



DATE: 28 September 2015

TO: Executive Director, Ottawa Police Services Board

FROM: Chief of Police, Ottawa Police Service

SUBJECT: **2015 PUBLIC SURVEY RESULTS**

## **RECOMMENDATION**

**That the Ottawa Police Services Board receive this report for information.**

## **BACKGROUND**

The 2015 Public Survey on Policing Services in the City of Ottawa is the seventh in a series of surveys conducted every three to four years since 1995 in which residents have been invited to provide their perceptions regarding:

- safety and security in neighbourhoods and across the City
- police performance and confidence in the police
- top concerns and priorities for the police
- awareness, use and satisfaction with police programs and services, and
- Victimization and police response.

The information collected assists the OPS in our ongoing measurement of performance and identifies public concerns and opportunities for service improvement under programs like the Service Initiative. It also guides the priorities and development of the strategic priorities for our upcoming 2016-2018 Business Plan.

Leger Marketing, a leading public opinion research firm, was commissioned by OPS to conduct this survey. As in 2012, the survey was conducted using a mail-to-online format. A random sample was drawn and 16,000 letters of invitation to participate were mailed out to households across all wards. Respondents could complete the survey in English or French using a secure online portal, and paper copies of the survey were available in English, French, Spanish, Arabic, Italian, German or Cantonese.

A total of 4,328 residents participated in the survey between March 30 and May 11, 2015, a response rate of 27.5% (up from 20.4% in 2012). The sample achieved provides results considered accurate within  $\pm 1.5$  percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

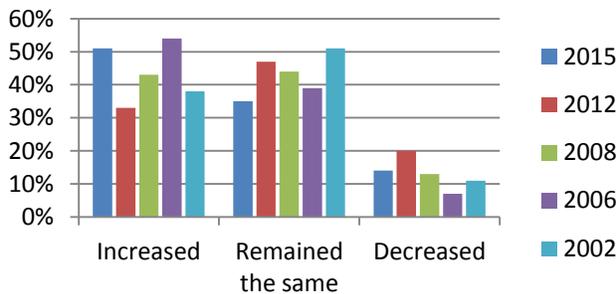
DISCUSSION

The results of the 2015 Public Survey suggest that the vast majority of Ottawa residents have a high level of satisfaction with the services provided by the OPS.

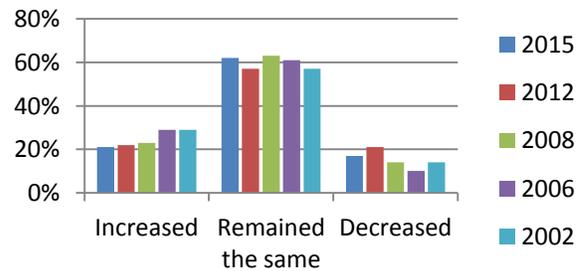
**Perceptions of Safety and Top Concerns Stable, but Perception of Level of Crime Increasing**

- Residents are nearly unanimous about feeling safe in their home (95%) and neighbourhood (90%) during the day, and similar results were observed in 2012. However, feeling safe in other places seems to have decreased over the last three years. The highest drop observed is in downtown Ottawa (-21 point decrease from 2012).
- There has been a significant increase in the perception that crime has increased across Ottawa, with 51% under the impression that crime had increased across the City in the past three years, up from 33% in 2012, and 43% in 2008, but slightly lower than 54% in 2006. In contrast, most residents (66%) continue to perceive that crime has remained the same in their

Q1. In the past three years, do you think crime has decreased, remained the same, or increased across Ottawa?



Q2. What about in your neighborhood? In the past three years, do you think crime has decreased, remained the same or increased in your neighborhood?



neighbourhood, a statistic that has remained stable in all surveys conducted since 2002.

- The specific concerns at the neighbourhood and City level have remained very stable since 2002.

Top 5 Concerns	Neighbourhood	Top 5 Concerns	City
Distracted Driving	69%	Distracted Driving	86%
Speeding Cars / Aggressive Driving	65%	Speeding Cars / Aggressive Driving	80%
Break & Enter	56%	Street Gangs	79%

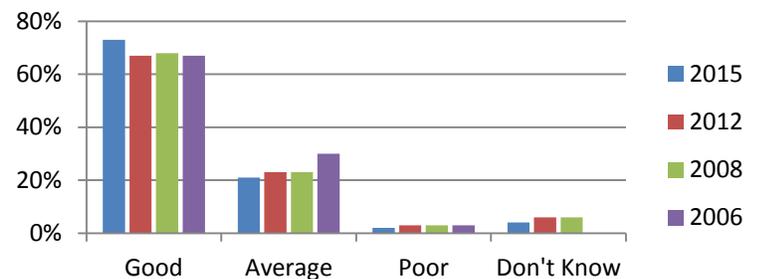
Theft From Vehicles	55%	Presence of Drugs/Dealers	76%
Vandalism	49%	Youth Crime	74%

### Perceptions of OPS Performance Remain High

- **Level of satisfaction** with the police service is relatively high, with more than eight respondents out of ten (82%) saying they are satisfied with the Ottawa Police Service. The level of dissatisfaction is extremely low (3%). Satisfaction ratings have been relatively consistent over the past decade.
- Six out of 10 respondents (60%) believe that the **quality of police service** in Ottawa has remained the same over the last 3 years, while a third (35%) think it has improved. Only a small proportion (5%) of respondents believe it has deteriorated.

- Nearly three in four (73%) consider that the **performance of OPS is good in ensuring the safety and security** of Ottawa citizens. This is a 6% improvement since 2012, and the highest rating recorded in previous OPS Public Surveys.

Q9. Overall, how would you rate the performance of the Ottawa Police Service in terms of ensuring the safety and security of the citizens of Ottawa?



- A majority of respondents (61%) say they have a high degree of **confidence in OPS**, compared to only 4% who expressed a low degree of confidence. The proportion who indicated they had very high confidence in OPS increased by 8% versus 2012 results.
- For the first time, residents rated OPS's performance in relation to the **three Operational Priorities**. Roughly half of respondents who provided a response rated OPS performance as very good or good in terms of reducing violence against women (50%), increasing traffic safety (52%), and reducing crimes related to guns and gangs (46%). However, a relatively large proportion of respondents lacked sufficient familiarity to provide a rating, which suggests there may be an opportunity for greater promotion of the Operational Priorities and the work being done by OPS.
- Also new in 2015, was a series of questions relating to ratings of **contact with OPS**. Sixty-eight percent of respondents reported having some type of contact with OPS over the past three years, and these contacts were rated on a number of dimensions. The types of contact that elicited the most positive ratings were for more casual types of contact and for front desk services. However, relatively strong ratings were also evoked by interactions that may be considered to be more fraught with potential for tension or conflict, such as those relating to a crime or accident. The lowest ratings

were for interactions in which a police officer spoke to the respondent without providing a reason.

### Percentage Satisfied with Various Types of Contact with OPS

<i>More Casual Contact/Front Desk Interactions</i>		<i>Crime-Related Interactions</i>	
Casual contact	91%	Questioned/charged relating to a crime	81%
Police/background check	88%	Pulled over for a traffic stop	78%
Provision of assistance or information	87%	Witness to a crime	78%
Visit to Collision Reporting Centre re. a traffic accident	83%	Victim of a crime	72%
Front desk services at Police Station	82%	Police officer spoke with me but did not provide a reason	52%
Front desk services at Community Police Centre	81%		

### Levels of Crime Victimization Remain Low, Satisfaction with Police High

- Thirteen percent of respondents reported that they (or an immediate family member) had been the victim of crime in the past three years (down from 17% in 2012). Most of the victims of crime were victims of a property crime (67%) versus a crime against the person (36%).
- Seventy percent indicated that they had notified OPS about the crime committed against themselves or their family member, compared to 73% in 2012. The primary reasons cited for not reporting the crime were: police would not consider the incident important enough (29%), the crime was minor/not worth the time to report (28%), and the incident was reported to another official such as OPP or by-law (20%).
- Respondents who were victim of a crime were asked to rate the actions OPS took after being notified of the crime as well as their treatment of the victim. Sixty percent of the victims of crime were satisfied with the actions OPS took while 77% were satisfied with how they were treated.

### Awareness and Usage of Certain Police Programs and Services Remains Low

- More than half of respondents (58%) are aware that OPS has two dedicated phone numbers for emergency police services, though satisfaction amongst the minority of respondents (15%) who had made an emergency call was very high (89%). Usage of

the non-emergency number was also low (15%), but elicited very positive satisfaction ratings (83%).

- Awareness of the responsibilities of the Ottawa Police Services Board increased slightly in 2015 to 44% from 38% in 2012.
- However, with the exception of Neighbourhood Watch and Crime Stoppers, which 72% and 66% of respondents were familiar with respectively, awareness of other OPS programs is low (<30%).

## CONSULTATION

The Public Survey has been the primary means of consulting with the public to inform development of the OPS Business Plan for the past six business planning cycles. In early November this year, OPS will hold a Public Consultation session as well as an open, on-line discussion panel, which will provide another opportunity for the public to provide input.

## FINANCIAL STATEMENT

There are no immediate financial impacts or implications from the results of the public survey.

## CONCLUSION

The 2015 Public Survey has provided an opportunity for Ottawa residents to share their perceptions of safety and security, satisfaction and confidence with police service, and priorities for OPS for the future. Key findings include:

- Perceptions of personal safety continue to be high, though perceptions of crime have increased for the City;
- Citizens' concerns regarding crime/disorder remain the same;
- Views on the performance of OPS remain very positive, and for some ratings, have increased;
- Levels of victimization are relatively low, but satisfaction amongst victims regarding the OPS's actions and treatment of the victim was high;
- Awareness of some police programs and services as well as the Chief's Operational Priorities could be strengthened; and
- Aspects of performance/contact that elicited the least positive ratings were in relation to: maintaining a police presence on bicycle or foot, preventing crime, utilizing financial and human resources efficiently/wisely, and interactions with officers in which the reason for the contact was not provided.

Further analysis will be undertaken and shared with district staff in order to assist them in working with community members to address crime and disorder in their neighbourhoods. Similarly, other aspects of the results will be shared with relevant sections such as Community Development, Communication and Call Centres, Victim Services, and community partners such as Crime Prevention Ottawa and OCTEVAW, among others.

Utilizing the results as an input to the Business Plan, the Service Initiative and setting priorities for the next three years will help OPS to continually improve our service to the public

and to further strengthen the public's confidence and trust in OPS --- a key requirement for OPS to be successful in our mission of keeping our community safe.

*(Original signed by)*

Charles Bordeleau  
Chief of Police

Responsible for report: Director Randy Mar

Attach. (1)