

**Report to / Rapport au:**

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

**25 April 2016 / 25 avril 2016**

**Submitted by / Soumis par:**

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**SUBJECT: OTTAWA POLICE SERVICE INITIATIVE UPDATE**

**OBJET: INITIATIVE DU SERVICE DE POLICE D'OTTAWA : MISE À JOUR**

**REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS**

**That the Ottawa Police Services Board receive this update on the Service Initiative Program.**

**RECOMMANDATIONS DU RAPPORT**

**Que la Commission de services policiers d'Ottawa reçoive la mise à jour sur l'Initiative d'amélioration des services.**

**BACKGROUND**

The Ottawa Police Service (OPS) launched the Service Initiative (SI) Program to enhance the sustainability of the OPS' policing model. Geared towards continuous improvement of service delivery and a renewed focus on policing responsibilities, the SI is meant to help address the challenges and pressures facing policing, namely budget expectations, growth, changing demographics, growing demands for service, and the increasing complexity of crime.

The OPS service delivery model is focused on preventing crime, reducing victimization, and holding offenders accountable. Through a series of projects, the SI will be introducing a number of incremental changes to the model over the next few years to improve service,

realize money and/or person hour efficiencies, create cost recovery or revenue opportunities, and enhance partnerships.

In the last update to the Board in October of 2015, the Integrated Operating Model (consisting of the combined Demand Management, Frontline, Investigative, and Control Centre projects) was presented. Each of the projects in the model tackles areas of service delivery at the OPS that were identified in the Current State Review in November of 2013 as having opportunity for improvement. Working in tandem with the projects that make up the Integrated Operating Model is the Courts project, which is also capitalizing on opportunities to improve service delivery.

The projects evolved from the current state analysis, best practices review, research, and internal and external consultation. The projects have, and will continue to, evolve as considerations such as budget, facilities, equipment, technology, staffing, legislation, and contracts, are factored in.

## **DISCUSSION**

One of the cornerstones of the SI Program is the five projects that are transforming the OPS's policing model: Demand, Frontline, Investigative, Control Centre, and Courts. A summary of the current status of these projects follows.

### **Demand Management**

The purpose of the Demand Management project is to reduce demands for police resources across the organization by 25 to 40 per cent by determining where capacity can be released, while still maintaining quality service to the public and adhering to legislative requirements and contractual agreements. Two key pieces of work to help realize this target are the point of service strategy and the implementation of alternative response modes for non-emergency calls.

The goal of the point of service strategy is to streamline the intake process for demands and help make it easier for members of the public to access the services they need. It should be noted that this does not apply to the handling of emergency calls for service which will remain status quo. Changes currently being explored in this area include the reduction of contact numbers for non-emergency calls, the introduction of an Interactive Voice Response telephone system to allow residents to self-select the service they need when they call, and the addition of kiosks to OPS Front Desks services to provide the public with a greater opportunity to access current and future services available online and by phone. A number of planned, technology upgrades are included in the overall IT plan for the OPS to allow for these changes over the next two years.

The implementation of alternative response modes for non-emergency calls is intended to divert calls away from the frontline, as well as reduce demands on other parts of the organization. This will not only free up capacity for officers on the road to conduct more proactive crime prevention activities, it will also allow for a more cost efficient and effective handling of service requests that still meets the needs of residents. The modes that may be used include call backs, appointments, online reporting, telephone reporting, delayed mobile response, and walk-ins. While some of these modes currently exist at the OPS (e.g. telephone reporting through the Call Centre), the goal is to further leverage these modes for additional call types. For example, the OPS recently expanded the number of reports for offences over \$5000 that can be filed online by citizens. This includes thefts, thefts from vehicles, and mischief to property, and soon fraud and drug complaints. Further expanded use of telephone and online reporting is expected to take place later in the year.

The OPS is also exploring more ways to increase capacity on the frontline by reducing the types of calls officers on the road are dispatched to, mainly non-emergency Priority 3 and 4 calls. The types of calls being considered are those where there is no offence in progress and no risk to public safety, or where a delay in responding would not place persons, property, or evidence at risk. Some examples could include a historical assault a threat, or collision reporting depending on the overall circumstances. The initial analysis of non-emergency Priority 4 calls showed that in 2014, Priority 4 calls accounted for 59 per cent of all calls for service requiring officer dispatch. Approximately 40 per cent of these calls, where the call was initiated by a member of the public, may be suitable for an alternative response. The Demand project team is in the process of mapping out how these call types will be handled in the future, prior to moving on to the analysis of Priority 3 calls for possible capacity savings.

The OPS recognizes that another way to reduce demands placed on police resources is to ensure our activities are focused on core policing. With that in mind, a decision was made to discontinue the attendance of officers at City By-law calls where there is no safety risk and no need for police. Some examples include parking and noise complaints. Back in June of 2015, in the SI Update report to the Board, the OPS advised it would be entering into discussions with City By-law to move forward on this decision. These discussions have since taken place and effective May 1, 2016, the OPS will be discontinuing its attendance at City By-law calls where there is no requirement for police. In 2014, the OPS attended 3,620 of such calls, including 2,666 (74%) when By-law was on duty.

It is expected that some of the calls for service being diverted away from the frontline will be redirected to other OPS sections to carry out the alternative responses.

Therefore, in order to ensure these other sections are able to manage these additional demands, a review was undertaken to see what capacity could be released across other parts of the organization. The OPS subsequently made the decision to stop taking lost property reports where there is no danger to public safety or visible serial number or distinct marker, and to close the Leitrim and Greenbank Front Desks. The efficiencies realized by these changes are being reinvested in other parts of the organization.

The OPS is also moving forward on an approved business case to begin charging a surcharge on vehicles impounded by the OPS. Police services in Ontario are mandated under the Highway Traffic Act to impound vehicles for a number of reasons including impaired driving, driving under suspension, driving under criminal disqualification, and stunt driving. The costs associated to the management of these impounds are significant and currently borne by taxpayers. The surcharge will see that these costs are recovered from the offending parties. It is estimated that by implementing this charge, approximately \$100,000 will be recovered annually.

Additional business cases looking at further opportunities to reduce demands on the OPS are also underway.

### **Frontline**

The Frontline project is looking to build capacity in the frontline and create a more fluid and flexible deployment of frontline uniformed members by integrating all officers responsible for mobile response, proactive policing, and/or community engagement. To achieve this end, work has been focused on three distinct areas:

- The development of a new frontline deployment model that breaks down unnecessary silos between frontline resources;
- The updating of the policing boundaries currently used by the OPS for allocating and deploying officers (which were established post amalgamation in 1995); and,
- The creation of a new Frontline organizational structure that supports the new deployment model and the updated boundaries.

These combined changes are intended to improve the deployment and allocation of frontline officers to respond to demands for service in our growing city, increase proactive policing opportunities to address emerging crime trends, level resource demands and workloads, and ultimately enhance public and officer safety. The new model will also maintain and build on the OPS's commitment to a community policing approach, which has been vital to the success of the organization.

Currently, the OPS has approximately 800 resources performing a variety of frontline activities: Patrol, School Resource Officers (SRO), Youth, Neighbourhood Officers

(NHO), Community Police Officers (CPC), Traffic Enforcement, Traffic Escort, Canine, Tactical, Marine, Dive and Trails (MDT), Beat Squad, and Chemical Biological Radiological Nuclear Explosive (CBRNE). The new deployment model is taking these resources and realigning them to build an increased unity of effort, enhance coordination, reduce duplication, and improve the effectiveness of frontline operations.

Specialized support such as SRO, Canine, Tactical, CBRNE, and MDT, will remain as is under the new model. Youth, Mental Health, and a percentage of CPC officers will become part of a group focused on community intervention activities, particularly involving vulnerable and high risk individuals and neighbourhoods. Traffic Escort and a percentage of District Traffic officers will be grouped to focus on traffic related activities. The remaining frontline activities will be carried out under a more generalist approach that has Patrol, NHOs, Beat Squad and some CPC and District Traffic Officers, working together on mobile response, proactive policing and community engagement.

The activities performed today by frontline officers will continue under the new model, such as interacting with the community, responding to calls for service, conducting traffic enforcement, liaising with schools and other partners, and conducting proactive policing in neighbourhoods. What is currently being developed is a strategy that better coordinates these activities using a more generalist, community policing approach, strengthening our ability to be more flexible and responsive. The new model, with the assistance of the Control Centre (discussed later in the report) will play a new role in directed, proactive policing, particularly in vulnerable, at-risk neighbourhoods.

At the same time, work is ongoing to revisit the current policing boundaries. Ottawa has grown and changed dramatically over the last 10 years. New neighbourhoods have sprouted, some rural regions have becoming increasingly suburban, and population density has intensified in a number of areas. The OPS is looking to modernize its current allocation of officers to be reflective of these changes, as well as be flexible to accommodate future growth and emerging demands. A number of factors will be used to determine the new boundaries such as population, demographic data, calls for service, points of interest (e.g. schools, hospitals, etc), roadway data, police response times, etc. As well, the findings from the recent Ottawa Neighbourhood Study conducted by the Centre for Research and Education in Community Services at the University of Ottawa will also be used as an input. The end result will be updated boundaries that are flexible and more reflective of population and demands for service that enable the OPS to more effectively serve the city of Ottawa.

The last step in the Frontline project will be the creation of the organizational structure that supports the new frontline deployment model and the updated boundaries.

Timing for the implementation of the new deployment model, boundaries, and ultimately the updated organizational structure, will be taking into account a number of factors such as internal and external communication, overlap with other SI projects, and deadlines for annual leave draws. The target date for implementation is early 2017.

### **Investigative**

The purpose of the Investigative project is to improve the processes around the handling of investigations at the OPS to better serve victims of crime and be more efficient. It includes centralizing all investigative functions under one command to improve decision making, information sharing, and priority setting, as well as the creation of a new organizational structure within the Criminal Investigative Directorate that allows for increased fluidity with investigative resources in addressing emerging crime trends and/or changing priorities.

Since the last update to the Board, a functional review was completed to look at all the investigative activities the OPS carries out and the different degrees of specialization required for each. The review revealed that the OPS has over 30 investigative units with many individual mandates. This has led the organization to become overly siloed. It has also reduced the ability to be flexible and agile with investigative resources, shifting them as required to meet community needs.

Using the results of the review, a new investigative model was created that realigns investigative functions using a “generalize where possible, specialize as needed” approach. This new model reduces silos, groups functionally similar units, balances workloads, and consequently helps build investigative capacity. Implementation planning for the new model is currently underway.

The Investigative project will be further improving the effectiveness and efficiency of investigations by reviewing demand and file management processes, as well as realigning case prioritization. This will involve looking for opportunities to streamline processes and remove duplication, as well as examining how to improve case prioritization based on impacts to community safety, organizational priorities, and solvability factors.

### **Control Centre**

The Control Centre project will provide the OPS with a centre that serves as a hub for day-to-day frontline operations, supplying a common operating picture of what’s happening across the city at any given time. It will maintain situational and operational awareness of incidents, resources, events, road blockages, etc, and be a key support to frontline operations, particularly during high-risk and complex calls for service known as

'trigger calls'. It is estimated that OPS gets approximately 6,700 of these types of calls annually, which is approximately 20-25 a day. Examples could include gun calls, abductions, robberies, etc. Even routine traffic stops can escalate into a situation requiring 'virtual backup' from the Control Centre.

The Centre will improve both public and officer safety with its ability to access and leverage integrated information sources and supply officers involved in trigger and other calls with near real-time intelligence, whether en route, on scene, or in the early stages of an investigation. Currently, the OPS Communications Centre is responsible for taking emergency calls for service, dispatching officers, and providing initial call support information. The Control Centre will supplement this work with its ability to quickly access a number of additional internal and external information sources. Intelligence information could include suspect photos, recent incidents, court records, social media, etc, and in the future, surveillance footage from cameras near to an incident.

Operating out of Greenbank police station and staffed with a watch commander, an operations support coordinator, and crime/intelligence analysts, the start-up of the Control Centre will focus initially on information dissemination and situational awareness. The longer term vision of the Control Centre is to evolve from the initial information dissemination role to a more tactical and strategic role of coordinating and directing proactive and problem-solving activities.

Since the last update to the Board, a staffing, facilities, and IT plan were created to support a May 2016 launch. A number of emerging factors were considered and a decision was made to delay implementation until the fall to allow more transition time for members who will be working out of the Control Centre, and to minimize operational impacts and disruptions due to upcoming summer staffing and planned/unplanned events.

## **Courts**

The Courts project identified three key areas to better streamline processes and realize efficiencies: court file quality and management, court attendance, and prisoner management. Work to date has been focused on the first of these areas – improving court file quality and management.

Changes thus far include the implementation of a new organizational structure, technology upgrades, and updated business processes.

In terms of the organizational structure, there was an opportunity to transition resources performing specialized functions to generalists. This has allowed staff to be trained on

additional functions, has created flexibility within the structure, and has made more efficient use of the resources assigned in the Court Liaison Section.

With respect to technology upgrades, new scanning software and hardware— Nuance eCopy — was installed in OPS police stations to allow officers to scan their notes and other paper disclosure directly into the Records Management System. This makes the documentation immediately accessible to investigators from any division, and also reduces the need to photocopy the disclosure and mail it out. In addition, the submission of court tracking sheets, which was previously done manually, was also moved online. This saves times for officers, Records and Courts Staff, as well as Mail Services. It is estimated that over 2,500 hours of officer time will be saved by no longer having to drive the above court documentation to Court staff.

A number of court business processes were also updated to be more streamlined and efficient, including changes around the service of court documents.

A review is currently taking place to evaluate the changes that have been implemented. Once this is complete, the project will move on to the remaining key areas: Court Attendance and Prisoner Management.

### **Multiagency Early Risk Intervention Table Pilot**

The Board will recall that in June of 2015, the Multiagency Early Risk Intervention Table (MERIT) pilot was launched in the South-end of Ottawa. This was another initiative launched under the SI to improve service to the community and better manage demands.

The purpose of the pilot was to integrate various agencies that serve people in the community like police, mental health resources, social agencies, and school boards, into a formal process that allows complex, high-risk cases, or those requiring a coordinated response from more than one agency, to be discussed and dealt with in a more effective and efficient manner.

Since the launch, 20 health, social, and safety professionals have been meeting on a weekly basis to discuss how best to assist a number of individuals and families exhibiting signs of ‘acutely elevated risk’ — meaning there is a high probability of the occurrence of harm, victimization or criminality if their situation is left unattended.

Over 70 at risk situations have come to the table in the first ten months of operations involving individuals and families. Acute risk was successfully mitigated in all situations managed by the table, with approximately 12 per cent of cases rejected due to a low risk threshold.

MERIT was successfully awarded a grant for \$80,000 to support an evaluation, as well as training and program management. The evaluation is currently underway, examining the MERIT processes and a plan for sustainability. Following the evaluation, the OPS in conjunction with MERIT partners, will be looking to explore the possibility of expansion in additional neighbourhoods.

## **CONSULTATION**

The Service Initiative is an ongoing program aimed at long term changes to improve and guarantee service delivery into the future. A great deal of the work on the projects has focused on research of best practices, discussions with other police and emergency services and consultation with OPS frontline members. With the various projects and models now more fully developed, the SI team will be conducting ongoing community consultation and awareness efforts to ensure understanding of the projects and gather public feedback.

An announcement on those efforts, which will include various opportunities for residents to learn about the work and express their views and comments about the projects, will be made in May. The strategy will include multiple forums for discussion including electronic, targeted stakeholder meetings and public presentations. These methods will allow the OPS to explain the design principles of the projects and get the feedback we need to ensure community expectations are maintained.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The budget for the SI Program as identified in the 2016 Budget process is attributed to account 126111. Activities to be undertaken by the SI program in 2016 are within the allocated budget. Full implementation of the integrated operating model will be dependent on funding to support the IT and facility requirements.

## **CONCLUSION**

In recent years, the need for reforms to current policing models within the province, and even in North America, has become more evident. This is underlined by the Ontario government's appetite for updating the Police Services Act, which hasn't been changed significantly since 1990.

The OPS, with direction from the Board, has been taking action to get ahead of the curve and make changes to its current policing model before the burden on police services becomes too large.

The SI Program, while focused on enhancing community safety, has also been looking for ways to offer residents value for services by being more effective and efficient in serving

the community. The five key SI projects, along with a number of other initiatives, are helping to accomplish these objectives.

A lot of foundational work has taken place throughout the SI program to develop solutions that are good both in the short and long term. This will result in a policing model that is both sustainable and adaptable to future pressures.

Policing services come at a cost to tax payers and over the years that cost has risen due to a number of pressures including growth, changing demographics, growing demands for service, member compensation, and the increasing complexity of crime. As well, as a 24/7 service, police have often become a default response for many service requests that are ultimately not about criminality.

Through the SI Program, the OPS is taking an in-depth look at how it operates to ensure it is focused on core policing and continuing to be recognized as a trusted partner in community safety.