

**Report to / Rapport au:**

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

**27 February 2017 / 27 février 2017**

**Submitted by / Soumis par:**

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**SUBJECT: POSITIVE WORKPLACE: 2016 ANNUAL REPORT**

**OBJET: MILIEU DE TRAVAIL POSITIF : RAPPORT ANNUEL DE 2016**

**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, as we know this leads to better service to citizens. 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 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 in a positive light.

The Respectful Workplace Policy sets out 2 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.

#### 2016 Activity

The 2016 activity in the Program is summarized in Table 1 with comparable data for 2014 and 2015. *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 them requiring consultation and guidance in order to deal with a Respectful Workplace issue. This occurs prior to it becoming larger and something that could have potentially had a negative impact on the OPS, had it not been dealt with accordingly. This is a new category that we 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.

Due to the confidential nature of the information, neither names nor specifics will be used, 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 on-going from the previous year are documented later in this report.

**Table 1 – Types of Cases**

<i>Type</i>	Self-Initiated Response			Assisted Responses			Total Number of Cases		
	2014	2015	2016	2014	2015	2016	2014	2015	2016
Single Based Clients	6	4	3	30	28	28	36	32	31
Group Based Clients	0	0	0	6	3	2	6	3	2
Professional Consultations	0	0	0	0	18	21	0	18	21
Miscellaneous	0	0	0	18	2	1	18	2	1
Total	6	4	3	54	51	52	60	55	55

In 2016, a total of 55 Respectful Workplace issues were logged, on par with the 2015 level of cases brought forward, and in range of 2014's level of 60 cases. 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.

Of the cases managed this year, there were 31 single based cases, 2 fell into the category of group based cases and 21 were classified as professional consultations and 1 were miscellaneous cases. Of the 55 cases this year, 52 were in the Assisted Response stream. It is not surprising that close to 95% of those seeking help prefer third party assistance.

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 discussion. Generally speaking, the cases were closed and resolved in a mutually acceptable manner.

**Table 2 – Employee Breakdown**

	Female		Male		Total Number of Employees
	Civilian	Sworn	Civilian	Sworn	
Single Based Clients	20	6	8	25	59
Group Based Clients	2	1	0	5	8
Professional Consultations	9	3	5	4	21
Miscellaneous	1	0	0	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>89</b>

As shown in Table 2, there was more representation from men than women and sworn members were involved almost equally to their civilian counterparts. The incidents occurred at various police stations/buildings. The incidents occurred during working hours.

Of the single and group based cases, most cases have been resolved however twelve remain open or are on-going.

Not shown in the table are the 12 cases carried over from 2015. They were resolved in 2016 and are now closed.

### Trend Analysis

Year-to-year variation in the number of cases is expected. As OPS continues to collect and analyze data in future years, the ability to provide meaningful statistical analysis will improve. This will enable for objective determination of whether or not observed year-to-year variations are significant in nature, or simply within normal variation.

### Case Conferences

Case conferences are another management tool established in 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.

### Respectful Workplace 2017 Action Plan

The Program will continue to focus attention on the day-to-day needs of OPS members. A number of key initiatives for 2017 have been identified to ensure that respect, civility and ethics are at the forefront of all OPS processes and practices. The 2017 RWP work plan will include the re-invigoration of the OPS Corporate Ethics Program and the creation of an OPS Code of Professional Ethics. This work will be done in consultation with OPS leaders, the OPA and the SOA to ensure best practices.

### **CONCLUSION**

The OPS is committed to a respectful workplace and follows a philosophy that we are leaders in policing. 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. The Program will continue to support respect in the workplace and strategize and spearhead behavioural and cultural change across the organization, by working with all members and management to address concerns and bring about a cultural change.

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's overall mission and values.