



Anti-Racism External Committee Meeting

What We Heard Report

May 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 External Anti-Racism Action Committee meeting on May 12, 2021. This report captures what was shared during the discussions, actions, questions, recommendations, and next steps.

Leadership Update

Regimental Sergeant Major (RSM) Travis Juska provided an update on the Thin Blue Line (TBL) (represented by a subdued Canadian flag with gray/black undertones with a blue line running horizontally) and the Service's decision process to support or prohibit the use of the symbol. RSM Juska will be presenting the engagement plan findings to the Executive Leadership Team (ELT).

What we asked

This was the Committee's third meeting with CPS members and the ARAC leads. Members attended virtually. The meeting was a blend of ARAC updates, presentations, and discussions.

To keep the Committee members informed and engaged in events that may garner attention in the community, the ARAC leads will sometimes provide information and updates to current events. Acting Inspector Avril Martin provided the members with an update to the preceding informational email surrounding the video of the young male arrested on April 17, 2021.

Rebecca Davidson, Resource & Project Team Manager for the Bureau of Service & Community Support presented on collecting race-based data, as well as some concerns regarding scope, definitions, and consistency with categorization that have been raised to Statistics Canada by CPS. Rebecca also shared a





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Statistics Canada-driven engagement opportunity to provide guidance on race-based data collection to interested members.

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
TBL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CPS members talked about the internal process for the Service to support or prohibit the use of the TBL symbol. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Findings gathered from the engagement process with the community and CPS members will be presented to the ELT to support the decision process. ○ The CPS reported that most community groups/committees engaged during the consultation process are supportive of the CPS approving the use of the TBL. ○ CPS members reported that if the organization supports the use of the TBL symbol that it will be guided by strict parameters, a robust communications plan affirming what the symbol means to the CPS (honouring the Fallen), and condemning groups attempting to misappropriate the symbol. • Some Committee members talked about the need and expectation for further discussion about the symbol. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Some members reported that they did not have an opportunity to have their voice heard. ○ The Committee discussed not having the time to reach a formal group consensus to support the use of the TBL or recommend an alternative solution.

Topic	Discussion
Young person's arrest on April 17, 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CPS members shared a brief update of the event. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A meeting with the youth, his family, CPS members, and an ARAC representative was held at the YouthLink Calgary Police Interpretative Centre. ○ It was a challenging, honest, and respectful conversation. ○ The event was a traumatic situation for the young boy and his family. ○ CPS members expressed gratitude to the ARAC Committee member that initiated the conversation between the family and the Service.





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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some Committee members reported how the incident impacted the black community. • Others talked about concerns for similar situations/incidents that are not captured on video and made public; how are these people supported, and what preventative recommendation can the Committee suggest for change?
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Topic	Discussion
Race-based data collection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over the years, Police Services have been reluctant to collect race-based data, as it was perceived to be inappropriate. • Race categories exist in the CPS data systems; however, the data field has neither been mandatory nor consistently applied. • On July 15, 2020, a joint statement by Statistics Canada the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police announced a commitment to work with the policing community and key organizations to enable police to report data on Indigenous and ethno-cultural groups in police reported crime statistics on victims and accused persons. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Statistics Canada is only collecting race-based data on the accused and victim, but the Service has so many more interactions with the public where the data will not be collected. • Collecting race-based data is shifting from the officer's perception to officers asking the accused and victim. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The group discussed the effectiveness of the different times/opportunities to collect the data during the interaction (e.g. at the end of the interaction or the beginning), and the different police interactions (e.g. collecting data from a victim versus the accused). ○ A key point raised included that the ask must be timed appropriately, because it can either deescalate or escalate a situation. • Race-based data is collected so the CPS can identify and address any potential biases that negatively impact our service to the community. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Collecting this data also allows for trends to be reported publicly as part of our commitment to be accountable to the community.

Topic	Discussion
How will this Committee make systemic change and what does the work look like?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Committee discussed the importance of difficult conversations and decisions that will be recommended by the Committee and shared with the community. • Committee members discussed their commitment to the community and the work of the External ARAC Committee.





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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Others talked about ELT's commitment for this work, and that patrol also needs to be committed.○ We all need to be on the same path for change to happen.○ If the Committee produces action, will it stick and have the long-term impact that was intended?● Some Committee members said that it is hard to contribute to a conversation about recommendations to CPS, because there are a lot of elements and processes that the members are not aware of.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Situational awareness of the current anti-racism activities within the Service will provide the Committee members with a baseline to identify and recommend new anti-racism work and opportunities.
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Next steps

- What We Heard Report to be approved by the External Anti-Racism Action Committee Co-Chairs.
- Approved report will be distributed to External ARAC Committee members.
- Approved report will be posted online by the Strategic Communications Section.





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Summary of Questions, Actions & Recommendations

Question/ Action/ Recommendation	Answer/ Action
Who did the Service engage with for input on the TBL and what was the general response?	<p>The Service consulted with the Advisory Boards, the Super Board (Advisory Board Co-Chairs), the External ARAC External Committee, and members of the Internal ARAC Committee. In addition, over 250 members (sworn and civilian) of the CPS were engaged, as well as the Calgary Police Association (CPA), Beyond the Blue, and other members of the community continue to be consulted.</p> <p>Other community Committees and Boards reported being supportive of the CPS approving the use of the TBL; however, a common theme during the discussions was the importance for appropriate education around the use of symbols.</p> <p>Committee members will be updated with TBL next steps.</p>
If CPS members continue to wear the TBL symbol, even if prohibited, will those members be disciplined and held accountable? Can officers refuse to follow a directive and/or direct order?	<p>Sworn Committee members explained the CPS internal discipline process/ procedure.</p> <p>Until a decision is communicated by ELT, officers have been directed by the Chief to avoid wearing or displaying the TBL on their uniform.</p>
Time constraints with the previous TBL discussion and at the May Committee meeting.	<p>RSM Travis Juska is available for further discussion.</p> <p>Due to time restraints, the External Committee members forwarded additional TBL comments and recommendations to the Co-Chairs. The information was collated into one document and submitted to CPS for consideration.</p>
Some Committee members asked/inquired about the process of call intake and police dispatch.	<p>Sworn Committee members briefly explained the training police are provided, and suggested the Committee reviews the “Use of Force” continuum and provide recommendations.</p> <p>The training subcommittee will be formed with members of both the External and Internal ARAC Committee members.</p>
Is it possible to have trained volunteers attend the scene with the officers to de-escalate the situation?	<p>Sworn Committee members explained the role of the Diversity Resource Team, specifically their role to reach out and initiate the reconciliation process in some incidents.</p>





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One Committee member asked if they have approval from the CPS to reach out and connect with the community in incidents/situations, such as the arrest of the young black male.	Yes, the CPS cannot do this work without the support of the External ARAC Committee.
Committee members inquired about the consequences of the officer who arrested the young black male.	Based on what we know and have seen, at this time, it appears the members actions were lawful. However, if there was to be a complaint filed, the event would be investigated in totality.
Committee Co-Chairs asked the Committee members to think of one to five outcomes that they would like to see changed.	Co-Chairs will compile the information and these collective issues will guide the agenda.
What is the current state of the Service's work on anti-racism?	Situational awareness of current anti-racism activities to be presented to the Committee.
One Committee member requested information/feedback from the ELT regarding recommendations made and next steps.	ARAC leads explained the process for the Committee recommendations to be approved by the ELT.
The Committee Co-Chairs recommended that only community Committee members continue to meet following the adjournment of each External ARAC meeting.	External ARAC members agreed.
Race-based data collection presentation questions and answers	
Why were police reluctant to collect race data before?	Previously seen as disrespectful, and some officers were viewed as being racist.
Can the public decline to respond, and will the public be made aware that they can decline?	<p>Yes, people will have a right to decline.</p> <p>The question led to a group discussion about the effectiveness of the various times/opportunities to collect the data during the interaction (e.g. at the end of the interaction or the beginning), and the different police interactions (e.g. asking a victim versus accused).</p> <p>To identify barriers and opportunities with this work, the CPS will engage the community to determine how best to collect the data, because timing is extremely important based on the many different variables in a scenario/incident.</p>
If people decline answering, will it not be a challenge to collect the data?	Yes, it will be telling. The CPS may need to do more engagement to address this potential issue/challenge, because





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	<p>the information collected will be informative of how the Service moves forward.</p> <p>This Committee can help shape the communication plan to each community and why this data is important to collect.</p>
<p>How is the CPS aligning, engaging, and working with other sectors collecting similar data to better understand systemic racism (e.g. the health sector)?</p>	<p>Systemic racism is not just a CPS problem. The question of race is important to all sectors, and it is important for policing agencies to align with these sectors. Collecting this data is a start to understanding how race influences the criminal justice system. There is good data for individuals in the prisons, but we have not had reliable information on how police interactions funnel into the bigger criminal justice system and how those interactions impact over representation.</p>
<p>How can we ensure Statistics Canada does not replicate the current bureaucratic representation, specifically for indigenous communities?</p>	<p>Statistics Canada is taking a long time to produce this work because they recognize that they must do this work differently, and consultations with the community is essential to the initiative's success.</p>

