

The Regional Municipality of York Police Services Board

Public Board Meeting
April 14, 2021

Report of the Chief of Police

Annual Report on Hate Crime Policy

1. Recommendation

That the Board receive this report for information.

2. Summary

The Regional Municipality of York is one of the most diverse regions in Canada. The Regional Municipality of York Police Services Board (the “Board”) is committed to developing an organization that is culturally sensitive and responsive to the diversity of the citizens of the Region. The Board is committed to ensuring that:

The Board and York Regional Police provide services in partnership with all the communities of the Region in a manner that is welcoming, and inclusive.

The Board and York Regional Police are committed to the creation of a region where all stakeholders live, work and play without fear of hate, bias or prejudice, based on race, national or ethnic origin, language, colour, religion, creed, sex, age, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation or gender identity / expression.

Board Policy #04/03 requires an annual report from the Chief of Police on the impact and effectiveness of the Hate Crime Policy.

- York Regional Police is committed to advancing an organization that is culturally sensitive and responsive to the diversity of its citizens of York Region
- York Regional Police Hate Crime Prevention Unit (HCPU) engages its members and community in hate crime prevention programs and initiatives in support of promoting the principles of human rights, diversity, equity and inclusion
- The HCPU has developed innovative methods to encourage the reporting of hate, including a variety of community engagement, partnership and education initiatives

3. Background

HATE CRIME PREVENTION UNIT

The HCPU is constantly monitoring global events, recognizing that these events can potentially impact the York Region community, causing rippling effects locally.

This strategic approach allows for better understanding and consideration in order to select the most appropriate responses when addressing the needs and concerns of the community.

Community Empowerment

Although York Regional Police encourages the reporting of hate crimes and hate incidents, some members of the community remain reluctant to file reports. This contributes to under-reporting and adversely impacts the actual numbers indicated. It is recognized that the trend of hate crime and hate incidents has also led to community tensions and anxiety, spawned by the COVID-19 global pandemic and social justice issues.

York Regional Police continues to empower communities through extensive community engagement, relationship building and community partnership initiatives. The goal is to provide enhanced levels of learning and understanding of marginalized and vulnerable communities in an effort to maintain a safe, welcoming and inclusive community.

4. Analysis

HATE CRIME AND HATE INCIDENTS

Compared to 2019 statistics, the HCPU recorded an increase of hate crime occurrences against East and South East Asian communities, Blacks, Indigenous people and the Arab and West Asian populace between January to December 2020, see Table 1 below for a breakdown of the 2020 hate crime statistics compared to 2019.

Hate Crime Prevention Strategy

The York Regional Police Hate Crime Prevention Strategy is comprised of three unique components that support its success. The first, utilizes a collaborative approach whereby the HCPU works in close collaboration with the Diversity, Cultural and Resources Unit (DCRU) as there are strong connections between incidents of hate crime and challenges to peaceful coexistence in a multicultural society.

Secondly, the York Regional Police Hate Crime Prevention Strategy promotes the understanding that marginalized communities can identify in the YRP-HCPU, knowing that YRP places the welfare of vulnerable communities at the apex of our priorities at a time of unprecedented escalation in intolerance globally.

In building on the first and second component of this strategy, the final stage is set for open and trusted dialogue with a broad range of historically vulnerable communities.

Currently in Canada hate/bias crime reporting rates are generally low. This undermines police agencies' capacities to respond effectively to hate-motivated crime and incidents, support victims and offer reassurance to affected communities.

The HCPU developed the "Building Partnership within York Region" initiative which involves delivering hate crime education training for all York Region municipalities. Conducted from October 2020 and concluded in March 2021, over 200 employees from various York Region departments including Bylaw, Operational staff and Customer Service staff were trained on how to address hate crimes.

Currently the HCPU is launching hate crime training for all front-line officers, Community Oriented Response officers (COR) and investigators assigned to the Criminal Investigations Bureau (CIB). The purpose of this training is to develop an effective response to hate incidents.

Ongoing administered hate crime training programs include:

- HCPU hosted its first annual Hate Crime Conference and Awareness Workshop (September 28, 2020 through October 2, 2020)
- A second Hate Crime Conference and Awareness Workshop is planned for September 2021
- Hate Crime training to front-line York Regional Police members and investigators
- Hate Crime presentations delivered to schools, colleges and universities
- Anti-hate youth engagement workshops at the Community Safety Village
- Ongoing hate crime training for Level 3 Recruits
- Places of Worship Tours

Ongoing hate crime prevention initiatives include:

- Presentations to Chinese and Southeast Asian Legal Clinics on the community experiences and impacts of COVID-19
- Presentations to vulnerable communities
- Welcome Centers/Settlement worker presentations

- Transgender Day of Remembrance flag raising ceremony
- Black History Month event
- Asian Heritage Month event
- Menorah Lighting ceremony
- Places of Worship Tours
- International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination event
- PRIDE flag raising ceremony
- Messaging through ethnic media and Chinese radio programs

Table 1
Hate Crime 2020 Statistics

Principal Motivation	2019	2020	Variance (%)
Race/Ethnicity	56	89	58.9
Aboriginal	0	7	Not calculable
Arab/West Asian	4	12	200.0
Black	31	39	25.8
East and Southeast Asian	8	19	137.5
South Asian	5	7	40.0
White	3	1	-66.7
Multiple Races/Ethnicities	5	2	-60.0
Religion	57	38	-33.3
Catholic	0	1	Not calculable
Jewish	40	30	-25.0
Muslim (Islam)	11	7	-36.4
Other Religion	6	0	-100.0
Unknown Religion	0	0	Not calculable
Sexual Orientation	17	22	29.4
Bisexual	0	0	Not calculable
Heterosexual	0	0	Not calculable

Principal Motivation	2019	2020	Variance (%)
Homosexual (Lesbian or Gay)	17	22	29.4
Other Sexual Orientation	0	0	Not calculable
Unknown Sexual Orientation	0	0	Not calculable
Language	0	6	Not calculable
English	0	6	Not calculable
French	0	0	Not calculable
Other Language	0	0	Not calculable
Unknown Language	0	0	Not calculable
Disability	0	2	Not calculable
Mental	0	2	Not calculable
Physical	0	0	Not calculable
Other Disability	0	0	Not calculable
Unknown Disability	0	0	Not calculable
Gender	3	3	0.0
Age	0	0	Not calculable
Other Factors	0	0	Not calculable
Unknown	0	0	Not calculable
Total Hate Crimes	133	160	20.3

5. Financial

No financial implications.

6. Conclusion

York Regional Police's Hate Crime Prevention Unit continues to actively engage with communities victimized by COVID-19 intolerance and hate, while simultaneously exploring opportunities to build community resilience and well-being for an inclusive York Region. With

a human rights approach that understands the complexities of our society, the HCPU has mapped out a practice that will continue to be responsive in combating hate crime and hate incidents.

Accessible formats or communication supports are available upon request.

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

JMS/za