

Report to / Rapport au:

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

24 January 2022 / 24 janvier 2022

Submitted by / Soumis par:

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**SUBJECT: RESPONSE TO INQUIRY I-21-28: IMPACTS OF CANNABIS
LEGALIZATION ON ILLEGAL ACTIVITY**

**OBJET: RÉPONSE À LA DEMANDE DE RENSEIGNEMENTS I-21-28:
RÉPERCUSSIONS DE LA LÉGALISATION DU CANNABIS SUR LES
ACTIVITÉS ILLÉGALES**

REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Ottawa Police Services Board receives this report for information.

RECOMMANDATIONS DU RAPPORT

**Que la Commission de services policiers d'Ottawa prenne connaissance du
présent rapport à titre d'information.**

INQUIRY

Cannabis was legalized in Ottawa in 2018. Can the Service provide an estimated number of incidents or calls received associated with legalized cannabis? Have there been any? The province has offered additional money for police enforcement around cannabis shops. I do not recall having seen the funds. Have the OPS received this? Has there been a reduction in illegal drug dealing?

RESPONSE

In October of 2018, the federal government decriminalized the possession of cannabis for personal use for those ages 18 or older. The possession, distribution and production

of cannabis, and cannabis-related products, is now regulated by both the provincial and federal governments.

At the provincial level, for non-criminal offences, cannabis falls under the Cannabis Control Act (CCA), which is the provincial legislation regulating the legal sale, possession, transportation and/or other provincial matters related to the CCA.

Ontario has formed a Provincial Joint Forces Cannabis Enforcement Team (PJFCET), which is tasked with cannabis enforcement throughout the province and enforces both provincial and federal laws. The Ottawa Police Service (OPS) has previously had an officer seconded to the PJFCET, however the position is presently vacant. The OPS also has an officer seconded to the Criminal Intelligence Service of Ontario (CISO) as a Regional Intelligence Coordinator responsible for gathering and disseminating intelligence information relating to provincial priorities, including cannabis-related crime at higher levels. The Regional Intelligence Coordinator liaises with, and refer cannabis related intelligence to, PJFCET.

Similarly to liquor licence infractions, for example open alcohol discovered during motor vehicle stops, the majority of CCA offences completed by the OPS are done through enforcement measures established by both federal and provincial legislation.

Criminal federal Cannabis Act (CA) offences are generally possession for the purpose of sale offences that stem from traffic enforcement investigations.

The following is a break-down of cannabis related charges laid by the Ottawa Police Service (OPS) since 2019:

Charges annually:

Year	Federal	Provincial	Total Charges Laid
2019	144	366	510
2020	166	570	736
2021	141	337	478
Total	451	1,273	1,724

The OPS Drug Unit focuses its efforts on criminal activity related to the distribution of more lethal or serious drugs, like fentanyl, and violent traffickers that pose a public safety risk. Cannabis complaints are assessed on a case by case basis.

The OPS has not received any additional funding from the province in relation to the CCA, outside of the CISO secondment.