



Anti-Racism Internal Committee Meeting

What We Heard Report

April 2021

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Project overview

To fulfill the Calgary Police Service (CPS) Anti-Racism Action Committee (ARAC) mandate to re-imagine policing in Calgary through the co-development and delivery of a Calgary Police Service Anti-Racism Strategy with our communities and members, ARAC is doing extensive engagement with the community and CPS members to identify strategic goals and outcomes.

The ARAC project team has invited CPS Internal and External Anti-Racism Action Committee members to participate in conversations that will add value and influence decisions made during the development of this strategy.

A key deliverable at the end of each engagement meeting with the CPS ARAC Internal and External Committees will be a What We Heard Report.

Engagement meeting overview

This report is a summary of the Calgary Police Service Internal Anti-Racism Action Committee meeting on April 27, 2021. This report captures what was shared during the discussions, actions, questions, recommendations, and next steps.

Leadership Update

ARAC leads and the CPS Communications Strategist reported that the internal and external websites are a work in progress and will be up and running shortly. The website will house all public messaging relevant to the work of the Committee, meeting minutes, What We Heard reports, definitions, and a resource section.

Moving forward the Anti-Racism Speaker Series will be recorded and available on MS Teams. This will provide the Committee with the opportunity to focus on discussions and meaningful conversations during ARAC monthly meetings. Topics will vary and it is expected that all Committee members will have listened to the months Speaker Series presentation prior to attending the monthly ARAC.

The Committee learned that one of their deliverables is to collectively define common terms that uniquely fit/suit the law enforcement community and align with the anti-racism commitment and work of the Committees and the CPS.

ARAC leads shared the process that recommendations for systemic change from the Internal ARAC Committee will be presented to CPS Executive Leadership Team for approval; all approved recommendations will contribute to the development of the Anti-Racism Strategy.

The leads also discussed what success looks like for the Committee and how it will be measured. These metrics are outlined in the Terms of Reference. Members were reminded to review the document to ensure that they are comfortable with the terms prior to signing the document.





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Lastly, ARAC leads updated the Internal ARAC Committee on the work of the External ARAC Committee and that the work of both Committees will be intertwined and complement each other. They also discussed the creation of subcommittees based on emerging themes and topics. The first subcommittee will focus on police officer training and the group will be a blend of Internal and External ARAC Committee members.

What we asked

This was the Committee's second meeting. Members attended in person and virtually. The meeting was a blend of ARAC updates, discussions, case study breakout sessions, and a presentation.

Anne Sureshkumar with the Calgary Counselling Centre presented on racial trauma. Anne is a Registered Social Worker and the designated therapist assigned to the work of this Committee. She is available to provide support/ counselling to all Committee members for the one-year term.

The recording of our Speaker Series presentation by Anne Sureshkumar on racial trauma can be found here: [Recorded Speaker Series Racial Trauma by Anne S.mp4](#)

What we heard

The following tables are a summary of the topics and key discussion points raised during that topic by the Committee.

Topic	Discussion
The journey to becoming anti-racist & systemic change	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Key points in the presentation/ discussion included:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Racism is wrong, and that is not just a CPS problem, it is institutional based.○ The conversation is not about blaming or shaming.• Members were asked to reflect individually on which zone (fear, learning, growth) that they identified with in the journey to becoming anti-racist.• Members were reminded of the importance of embracing themselves and each other with compassion, regardless of where they are in the journey, it is about moving forward.• Some members shared lived experiences as immigrants and the problems they have experienced.• Committee members discussed the subtle differences between immigrants based on the colour of one's skin (the difference between white and colour immigration), and the impact of micro aggressions and implicit actions.

Much of the meeting was spent in small breakout groups discussing a case study focused on the recruitment process of CPS. Some example questions were provided to guide small group discussions.





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Groups were provided with information on the recruitment status and ethnicity of 43 police applicants. The analysis reported significant variation in the recruit training completion rates between applicants who declared as a minority (13% selection for hire) to white applicants (32% selection for hire).

Topic	Discussion
Disparities in the data & possible reasons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many breakout groups discussed the significant variation in completion rates between applicants who declared as a minority or as a white applicant for some tests, specifically the Psychological Evaluation and the Behavioural Descriptive Interview (BDI). • Many Committee members noted that the most significant inequalities between identified races were on communication tests (written and/or verbal) (i.e. highest % fails for minority applicants). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Communication is a barrier for English as a Second Language (ESL) and/or English language learning applicants. ○ Language is a barrier for some applicants who lack the ability to understand the question, find the proper words to express themselves, and provide a response that will score favourably. ○ Written exams and the Psychological Evaluation may be too colonial in nature, causing bias against ESL applicants. ○ For multilingual and ESL applicants, test time constraints are a challenge. • Other members reported that an applicant’s prior experience with law enforcement may itself be intimidating, and impact how the applicant performs in the BDI and Psychology tests. For example, if applicants come from a part of the world where the role of police in the community is very different from policing in Canada. • Groups discussed possible challenges in the application process, specifically with the BDI and marginalized applicants, these included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Unconscious, implicit, and explicit biases during panel interviews. ○ The importance of understanding that all cultures interact differently in certain interactions; we need to accept the human variable in interviewing, the subjectivity of it. ○ It can be overwhelming to try and learn the BDI process, as well as participate in that type of structured interview. ○ Lived experiences of immigrants to draw upon for examples can be quite different from that of applicants raised in Canada. ○ Potential preferential applicant scoring based on unconscious/ implicit biases.





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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Groups discussed possible challenges in the application process, specifically with the Psychology Evaluation and marginalized applicants, these included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Multiple-choice questions can be challenging for ESL and/or English language learners; grammar and sentence structure can make it difficult for applicants to often discern the differences. ○ Some Committee members questioned if applicants are displaying signs of trauma during the Psychology Evaluation that are not being recognized or considered. ○ The Psychology tests may be too Eurocentric; it may not consider other ways of being and knowing, and other ways of problem-solving that may not necessarily fit into some common perceived ideas of the ideal temperament. ○ The Psychology Evaluation has been standardized for decades and should be reviewed to determine if it still relevant to todays reality of policing.
Data limitations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members reported that it is difficult to suggest changes to recruiting and training practices without a bigger picture, a deeper dive into the data is needed. • The data sample size is too small and limited to brainstorm solid conclusions and recommendations to implement sustainable change. • Members commented that they require more context on the reasons for failing out, to have a meaningful conversation. What factors are impacting/ influencing these numbers? • Some members wanted additional data over a time span to determine if these numbers have changed over time. • It was expressed by some members that there were too many unknowns in the provided data, and that reflecting on the data with no context would lead to empty and low value comments. • Are diverse people not applying, or not successful? More data is needed.
Institutional racism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some members talked about the need to hire to represent the community we serve. • The group discussed being unapologetic in our approach and comfortable saying that the CPS wants to hire people of colour and from different backgrounds, to be reflective of the community. • Members discussed if the reason some individuals do not apply and think “why bother”, is because the current CPS membership is not reflective of the community. • Some members shared lived experiences around how general cultural behaviours can be potentially misread by people causing discomfort, frustration, or misunderstandings during the recruiting process.





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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small group discussions included the follow key points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If we only look at the data points and not the why, we are missing the root conversations that have created a long-standing bias in the recruiting process, we need to reflect if our recruiting processes are the problem and not the applicants skill set or lack of. ○ Cultural differences and norms can potentially work against someone in the process. ○ Recruitment processes should be implemented/ applied with an Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) lens. ○ Some members talked about preferential hiring based on implicit biases. ○ Members discussed the need to remove barriers (real and perceived) for racialized applicants. ○ Members discussed the need to understand trauma and racial trauma and how this shows up in the body, and specifically how it can transfer into the recruitment process. ○ Discussion about existing gaps in representation of the demographics and communities in Calgary and the BDI panel and mentorship program.
<p>What can we do better to improve the success rate of all applicants, including marginalized applicants?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparing recruits for what is expected of them and how testing will be done will allow for better confidence, less “test stress” and likely better outcomes. • To create change, groups suggested the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Provide supports and resources so all applicants have the skills to communicate effectively and understand expectations, and what the CPS is looking for (valued responses). ○ Talk and connect to applicants’ families about expectations and the job, because applicants need to be supported by family. ○ Mentor and coach applicants. ○ Provide resources for marginalized groups. ○ Provide online resources. ○ Interview unsuccessful and successful applicants to determine what factors, if any, influences the outcome. • Other members said that the process needs to be fair and respectful, without lowering hiring standards.
<p>Structural racism</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keys points raised by members included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Some recruit processes and training are standardized and provincially driven, a bigger institutional issue. ○ To create systemic change, we need to develop an anti-racist culture within the CPS. ○ This is more than an anti-racism goal; there needs to be a re-write of the entire CPS culture.





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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ We must start talking about the trends in the data and the factors influencing what we see.○ Other industries struggle with diversity, the CPS is not alone. |
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Next steps

- What We Heard report to be approved by the Co-Chairs of the Internal Anti-Racism Action Committee.
- Approved report will be distributed to Internal ARAC Committee members.
- Approved report will be posted online by the Strategic Communications Section.
- Listen to next months Speaker Series presentation prior to attending the next monthly ARAC meeting.





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Summary of Questions, Actions & Recommendations

Question/ Recommendation	Answer/ Action
Concerns expressed with the amount of work to do and only meeting once a month	Anti-Racism Speaker Series will be recorded and available on MS Teams, to provide the Committee with the opportunity to focus on discussions and meaningful conversations during ARAC monthly meetings.
Concerns expressed with the amount of work to do and only meeting once a month	The External and Internal ARAC members will be working in collaboration on subcommittees to do deep dives into the content; the first topic will be training. Please reach out to the ARAC leads if you are interested in participating on this subcommittee of eight members, comprised of four External and four Internal Committee members.
Internal ARAC Committee webpage	Please share any suggestions or ideas for web content to the CPS Anti-Racism Communications Strategist.
Vote to recommend having an interfaith calendar in the CPS workplace on outlook postponed.	Internal Committee members to propose additional suggestions/ options surrounding the implementation of the calendar in the workplace. Bob Fenton will be leading this task, please advise the ARAC leads if you are interested in working collaboratively on this initiative.
Presentation on racial trauma was a lot of information to absorb in a short time and Committee members requested additional resources.	The presentation was recorded and will be available. Additional resources will be available in the resource section on the internal ARAC web page.
What is the difference between white and colour immigration?	The question resulted in a discussion of the subtle differences and the impact of micro aggressions and implicit actions/ behaviours. Members shared living experiences to describe the subtly.
During the case study discussions, many groups mentioned wanting more information/ statistics on the information discussed.	ARAC leads to reach out to Recruiting & Selection Unit for additional data.

