Quality Assurance Review Report – 2017

Policing Standards and Contract Management
Public Safety

Woodstock Police Force

Overview

Pursuant to paragraph 1.1(2)(c) of the New Brunswick *Police Act*, the Minister of the Department of Public Safety (DPS) may establish a system of inspection and review of police forces. The *Policing Standards – New Brunswick* are issued as ministerial directives pursuant to subsection 1.1(3) of the *Police Act*. The Standards set out the police force Quality Assurance (QA) program in ORG 5 with the current QA Program in place since 2013. The system of inspection and review of police forces is conducted by policing consultants Jennifer Smith and Rick Votour of the Policing Standards and Contract Management (PSCM) branch of the Department of Public Safety (DPS).

While the QA program follows a cyclical process, it is flexible enough to respond to any newly identified risk activities facing municipal police forces. The program examines facts and realities facing modern day law enforcement agencies to identify gaps as well as best practices.

Objective

The purpose of the QA review is to assess adequacy and effectiveness of the policing services provided by the police force by examining common risks to police agencies on behalf of the Minister.

The report is intended to summarize the data collected from the police force, analyze the findings, identify gaps, and present any recommendations and observations that could improve police service to the Director of Policing Standards and Contract Management.

Scope

The QA Program operates on an annual cycle beginning in the fall when the PSCM Director announces to the New Brunswick Association of Chiefs of Police (NBACP) those activities that are mandatory to risk. The 2017 risk activities announced were:

- Sex crimes investigations;
- UCR scoring (data integrity); and
- Community policing.

Members of the police force in collaboration with the PSCM review team conduct a fall risking exercise that examines the mandatory risk activities and any police force specific risks that could benefit from an examination.

In January police forces begin their reviews using either review guides created by the PSCM review team or developed by the police force. The police force can also employ any other review technique they deem appropriate. All documentation is submitted to the PSCM

review team.

In the spring of 2018, the PSCM review team conducted an internal risking exercise to identify municipal police forces that will be scheduled for an on-site review.

This report serves as an overview of the police force QA program performance for the 2017 cycle to ensure the management of selected risk activities is in compliance with the *Policing Standards – New Brunswick*, the Municipal/Regional Police Forces Operational and Administrative Manuals (Operational Manual and Administrative Manual, respectively) and legal requirements. The PSCM review team monitors recommendations to completion.

A snapshot of the reviewed activities is summarized in this report (see table 2) and includes a rating based on the following scale (table 1).

TABLE 1	
Rating	**Description**
Needs Improvement (NI)	Practices and controls are not adequate to ensure the objectives are achieved effectively in this activity.
Meets Expectations (ME)	The activity's management meets current provincial policing requirements. Any issues/opportunities for improvement noted are not major in that they do not affect the ability to achieve its objectives.

Findings

	TABLE 2 – Summary of findings	
	Review by police force	
NI	ME	Comments
Sex crimes		
	✓	Every incident of sexual crime reported in 2017 received thorough attention and follow-up investigation. While basic investigation and police response to these incidents is fully satisfactory, there are several small steps that will lead to a continued effort to improve investigator awareness of trauma-informed police response to victims. *See recommendations - #1 and #2*
UCR scoring (data integrity)		
	✓	WPF has a civilian UCR/RMS coordinator / validator who is a subject matter expert in this field. WPF place a high priority on UCR scoring and data integrity and based on the PSCM review guide the accuracy of their crime stats can be relied on. WPF would benefit from cross training for civilian employees and regular members. *See recommendations - #3, #4 and #5* *See observations - #1 and #2*
Community policing		
✓		WPF is a smaller police force and all employees have a role to play in delivering a community focused service delivery model. Analysis and evaluation of the current programs is the next logical step in focusing WPF's energies. Presently WPF is delivering community based policing at a transitional level with a focus on enhancing their service to the contemporary level, the Policing Standards requires contemporary. *See recommendations - #6 and #7* *See observations - #3 and #4*
IPV		
	✓	ODARA risk assessments were conducted in all 2017 intimate partner violence incidents that met the ODARA criteria. WPF has a coordinator for oversight and monitoring of statistics and trends. WPF has made significant gains in the investigation and documentation of IPV calls for

service in the past three years. Improvement can be achieved by having more consistent feedback from supervisors during the investigation including interaction to ensure the expectations are understood by all investigators.
See recommendation - #8
See observation - #5

Pursuits

Of the 2017 incidents reported on pursuit report P100, no incidents involved property damage or personal injury. Average speeds were low and the average distance travelled was short. An area of improvement will be to continue an education campaign for the public and reduce the instances where the reason for initiating a pursuit was due to a Motor Vehicle Act violation.
See recommendations - #9 and #10
See observations – #6 and #7

Findings of the WPF self-review

Sex crimes

Objective:
To ensure that appropriate investigative procedures and established protocols are followed, documented and that where appropriate, charges laid in cases surrounding sexual crime incidents.

Findings:
The review was completed by the Deputy Chief who used the PSCM review guide and matrix to complete an examination of the sex crime files for 2017. In every case investigating officers obtained a victim statement. WPF officers ensure victim service referrals are made, that victims are kept apprised of the status of the investigation and named suspects are informed when appropriate to do so.

Sexual crime investigations are complex and in all cases WPF investigators obtained or attempted to obtain a statement from the victim. Victims should be notified and advised of any release conditions on the accused however this practice is not being applied consistently across all applicable cases. WPF has to improve their ViCLAS submission process by adhering to the requirement that a ViCLAS booklet on incidents of reported sexual assault has to be submitted within 30 days from the start of an investigation.

All cases that WPF submitted to the Crown for review were approved for charges.

In May of 2018, WPF arranged and hosted a three day *Trauma Informed Sexual Assault Police Response* training course in Woodstock that was attended by municipal police force representatives, provincial policing standards consultants and a representative from the Crown's office. This specialized training was delivered by subject matter experts from the Fredericton Sexual Assault Centre. The training was intended for candidates to gain skills and investigational techniques to better understand the impact of trauma on sexual assault victims.

Recommendation - #1:
The Chief or delegate will ensure that all sexual crime investigations are peer reviewed by a

supervisor to ensure that all aspects of investigation are exhausted and complete.

Recommendation - #2:

The Chief or delegate will take steps to ensure that training in sexual assault investigations, with a focus on trauma-informed police response, is provided to all investigators at the earliest opportunity.

UCR Soring / Data Integrity

Objective:

To ensure that data entered into the Records Management System (RMS) is complete, consistent, accurate and void of duplication while conforming to policies, legislation and the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Incident Based Survey reporting to Statistics Canada.

Findings:

This review was conducted by the WPF records management coordinator, a UCR subject matter expert. The reviewer used the newly created PSCM review guide to examine UCR accuracy and data integrity.

A call for service requires the creation of a General Occurrence (GO) when the call for service requires additional investigative steps or inquiries before matters can be concluded. GO's can be categorized as inactive, cleared by charge, cleared otherwise and unfounded. Not all GO's would be incidents that required reporting to UCR, such as calls for service that were classified as belonging in the assistance category; examples would include assist general public, assist other agencies, alarms and 911 hang-ups.

WPF maintains a workflow management document that is not linked or attached to the WPF operational manual. Responsibility for overall validation of information and liaison with the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics (CCJS) rests with the WPF RMS coordinator. It is important to note that no cross training has occurred to date to address the risk for succession planning and relief for periods of employee absence such as vacation, training or sickness. Civilian validators are considered a good practice since they are well trained, experienced and consistent in the application of UCR rules.

WPF provides one-on-one training to new recruits and investigators on RMS and UCR. Since the police force is small, as RMS updates occur all police officers are kept advised. There is a recognized need to develop and implement a more formalized training program for police investigators/supervisors as well as the administrative support staff. In April 2018, two WPF employees attended a UCR seminar facilitated by Statistics Canada.

The RMS system has built in "details" pages that are designed to prompt investigators to collect and record all pertinent details of an investigation. Seven of these detail pages are presently used by the police force. Other details pages are available but are not mandatory or applicable in most WPF calls for service. The online CCJS edit reports tab is not always checked by investigators after a GO is created. This creates additional workload for the WPF validator. The validator does run a monthly validation report and Edit and Imputation reports from CCJS are also acted on when they are received from CCJS.

UCR compliance and data integrity at WPF meets policing standards, policies, legislation and the requirements set out in the UCR incident-based survey guide. A number of small recommendations and corrections have been put forward and should increase efficiencies and bridge gaps.

Recommendation - #3:
The Chief or delegate will ensure that the current workflow management document is adopted as operational policy.

Recommendation - #4:
The Chief or delegate will arrange for administrative cross-training in UCR and RMS to ensure that a succession plan is in place for the future.

Recommendation - #5:
The Chief or delegate will ensure that a RMS and UCR training program is developed or adopted for investigators and supervisors.

Observation - #1:
In the months ahead there will be new legislation for the legalization of marijuana and new laws governing drug impaired driving. The Chief could include civilian support staff in any training or policy changes that could impact the collection of statistics on the WPF RMS.

Observation - #2:
WPF use specialized "detail pages" within the RMS system but not all investigators are using them consistently. It could be worthwhile to review WPF operational policies to specify which "detail pages" are mandatory for investigators to complete.

Community policing

Objective:
To ensure that the police force responds to the needs of the community based on the principles of partnership, ownership and problem solving with a focus on delivering quality service. The police force will maintain an ongoing dialogue by working in collaboration with others for the purpose of remaining proactive and will strive to achieve a contemporary community policing service delivery model that is evidence based, flexible and responsive.

Findings:
The review was conducted by an experienced police supervisor using the PSCM review guide. WPF is a small agency that does not have the resources to appoint a police officer as a full time community policing coordinator so each employee is expected to go about their duties with the best interests of the client and the community in mind. The Chief could consider identifying a champion for community based policing considering he has a talented and committed workforce that are very involved in the community of Woodstock.

The police force is guided by both provincial operational policy on community based policing and an internal community based directive. Presently members of WPF are engaged

with six different community groups that include Youth Diversion, Crime Stoppers, P.A.R.T.Y., N.B. Mental Health, Town of Woodstock Protective Services Committee and the Woodstock Caring Communities Committee. The work with the Woodstock Caring Communities Committee advances initiatives designed to address the problems of intimate partner violence. This stakeholder group tackles current issues with a view on impacting community harm caused by the drivers of crime such as mental health, housing, employment, literacy and addiction.

WPF actively uses social media to share information with the public. Participation in annual events such as "Take back the night" and regular interaction with local schools is a priority for WPF members. To address local organized crime WPF have a full time police officer seconded to the Crime Reduction Unit in partnership with the RCMP. School safety plans are in place but could benefit from an update.

While there has not been any recent community survey on local policing and crime issues, WPF members are continually engaged with local elected officials and other community service providers such as fire and ambulance.

WPF is delivering community policing service at a level 2 "transitional" and have a path moving the organization forward to level 3 "contemporary".

WPF submitted their annual report to the Minister.

Recommendation - #6:
The Chief shall appoint a police officer to perform, in addition to their regular duties, the duty of community policing coordinator.

Recommendation - #7:
The Chief or delegate will update all current school safety plans.

Observation - #3:
The current WPF policy on community based policing is dated and could be reviewed and updated to provide increased clarity and a better understanding of the expectations placed on all WPF employees.

Observation - #4:
While it is clear that community consultation is happening on a regular basis, the Chief might consider establishing a forum to consult with the community to expand the number of residents providing ideas and feedback on community safety. This could be combined with a community survey.

Intimate Partner Violence (IPV)

Objective:
To ensure that appropriate investigative procedures and established protocols are followed and documented and where appropriate, charges are laid in cases involving intimate partner violence (IPV)

Findings:

The review was conducted by the WPF IPV Coordinator using the PSCM review guide and matrix.

IPV flagging of the files within the RMS system is occurring which is a noticeable improvement over past reviews. The WPF IPV coordinator is reviewing all IPV related files for quality and conformance to established provincial protocols.

Articulation on the RMS operational files is strong and investigators are documenting when children are present at calls for service where adults have been involved in disputes attended by police. Referrals to Social Development are made when appropriate and that is being documented on the file. Incidents involving injuries were uncommon. It is important to note that investigators are clearly outlining the reasons for arrest or non-arrest of persons suspected of committing a criminal offence. Statements are being taken from victims, suspects and witnesses and the taking of KGB statements is the common practice.

ODARA was completed in all of the IPV files that met the ODARA criteria. Victim services were notified in 70% of the total occurrences. Victims are generally updated on the status of the investigation. 31% of the files were presented to the Crown's office for pre-charge approval and in three quarters of those cases charges were approved.

The reviewer of this risk activity indicated that most files were thoroughly investigated and findings were well documented but there remains room for improvement in firming up some points of investigation which can include comments on the availability of weapons to a suspect and previous calls for service from the same locations.

Recommendation - #8:

The Chief or delegate will ensure that the two Corporal supervisors and the IPV coordinator are all working together to establish uniformity and consistency with all investigators who respond to calls for service and submit operational files involving intimate partner violence.

Observation - #5:

Due to the high risks involved in IPV calls for service, supervisors reviewing files must remain diligent with a thorough review of every IPV file. Investigators need to receive feedback and coaching from supervisors and the recent addition of a second Corporal position at WPF provides an opportunity for both Corporal supervisors to work as a team to keep performance standards high.

Fail to stop / Pursuits

Objective:

To ensure the reporting procedures in these matters are followed and that the fail to stop pursuit is in compliance with policies and Policing Standards.

Findings:
The review was completed by an experienced corporal using the PSCM review guide and matrix.

The reviewer's findings show that a number of the files reviewed did not actually reach the threshold of being a pursuit. By definition stated in OM 3.7 a pursuit occurs when a police officer attempts to enact a vehicle stop and the driver of the target vehicle takes evasive action to avoid apprehension. The key factor to consider in every incident is if the officer was actually in pursuit or closing the gap between the police vehicle and the target vehicle.

Closing the gap is not necessarily a pursuit as often times the WPF officer disengages from the vehicle stop before a dangerous situation unfolds.

Pursuits due to a *Motor Vehicle Act (MVA)* violation should be rare. Released on February 15, 2017, The Policing Standards, Operations (OPS) 7 reads in part:

> *"There are limited circumstances where a motor vehicle pursuit is necessary and at a minimum a driver and/or passenger of a vehicle being pursued must have committed, or is about to commit, an indictable (dual procedure) offence and immediate apprehension is required to prevent imminent harm to a person."*

An analysis of all calls revealed the following trends for WPF. There were never more than two cars involved, maximum speeds averaged 102 kph, the average distance was 4.4 kilometers, no all-terrain vehicles or motorcycles were engaged, no property damage or injuries occurred and every incident was properly reported through channels.

WPF members have been very active in getting the message of the dangers of pursuits out to the public and stakeholders in the justice system. Resulting fines and other outcomes in court for charges laid in connection to pursuits have been very encouraging.

Recommendation - #9:
The Chief or delegate will ensure that all members of the WPF review Policing Standards OPS 7 and the updated pursuit policy scheduled for approval by the Policing Standards Policy Committee in September 2018, paying particular attention to initiating a pursuit for a motor vehicle act violation.

Recommendation - #10:
The Chief or delegate will address the issue of supervisor availability to monitor and take command of any incident of vehicles failing to stop for police.

Observation - #6:
A media campaign to raise awareness on the consequences of vehicle operators engaging police in pursuits by failing to stop when required by law could be directed by the Chief of Police.

Observation - #7:
The WPF front line investigators should consider targeting high school age drivers and informing them on the dangers and consequences of pursuits involving the police. The P.A.R.T.Y. program for Woodstock High School might be a good fit

Review by PSCM

PSCM risking did not identify WPF as requiring an on-site review.

Concluding Summary

The PSCM review team would like to thank the Woodstock Police Force for their contribution during the 2017 QA review process. As a result of the review, WPF has created an action plan to track recommendations to completion. The PSCM review team remains available to WPF for assistance and looks forward to continued collaboration for the fall 2018 risking process.

Policing Standards and Contract Management (PSCM)

Quality Assurance (QA) Review Team

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