

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: BIAS-NEUTRAL POLICING UPDATE

OBJET: MISE À JOUR SUR LES SERVICES POLICIERS SANS PARTI PRIS

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) recognizes that racial biases exist in society and that racial profiling can have a profound impact. As policing professionals, it's important for the OPS to address community concerns about racial profiling. By working together, community-police partnerships and dialogue can play an active role addressing concerns about racial profiling.

OPS is a recognized leader in working in partnership with the community to address racial profiling concerns and is committed to continuing the journey of collaboration and collective action to ensure a professional and bias-neutral police service.

DISCUSSION

This report provides a timely update on:

1. Bias-neutral policing initiatives including: partnership and community engagement efforts, new training, and policy requirements.
2. Bias-Neutral Policing Committee – the launch of a bias-neutral committee earlier this month to harness and improve coordination of the efforts across the police service.
3. Partnership in Action: Let's Chat about Bias-Neutral Policing Strategies is taking place on April 7, 2016 and will be another opportunity to continue the dialogue about racial profiling.

A separate project update report on the Traffic Stop Race Data Collection Project is also being provided to the Board this month. It is becoming increasingly important for all these areas to merge into a coordinated effort in preparation for the final report expected from the York Research Team later this year.

1. Bias-Neutral Policing Efforts

CANADIAN CENTRE FOR DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

In 2014, the OPS became an Employer Partner of the Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion (CCDI), a national non-profit organization that provides innovative and proven strategies, research, tools, and educational supports to leaders, professionals and employees in organizations across Canada with the goal to help improve the overall inclusivity of the Canadian workforce.

As an Employer Partner of CCDI, OPS employees have access to a number of benefits including monthly newsletters, professional development and training opportunities, quarterly events, resources and research.

TRAINING: FAIR AND IMPARTIAL POLICING PROGRAM

The OPS Professional Development Centre began implementing the Fair and Impartial Policing Program (FIP) earlier this year.

FIP is being delivered to officers and Communications Centre members throughout 2016. Senior officers will also receive a full day training and information session.

Developed by Dr. Lori Fridell and being implemented across the United States and recently in some Canadian cities, the fair and impartial policing perspective reflects a new way of thinking about the issue of bias. Research tells us that even well-intentioned people manifest biases that can impact their perceptions and behaviour. FIP uses

science-based research to understand human bias and develop tools to mitigate its effects.

This training builds on, and helps better equip officers with information, understanding and practical tools they can use when recognizing and dealing with issues of bias.

Participants in the training will:

- Understand that everyone, even well-intentioned people, have biases;
- Understand how implicit (or unconscious) biases impact what we do;
- Understand that fair and impartial policing leads to effective policing; and
- Be given tools that help recognize conscious and implicit biases, and implement “controlled” (unbiased) behavioural responses.

Equipping officers with this training not only augments member safety, but enhances communication between the public and contributes to greater public confidence and trust. That cooperation, in turn, leads to better intelligence and overall cooperation with the community we serve.

FIP is another investment towards our commitment to professional bias-neutral policing.

DIVERSITY AND RACE RELATIONS

The Diversity and Race Relations Section continues to provide subject matter expertise, advice, and training throughout the service and community while coordinating key programs and committees such as the community-police action committee known as COMPAC – which was formed over 15 years ago to build relationships between police and racialized communities. Some recent section activities include:

- Diversity and race relations training and awareness to all new recruits – featuring community speakers and interactive presentations.
- Human rights training to various sections within the service including the Communications Centre.
- In December 2015, the section collaborated with the OPS GLBT Liaison Committee and COMPAC to host the first ever Human Rights Learning Forum that was well attended by over 180 people.
- Diversity and Race Relations is currently working with COMPAC and the GLBT committees to develop new three year work plans.

RACIAL PROFILING POLICY DIALOGUE – FEBRUARY 16 – 18, 2016

In partnership with York University Centre for Human Rights, York University School of Public Policy and Administration, and York University Institute for Social Research, the

Ontario Human Rights Commission held a three day policy dialogue on racial profiling with over 70 experts, researchers, policy makers and practitioners from across Ontario. The goal was to provide a forum for dialogue and debate that will generate relevant research and feedback, to inform the OHRC's development of a policy on preventing discrimination based on racial profiling.

The OPS was well represented with four attendees, and the service was profiled in a number of presentations on community engagement and partnership efforts through Diversity and Race Relations and the organization's Partnership in Action framework, the largest race data collection study of its kind in Canadian policing – Traffic Stop Race Data Collection Project, and the service's Racial Profiling Policy.

RACIAL PROFILING POLICY

With the assistance of the Dr. Shaheen Azmi of the Ontario Human Rights Commission and the Professor David Tanovich from the Windsor University who authored the book Racial Profiling in Canada, the first comprehensive anti-racial profiling policy in policing was launched by the Police Service in 2011.

The policy, which was presented at the Ontario Human Rights Commission's Racial Profiling Dialogue last month, includes definitions, practices, procedures as well as training and engagement requirements. It acts as a guide and sets out our commitment and standards to ensuring professional bias-neutral policing.

While considerable efforts have been made to implement the policy requirements including mandatory racial profiling training, the review will be completed in the coming months with community and police input – via a new Bias-Neutral Policing Committee and the upcoming Partnership in Action: Let's Chat About Bias-Neutral Policing Strategies.

2. Bias-Neutral Policing Committee – Towards a More Coordinated Approach

Based on consultation and engagement efforts, the project lead for the Traffic Stop Race Data Collection Project Inspector Pat Flanagan recommended an OPS committee to improve coordination, tracking and reporting of bias-neutral policing efforts across the OPS.

Recognizing that the Traffic Stop Race Data Collection Project is only one component of an integrated strategy to address racial profiling concerns, the committee will be co-led by the Director of Community Development and Executive Officer to conduct a gap analysis of other areas (training, policy, outreach and recruiting, community engagement) to strengthen the organizational approach to ensuring a professional and bias-neutral police service.

Still in development, the first committee meeting was launched this month to create a terms of reference, centralized tracking and reporting of bias-neutral initiatives and strategies, improved problem solving, and coordinated efforts of subject matter expertise – creating a more coordinated effort for bias-neutral policing strategies across OPS.

This important work will also promote continued momentum and community-police dialogue while we await the report in the short-term in 2016 and provide a longer term organizational strategy that focus on the equity, diversity and inclusion lens in the 2016 – 2018 business plan.

3. Partnership in Action – Let’s Chat About Bias-Neutral Policing Strategies

The Traffic Stop Race Data Collection Project has been underway since 2013 and has created significant community-police dialogue about racial profiling and bias-neutral policing. But it’s not the only strategy for addressing racial profiling concerns. While we await the final report due out later this year, community and police members have asked to talk about ways we can continue this important dialogue and work on solutions together.

Taking place on Thursday, April 7th, the interactive Partnership in Action session, “Let’s Chat About Bias-Neutral Policing Strategies,” will be an opportunity to continue the conversation about bias-neutral policing strategies to address racial profiling.

CONSULTATION

Not applicable.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable.

CONCLUSION

Through community policing initiatives like the Partnership in Action and working with groups like COMPAC and the Advisory Committee of the Traffic Stop Race Data Collection Project, ongoing engagement and consultation remains essential to building trust and addressing racial profiling concerns.

The Ottawa Police Service is committed to continuing this important work and working collaboratively with community-policing partners and stakeholders to ensure professional bias-neutral policing.