Ottawa Police Service Traffic Stop Race Data Collection Project II
Progressing Towards Bias-Free Policing:
Five Years of Race Data on Traffic Stops in Ottawa

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• The Ottawa Police Service Traffic Stop Race Data Collection Project (TSRDCP) in its first report based on two years of data from June 2013 to June 2015 found disproportionally high incidences of traffic stops for Middle Eastern and Black Drivers, and especially for young male Middle Eastern and Black Drivers.

• The TSRDCP I report made six recommendations, all of which have been implemented by the Ottawa Police Service and the Ottawa Police Service Board over the past three years. The next slide identifies six of the most important responses to the race disproportionalities in traffic stops identified in the 2016 report.

• The current TSRDCP II report examines the traffic stop data for the three year period from June 2015 to June 2018. In this period, there was a total of 96,436 recorded traffic stops of Ottawa residents. As with the original groundbreaking report, each traffic stop record includes complete information on race, sex and age, along with the reason and outcome of each stop.

• The report segments the records of the 96,436 traffic stops into three data sets reflecting one-year periods, 2015-2016, 2016-2017, and 2017-2018. The analysis focuses on the findings for each year, compares the findings to those reported in TSRDCP I, and identifies traffic stop patterns that have emerged in the five years of data collection.
OPS Responses to the 2016 TSRDCP I Report Designed to Reduce Race Disproportionalities in Traffic Stops

- **The Fair and Impartial Policing (FIP) Training Program** delivered to all sworn officers. This involves officer and staff implicit bias training as well as a review and evaluation of FIP training outcomes.

- **The Human Rights & Racial Profiling Policy Annual Report** provided in November 2016 outlines several initiatives related to bias-neutral policing.

- **The Street Checks/Regulated Interactions Provincial Regulations** for regulated interactions, also known as street checks, was implemented throughout 2016 and launched in March 2017. This requires officer training on the new rules, which also includes topics such as individual rights, unlawful detention, discrimination, and bias awareness.

- **The Gender Audit** is now in the fourth phase of the project, phase one and two of the OPS Gender Audit was carried out and released in 2016.

- **The OPS Business Plan 2016-2018** outlines three significant and measurable goals: (1) Engaging, mobilizing and supporting communities, (2) Building sustainable strategic/collaborative partnerships, and (3) Prioritizing and addressing risk activities in communities and neighbourhoods in a collaborative manner.

- **The Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Office at the OPS** is scheduled to be fully launched in 2019.
There is a clear pattern across the five years that the Ottawa Police Service are stopping fewer and fewer of its residents for traffic violations.

Traffic stops declined from 40,951 in 2013-2014 to 26,641 in 2017-2018, which is a 35% decline.

Initial consultations and outreach by the Traffic Stop Race Data Collection Project found that racialized communities felt subject to excessive surveillance by the police.

This finding suggests that the Ottawa Police Service has become less reliant on traffic stops as an instrument to advance community safety.

This finding is significant especially for racialized communities in Ottawa because it means in absolute terms Middle Eastern and Black drivers are being stopped far less in 2018 than they were five years ago.
INCIDENCES OF TRAFFIC STOPS: Racial Disproportionalities

- Middle Eastern and Black drivers continue to experience disproportionately high incidences of traffic stops.

  - In both 2015-2016 and 2016-2017, Middle Eastern Drivers were stopped 2.9 times more than what you would expect based on their segment of the driving population. In 2017-2018, this rose to 3.18 times.

  - Black Drivers were stopped between 2.2 and 2.3 times more than what you would expect based on their segment of the driving population during each of the three years of the study.

- There has been only a very modest reduction in the overall disproportionality traffic stop rates for Middle Eastern and Black drivers by the Ottawa Police Service compared to the TSRDCP I report findings for 2013-2015.

- The continued adverse impact of traffic stop enforcement on certain racial communities strongly points to the importance of the Ottawa Police Service exploring alternative and experimental practices that can advance community safety.
The reductions over the five years from 2013 to 2018 averaged 30% for young Middle Eastern Males and 23% for young Black males.

- There have been significant reductions since 2013 in the disproportionately high incidences of traffic stops for the two subgroups – Middle Eastern and Black Males aged 16-24 – identified in the 2016 TSRDCP I report as the most adversely affected by OPS traffic stop practices.

- The patterns of disproportionately high traffic stop rates for young Middle Eastern and Black males by the Ottawa Police Service in the period from 2015-2018 cannot be justified and are consistent with findings of racial profiling in cases involving other police services.

- In 2017-2018, young male Middle Eastern Drivers were still stopped 8.7 times more than what you would expect based on their segment of the driving population while young male Black Drivers were stopped 6.7 times more than what you would expect based on their population.

- Reductions on this scale suggest that at least some of the targeted measures adopted by the Ottawa Police Service during TSRDCP I and TSRDCP II have been impactful and that there are good reasons to be optimistic that the unacceptable high rates of disproportionality for these two sub-groups can be further reduced.
REASONS FOR TRAFFIC STOPS

Police officers did not utilize Provincial and Municipal Offences for traffic stops in a disproportionately manner for any racial minority group.

Provincial and Municipal Offences was the reason for 98% of the traffic stops by the Ottawa Police Service for the three-year period from 2015 to 2018.

Police officers did not utilize Provincial and Municipal Offences for traffic stops in a disproportionately manner for any racial minority group.

The findings about reasons for traffic stops in the three years from 2015 to 2018 are very similar to those findings in the 2016 TSRDCP I report regarding the period from 2013 to 2015.

The consistent finding that Provincial and Municipal Offences is the cited reason for the traffic stop except in a tiny fraction of circumstances suggests that there is a genuine need in the future to develop a more robust data field that requires officers to identify in more detail the particular provincial or municipal offence at issue for the traffic stop.

In the three-year period from 2015 to 2018, Black Drivers were at least 3 times more likely to be stopped for both Criminal Offenses and Suspicious Activities than White Drivers. Likewise, Middle Eastern Drivers were at least 2 times more likely to be stopped for both Criminal Offenses and Suspicious Activities than White Drivers.
**OUTCOMES OF TRAFFIC STOPS**

- There is an upward trend in charges (ticket, fine, arrest) as the outcome of traffic stops in the five-year period from 2013 to 2018. Over the five-year period, there is more than a 30% increase in charges resulting from a traffic stop by the Ottawa Police Service.

- There is no evident disproportionate higher incidences in charges for racialized minority drivers in Ottawa when compared with White Drivers from 2015 to 2018.

- White Drivers have seen the greatest increases in likelihood of being charged and are the most likely to be charged when stopped. In 2017-2018, 62% of White Drivers were charged compared to 51% of Black Drivers.

- During the same period, there is a corresponding decrease in drivers receiving warnings. No action outcomes have remained steady across the five years.

- The increase in charges resulting from a traffic stop may be linked to the declining frequency of traffic stops by the Ottawa Police Service. When officers do engage in a traffic stop, the traffic stop may be more serious and involve a violation of a Provincial or Municipal Offence where the officer does not have the same degree of discretion to issue a warning instead of a charge.
TSRCDP II RECOMMENDATIONS
SEVEN RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Create a formal policy directing officers to permanently track and report the races of people involved in traffic stop encounters.

2. Set annual targets for the reduction of the high racial disproportionalities of Middle Eastern and Black traffic stops.

3. Develop police service procedures on racial profiling that includes a clear definition of bias neutral policing that is inclusive of explicit and implicit bias.

4. Experiment with new and innovative protocols for engaging in traffic stops.

5. Test the decision points that are most vulnerable to implicit bias during traffic stops and be innovative about how those decision points may be shifted, including using new Artificial Intelligence technology.

6. Using Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology, develop an Early Intervention System (EIS) that captures all necessary information to alert supervisors to potential racial discrimination by both individuals and platoons/units/divisions.

7. Conduct a Body-Worn Camera Pilot Project.