

Street Check Ban

Recommendation #	Description	Responsibility	Not Started	In Progress	Completed
1.1	Recommendation : If a decision is made to formally ban street checks, all police officials should be ordered to immediately cease the recording of civilian information for “street check” purposes.	HRP RCMP			X
	Furthermore, the street check field within the Versadex data management system should be immediately disabled;	HRP			X
1.2	Officers on patrol should no longer have immediate access to historical street check data pertaining to the civilians they interact with in the community. Access to historical street check data should be restricted to investigators, supervisors and crime analysts. This practice will ensure that police decision-making is not unduly influenced by the often-times subjective information present in the historical street check dataset;	HRP RCMP			X
1.3	So as not to interrupt or impede current criminal cases or investigations, historical street check data should remain available to police investigators -- for a one-year period -- following the formal street check ban. After this one-year grace period, all street check data containing personal information should be purged;	HRP RCMP		X	
1.4	During the one-year grace period, prior to the destruction of personalized street check data, civilians should be informed of their right to order, retrieve and review their own street check record. Civilians should also be given written documentation about how their personal information was used by the police and whether it was shared with third parties. This will inform civilians about the types of information the police have collected on them in the past and give them a chance to dispute the accuracy of that information. This gesture will also increase the transparency of the police service and could thus serve as a step towards improving community trust;	HRP RCMP		X	

1.5	<p>All historical street check data should eventually be de-identified and retained for future research purposes. De-identification should include the removal of names, addresses, birth dates or any other information that could be used to identify specific individuals. However, information on general demographic characteristics -- including race, age and gender – should be retained for aggregate-level analyses.</p> <p>The retention of a historical street check dataset may assist researchers in further addressing issues of racial bias, the impact of street checks on individuals and communities and the effect of the street check ban on subsequent crime patterns and trends;</p>	HRP RCMP		X	
1.6	<p>A committee, consisting of both police officials and community members, should be formed to assess the impact of the street check ban on police-community relations and public safety. This committee should also explore the possible re-branding or re-naming of street checks or the shifting of street check information into other data fields (i.e., general occurrence reports);</p>	DOJ HRP RCMP HRM Public Safety Office			
1.7	<p>In the absence of street checks, the police should be mandated to collect and disseminate information on the personal characteristics – including racial background -- of all civilians subject to police stops and other investigative detentions. This will ensure transparency and the continued monitoring of police services for evidence of possible racial bias or profiling.</p>	DOJ HRP RCMP			

Data Collection

Recommendation #	Description	Responsibility	Not Started	In Progress	Completed
3.1	A research committee should be formed to explore the feasibility of gathering data on police stops in addition to information on street checks. This committee would be responsible for the development and implementation of the research and evaluation plan. This committee should consist of police personnel, community representatives and academic researchers. It is important that researchers be involved from the beginning of the research process as they should have the methodological training to ensure the development of a sound methodological strategy. The selection of the researchers is an important step. Ideally, researchers should be approved or accepted by both the police and community representatives.	DoJ HRC HRP RCMP			
3.2	Halifax region police services should establish a permanent data collection system to record information on all stops of civilians. This data system should record information on both traffic stops and stops involving pedestrians. The information to be collected on each stop should include: the date of the stop, the time of the stop, the location of the stop, the reason for the stop and the outcome of the stop (no action, warning, ticket, summons, arrest, etc.). Whether the person or vehicle was searched by the police should also be recorded. It is also important to distinguish between consent searches, investigative searches and searches that take place after arrest. The age, gender and racial background of the person stopped should also be recorded. Ideally the data collection procedure would also record the full name and home address of the individuals stopped. This would help the research team identify individuals who are stopped multiple times in a given time period as well as individuals who reside outside of the study 175 jurisdiction. Such information would also help researchers determine if people are more likely to be stopped in their own neighborhoods or when they travel to other areas of the city	DoJ HRC HRP RCMP			
3.3	The collection of official police data should be supplemented with periodic surveys of the general public. General population surveys should collect information on self reported contacts with the police as well as respondent attitudes and perceptions of the police and wider criminal justice system.	HRP RCMP		X	
	Survey data on self-reported stops could be compared with official stop data in order to identify significant commonalities or differences.	DoJ HRP RCMP			
	Surveys could also be used to conduct multivariate analyses and determine whether racial differences in stop and search activities can be explained by other factors including age, area of residence, local crime rates, driving habits, use of public spaces, self-reported drug and alcohol use and self-reported involvement in criminal activity.	DoJ HRP RCMP			
	Importantly, if such surveys are conducted on a periodic basis (every 2-5 years), the data could be used to determine if racial differences in stop and search activities are declining or increasing and if attitudes towards the police are improving or getting worse. In other words, survey research data over time could be used to evaluate the effectiveness of anti-racism and anti-profiling policies.	DoJ HRP RCMP			
	Periodic surveys should also be conducted on the police themselves. Such surveys could be used to measure the impact of data collection on officer morale and job satisfaction, officer attitudes towards anti-racism programs or policies, and officer decision making with respect to stop and search tactics.	HRP RCMP		X	

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3.4	Such surveys could be expanded to measure prejudice and stereotyping, attitudes towards specific minority groups and minority crime and opinions about the effectiveness of various anti-racism policies.	HRP RCMP	X		
	These surveys could address any other topics of interest to the research team or police managers.	HRP RCMP	X		
	It is suggested that such officer surveys be conducted every 2-5 years to better facilitate the evaluation of anti-racism initiatives.	HRP RCMP	X		
3.5	It is proposed that reports documenting the results of all data collection and research activities be released to the public on an annual or biannual basis. The dissemination of these reports will increase both transparency and police accountability.	DOJ RCMP	HRP		

Police Community Relations

Recommendation #	Description	Responsibility	Not Started	In Progress	Completed
4.1	The HRP and RCMP should develop a protocol that will screen new recruits for both cultural competency and racial bias. The importance of this recommendation is reinforced by new research which suggests links between right-wing extremist groups and law enforcement and the possible infiltration of White supremacists into both policing and the military	HRP RCMP		X	
4.2	The HRP and RCMP should continue to develop and implement mandatory anti-bias, cultural competency and race relations training.	HRP RCMP		X	
4.3	The HRP and RCMP should continue to develop and implement training modules designed to educate police officials about local Black history and the contemporary social and law enforcement concerns of the Black community. These modules should be delivered, onsite, by Black community members. Such efforts will give members of the Black Nova Scotian community a stake in police training strategies and could help build mutual understanding, empathy and compassion.	HRP RCMP		X	
4.4	Although mandatory, a potential weakness with current anti-bias training strategies is the lack of officer performance evaluation. In other words, officers only have to “take” these training courses, they do not have to “pass” them. Anti-bias training can, therefore, be viewed as a box that must be ticked rather than a skill-set or knowledge-base that must be learned. Thus, it recommended that the HRP and RCMP develop a testing or evaluation strategy for all anti-bias, cultural competency or race relations courses. Such a testing strategy will ensure that officers take these training opportunities seriously and increase the likelihood that teaching objectives will be met.	HRP RCMP		X	
4.5	It is recommended that both the HRP and RCMP continue to hire police officers from diverse backgrounds and that police services continue to reflect the racial/ethnic makeup of the communities they serve. It is recognized that the Halifax Regional Police is already more racially diverse than the population it serves. This trend should be both celebrated and continued.	HRP RCMP		X	
4.6	It is recommended that Black and other minority officers be promoted to positions of upper management within both the HRP and Halifax region RCMP. Both community members and police participants maintained that minority officers must be promoted to upper management before they can have a positive impact on police culture and police practices. It was suggested that appointments to the police executive would also have great symbolic value and could contribute to an improve police-community relationship	HRP RCMP		X	

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4.7	It is recommended that both the HRP and RCMP devote more time and resources to community policing efforts. Both community members and police officials stressed that the police should get to know better the people they are policing, and that the community should get the chance to know the police. It was stressed that this could be accomplished if officers were stationed in the same communities for sustained periods of time (i.e., several years). It is also recommended that the police, in conjunction with community leaders, organize more social opportunities in which community members and police officers can interact and learn about each other. Individual police officers are also encouraged to participate, off duty, in community activities (i.e., church, sports events, festivals, etc.) so that they could develop relationships with community members. Such participation will likely send a positive message to community members and “humanize” the police profession.	HRP RCMP		X	
4.8	It recommended that the police establish more community-level detachments like the one recently developed in North Preston. Such local detachments should operate seven days a week, twenty-four hours a day. In the absence of local detachments, it is recommended that both the HRP and RCMP deploy more community liaison officers to cultivate local relationships, develop local knowledge and act as mediators between the community and regular patrol officers	DOJ HRP RCMP			
4.9	It is recommended that the HRP and RCMP devote more time and resources to the development and implementation of youth-based sports, recreational and mentorship programs. Both community members and police officials maintained that such programs create opportunities for positive interactions with the police. These positive interactions can break down mutual stereotypes, foster relationships and increase trust. It is further recommended that, to be effective, youth programs must receive sustained funding so that they can become permanent fixtures within disadvantaged communities. One-time, short-lived programs, while positive, are unlikely to have a lasting impact on police-community relationships.	HRP RCMP		X	
4.10	It is recommended that the HRP and RCMP develop a public education program for Black and minority youth. This program should be delivered by police officials and focus on teaching youth about their rights during police interactions. The program should also teach youth about street checks and the new street check regulation. Such a program could help relieve tensions during police-youth encounters and contribute to an understanding of police powers and limitations. The program could also serve to remind police officers about the Charter rights of civilians and ensure compliance the principles of procedural justice.	DOJ HRP RCMP			

Recommendation #	Description	Responsibility	Not Started	In Progress	Completed
4.11	<p>It is recommended that a committee – consisting of community members, police officials and government stakeholders – be formed to study the strength and integrity of the current police complaints process. Both the HRP (Police Complaints Commission) and the RCMP (Commission for Public Complaints) have independent police complaints bodies.</p> <p>However, during consultations, community members expressed serious doubts about these organizations. Community concerns included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A lack of community awareness about how to file a complaint; The inability to file verbal complaints; The inability to file 3rd party complaints; The six-month time period for filing; A lack of independent complaint investigation and adjudication (i.e., the fact that complaints are returned to the police service in question for internal investigation, deliberation and disciplinary decisions); A lack of transparency with respect to the investigative process and the rationale behind complaint decisions; A confusing, convoluted appeals process; <p>Some community members expressed that they had previously filed a complaint against the police and found the process to be confusing, frustrating and unfairly biased in favor of the police. All stated that, as a result, they would never file a complaint against the police again. The proposed committee should examine these issues and make recommendations for improving the current police complaints system and increasing community confidence in the complaints process.</p> <p>As part of the police oversight process, the government should also consider creating and funding an African Nova Scotian Legal Advocate or Legal Clinic. Such an organization would help Black youth and adults negotiate the police complaints process and provide them with legal advice on other criminal justice matters. The creation of such a body might also serve to increase confidence in the overall criminal justice system</p>	DOJ RCMP HRP			
4.12	<p>It is recommended that the HRP and RCMP develop additional training modules that will improve officer adherence to the principles of procedural justice and ensure respect for civil rights during all civilian encounters. Such training should focus on developing officer communication skills and their ability to explain lawful police actions to civilian actors.</p>	DOJ HRP RCMP			
4.13	<p>It is recommended that the HRP and RCMP develop new policies to address the police code of silence and empower officers who challenge the illegal or unprofessional activities of their colleagues. Punishment for the violation of these regulations should be clearly communicated and consistently enforced.</p> <p>Officers should receive continual training with respect for both existing and emerging departmental regulations.</p>	HRP RCMP		X	

Recommendation #	Description	Responsibility	Not Started	In Progress	Completed
4.14	It is recommended that the HRP and RCMP develop a new performance evaluation system that explicitly rewards officers for their community policing efforts, their ability to work effectively with diverse communities and their ability to develop relationships of trust with community members from various backgrounds. Performance indicators should be clearly articulated and communicated to all police officers and further entrenched in the promotion process.	HRP RCMP		X	
4.15	<p>It is recommended that the HRP and RCMP fully engage in efforts to evaluate the effectiveness of all anti-bias initiatives and community building strategies – including anti-bias training and community policing protocols.</p> <p>Evaluation should take the form of continued data collection on street checks and other policing outcomes.</p> <p>Changes with respect to public trust and confidence in the police should be monitored through ongoing community consultations and periodic surveys.</p> <p>The police should engage with objective, outside experts to develop evaluation methodologies and analytic strategies. The results of evaluation projects should be fully disseminated to the public</p>	DOJ HRP RCMP			
4.16	<p>It is recommended that a committee – consisting of community members, police officials and government officials – be formed to monitor progress towards the implementation of the recommendations produced by this report, or additional policy initiatives that emerge post-release.</p> <p>This committee should report to the Police Board of Commissioners by September 2020.</p>	DOJ HRP RCMP BOPC			
4.17	Finally, it recommended that the Government of Nova Scotia, and the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission, extend their examination of racial bias beyond police street checks to other aspects of policing and the broader criminal justice system. Statistics reveal that Black Nova Scotians are significantly over-represented in both the provincial and federal correctional systems. It is important to determine the extent to which this over-representation reflects possible biases at each stage of the criminal justice process: from police surveillance and charge practices to remand decisions, plea bargaining, conviction rates, sentencing and parole 179 outcomes. A small degree of racial bias at each stage of the criminal justice funnel can result in gross racial disparities within the correctional system. This inquiry could begin by mandating the collection of race-based statistics within policing, the criminal courts and corrections.	DOJ HRC			