

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: POSITIVE WORKPLACE: 2020 ANNUAL REPORT

OBJET: MILIEU DE TRAVAIL POSITIF : RAPPORT ANNUEL DE 2020

REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Ottawa Police Services Board (the 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 equity/ diversity/ inclusion and non-discrimination. This is in direct alignment with the OPS' approach to change. The core components are made up of the principles of Duty of Care, Public Trust and Community Safety and Wellbeing. These concepts will act as a barometer for how we treat each other, how we make decisions that affect our members and how that translates into how our language, conduct and actions impact public trust. Both internal and external trust can be achieved through fair and transparent interactions. The available research indicates that perceived organizational support (organizational justice) is a critical component of engagement for police officers. If members believe their organization

supports them, they remain engaged internally and with the community. If they don't feel the support is there, engagement drops. Part of our mission is to make ethical thinking a core component of training, decision-making, actions, behaviours and work relationships.

In 2007, the OPS launched the "Respectful Workplace Program (RWP)". This innovative 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.

In 2017 the OPS established the Office of Respect, Conduct and Values (ORCV), reporting to the Director General, to reflect the importance of this work in creating a positive work environment within OPS. The Respectful Workplace Program was managed within this Office. In 2018 the mandate of the Office was expanded to include ethical matters. In the middle of 2020, the Unit underwent a title change and it became the Respect Ethics Values Branch and is now housed in the newly formed Respect Values Inclusion (RVI) Directorate. At this time the title of the person who manages and supports the work of the REV Branch, experienced a title change as well – Director, Respect Ethics Values. The OPS Sexual Violence and Harassment (SVH) Strategy was created mid way through the year. This was followed by a 6-month pilot project being initiated with an external 3rd party law firm, Rubin Thomlinson LLP (RT), for reporting cases of harassment and violence. All these changes resulted in a change in mandate and change in work priorities.

Annually, under Board Policy CR1, 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. This report fulfils that reporting obligation. This report will take into consideration all the changes and all the work that was done before, during and after the above changes were made.

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 Director, Respect Ethics Values, who ensures that issues which arise in this area are handled in accordance with the Program guidelines.

In March 2020, the OPS launched the Sexual Violence and Harassment Strategy (SV&H). The SV&H Strategy was created as a joint initiative by the OPS and the Board. The SV&H Project's objective was to develop a service-wide strategy and framework that would focus on understanding, supporting, responding and preventing Sexual Violence & Harassment at OPS. The overall mandate and mission is to eliminate workplace sexual violence and harassment in the OPS by ensuring a safe, supportive and inclusive work environment for all members, and an overall organizational culture of respect, openness and high standards for professional and equitable policing that is reflective of our core values. Over the course of the SV&H project, it became clear that members were asking for an independent and an external party to handle workplace harassment and discrimination complaints and investigations.

Between May-July 2020 there was a re-organization which resulted in different responsibilities, along with new staff members with new functions and new titles joining the Respect Ethics Values team.

October 2020 brought more changes, where the OPS started a pilot project with Rubin Thomlinson LLP (RT). Files relating to RWP and Violence and Harassment would now be handled through RT. The pilot will run until June 2021, at which time the success of the pilot will be assessed and measured.

With that said, the OPS has been a leader in policing regarding RWP. The RWP 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 RWP has met with success by being available for consultation to all employees, operational managers, the Executive, 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 RWP 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; employees see the RWP as a workplace tool and it is seen in a positive light.

The OPS RWP 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 Director, Respect Ethics Values or a member of the REV team, 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 Director can be reported below for statistical purposes.

2020 Activity

The 2020 activity in the RWP is similar to previous years in terms of volume and case types and is summarized in the table below. This is actually a little surprising considering that in November, all new RWP and Harassment files were being handled by RT. However, even without REV receiving new files to investigate the last two months of the year, the RWP had a very busy and full caseload. The 60 Respectful Workplace cases were on par with 2018 and 2019 levels.

Single Based Case refers to a case with one or two Complainants or Respondents, and a *Group Based Case* refers to a case with multiple Complainants and/or Respondents.

Professional Consultation refers to cases that were brought to the attention of the Director Respect Ethics Values, for purposes of consultation and eventual action. Many of these cases were brought forward by a supervisor and involved consultation and guidance in order to deal with a RWP issue before it escalates. This category was

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 case specifics will be disclosed, in order that the parties involved remain anonymous and the information confidential.

The protocol for reporting changed in the 2011 RWP 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 2020 Activity

	Self-Initiated Response			Assisted Responses			Total Number of Cases		
	2018	2019	2020	2018	2019	2020	2018	2019	2020
Single Based Clients	6	5	1	26	25	39	32	30	40
Group Based Clients	0	1	0	2	2	1	2	3	1
Professional Consultations	2	4	0	10	21	16	12	25	16
Miscellaneous	6	0	0	3	3	0	9	3	3
Total	14	10	1	41	51	56	55	61	60

Of the **60** RWP cases managed this year, there were 39 single based cases, 2 fell into the category of group based cases, 16 were classified as professional consultation and 3 fell into the miscellaneous category. A total of 59 were in the Assisted Response stream and only one was Self Initiated. The high use of REV services in managing workplace conflict, highlights the value members place on utilizing internal OPS subject matter experts who understand conflict and the OPS culture.

In addition in 2020 a total of 3 workplace violence concerns were raised through the Health, Safety & Wellness section (HSW). Two cases were resolved using the Internal Responsibility System as prescribed by the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*. One case still remains unresolved at the end of 2020 which is being handled internally through the chain of command and the Internal Responsibility System.

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. This is also due to the high level of employee movement in the organization, which makes it difficult to pinpoint specific areas of concern.

However, when multiple files are opened on the same individual, flags are raised and the concerns may be highlighted to senior management or other disciplines for assistance. There were a number of cases this year that met that criterion and they have either been resolved through a multi-disciplinary approach or are on-going and awaiting resolution.

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.

Employee Breakdown

	Female Civilian	Female Sworn	Male Civilian	Male Sworn	Total Number of Employees
Single Based Clients	20	20	6	32	78
Group Based Clients	0	0	0	4	4
Professional Consultations*	9	6	4	11	30

Miscellaneous	0	0	0	0	0
Total	29	26	10	47	112

* 3 additional Professional Consultations were completed regarding 1 civilian member of the public (complainant) and 2 sworn members (respondents). No gender of the complainants in these cases were available or applicable. They do not represent people who identified other than male or female. Total number of clients was 115.

As shown in Table 2, there was practically equal representation based on numbers of men and women. Civilian members were less involved than their sworn counterparts, which makes sense as there are less civilians than sworn at OPS. As well with the Director having moved back to Headquarters, there is more opportunity for the sworn to seek assistance, as there is an increased comfort level. The incidents occurred at various police stations/buildings and occurred during working hours.

Of the single and group based cases, most cases have been resolved however 5 files remain open or are on-going.

Not shown in the table are the 6 cases carried over from 2019. They were resolved and closed in 2020.

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 case was dealt with via individual and group meetings. Generally speaking, the cases were closed and resolved in a mutually acceptable manner.

Ethics Portfolio

In May 2018, a temporary position (Staff Sergeant – Ethics Project) was created within the ORCV (now re-named and re-branded the REV Branch). In March 2019, this position was re-named to Service Sergeant Major (SSM). As well, the Corp Sergeant Major (CSM) position was staffed full time to work alongside the SSM in the ORCV. Both these positions reported to the Executive Advisor (now re-named Director Respect

Ethics Values) and they are the ears and voice of the frontline to the Chief and vice-versa. These positions were key to the project work which the Service was undertaking to create a permanent ethics program within OPS. In 2020, with the changes that occurred mid-year with the creation of the RVI Directorate and the REV Branch, the SSM and CSM positions reporting structure and mandate was changed. The SSM and CSM positions reported directly to the Chief and the REV Branch was outfitted with a Staff Sergeant Conflict Ethics and Risk Management, and a Sergeant Ethics and Risk Detection. As the research shows, a robust ethics program supports the professionalization of policing, which in turn promotes public trust.

Over the course of 2020, the REV Branch worked on and resolved 59 issues of an ethical nature. The Director worked on 5 files and the SSM worked on 8 files and had 46 interactions. The breakdown of the files and the nature of the interactions are detailed below.

Ethics File Assessment Scale

Red: Potential for organizational and/or strategic consequences, and/or harm (mental and/or physical) to a person

Yellow: Tactical level issue that has the potential to evolve into a red file, if not addressed

Green: Neutral, positive contribution (i.e. training), advice and/or actions to promote organization's ethical climate

Table 3- Ethics File Breakdown

Ethics File Type	Number
Red File	13
Yellow Interaction	17
Green Interaction	29
Total Number of Files	59

The breakdown of the files by risk assessment largely reflects the breakdown of the overall nature of the files/issues.

In terms of red files, these include allegations of potential wrongdoing or conflict of interest, and the remainder are related to wellbeing both of the individual and the collective.

In terms of the yellow files, these are all related to personal discontent, disrespect and frustration that is impacting a larger group and has the potential to grow into a red file, if not addressed.

Most of the files are in the “Green” category. The vast majority of these can be broken down into these sub-categories:

1. *Assistance*: Advice to members of all levels of the chain of command (at their request) about tactical and strategic issues
2. *Instruction*: Providing ethics and leadership instruction to different ranks
3. *Career/Leadership Development*: Providing leadership and/or career advice (i.e. career mapping, identifying appropriate contacts, etc) to members of the junior ranks at their request
4. *Wellbeing Support for Serving and Retired Members*: Sitting on Ottawa Police Veterans Association (OPVA) committee and on the Resiliency Performance Group (RPG) committee, organizing events (e.g. support for former member’s family health crisis, suggesting group bonding activities to members of the chain of command at their request, etc)

Trend Analysis

Year-to-year variation in the number of cases is expected. As OPS continues to collect and analyze data in future years with the assistance of upgraded technology, with the advent of new Staff Sergeant and Sergeant positions with a new mandate, the ability to provide meaningful statistical analysis may improve. With enhanced processes and increased technological capability, the REV branch will be in a better position to identify cultural issues that may be brewing and report metrics in a timely manner. This will allow for objective determination of whether or not observed year-to-year variations are significant in nature, or simply within normal variation. As well, with the Ethics portfolio being a part of the REV mandate, along with the SV&H Strategy including the Prevention Pillar and the Conflict Management Process in general, the issues being raised will highlight various concerns and create a wider breadth for discussion, training, and resolution of issues and employee concerns.

Establishing Rapport and Relationships

In order to maintain the credibility and raise awareness of the Respectful Workplace Program and Ethics portfolio, it is important for the REV branch to establish rapport and relationships throughout the organization. With COVID 19 restrictions coming into effect in March 2020, some of the regularly scheduled engagements and meetings were cancelled. For those that were not, they were handled through various on-line platforms. Throughout the year a number of presentations were given to:

- New recruits and experienced officers – RWP and Ethics Training
- Call Centre employees - RWP Training and REV Mandate
- Major Case Management – Ethics course
- Various Platoons – REVConnects - REV Strategy, Mandate and Ethics

The Director and the REV Branch participated in a number of initiatives at OPS:

- Competency development process for Performance Management and Talent Development Unit
- RWP Audit
- Sexual Violence and Harassment Strategy
- Member Engagement Survey
- International Women's Day
- Staff Sergeant Sworn Promotion Process
- High Risk Conduct Meeting Process
- Support Panel for Operational Leadership Course
- Support to York Regional Police on REV initiatives and best practices

To profile the work of the OPS, the Director has invested in external networks in the RWP and Ethics communities. The Director attended an EDI training session called the "DI Unconference". The Director sits on various committees regarding harassment, conflict and ethics and is a member of the CACP Ethics Committee.

The REV branch participated and completed Workplace Restoration Training and Advanced Mediation Training.

Respect Ethics Values 2021 Work Plan – Enhancing the REV Branch

A number of key initiatives for 2021 have been identified to ensure that respect, civility and ethics are at the forefront of all OPS processes, practices and decisions. The REV branch is actively working to develop and implement an expanded Conflict Management

Process and Ethics Program at OPS. This strategy includes a logic model, that embeds the principles of Duty of Care, Public Safety and Community Safety and Wellbeing. Our strategy emphasizes that our unit provides a supportive role; training in ethical decision-making, supports to leadership in different areas, conflict management and workplace restoration. Feedback was applied from members from across the organization in developing and refining this strategy. Those consulted included members from Patrol, NRT, Communications Centre, EDI, PDC, PRU, PSS, Recruiting, Pandemic Team and Community Policing, among others. Ethics is all about decision-making (continuous assessment of right and wrong), and conflict can be a by-product of decisions, their consequences and their outcomes, even when the decision was “right”. The available research indicates that perceived organizational support (organizational justice) is a critical component of engagement for police officers. If members believe their organization supports them, they remain engaged internally and with the community. If they don’t feel the support is there, engagement drops. Part of our mission is to make ethical thinking a core component of training, decision-making, actions and behaviours and work relationships. As well, we are there to support existing ethical decision-making and mitigate lower level misconduct in a non-disciplinary but growth focused manner and support employees, all through the lens of enterprise risk management. Part of the plan is to develop a Centre of Professional Practice (COPP). This will be comprised of members - both sworn and civilian - who will be ambassadors for the strategy, and act as force multipliers for positive engagement. The benefits in terms of early complaint resolution and positive interactions are evident in terms of improving workplace culture. This along with leading the Prevention Pillar of the SV&H Strategy, will allow us to demystify and destigmatise these issues and work towards enhancing the professionalism at OPS.

CONCLUSION

The OPS is committed to a respectful workplace. 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. Under the umbrella of the Respect Ethics Values branch of the Respect Values Inclusion directorate, an enhanced Conflict Management Process and Ethics Program, continues to evolve to complement the existing RWP work.

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.