

The Regional Municipality of York Police Services Board

Public Board Meeting
January 27, 2021

Report of the Chief of Police

Quality Assurance Process

1. Recommendation

That the Board receive this report for information pursuant to the Quality Assurance Process, Board Policy No. 01/08.

2. Summary

The Quality Assurance Process, Board Policy No. 01/08 was approved on January 23, 2008, and amended on June 25, 2014. This policy outlines the requirement for internal audits based on a risk assessment and regular procedure/regulation reviews, the results of which are to be presented to the Regional Municipality of York Police Services Board.

In order to ensure York Regional Police is in compliance with the requirements of the Adequacy Standards Guidelines made under the Adequacy and Effectiveness Regulation 3/99, the Quality Assurance and Risk Management (QARM) Unit is responsible for conducting audits and procedure/regulation reviews.

In compliance with the aforementioned requirements, the following audits were required in 2020:

Property, Evidence and Records Retention Audit

Ministry of Transportation Inquiry Services System Audit

Street Checks Audit (*Regulation 58/16: Collection of Identifying Information in Certain Circumstances*)

The annual Quality Services Standards audit was temporarily suspended due to COVID-19 related impacts that affected the ability to collect and compile relevant data. The Street Checks Audit is currently in progress and will be reported to the Board at a later date in a separate report.

The results of all organizational audits undertaken were very positive and did not present any significant organizational risks or concerns.

3. Background

The QARM Unit is committed to improving the operations of York Regional Police with oversight through audits to identify and manage risk. Policy/procedure reviews are also undertaken to set forth clear rules of conduct, establish transparent processes and accountability mechanisms. Additionally, the unit ensures alignment with York Regional Police Business Plan goals by conducting risk management presentations for members throughout the organization, and by providing advice and guidance to other units, projects teams and external partners during organizational reviews and inspections.

Further to the various annual audits conducted by the audit section, other departmental mini-audits and/or spot audits are routinely conducted in high-risk areas, pursuant to York Regional Police procedure requirements. The QARM Unit also researches and develops procedures and related recommendations for process improvements stemming from legislation changes and leading practices. Chief's Orders, general documents and related required training are then developed in consultation with the affected stakeholders to provide members with current information and adequate skills to effectively perform their duties.

This report summarizes the findings and actions taken to ensure compliance with *Adequacy and Effectiveness Regulation 3/99* and deliver high quality, accountable policing services to the public.

4. Analysis

AUDITS AND PROCEDURES

Property, Evidence and Records Retention Audit

Policing Standards Guidelines, York Regional Police Procedure LE-020 Collection and Preservation of Evidence and Property, and Board Policy 02/00-22 Collection, Preservation and Control of Evidence and Property, require York Regional Police to undertake an annual audit of all property and evidence under the control of the Service and report the results to the Board. There are nine property rooms that are located within York Region, eight are within police facilities and one is within an external storage location.

Representative samples of property from each property room were examined in accordance with the International Standards on Auditing established by the International Auditing and Assurance Standards Board. Only minor administrative errors were identified and reported to the Information Governance and Evidence Management Bureau manager for immediate attention.

As a result of the audit there were three administrative recommendations presented to the Executive Command Team to enhance existing processes. These recommendations will be implemented by the Property and Evidence Management Bureau in an effort to continually improve our property management practices.

Ministry of Transportation Inquiry Services System Audit

As part of our agreement with the Ministry of Transportation (MTO) for use of the Inquiry Services System (ISS), York Regional Police annually audits our compliance with the requirements for authorizing users, confidentiality (including privacy laws and protection of confidential information) and system security.

The audit examines the annual declaration documents, random samples provided by the MTO and random samples provided for exception testing. Responses for the compliance review are also provided.

As a result of the audit there were two recommendations identified, one of which was technological in nature and one of which was administrative. Both of the recommendations are the responsibility of the MTO to implement.

Street Checks Audit

Per *O.Reg 58/16 Collection of Identifying Information in Certain Circumstances – Prohibitions and Duties*, the Chief is required to report whether the collection, or attempts to collect identifying information from individuals were disproportionately representative of a specific racialized group, sex, age or any combination thereof.

The 2020 audit is currently in progress and will be reported to the Board at the March meeting.

Quality Service Standards (QSS) Audit

Board Policy 04/09, Accessible Customer Service Policy, provides that the Chief of Police shall ensure that minimum customer service standards are developed and that community satisfaction is monitored through a variety of means, and the results must be reported annually to the Board.

York Regional Police has 13 Quality Service Standards which set forth the organizational standards of service that are to be provided to all citizens. Due to difficulties in conducting in-person audits and compiling sufficient data due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the 2020 QSS audit was deferred.

The existing standards have been in place for several years and are currently under review. The audit team will be identifying opportunities to update the standards to reflect process changes and take advantage of technological advancements that have occurred since they were first established.

Procedural Reviews and New Procedures

Procedural reviews are conducted independent of internal audits and incorporate legislative changes, risk management, leading practices, training, or a recognized opportunity to build on the services and response provided by York Regional Police.

The QARM Unit worked in collaboration with members of various bureaus and units to develop 105 new Chief's Orders and revise 55 existing procedures throughout 2020. The procedure reviews were conducted to ensure quality service when responding to the needs of both the organization and the community. Written procedures provide officers with a standard of conduct to ensure consistency of operations that reflect leading practices in policing. The QARM Unit researches and evaluates trends in policing and monitors forthcoming legislative changes to mitigate risk and provide responsive service delivery.

QARM is also responsible for reviewing All Chiefs Memorandums from the Province and determining the organizational impact, including whether they require a new Chief's Order, procedure updates, priority messaging, or other action. In 2020, 179 All Chiefs Memorandums were reviewed, of which a significant number were related to the COVID-19 pandemic. This number was almost double that of 2019 when 92 All Chiefs were issued.

The QARM Unit also completed the research and development of two new procedures to the organization for peer support and cybercrime, social media and online investigations. In response to legislative changes in 2020, orders were developed and posted to the YRPNet to provide officers with direction concerning the *Reopening Ontario Act*, the *PAWS Act* and numerous *Highway Traffic Act* changes. A number of other orders concerned technological enhancements to the organization designed to assist front-line officers, such as the use of e-warrants, the expansion of video testimony and the Digital Evidence Management System (DEMS). Additionally, 121 forms were revised/developed and posted to the YRPNet.

5. Financial

Not applicable.

6. Conclusion

The Quality Assurance and Risk Management Unit will continue to work to improve the quality of service delivery, accountability and transparency of York Regional Police through effective procedure reviews, risk management processes, audits and inspections. In 2021, the following audits are planned: Property, Evidence and Records Retention Audit, Quality Service Standards (QSS) Audit, Street Checks and Ministry of Transportation Inquiry Services System Audit.

Accessible formats or communication supports are available upon request.

Jim MacSween, B.A.A.
Chief of Police

JMS:bm