



**OTTAWA POLICE SERVICE
SERVICE DE POLICE D'OTTAWA**

*The Trusted Leader in Policing
Le chef de file de confiance dans la police*

**REPORT
RAPPORT**

DATE: 23 February 2015

TO/DEST: Executive Director, Ottawa Police Services Board

FROM/EXP: Chief of Police, Ottawa Police Service

SUBJECT/OBJET: **POSITIVE WORKPLACE: 2014 ANNUAL REPORT**

RECOMMENDATION

That the Ottawa Police Services Board receive this report for 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 support, equal and accessible treatment, safety, high ethical 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 and is supported by a highly skilled professional. 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 Manager, Respectful Workplace, who ensures that issues which arise in this area are handled in accordance with the Program guidelines. The Manager reports to the Director of Human Resources.

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 utilizing in-house talent as opposed to hiring an external resource.

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 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. Employees value the program and continue to use it to resolve their issues. Conflicts will always occur in a workplace and employees see this as a workplace tool and it is seen in a positive light.

The Two Approaches to Resolution

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 RWP Manager when dealing with an issue and working 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 RWP Manager can be reported below for statistical purposes.

2014 Activity

The 2014 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. *Miscellaneous Cases* refers to cases that were brought to the attention of the Respectful Workplace Program Manager, for purposes of consultation and eventual action. Most 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.

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.

Summary of 2014 Activity
Table 1

	Total Number of Cases	Self- Initiated Response	Assisted Response		Total Number of Employees	Female	Male	Civilian	Sworn
Single Based Clients	36	6	30		70	38	32	32	38
Group Based Clients	6	0	6		80	29	51	29	51
Miscellaneous	18	0	18		23	19	4	17	6
Total	60	6	54		173	86	87	78	95

In 2014, there were 60 cases of Respectful Workplace issues, involving 173 employees. This number represents almost 9% of the employee population. It is higher than the 2013 level of 37 cases involving 113 employees.

Of the cases managed this year, there were 36 single based cases, 6 fell into the category of group based cases and 18 were classified as miscellaneous cases. Almost all of the cases were in the Assisted Response stream, and were brought forward by the individual or a supervisor, either sworn or civilian. As shown in Table 1, there was rather equal representation from men and women. However, more sworn members were involved than civilian. 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 some remain open or are on-going. Some of these cases will be resolved in 2015. However, others will remain open as the employees requested the incident(s) be documented and solicited advice on how to proceed, but then decided to not take action at the time. Some other cases were put on hold as the employees are currently on sick leave. Thirteen cases are still open and will be worked on in 2015: 9 single, 2 group and 2 miscellaneous based cases.

Not shown in the table are the 2 group cases carried over from 2013. They have been dealt with in 2014 and are now closed.

The single based cases were dealt with on an individual basis and the resolutions ranged from facilitated dialogue to investigation to mediation to 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.

Case Conferences

Case conferences are another management tool established in OPS to deal with significant and complex employee 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. There were 9 RWP files that were raised at 15 case conferences involving the RWP during 2014.

Establishing Rapport and Relationships

While the RWP Manager regarded all issues of Respectful Workplace as priorities, other initiatives were identified throughout the year for attention and completion by the Program Manager. This included a number of presentations given to:

- All new employees to inform them about the RWP;
- 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.

All of these presentations will be continued in 2015 and beyond.

The RWP Manager also attended meetings with the Gay Lesbian Bi-Sexual Transgendered (GLBT) community, Patrol Engagement, Ethics Week, Calgary Police and RCMP to consult about the OPS RWP. She completed training on Finance for the Non-Financial Manager, Alternate Dispute Resolution and continues to apprise herself of best practices in the field of Respectful Workplace via Webinars and sessions. In order to increase the visibility of the

Program and promote a culture where respect matters, a number of group trainings geared to particular work areas specific RWP concerns occurred.

Respectful Workplace 2015 Action Plan

The Program will continue to focus attention on the day-to-day needs of OPS members. A number of key initiatives for 2015 have been identified to ensure that respect, civility and ethics are at the forefront of all human resources processes and practices. This will be done in consultation with the Executive, the OPA and the SOA to ensure best practices.

The Crucial Conversations Training will begin at the end of 2015. The provision of skills training in support of conducting difficult conversations and resolving conflict is a priority. The objective is to educate employees in how to help resolve respect concerns effectively, efficiently and respectfully. The training will be launched as a boutique intervention for groups that the RWP Manager feel would benefit. After analysis and feedback, she is looking at wider spread intervention to include supervisors at a later date.

CONCLUSION

The OPS is committed to a respectful workplace and follows a philosophy that everyone matters. 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. The Program will continue to strategize and spearhead behavioural and cultural change across the organization, by working with all members and management to address concerns and also 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 overall mission and values.

(Original signed by)

Charles Bordeleau
Chief of Police

Responsible for report: Director General D. Frazer