



STRATEGIC PLAN

2016 – 2021

OIPRD

OFFICE OF THE INDEPENDENT
POLICE REVIEW DIRECTOR



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MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

In maintaining our ongoing commitment to providing leadership in police oversight, I am pleased to introduce our five-year Strategic Plan. This plan reflects our dedication to providing excellent service that inspires public confidence by increasing the effectiveness and accountability of the public complaints system.

In creating this strategy, we have had to test ourselves as an organization and question our processes in order to identify areas of success and areas to build on. In our past seven years, we have grown as an organization, introduced new programs, and improved processes. The thoughtful and careful development of this Strategic Plan uses these past lessons to guide us into the next five years.

This document maintains my commitment to ensuring that the organization is engaged in continuous improvement to serve the public effectively. The strategies that the OIPRD will undertake in the next

five years will work to address the challenges faced by the public, policing organizations and Ontario's many communities.

Building on our past accomplishments, this Strategic Plan will provide the framework for our continued success over the next five years and ensure that our organization continues to operate with independence, integrity and accountability.

Gerry McNeilly

Independent Police Review Director



ABOUT THE OIPRD

Established in 2009 under the Independent Police Review Act, 2007, the Office of the Independent Police Review Director (OIPRD) is an independent civilian agency that is responsible for receiving, managing and overseeing all public complaints about the police in Ontario. The OIPRD operates as an arm's length agency of the Ministry of the Attorney General; however, it is neutral and its decisions are independent of the government, the police and the public.

The OIPRD manages all complaints about the conduct of a police officer or the policies and services of a police department. The OIPRD's jurisdiction extends to approximately 24,000 sworn police officers in 52 municipal or regional services and 172 OPP detachments and headquarters. This does not include RCMP officers, TTC Special Constables, First Nations police officers, court officers, campus police, provincial offences officers, or special constables.

Central to our work is the belief that public confidence in the public complaints system

will lead to increasing the overall effectiveness of police services in Ontario. As such, we carry out our role as a responsible, independent oversight agency to ensure that complaints are dealt with in a manner that is transparent, effective and fair to both the public and the police.

We do this through the following core functions:

- Oversight of public complaints, from receipt to completion (approximately 3,000 annually)
- Encouraging meaningful resolution of complaints
- Investigating complaints and providing oversight to police service investigations
- Conducting systemic reviews of police issues
- Education and outreach to both public and policing stakeholders to raise awareness of the public complaints system
- Conducting audits of how various police services administer the complaints system

WHAT GUIDES US

OUR VISION

To enhance confidence in the public complaints system through excellence in the independent and impartial oversight of police

OUR MISSION

To provide effective management and oversight of public complaints, promote accountability of police services across Ontario and increase public confidence in the complaints system

OUR VALUES

Accountability: improving accountability of the public complaints system and remaining accountable to our stakeholders for the management of the public complaints process

Integrity: working honestly and ethically to provide professional, objective, timely services to all stakeholders; respecting the privacy and dignity of our stakeholders and treating them fairly

Independence: overseeing investigations by police services in a fair, transparent and effective manner and conducting independent investigations thoroughly and fairly

Accessibility: providing an accessible system for the public to make complaints about police and increasing public awareness about the complaints system

Inclusion: being responsive to and inclusive of diversity in delivering OIPRD services

ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

PUBLIC EXPECTATIONS

Public expectations for accountability and transparency from civilian agencies overseeing police are greater than ever. Over the past year there has been an increase in media coverage of civilian oversight of police, including use of force incidents, police involvement with people with mental health issues, police street checks and protests by groups calling for, among other things, the OIPRD to retain more investigations because they are unhappy with police services investigating police officers. As such, the OIPRD has experienced greater public scrutiny of its processes and decisions and has worked hard to maintain accountable, transparent practices with the media, while preserving confidentiality regarding police complaints as mandated by the PSA.

POLICE OVERSIGHT REVIEW

In April 2016 the Ontario government appointed the Honourable Michael H. Tulloch, a judge from the Ontario Court of Appeal, to lead an Independent Police Oversight Review of the three agencies that oversee police in the province: the Special Investigations Unit, the OIPRD and the Ontario Civilian Police Commission.

Justice Tulloch's report is expected to be delivered to the Attorney General by March 31, 2017, and will contain his recommendations on ways to increase transparency and accountability in police oversight, while at the same time, ensuring that work can be carried out as efficiently and effectively as possible. It is likely that these recommendations will have an impact on the OIPRD, its business processes and services.

TECHNOLOGY

New and emerging technologies are playing a critical role as tools of policing. As the internet and digital technologies are becoming more prevalent in society, they impact the relationship between the public and the police. Civilian activism, as seen in the increased video and photographic documentation, has created more awareness and demand for greater police accountability and oversight. Some police services are considering the use of body-worn cameras. The Toronto Police Service has piloted the use of body-worn cameras and has recommended that all front-line officers be equipped with them. Technologies such as body worn cameras may enhance the investigation process as with more available information, more objective evidence can be collected and applied to our investigations. This technology will impact the way the OIPRD investigates and oversees complaint investigations.

From a service delivery perspective, the pace of technological change continues to increase with citizens having a greater desire for on-demand, electronic services. The OIPRD is already

witnessing this shift, with over 70 per cent of all complaints in 2015 – 16 being received electronically. A growing expectation for electronic interaction on mobile and tablet devices will require responsive technology to meet these needs. The OIPRD recognizes these changing expectations and has included responsive initiatives in this Strategic Plan to meet these needs.

ECONOMY AND FISCAL PRESSURES

Ongoing cost pressures continue to be a significant internal factor as the government works towards its goal of balancing the budget by 2017 – 18. Although budgets are becoming tighter, the broader public sector is expected to maintain and even expand service delivery to the public. The OIPRD will continue to utilize its resources to be more efficient and effective by focusing our efforts on key priorities and initiatives as laid out in this plan.

DEVELOPING A PLAN THAT WORKS

Developing a plan that builds on our past accomplishments, addresses emerging issues and maintains our guiding principles was central to determining our key strategic priorities. These priorities will guide us through the next five years. Ensuring that this plan fits the demands for greater accountability and transparency in police oversight was core to the developmental process of this plan and will lay the groundwork for operational and strategic reports that will follow.

We began our process by first assessing our organizational values, which were determined in 2009, and re-evaluated their applicability to our organization seven years later. One of our key organizational values is our commitment to inclusion and diversity in the delivery of our services to the public. Our five organizational values represent our vision of enhancing public confidence in the complaints system.

In order to ensure that our plan works to address the current social climate, a comprehensive environmental scan was conducted. Through this environmental scan, which included input from staff and stakeholders, a plan was developed to meet our long-term priorities over the next five years. The priorities identified in our Strategic Plan are supported by three further strategic documents: the Business Plan, Operational Plan, and the Knowledge Management Strategy. Collectively, these documents will ensure that each identified priority is supported by key operational goals and performance measures to ensure that progress is made in an effective and efficient manner.



OIPRD STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The OIPRD has identified four strategic priorities that will shape the agency's direction over the next five years: building confidence in the complaints system, achieving excellence in police oversight, influencing change in police policies and practices, and supporting professional, committed and engaged employees.

Each strategic priority is supported by goals and initiatives outlined in the Operational Plan to ensure that we achieve progress and have the tools in place to measure our success.

PRIORITY 1: CONFIDENCE IN THE COMPLAINTS SYSTEM

The first strategic priority of the OIPRD is to build confidence in the complaints system. This priority is central to both our agency mission and vision.

Increasing confidence in the public complaints system is first and foremost dependent on the transparency between the agency and the public. Our commitment to transparency can be seen by the public posting of all disciplinary hearing outcomes and disciplinary appeal rulings. The OIPRD plans to increase transparency by posting anonymized summaries of investigative reports where misconduct of a less serious nature has been found. The OIPRD will further ensure that these initiatives are easily accessible and searchable by the public on our website. In addition, we will continue to publicly release the OIPRD data inventory in order to ensure that the public has access to key information that is collected, managed, and used to inform operational decisions by the OIPRD. In the future, we plan to initiate the collection of race based data to help support our commitment to maintaining public confidence in the complaints system and remain proactive in identifying trends and issues.

The core values of the OIPRD, namely accessibility and inclusion, are central in achieving our priority of building confidence in the complaints system. To this end, the OIPRD will build on our current outreach initiatives to share the knowledge we have gained as a police oversight body for training and professional development purposes. This will include the creation of informational videos for the public in order to increase public awareness of the OIPRD, and training videos for police services in order to address gaps in knowledge of the process and their responsibilities.

Lastly, the OIPRD will continue its engagement with various stakeholders in order to strengthen its relationships, including those with Indigenous communities. Through continuing discussions with First Nations policing organizations, we can gain valuable insight on how to provide support to Indigenous communities in their effort to regulate First Nations policing. Further, the OIPRD remains committed to collaborating with Indigenous communities to discuss ways to enhance the quality and sustainability in First Nations policing communities.

The OIPRD continues to evaluate and fine tune our internal processes in order to maintain our commitment to managing and investigating complaints in a timely and impartial manner. Through the review of internal business processes, we will be able to identify areas for improvement, shorten timelines and allocate resources accordingly.



PRIORITY 2: EXCELLENCE IN POLICE OVERSIGHT

The OIPRD's second strategic priority is to achieve excellence in police oversight. While this priority is closely linked to the first, it involves different goals and operations.

The OIPRD will achieve excellence in police oversight firstly, by implementing transformative information technology and business processes to support operations. The OIPRD has already made considerable progress towards renewing its I&IT infrastructure, which will support operational initiatives aimed at the processing and analyzing of caseload data and statistics. We will continue to utilize technological solutions to implement a more broad range of services to the public and to optimize efficiencies, such as improving timelines of investigative reviews and reports. Moving forward, the ongoing integration of technology will play a central role in streamlining our processes and reaching our operational and strategic goals.

Achieving excellence in police oversight is closely connected to increasing the efficiency and timeliness of investigative reports. Further, the OIPRD will work to increase the number of complaints resolved through mediation and resolutions. Alternative Dispute Resolution, particularly mediation, plays a key role in achieving this strategic priority. The OIPRD will actively promote mediation and work to educate police services about our newest resolution pilot program, the Enhanced Mediation Program, which began in 2017. This pilot recommends that mediation be the first step in dealing with less serious complaints that have been screened in for investigation, with the aim of increasing communication between the public and the police to enhance policing within the community.

Further, the OIPRD will work to improve the timeliness and quality of retained investigations and the review processes. Through our continued commitment to increasing the thoroughness of Investigative Report Reviews, we will be able to strengthen our existing oversight practices; we will ensure that our staff are equipped with the tools necessary to effectively and efficiently conduct Investigative Report Reviews by ensuring that they receive ongoing training and professional development. This training will be focused on new and emerging issues and trends in policing policy, legislation, and services.



PRIORITY 3: INFLUENCING CHANGE IN POLICE POLICIES AND PRACTICE

The OIPRD aims to not only build confidence in the complaints system and achieve excellence in police oversight, but it also strives to use its complaints data as a means to proactively identify trends and make recommendations in policing. Conducting systemic reviews is one of the primary ways that we execute this responsibility; we aim to complete responsive and timely systemic reviews that will influence change in police policies and practice. Since opening in 2009, our office has completed two systemic reviews and is currently working on three others regarding strip searches, use of force, and the Thunder Bay Police Service.

Due to the high level of investigative and other resources needed to complete thorough and comprehensive systemic reviews, these reports can take time to complete. Initiatives involved in supporting the goal of more timely systemic reviews, such as establishing a dedicated systemic review team through the realignment of resources, will allow for a more agile and focused response to such issues. Through this, we can continue to develop our expertise in systemic reviews while enhancing transparency and accountability.

Our experience in managing over 3,000 complaints annually has provided us with expertise regarding policing issues in conduct, policies and services. We aim to lead and promote innovations and best practices in police oversight through, but not limited to, advocating for legislative amendments to the PSA and making recommendation through our systemic reviews in order to more effectively manage and oversee the public complaints system. Further, the OIPRD is committed to strengthening oversight in Ontario by supporting the independent review being conducted by the Honourable Michael H. Tulloch to enhance the transparency and accountability of the province's three police oversight bodies; we intend to support and implement the recommendations adopted by the Ontario government from the mandate review. The OIPRD will actively work as a leader to promote innovations and best practices in police oversight in an effort to share our knowledge with our oversight counterparts and stakeholders.

A key goal of the OIPRD, in the next five years, will be to improve policing practices regarding the public complaints system through the use of audits. Increasing the number of audits and

'mini-audits' of police services across Ontario will provide us with invaluable knowledge that can be used to further direct our business processes and provide us with the information needed to make valuable recommendations to police services in order to guide the direction of their processes. Further, conducting audits on the impacts of our released systemic reviews and whether our recommendations have been implemented in police services across Ontario will inform us of the impact that our organization is making in influencing change.



PRIORITY 4: PROFESSIONAL, COMMITTED AND ENGAGED EMPLOYEES

The OIPRD firmly believes that an organization is only as strong as its people; having a professional, committed and engaged workforce is a key priority. The Knowledge Management Strategy, crafted on the priorities and goals outlined in this document, addresses this priority and aims to create a flexible and responsive workforce that rapidly adjusts to changing business environment and improves employee engagement and diversity within the OIPRD.

The world of police oversight is dynamic and ever-changing, and in order to adapt and realign our priorities, we need to ensure that we are providing ongoing training and professional development that meets the new and emerging trends in society and in policing. Job shadowing, professional development workshops and cross-unit training, among other initiatives, will be central to ensuring that our staff are knowledgeable and responsive. In addition, a key commitment will be to continue to ensure a diverse and engaged workforce that reflects the demographics of the province.

STRATEGIC PLAN MAP

The following map illustrates the strategic priorities that will guide the OIPRD over the next five years, including related goals that will need to be met in order to achieve the priority.

