

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: POSITIVE WORKPLACE: 2017 ANNUAL REPORT

OBJET: MILIEU DE TRAVAIL POSITIF : RAPPORT ANNUEL DE 2017

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

The Ottawa Police Service (OPS) strives to provide a positive workplace that exemplifies the organization's vision, mission and values. Members who work for the OPS can expect a work environment that promotes and offers personal and professional standards, diversity and non-discrimination.

In 2007, the OPS launched an innovative program known as "The Respectful Workplace." The Program was a concrete response to feedback from members about the need to address conflict, harassment and discrimination in the workplace. The OPS is seen as a leader in policing in strengthening respect in the workplace. Many other police services are developing or have modelled their programs based on the OPS initiative.

Annually, the Chief is required to report to the Ottawa Police Services Board (Board) on the usage and outcome of the Respectful Workplace Program (RWP), and creating and maintaining a positive work environment for members of the OPS. The OPS wants employees to be engaged in their positions and feel fulfilled in their jobs. This report fulfils that reporting obligation.

DISCUSSION

Changing the Approach to Workplace Conflict

The RWP is a comprehensive and proactive approach to managing workplace conflict, harassment and discrimination issues. The Program includes several elements:

- Policy – A policy is in place to guide employees on respectful behaviour in the workplace, and to outline the avenues open to them when they encounter disrespectful behaviour.
- Training – All employees and volunteers are trained on the Program so that the expectations of working in a respectful workplace are known by all.
- Professional Guidance and Support – The Program is actively managed and supported by the Executive Advisor, Respect, Conduct & Values who ensures that issues which arise in this area are handled in accordance with the Program guidelines.

The OPS has been a leader with the RWP. The Program is focused on achieving resolution to workplace conflict, harassment and discrimination-where it exists, through face-to-face discussion, increased self-awareness, and learning about the perspectives of others. This approach allows for the successful resolution of work related issues.

The Program has met with success by being available for consultation to all employees, operational managers, the Ottawa Police Association (OPA) and the Senior Officers Association (SOA), on matters requiring guidance when it comes to issues of a respectful workplace and overall communication skills and conflict management. This proactive and well-supported environment is well received by the employees.

Now that the employees have a supportive Program to draw on, a number of issues continue to be brought forward for resolution. This result was expected and it is encouraging. Conflict will always occur in a workplace and employees see this as a workplace tool and it is seen in a positive light.

The Respectful Workplace Policy sets out two basic approaches to resolving conflict, harassment and discrimination matters: 1) Assisted Response and 2) Self Initiated Response.

If an employee chooses the *Assisted Response* approach, they will work with the Executive Advisor, Respect, Conduct & Values when dealing with an issue and work towards resolution. The volume and nature of these activities are reported below.

If an employee chooses the *Self Initiated Response* approach, the person who is affected (the Complainant) will speak directly to the person with the offending behaviour (the Respondent), requesting that the offending behaviour cease. Although the *Self Initiated Response* may occur more often, only those cases that have been brought to the attention of the Executive Advisor can be reported below for statistical purposes.

2017 Activity

The 2017 activity in the Program is summarized in the table below. *Single Based Case* refers to a case with one Complainant and a *Group Based Case* refers to a case with multiple Complainants or Respondents.

Professional Consultation refers to cases that were brought to the attention of the Executive Advisor, Respect, Conduct & Values for purposes of consultation and eventual action. Many of these cases were brought forward by a supervisor and involved consultation and guidance in order to deal with a Respectful Workplace issue before it escalates. This category was introduced in 2014 to capture these types of issues. They were previously categorized under the miscellaneous category.

Miscellaneous Case refers to cases that are brought forward and usually require a response about the RWP Policy.

In 2017 the *Ethics* category was introduced in response to the growing number of issues that had a predominant ethical dimension.

Due to the confidential nature of the information, neither names nor case specifics will be disclosed, in order that the parties involved remain anonymous and the information confidential.

The protocol for reporting changed in the 2011 Positive Workplace Report. Only cases opened in the specific calendar year are shown in the data summaries. Cases that are ongoing from the previous year are documented later in this report.

Summary of 2017 Activity

Table 1 – Types of Cases

	Self-Initiated Response			Assisted Responses			Total Number of Cases		
	2015	2016	2017	2015	2016	2017	2015	2016	2017
Single Based Clients	4	3	4	28	28	22	32	31	26
Group Based Clients	0	0	1	3	2	1	3	2	2
Professional Consultations	0	0	0	18	21	30	18	21	30
Miscellaneous	0	0	0	2	1	0	2	1	0
Ethics						8			8
Total	4	3	5	51	52	61	55	55	66

In 2017, the Respectful Workplace cases were on par with the 2016 level (58 cases), with the new Ethics portfolio adding a further 8 cases, for an overall total of 66.

It is challenging to chart any patterns as the cases come from different directorates and work areas, and there has not been a recurring concentrated pattern of concern. This is also due to the high level of employee movement in the organization, which makes it difficult to pinpoint specific areas of concern.

However, when multiple files are opened on an individual, flags are raised and the concerns may be highlighted to senior management or other disciplines for assistance. There were a number of cases this year that met that criterion and they have either been resolved through a multi-disciplinary approach or are on-going awaiting resolution.

Of the 66 cases managed this year, there were 26 single based cases, two fell into the category of group-based cases and 30 were classified as professional consultation. A total of five were Self Initiated and 61 were in the Assisted Response stream. It is not surprising that close to 92% of those seeking help prefer third party assistance.

In addition in 2017, a total of nine workplace violence concerns were raised through the Health, Safety & Lifestyles section. All nine cases were resolved using the Internal Responsibility System as prescribed by the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*.

Table 2 – Employee Breakdown

	Female Civilian	Female Sworn	Male Civilian	Male Sworn	Total Number of Employees
Single Based Clients	16	3	12	21	52
Group Based Clients	14	0	7	3	24
Professional Consultations	11	5	2	16	34
Miscellaneous	0	0	0	0	0
Ethics	2		2	3	7
Total	43	8	23	43	117

As shown in Table 2, there was more representation based on numbers from men than women but not a statistically significant difference considering there are more men than women at the OPS. Civilian members were far more involved than their sworn counterparts, which is statistically significant as there are less civilians than sworn at the OPS. This may be due to the fact, that sworn members have more opportunity to move positions in times of conflict, where civilians remain in their positions much longer and therefore may be more vested in working through the issues when they arise. The incidents occurred at various police stations/buildings and occurred during working hours.

Of the single and group based cases, most cases have been resolved however 12 files remain open or are ongoing.

Not shown in the table are the 12 cases carried over from 2016. They were resolved in 2017 and are now closed.

The top two categories of disrespectful behaviour this year were:

1. Disrespectful communication related to inappropriate behaviour, gossip and general lack of respect.
2. Personal harassment in the form of bullying, intimidation, yelling, swearing, rumours and conflict;

The single based cases were dealt with on an individual basis and the resolutions included: facilitated dialogue; investigation; mediation; or supervisor response. The group-based cases were dealt with via guided change process, RWP remedial training and group intervention. Generally speaking, the cases were closed and resolved in a mutually acceptable manner.

Trend Analysis

Year-to-year variation in the number of cases is expected. As the OPS continues to collect and analyze data in future years with the assistance of upgraded technology, the ability to provide meaningful statistical analysis may improve. This will allow for objective determination of whether or not observed year-to-year variations are significant in nature, or simply within normal variation. As well, with the Ethics files being added to the portfolio, the issues being raised will highlight various concerns and create a wider breadth for discussion, training, and resolution.

Case Conferences

Case conferences are another management tool established in the OPS to deal with significant and complex employee issues, including RWP issues affecting the workplace. They promote positive employee relations, transparency and consistency in the management of workplace issues. This approach involves bringing together the appropriate resources and expertise from various in-house disciplines to discuss and implement an action plan, and establish a time frame to resolve or develop a course of action to deal with the identified issues.

Establishing Rapport and Relationships

In order to maintain the credibility and raise awareness of the Respectful Workplace program, it is important to establish rapport and relationships throughout the organization. On a yearly basis, a number of presentations are given to:

- All new employees – (mandatory RWP training);
- New sergeants to inform them about the Program as part of the Frontline Supervisory Course;
- OPS Youth in Policing Initiative (YIPI) Students on the Respectful Workplace; and
- OPS Volunteers to provide an overview of the Program.

- Senior Leadership Team (SLT) - a half-day workshop on the topic of Ethics, Professionalism and Trust.
- Joint Senior Officer and Staff Sergeant Managers' meeting – a full day meeting on the topic of Professionalism and Accountability, where conflict and ethics in the workplace was discussed.

To profile the work of the OPS, the Executive Advisor is investing in external networks in the RWP and Ethics communities and sits on various committees, some of which are publishing papers in the field, including the CACP Ethics Committee.

Respectful Workplace 2018 Work Plan – Enhancing the Ethics Program

A number of key initiatives for 2018 have been identified to ensure that respect, civility and ethics are at the forefront of all the OPS processes and practices. A temporary Staff Sergeant position has been approved to create a Project Plan for the enhanced Ethics Program, which will include the creation of a Professional Code of Ethics and other elements of a framework for the program. This will be done in consultation with the Executive, the OPA and the SOA to ensure best practices.

The enhanced Ethics Program will be housed in the Office of Respect, Conduct & Values, which will also have responsibility for RWP. Over the next 12 to 24 months, the reporting relationship for the Executive Advisor position will move from the Director General to report directly to the Chief. This change will ensure that the Chief has direct awareness of ethics and respect matters and demonstrates the critical importance of these issues.

CONCLUSION

The OPS is committed to a respectful workplace. The RWP continues to be effective and is an excellent example of the tools we have to ensure all members can feel their concerns are being heard and addressed. Under the umbrella of the Office of Respect, Conduct and Values, an enhanced Ethics program will be developed in 2018 to complement the existing RWP work.

The continuous promotion of a respectful workplace, founded on principles of respectful communication, teamwork and the overall social and psychological well being of each employee is paramount. This in conjunction with working together with management and the Associations to bridge gaps and broker conflicts will foster and promote respectful interactions, and be in keeping with the OPS overall mission and values.