

**VANCOUVER POLICE BOARD
SERVICE & POLICY COMPLAINT REVIEW COMMITTEE**

Meeting minutes

September 26th 2018

2:03pm to 2:44pm

7th floor boardroom, 2120 Cambie Street, Vancouver, BC

Board Members Present

Barj Dhahan (Chair)
Mayor Gregor Robertson
Dr. Sherri Magee
Carolyn Askew
Patricia Barnes
Johnny Cheung
Claire Marshall (via conference call)
Thomas Tam
Dr. Peter Wong

Staff Present

Chief Constable Adam Palmer
DCC Howard Chow
DCC Steve Rai
DCC Laurence Rankin

Patti Marfleet, Executive Director
Stephanie Johanssen, Executive Assistant

Absent:

1. Agenda

The Chair called the meeting to order.

MOVED / SECONDED:

THAT the Vancouver Police Board approve the Service and Policy meeting Agenda for September 26th 2018.

CARRIED

2. Minutes

MOVED / SECONDED:

THAT the Vancouver Police Board approve the Service and Policy meeting Minutes of July 19th 2018.

CARRIED

3. New Service & Policy Complaint & Investigation Report

3.1 Complaint #2018-133 (Street Checks)

3.2 Report #1809C01: Report on S&P 2018-133

CC Palmer provided opening remarks for this complaint, and thanked the representatives from the BCCLA and UBC for attending the meeting. CC Palmer spoke to the VPD's great relationship with the BCCLA, stating how important it is for the VPD to have third party accountability when issues such as this arise.

CC Palmer spoke to the different oversight bodies that hold the VPD accountable, and that the VPD was happy to address this complaint.

CC Palmer stated that street checks have not just been a huge issue locally, but also in the United States and eastern Canada. CC Palmer spoke to the fact that when an issue such as this arises, there is an academic response, and also an emotional response. The report provided by the VPD gives an academic background and deep analysis on the data, but the VPD is also very cognizant of the emotional component to this complaint.

CC Palmer underlined the promise from the VPD to continue to compassionately police, but also to maintain the public expectation that the police will respond to suspicious circumstances, and check on the wellbeing of those at risk. Street checks is a proactive policing tool and the data shows that the people that the VPD are checking have a heavy history of criminality, regardless of their race. In many cases these checks are generated by the public.

CC Palmer stated that there are six recommendations outlined in the report and that he would like to make a 7th recommendation for the Board's consideration to ensure transparency and community trust. CC Palmer recommended that if the Board feels that there is more analysis required by an independent third party, that the VPD would be happy to facilitate the process.

DCC Chow provided background on the complaint. Initially the VPD publicly released street check data on 97,000 street checks spanning over 10 years, in response to an FOI request from a blogger. The BCCLA and UBCIC filed a complaint with the OPCC about what appeared to be the discriminatory nature of the VPD's street check data.

In response to this complaint, Chief Palmer commissioned an investigation report and a study entitled "Understanding Street Checks: An Examination of a Proactive Policing Strategy". This report is heavy on statistical analysis, citing over 185 references, and looking at experiences across Canada and the US in terms of the climate on street checks. DCC Chow acknowledged some of the people involved in the study, including a number of people from the Planning and Research Department, along with Sgt. Mike Wheeler.

DCC Chow stated that according to 2017 statistics, 91 percent of suspicious circumstance calls were generated by the public. Street checks are also used to check on the wellbeing of an individual at risk. The report found that street checks are not conducted at random; in 2017, 80% of street checked people had an average of 22 prior criminal investigations against them. 66% of those checked had prior convictions.

The report also concluded that street checks are being conducted in the busiest areas of town where most of the violent crimes occurred. The street checks data is aligned with the highest crime areas of Vancouver.

DCC Chow noted that street checks data does not align with population demographics. Caucasians are also overrepresented, as are males. DCC Chow noted that 77% of violent offenders are males.

DCC Chow spoke to the addendum that was made on the initial complaint, which highlighted the overrepresentation of Indigenous women in street check data. DCC Chow noted that 53% of Indigenous women that were checked were the subject of missing persons investigations.

DCC Chow outlined the six recommendations in the report:

1. Formalizing the existing VPD street check standards into policy and ensuring that our policy adheres to new provincial standards that are currently being developed;
2. Additional training to ensure that VPD officers are utilizing street checks appropriately;
3. Committing to publicly releasing VPD street check data annually;
4. Furthering existing community relationships to better understand the unique experiences, perceptions and histories of the communities that we serve;
5. Assigning an Indigenous Liaison Protocol Officer to support greater communication between our patrol officers and our partners in the Indigenous community; and,
6. Establishing a new street check category in the records system to specifically document when officers are dealing with an individual to ensure their safety and well-being.

DCC Chow stated that when officers observe suspicious activity, they are bound to investigate. DCC Chow stated that street checks are used judiciously and that on average officers conduct one street check per month in a given year. Street checks are an important tool for proactive policing.

DCC Chow noted that it is important to recognize the societal impact of colonization, displacement, discriminatory government policies and residential school systems that have led to Indigenous overrepresentation in street check data.

The Chair stated that it would be helpful to hear the latest on the Provincial guidelines. CC Palmer stated that the VPD has developed a street check policy but is waiting for the Province as it is important to put out a policy that aligns with the Provincial guidelines.

Board members stated that they would support an independent review

MOTION to approve the six recommendations as outlined in the report.

MOVED/SECONDED

CARRIED

MOTION to approve the seventh recommendation:

THAT Board staff issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) from independent third parties to conduct the following studies:

- a) Independently analyze and interpret the Vancouver Police Department data on street checks practice, policy, procedures and guidance on street checks and use of them as a policing tool

- b) The impacts of street checks on Indigenous and racialized people including a community based research assessment of police contacts to determine the satisfaction of particularly affected racialized or geographic communities with recommendations in relation to street checks in Vancouver
THAT these studies start by January 2019 and complete by July 2019
THAT Board staff research the resources necessary to conduct these studies, complete an evaluation and recommendation of the RFP bids and bring forward a plan to the Police Board before year-end

MOVED/SECONDED

CARRIED

4. New Service & Policy Complaint & Investigation Report

4.1 Complaint #2018-131 (Police Response)

4.2 Report #1809C02: Report on S&P 2018-131

MOTION to dismiss the complaint based on the information provided in the report and to provide the complainant with a response.

MOVED/SECONDED

CARRIED

5. New Service & Policy Complaint & Investigation Report

5.1 Complaint #2018-132 (Policing in the DTES)

5.2 Report #1809C03: Report on S&P 2018-132

S/Sgt. Rich Rabinovich provided a background to the complaint, and outlined the information provided in the report. S/Sgt. Rabinovich stated that there is a plan going forward to maintain a regular connection with the complainants to address issues as they arise.

MOTION to dismiss the complaint with reasons.

MOVED/SECONDED

CARRIED

6. Correspondence

OPCC Letter noting File Closure: S&P #2018-130 (Vandalism)

The correspondence was received for information.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:44pm