosted on December 10, 2020. This year's theme, "We need to talk – It's about Systemic Racism," provided an opportunity for police and community members to share lived experiences and examine the issue of systemic racism through candid, respectful and inclusive discussions. The Forum also provided an opportunity to initiate change at OPS, as participants provided valuable insights on how to address systemic racism.

CONSULTATION

Human Rights and EDI work continues to be built on significant consultation with both internal and external stakeholders, with ongoing implementation, monitoring, and updates of the 2020-2022 EDI Action Plan. The EDI team seeks early input from relevant functional teams and community groups on various initiatives, including policy revisions, updates to training material and strategic planning. Meaningful and collaborative engagement with police and community members is fundamental to successfully fostering an equitable and inclusive police service.

This work has been informed by feedback received at the 2019 Human Rights Learning Forum and development with the CEC into 2021.

CONCLUSION

2020 was a pivotal year for EDI and human rights work at the OPS. First-year implementation of the 2020-2022 EDI Action Plan served to support the Equitable Work Environment Policy and raise awareness of the importance of EDI within our workplace. The value of EDI at the OPS extends beyond simply meeting business directives or legislative compliance. A workforce where each member is valued for the unique contributions they bring to the Service - one where every individual feels included and supported by their colleagues, regardless of gender identity, race, ethnicity, disability, age, etc. – will improve the morale, culture and efficacy of the organization.