

Chief's Verbal for January 29, 2018

Good afternoon,

I want to focus most of the verbal report on the issue of gun violence in our city. As the board is aware we held a briefing for the Mayor and Chair to discuss our enforcement strategies on Friday. Like many larger cities across Canada, Ottawa has seen an increase in shootings over the last few years.

I can tell you that the gun violence we have seen since the start of the year is our top priority and is receiving organizational wide attention. That includes Frontline patrol, the Drug unit, DART, intelligence, surveillance, street crime and guns and gangs. Our enforcement strategy is based on investigation and suppression. We also are heavily involved in intervention and prevention. We have seen twelve shootings since the start of the year, many of them resulting in injury and two in deaths. Every incident is being investigated and we are following up on all leads. Our investigators are working to hold those responsible accountable.

I am confident in the investigations that are being conducted on these files and the leadership in place. The evidence so far links these shootings to a small number of criminals. These persons of interest are often involved in drug trafficking and other serious criminal offences. They are using weapons for protection, retribution and to intimidate their competitors. This trend of criminals arming themselves with crime guns is being seen in a number of major Canadian cities.

As I said, we are using all investigative and enforcement techniques at our disposal to target those responsible and their associates. That includes conducting compliance checks on those already charged but released in the community on conditions.

This past weekend teams of front line officers were assigned to check on some of these individuals. Those checks resulted in about 40 compliance checks as well as more than 30 patrols of problem addresses and areas of interest to our investigators. Our DART unit continues to be very active. Last week they assisted with the arrest a high profile organized crime member wanted by Vancouver police for homicide. They conducted compliance checks on persons of interest to our investigations. In one traffic stop they seized 350 grams of marijuana and cash which led to possession for the purpose of trafficking were laid.

They also took part in community outreach in the Michelle Heights area. But investigations and frontline actions are only part of our strategy. Our School Resource Officers are actively working with our four school boards to identify people who could be

involved in these activities now or in the future and working to intervene with community partners. Our Community Police Officers continue to engage with Councillors, residents and community safety committees to provide information when an incident occurs. They work proactively to address community safety concerns. This is an organization wide effort and these activities will continue.

We will continue to make arrests, seize guns and carry out investigations targeted at these criminals just as we saw during Project Sabotage where 14 people were arrested and 24 illegal guns were seized. There is more work to do and we need the public's assistance.

Our message to the public is that if you know of someone with an illegal gun we need to know about it. We also need our community members to cooperate with our investigations when they have important information. You can call the police or Crime Stoppers if you want to remain anonymous. These enforcement efforts are shorter term solutions. We must continue to support the longer term work already underway with the City of Ottawa Street Violence and Gang Strategy. That work is being lead through Crime Prevention Ottawa and involves important partnerships with organizations like the John Howard Society, Ottawa Community Housing and our local School Boards. The focus needs to continue to be on early intervention on those young people who are engaging in these activities.

Safe Access Zones

I want to update the Board on some of the activities in preparation for Bill 163, the *Safe Access to Abortion Services Act*, which comes into effect on Thursday, February first. Our Special Events Section has been actively working on this issue since the announcement of the legislation and has been working with the Provincial Crown's office to ensure it will be enforced appropriately and that all measures to educate stakeholders and the public are undertaken.

Officers from our Police Liaison Team (PLT) have met on site with known protest groups and individuals to educate them about the new Safe Access Zone and to show its limits. We have also met with Morgentaler Clinic security and supervisors. We have created a Front Line Response Protocol for officers regarding the new legislation that includes maps of the Safe Access Zone. Officers have been working with the City of Ottawa to post signs that clearly mark the Access Zone around the clinic. Officers will also be on site on the first days when the legislation comes into force.

Cannabis Legislation

Later this year we will see marijuana become legal across Canada. As the Board can appreciate, there are a number of issues and challenges that the pending legislation creates for our Service, our partners (including the City of Ottawa) and the broader community.

I have asked Deputy Chief Skinner to lead an implementation project to prepare and address our obligations under the new and pending legislation. The Deputy and her team are prepared to provide the Board with an update on the plan to be ready for the new legislation at the February meeting of the board.

Thank You.