

Report to / Rapport au:

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

24 October 2016 / 24 octobre 2016

Submitted by / Soumis par:

Chief of Police, Ottawa Police Service / Chef de police, Service de police d'Ottawa

Contact Person / Personne ressource:

Inspector Pat Flanagan

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SUBJECT: UPDATE: TRAFFIC STOP RACE DATA COLLECTION PROJECT

**OBJET: OBJET: MISE À JOUR, PROJET DE COLLECTE DE DONNÉES
FONDÉES SUR LA RACE AUX CONTRÔLES ROUTIERS**

REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

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

RECOMMANDATIONS DU RAPPORT

Que la Commission de services policiers d'Ottawa reçoive ce rapport à titre informatif.

BACKGROUND

As a result of an agreement between the Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC) and the Ottawa Police Services Board (Board) that was signed on April 27, 2012, the Ottawa Police Service has undertaken the largest race based data collection project in Canadian policing history.

The Traffic Stop Race Data Collection Project (TSRDPC) requires police officers to record their perception of the driver's race, by observation only, for traffic stops over a two-year period from June 2013 to June 2015.

Full information, including the agreement, project updates, and opportunities to stay engaged are available online at ottawapolice.ca/race.

DISCUSSION

The Traffic Stop Race Data Collection Project examines the relationship between race, sex, age and traffic stops conducted by the Ottawa Police Service between June 27, 2013 and June 26, 2015.

The full Report by the York Research team is attached to this report as document 1 and is also available along with the data at ottawapolice.ca/race.

OPS officers took on a leadership role in policing with this project – collecting race based data for traffic stops since June 27, 2013. They continue to show professionalism to collect this data 42 months later.

On behalf of the Ottawa Police Service, I have received this report and recommendations. I am committed to working with both police and community members to better understand the report.

Over the next several months, we need to conduct a deeper analysis in order to respond to the report with an action plan that contributes to our existing bias-neutral policing efforts. This will include the creation of a committee made up of police and community members that will oversee the discussion and further analysis on the report.

As the Research Team has pointed out throughout this project, one of the limitations of this report is that it does not conclude racial profiling:

“This study is a correlational study on the relationship between race, sex, age, and traffic stops in Ottawa. It does not deal with the issue of causality. That is to say, it does not explain why and how these factors are related or not related. For this reason, the findings only provide a big picture of traffic stops in the entire capital city of Ottawa, covering a two-year period from 2013 to 2015 – a picture which provides a fresh and pioneering perspective on race and traffic stops in Canada (Page 25).”

Another limitation they point out is the external benchmark. The external benchmarking used in the study to compare traffic stops is the “commute to work” segment of the labour force data collected in the National Household Survey, 2011. While traffic stops are conducted 24 hours a day/7 days a week of all drivers, the benchmark is based only on the individuals who drive to work, not when they use their cars for non-work purposes. Raised as a concern with the advisory committee and project team over the last 18 months, it was determined by the researchers to be the best available benchmark.

Despite these and other limitations, the study does show variances and anomalies that must be researched further. We need to continue this work and understand the findings by examining the study findings, doing further research and more importantly, continue building on the community-police dialogue that is so important to this project and the topic of racial profiling.

Our work will need to go beyond straight numbers and take into account factors like how we use our resources, the realities of policing the communities we serve, and disparities in society. Police deployment will also need to be examined.

People want us visible in areas with high crime or social disorder issues to respond to violent crime, shootings, organg activity. Increased police visibility and work in these neighbourhoods often results in increased traffic stops. This can cause concern both for members of diverse communities and our own members. In fact, officers approached the project team with concerns that their anti-gang work in diverse neighbourhoods might affect the data and analysis. We need to better understand how these factors affect data analysis.

We take this work and the report seriously. The work we have done to date is proof of that. Our Service has been very active with other approaches designed to promote bias-neutral policing like new training, outreach recruitment, policy and police and community outreach.

Study findings include:

- The study examines 81, 902 traffic stops where officers recorded their perception of the driver's race: 69.3% White (56,776), 12.3% Middle Easterner (10,066), 8.8% Black (7,238), 4.7% E.Asian/SE Asian (3,875), 2.7% S. Asian (2,195), 1.9% Other racialized minorities (1,545), and .3% Indigenous Peoples (207).
- Officers reported perceiving the race of the driver prior to the decision to stop the vehicle in 11.4% of the stops.
- Middle Easterner and Black groups are the two race groups with disproportionately high incidences of traffic stops. Middle Easterner drivers were stopped 10,066 times, which constituted about 12.3% of the total stops over the two year period. However, these drivers represent less than 4% of the total driving population in Ottawa. This means that Middle Easterner Drivers were stopped 3.3 times more than what you would expect based on their population. Black drivers were stopped 7,238 times, which constituted about 8.8% of the total stops over the two-year period. However, these drivers represent less than 4% of

the total driving population in Ottawa. This means that Black drivers were stopped 2.3 times more than what you would expect based on their population.

- With the exception of Indigenous peoples, men aged 16-24 of all race groups have disproportionately high incidences of traffic stops. The disproportionalities ranged from 64.21% (E. Asian/ S.E. Asian) to 1100.39% (Middle Easterner).
- Middle Easterner male drivers aged 16-24 were stopped 2,302 times, which constituted about 2.8% of the total stops over the two year period. However, these drivers represent less than 0.25% of the total driving population in Ottawa. This means that young Middle Easterner male drivers were stopped 12 times more than what you would expect based on their population. Black male drivers aged 16-24 were stopped 1,238 times, which constituted about 1.5% of the total stops over the two year period. However, these drivers represent less than 0.2% of the total driving population in Ottawa. This means that young Black male drivers were stopped 8.3 times more than what you would expect based on their population.
- The findings showed that the reason most used by police officers in traffic stops is “provincial and municipal offenses”. It was used in 79,603 of the 81,902 traffic stops (97.19%). Police officers did not utilize “provincial and municipal offenses” for traffic stops in a disproportional manner for any racial minority groups.
- When compared with the White group, “criminal offences” reason has been used disproportionately by police officers for five of the six racialized minority groups.
- Similarly, “suspicious activities” reason has been used disproportionately by police officers for - Indigenous peoples (99.37%), Black (148.40%), Middle Easterner (133.70%), and other racialized minorities (132.78%).
- For the “outcome” of traffic stops, all race groups have received similar proportions of “charges” (44.65%) and “warnings” (41.29%). There were disproportionately high incidences of “final/no action” outcomes of traffic stops for indigenous peoples (37.77%), Black (47.28%), Middle Easterner, and Other Racialized Minorities.

Police and Community Engagement Continues

The Ottawa Police Service is committed to developing and maintaining the trust of the community it serves by providing responsive, effective and equitable policing to all residents. We are committed to the principle that all persons have the right to live and work in an environment that is free of police action based on racial bias and racial profiling.

Since the beginning of this project, the OPS has been committed to extensive community-police engagement. It has helped shape the direction and decisions of the project and has created important dialogue about racial profiling and race based data collection.

Over the next several months, community-police engagement will continue to play a critical role to ensure that we understand the report, review the recommendations and create a multi-year plan that goes beyond just action planning the report's recommendations. This work will put us at the forefront of ensuring professional and bias-neutral policing.

The police service will be working closely with the Police Services Board, Ottawa Police Association, Ontario Human Rights Commission, the York Research Team, and other academics to ensure that there are meaningful consultative and outreach opportunities including: information sessions, presentations, focus groups, online and social media feedback opportunities, and forums. We will also consult community partners to plan for another Partnership in Action session in the community following the release of the report and recommendations.

The first of these sessions will take place with the York Research Team on the evening of November 24th at the Ottawa Conference Centre. An additional session is also being planned for February 28th. Here is an overview of the engagement plan:

1. Public Release of Report & Data (October 24 – November 24, 2016)
 - Press Conference and Ottawa Police Services Board Meeting: October 24th
 - Distribution of report to partners, agencies and organizations across Ottawa
 - Officer and community member outreach meetings and presentations
 - Email and online feedback
 - Updates and planning with Community Police Advisory Committee (CPAC) and COMPAC.
2. Session with York Research Team (November 24, 2016)
 - Information session and panel discussion – understanding the report and moving forward with recommendations together.
3. Ottawa Police Information Session in partnership with Ottawa Police Association (November 2016)
4. Call for Applications – Creation of Committee (December 2016)
5. Researchers Academic Forum (January 2017)

- Session to discuss and assess the study from an academic perspective.
6. Partnership in Action Session – Bias-Neutral Policing (Save the Date: February 28, 2017)
 - Public session in partnership with Police Services Board, COMPAC, and CPAC.
 - Local community and police dialogue and action planning of the report.
 7. Creation of Multi-Year Action Plan (Q2 2017)

CONSULTATION

Included above.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable for this update

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

The full Report by the York Research team is attached to this report as document 1 and is also available along with the data at ottawapolice.ca/race.

CONCLUSION

The mission of our service is to protect our community and prevent crime. We can only be successful if we have the trust of those communities. This study was designed to examine an issue many in Ottawa are concerned about.

The OPS is committed to bias-neutral policing and recognizes that addressing racial profiling concerns requires a multi-pronged organizational strategy. While race based data collection is regarded as important tool, we will continue to work together with police and community partners, like COMPAC, on various projects and programs such as training, policy, community outreach, Street Checks and the Traffic Stop Race Data Collection Project

We are committed to ensuring the Ottawa Police Service has demonstrated professionalism and leadership to advance the study of race data collection in Canada while contributing to open dialogue and building community trust.

Community and police engagement remains at the foundation of this important work and will be used over the next six months to create a multi-year action plan.

Charles Bordeleau

Chief of Police

Responsible for the report: Inspector Pat Flanagan

Document 1

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