

Chapter 1

Section 1.14

Ministry of the Solicitor General

Follow-Up on 2021 Value-for-Money Audit:

Ontario Provincial Police

RECOMMENDATION STATUS OVERVIEW

	# of Actions Recommended	Status of Actions Recommended				
		Fully Implemented	In the Process of Being Implemented	Little or No Progress	Will Not Be Implemented	No Longer Applicable
Recommendation 1	2		2			
Recommendation 2	1		1			
Recommendation 3	3		3			
Recommendation 4	2	1	1			
Recommendation 5	3	1	2			
Recommendation 6	2	1	1			
Recommendation 7	3		3			
Recommendation 8	2		2			
Recommendation 9	2		2			
Recommendation 10	1		1			
Recommendation 11	3	1	2			
Recommendation 12	3	2		1		
Recommendation 13	2		2			
Recommendation 14	4		3	1		
Recommendation 15	1		1			
Total	34	6	26	2	0	0
%	100	18	76	6	0	0

Overall Conclusion

The Ontario Provincial Police (OPP), as of October 20, 2023, had fully implemented 18% of actions we recommended in our *2021 Annual Report*. The OPP and the Ministry of the Solicitor General (Ministry) made progress in implementing an additional 76% of the recommendations.

The OPP fully implemented recommendations such as establishing detachment targets for the proportion

of frontline officer time spent on proactive policing; developing controls that limit purchase orders over \$5,000 to vendors through internal systems; and establishing a benchmark for OPP vehicle utilization.

We noted that the OPP made progress on recommendations such as establishing a minimum acceptable staffing level for detachments based on officer workload and stressors, and tracking and analyzing the best practices of high-performing detachments. Together, the OPP and the Ministry made progress on recommendations such as establishing key performance

indicators for monitoring the adequate and effective delivery of policing services.

However, the OPP made little or no progress on 6% of the recommendations, including setting individual response-time benchmarks for each detachment based on local variables.

The status of actions taken on each of our recommendations is described in this report.

Background

The Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) was established in 1909 and is one of the largest police forces in North America, with about 5,600 police officers and 2,500 civilian employees. In 2020, the OPP provided municipal policing services to 327, or 74%, of Ontario's municipalities, and was responsible for patrolling over 1 million square kilometres across the province, from remote northern and First Nation communities to rural and urban centres. This included more than 99,000 kilometres of waterways and trails, and over 130,000 kilometres of roadways. In 2020, OPP officers laid over 424,000 charges, including over 104,000 charges for violations of the Canadian Criminal Code, and over 269,000 charges related to the *Highway Traffic Act*.

The OPP's operating expenditures totalled nearly \$1.4 billion in the 2022/23 fiscal year (over \$1.2 billion in 2020/21), an increase of about 13% since our audit. Despite increases in OPP expenditures, our 2021 audit found that the OPP employed 9% fewer police officers than it had a decade earlier. In addition, detachments were increasingly understaffed when it came to frontline officers, known as constables. In 2020, over 1,000 frontline constable positions were vacant, representing 26% of the OPP's total funded frontline constable positions.

Frontline constable vacancies also appeared to be contributing to a decline in the service levels provided by the OPP to municipalities. The number of hours of patrol that the OPP provided to municipalities and on provincial highways decreased by 48% from 2011 to 2020, from 1.87 million hours to just over 975,000

hours. Not surprisingly, we also found that the OPP's fleet of frontline road vehicles was underutilized. In addition, our testing indicated that the OPP was not providing each municipality it provided policing services to with the level of service, specifically uniformed officer hours, that its deployment model identified as required to respond to calls for service on a timely basis.

Frontline officer vacancy rates varied considerably between OPP regions and detachments; regions with higher vacancy rates also had lower crime clearance rates. However, despite the variation in officer staffing, the OPP had not taken sufficient steps to adjust its deployment of officers to equalize staffing at detachments most in need. More generally, the OPP's efforts to monitor and measure the quality and effectiveness of the police services it provided was limited. We observed that detachment inspections often showed recurring compliance violations, and the number of violations identified during inspections had been increasing. We also found that, generally, there were limited consequences for officers responsible for violations that posed a significant safety or liability risk.

Some other significant findings were:

- Stress-related officer leaves were contributing to rising vacancies and costs. Medical leave taken by officers with a diagnosis of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) was contributing significantly to increasing vacancies at detachments. In addition, the OPP was incurring rapidly increasing financial costs, which had reached \$42.7 million in 2020, in relation to Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) claims submitted by officers, in large part due to claims for PTSD. Exposure to psycho-social situations, which includes traumatic incidents leading to diagnoses of PTSD, represented 75% of all OPP WSIB incidents in 2020, and these types of claims in 2020 led to 11,037 days of leave for OPP employees. The increasing number of officers filing WSIB claims for PTSD and other mental health injuries is symptomatic of an ongoing issue related to officer mental health and stress.

- The OPP was providing less and less proactive policing. It provided just over 975,000 hours of patrol in 2020, down 28% from the over 1.35 million hours it provided in 2016, and down 48% from the 1.87 million hours it provided in 2011. In 2020, patrol made up just 13% of frontline officer hours, compared to 22% in 2011. Studies have shown that police presence in an area can reduce and act as a deterrent to crime. The OPP's reduced frontline staffing and patrol hours over the last decade were occurring at the same time as incidents of crime in OPP-patrolled areas had been increasing, after reaching a low in 2017, and while calls for service and the number of municipalities and population the OPP served steadily increased.
- Frontline officer schedules were not aligned with calls for service. In our 1998, 2005 and 2012 audits of the OPP we found that officers were not scheduled in a way that corresponded to peak workload periods. Our 2021 audit found this continued to be the case. Our analysis of 2020 shift data for all detachments found that:
 - Detachments received their peak number of calls for service between 11 a.m. and 5 p.m., and received the fewest calls between 1 a.m. and 7 a.m.—75% lower than during peak hours. However, the number of frontline constables on duty during this much less busy time was only 25% lower than during peak hours.
 - Frontline constables took the most vacation time and worked the fewest hours in August, which was also the month with the greatest number of calls for service. In contrast, frontline constable hours worked in January were 4% greater than in August, even though the OPP received 30% fewer calls in this month.
- The OPP did not accurately track or monitor call response times. An important indicator related to public safety is how quickly a police service responds to calls, particularly urgent calls. However, the OPP did not analyze information about how much time elapsed between when

a call was received by one of its regional communications centres and when an officer arrived on the scene. Consequently, the organization did not know whether its average response times were reasonable, particularly for more serious or higher-priority calls. Our attempt to analyze response times found significant issues with the accuracy and reliability of OPP data that made an analysis of it impossible. We found examples of several jurisdictions that measured and publicly reported response times to calls for service, including the Vancouver Police Department and the Ottawa Police Service.

We made 15 recommendations, consisting of 34 action items, to address our audit findings. We received commitments from the OPP that they would take action to address our recommendations.

Status of Actions Taken on Recommendations

We conducted assurance work between May 2023 and October 2023. We obtained written representation from the OPP that effective November 20, 2023, it had provided us with a complete update of the status of the recommendations we made in the original audit.

Police Officer Staffing and Deployment

Recommendation 1

To promote a healthy workplace, limit stress placed on officers, and reduce the number and cost of employees on long-term leave and accommodation, we recommend that the Ontario Provincial Police:

- *study and establish a minimum acceptable staffing level for detachments based on officer workload and stressors;*

Status: In the process of being implemented by March 2024.

Details

In our 2021 audit, we found that the number of frontline officers working in detachments across the province was in decline, and these detachments were significantly understaffed. The OPP had almost 1,030 vacancies in frontline constable positions in 2020.

Despite some detachments being significantly understaffed, the OPP had not taken sufficient steps to adjust its deployment of officers to detachments most in need. We noted understaffed detachments were self-reinforcing, as understaffing led to increased stress and burnout of frontline officers who were required to take on a higher workload, which in turn led to more officers taking leave. We also found that that medical leave taken by officers due to a diagnosis of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) was significantly contributing to increased vacancies at detachments. The OPP had not performed any analysis to project how much the financial cost and vacancies associated with traumatic stress would continue to rise over the coming years, or whether these effects could be mitigated.

In our 2021 audit, we noted the OPP had developed a new draft Service Delivery Model that could calculate how many police officers are required to serve each detachment and region by considering factors such as officer leave, response time standards, calls for service, providing support to First Nations, and community engagement. At the time of our 2021 audit, the OPP was making adjustments to the model, and it had not yet been approved for use in decision-making.

In our follow-up, we found that, in January 2022, the OPP convened an internal project team tasked with ensuring a healthy workplace, limiting stress placed on staff, and reducing the number and cost of employees on long-term leave and accommodation. The OPP developed a formula within the Service Delivery Model to establish minimum acceptable staffing levels for detachments. The formula includes factors affecting officer workload and stressors such as calls for service, administrative time, proactive policing, community engagement, and officer leaves. The OPP indicated that, as of January 1, 2023, the process for determining optimum staffing levels had commenced at five

detachments where the Service Delivery Model was being implemented and assessed. The assessment of the model was anticipated to be completed by March 2024. Thereafter, the OPP planned to establish these minimum acceptable staffing levels at each detachment, province-wide, as the model was implemented.

- *establish benchmarks for leave of absence and accommodation rates, and Workplace Safety and Insurance Board claims indicative of a healthy workplace, and evaluate the Healthy Workplace Team initiatives against progress towards these benchmarks.*

Status: In the process of being implemented by December 2023.

Details

In our 2021 audit, we found that medical leave taken by officers due to a diagnosis of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) was significantly contributing to increasing vacancies at detachments. WSIB leave increased by 364% between 2015 and 2020, from 76 employees to 353. Similarly, the cost of WSIB claims to the OPP increased by 181%, from \$15.2 million in 2015 to \$42.7 million in 2020.

We also found that there were 377 frontline constables on accommodated work arrangements that restricted them from performing some or all of their regular frontline duties. These constables accounted for 37% of the 1,028 frontline constable vacancies in 2020. However, the OPP noted that due to privacy and confidentiality requirements, it did not track the specific reason (e.g., medical condition) that resulted in an officer's accommodation, and it was thus unable to identify the number of officers who were receiving an accommodation due to mental health concerns.

In 2020, the OPP established the Healthy Workplace Team, a bureau responsible for the wellness of the OPP and its members. However, we found that while the team had implemented several initiatives, the OPP should apply a wellness lens to all operational decisions related to staffing across the province.

Our follow-up found that the OPP had developed an evaluation framework in May 2022 to consider pillars of mental health and safety systems and prevention of harm. The framework includes eight mental health performance measures to support a healthy workplace such as days lost by type, rates of accommodation, WSIB psycho-social claims as a percentage of total claims, and return to work rates. At the time of our follow-up, the OPP had begun analyzing data for each of the eight mental health performance measures, and expected to establish benchmarks for each measure by December 2023.

Recommendation 2

So that frontline detachments are sufficiently staffed to provide adequate and effective police services to the communities they serve, we recommend that the Ontario Provincial Police review the rate of redeployment of constables to specialized units and specialized areas of policing, including the impact of redeployment on crime clearance, and determine if the rate should be reduced.

Status: In the process of being implemented by June 2024.

Details

In our 2021 audit, we found that constables transferring from frontline duties to non-frontline temporary assignments made up 18% (189 of 1,028) of frontline constable vacancies in 2020. The number of constables placed in temporary assignments had increased by 75% from 2016 to 2020. In addition to constables placed in non-frontline temporary assignments, we noted that between January 2018 (when the OPP started to track transfers to specialized units) and July 2021, 206 frontline constables had moved from frontline duties to specialized units, further contributing to the rise in vacancies. The contribution of these transfers to frontline officer vacancies were concerning since we also found that regions with higher frontline officer vacancies resolved fewer crimes.

In our follow-up, we found that between October 2022 and February 2023, the OPP had surveyed 33 municipal police services in Ontario to better define specialized units and determine how other police services deployed constables to their specialized units.

In 2022, the OPP also completed a review of its vacancy rates and staffing pressures in frontline and specialized units from 2016 to 2021, including redeployment from frontline to specialized units. In August 2023, the OPP used the results of this review to establish a draft procedure for redeployment from the frontline to specialized units based on recruit and experienced police officer class sizes. The OPP told us that after each intake, it uses this procedure to review the rate of redeployment of constables to specialized units of policing.

Between February and May 2023, the OPP also provided direction to regions to ensure frontline officers were not transferred to specialized units if the vacancy rate at their detachment exceeded a specified threshold. In addition, the OPP informed us it would consider detachments' crime clearance rates for the period of 2016–2021 to determine if redeployment rates should be changed. The OPP also planned to complete an analysis of the impact of redeployment at the five detachments where the Service Delivery Model was being assessed (described in **Recommendation 1**), and by June 2024, the OPP expected to formalize its standard operating procedure for redeployment to specialized units.

Recommendation 3

To maintain consistent police services across detachments and regions, and to ensure that detachments are sufficiently staffed with frontline officers according to the needs of local communities, we recommend that the Ontario Provincial Police:

- *adjust deployment of constables with the goal of increasing staffing at detachments with the most need;*

Status: In the process of being implemented by March 2024.

Details

In our 2021 audit, we found that, similar to what we noted in our 2012 audit, the OPP did not have a consistent, province-wide model that it used to periodically identify staffing needs and adjust the deployment of officers to detachments. We found significant

differences in frontline officer vacancies between regions and detachments, and noted that regions with higher frontline vacancies resolved fewer crimes.

In our follow-up, we found that the OPP had developed a draft detachment prioritization process as part of its Service Delivery Model that uses staffing levels and vacancies to prioritize detachments most in need of constables. The OPP first used this process to prioritize detachments for constable deployment in September 2022, and indicated it will run the prioritization during each intake of new constables, occurring six times per year. The OPP expected to fully implement this recommendation, with the development of a standard operating procedure for recruitment prioritization, by March 2024.

- *implement the Service Delivery Model as soon as it has been validated;*

Status: In the process of being implemented by December 2029.

Details

Our 2021 audit noted that in January 2020, the OPP established a committee of internal staff and external experts to research and develop a deployment model to ensure adequate and effective levels of service, prioritizing both operational demands and the health and wellness of its officers. At the time of our audit, the group had developed a new draft Service Delivery Model (see details under **Recommendation 1**).

In our follow-up, we found that the Treasury Board Secretariat had approved funding for the Service Delivery Model in 2022, and the model was being tested in five OPP detachments. At the time of our follow-up, the OPP was assessing and validating the model, a process which it expected to complete by mid-2024. The expectation was that once this validation process was completed, the Service Delivery Model would be gradually implemented at all detachments in the province, in accordance with Treasury Board Secretariat's approved funding. The OPP told us that, due to funding and staffing constraints, full implementation was not expected to occur until the end of 2029.

- *periodically update the Service Delivery Model, compare its outputs to actual deployment, and utilize the results to adjust deployment throughout the province.*

Status: In the process of being implemented by December 2029.

Details

In our 2021 audit, we found that the OPP did have a model it used when it first contracted with a municipality to calculate how many officers would be required to serve the area. However, the OPP did not revisit the model after the contract was agreed to in order to compare actual staffing levels against those indicated in the contract, or to guide deployment decisions.

At the time of our audit, a new draft Service Delivery Model had been developed. The Service Delivery Model could calculate how many police officers are required to serve each detachment and region by considering factors such as officer leave, response time standards, calls for service, providing support to First Nations, and community engagement. It is designed to be run regularly with updated inputs and used to guide deployment decisions. At the time of our 2021 audit, the OPP was making adjustments to the model, and it had not yet been approved to be used to guide decision-making. The model calculated that the OPP required 3,873 constables across the frontline regions and the Highway Safety Division in 2020. The actual number of constables for 2020 was 2,905, a shortfall of 968, or 25%. For any deployment model to have an effect, it must be continuously updated, compared to actual deployment, and consistently used to guide decision-making and to adjust deployment.

In our follow-up, we found that the Treasury Board Secretariat had approved funding for the Service Delivery Model in 2022 and the model was being tested in five OPP detachments. At the time of our follow-up, the OPP was assessing and validating the model, including through a comparison of the model's outputs to actual deployment. The OPP anticipated completing this process by March 2024. Thereafter, the OPP expects to gradually implement the Service Delivery Model at all detachments in the province, in accordance with the

Treasury Board Secretariat's approved funding. The OPP has committed to reviewing the Service Delivery Model on an annual basis and using the results to continually adjust deployment to those detachments most in need (as the model is implemented by detachments). The OPP expects to implement the Service Delivery Model at all detachments by the end of 2029.

Police Service Delivery

Recommendation 4

To increase police presence and deter crime in municipalities, we recommend that the Ontario Provincial Police:

- *establish evidence-based detachment targets for the proportion of frontline officer time spent on proactive policing;*

Status: Fully implemented.

Details

Our 2021 audit found that one of the most significant impacts of OPP constable shortages was on the number of patrols the OPP provided to municipalities and on highways. Patrol is the primary means of providing proactive policing. In 2020, the OPP provided just over 975,000 hours of patrol, down 28% from the over 1.35 million hours it had provided in 2016, and down 48% from the 1.87 million hours it had provided in 2011. In 2020, patrol made up just 13% of frontline officer hours, compared to 22% in 2011.

Research has shown that police presence in an area can act as a deterrent to crime and reduce the number of crimes committed. The OPP's reduced frontline staffing and patrol hours were occurring at the same time as incidents of crime in OPP-patrolled areas were increasing, after reaching a low in 2017, and while calls for service and the number of municipalities and population the OPP served had steadily increased.

Our 2021 audit also found that the proportion of time frontline officers spent on patrol at each detachment varied from almost 30% of frontline officer hours at one detachment, to approximately 3% at another in 2020.

In our follow-up, we found that the OPP had established targets for the proportion of frontline officer

time to be spent on proactive policing. In 2022, the OPP conducted research on over 10 Canadian and American police services, comparing each service's thresholds for time spent on proactive policing. The OPP also reviewed the number of hours its officers historically spent on proactive policing such as patrol and considered projected future staffing levels and approved increases in officer recruitment. Using this information, the OPP finalized a target in the Service Delivery Model of 21% of officer time to be spent on proactive policing and 5% for community engagement.

- *regularly monitor time spent on proactive policing to ensure these targets are met.*

Status: In the process of being implemented by March 2024.

Details

Our 2021 audit noted that fewer officers serving a larger area and population, responding to more calls, and investigating more incidents of crime have fewer hours available for proactive policing. We spoke with staff at two municipalities that had recently terminated their contracts with the OPP. These municipalities cited a lack of police presence in their community as a major factor in their decision. For example, one of the municipalities told us that the service level and visibility of OPP officers had been an ongoing issue and that it had received complaints from the public, specifically about a lack of foot patrols in the community.

In our follow-up, we found that the OPP has made progress in regularly monitoring time spent on proactive policing to ensure its targets were met. Since April 2023, the OPP been monitoring the percentage of time spent on a monthly basis on proactive policing and community engagement across all detachments. For the five detachments where the Service Delivery Model was being implemented and assessed (see **Recommendation 1**), the OPP also provided a more in-depth monthly report on proactive policing and community engagement. However, the OPP has not yet completed an analysis of the data comparing each detachment's results to the established provincial targets. It expects that by March 2024 operational data will be available

for 2023 from all detachments to analyze and formally compare against targets. Detachment and Regional Commanders may then implement strategies if targets were not met, such as holding discussions with frontline officers, providing training, and providing additional direction.

Recommendation 5

So that municipalities receive an adequate and effective level of policing services, to increase transparency, and to provide municipalities with the information required to make informed decisions on policing in local communities, we recommend that the Ontario Provincial Police:

- *review the number of uniformed policing hours its deployment model identifies are required for each municipality and provide municipalities with explanations when the number of hours is not delivered;*

Status: In the process of being implemented by June 2024.

Details

Our 2021 audit found that although the OPP is required to provide adequate and effective policing under the Act, nearly half of municipalities were not getting the level of service (hours and full-time-equivalent staff) identified as required by the OPP's deployment model. We asked the OPP to run the model it uses for municipalities after inputting the most up-to-date information, to determine the number of constable hours and full-time-equivalent (FTE) staff required to service municipalities. Data was available for 230 municipalities. The model indicated that the OPP should be providing 3.9 million constable hours annually to meet the needs of these 230 municipalities. However, we found that the OPP provided only about 3.4 million constable hours to these municipalities in 2020, or 87% of the necessary hours indicated by the model. The OPP had not undertaken an analysis to determine why it provided some municipalities with fewer constable hours than targeted by the model. Nor had it analyzed the impact on public safety of providing fewer hours.

In our follow-up, the OPP informed us that it was committed to using its new Service Delivery Model, instead of the deployment model that was in place at the time of our audit, as the primary tool to guide staffing decisions and to calculate optimum staffing levels required at detachments. The OPP provided us with sample reports that compared the optimal uniformed policing hours identified as required by the new Service Delivery Model against the actual hours provided to detachments within municipalities. However, the OPP indicated that the specifics of what would be provided to municipal police service boards was still under development and would be informed by consultation with the Ontario Association of Police Service Boards (OAPSB). The OPP expected to share similar reports with municipal police service boards, including explanations of variances that were statistically significant, by June 2024.

- *survey police services boards to identify what additional data and statistics on police services they would find useful;*

Status: Fully implemented.

Details

In our 2021 audit, we found that the OPP Police Services Board Reporting Manual states that detachment commanders are required to report to the police services boards the following information: public complaints; motor vehicle collisions, by type; Criminal Code and provincial statute charges laid; and actual occurrences of violent crime, property crime and drug crime, and clearance rates. We found that the limited statistics provided by the OPP may not be adequate for municipal police services boards to fulfill their responsibilities. While detachment commanders have the discretion to provide additional statistics or data, we did not find any consistency in what was being provided to police services boards or individual municipalities over and above what was required.

In our follow-up, we found that in May 2022, the OPP developed a police services board survey to identify what additional data and statistics on police services that boards would find useful. To develop the

survey, the OPP considered items such as the current information provided to police services boards, current data collection databases within the OPP, other recommendations our audit report made, and legislated requirements as identified in the *Police Services Act*. Once developed, the survey was distributed electronically to 117 police services boards in June 2022, and received a response rate of 91%. The survey found that some of the information police services boards would find valuable were the number of policing hours a municipality received; good news stories; youth crime rates; and mental health–related incidents.

- *expand the scope of information required to be provided to police services boards based on the results of the survey.*

Status: In the process of being implemented by January 2024.

Details

In our follow-up, we found that in June 2022 the OPP surveyed police service boards to identify what additional data and statistics on police services they would find useful, and subsequently provided a preliminary summary of findings to partners and stakeholders. In December 2022, these results were communicated to all detachment commanders for dissemination to their respective police services boards. Between February and July 2023, the OPP reviewed the survey results and created a data catalogue that outlined the OPP's capacity and ability to report on the metrics identified by the survey. By July 2023 the OPP had prioritized 30 of these metrics, including youth crime rates, staffing updates, and the number of public complaints. It expects to begin providing information on these metrics to municipalities beginning in January 2024. The OPP also indicated it would conduct a follow-up survey with police services boards to see if there was an appetite to further expand metrics provided to the boards.

Recommendation 6

In order to reduce operating costs and make the best use of available officers' time to more effectively respond to calls for service from Ontarians, we recommend that the Ontario Provincial Police:

- *utilize the work of its current scheduling project to develop alternative shift rotations that better align with demand for services;*

Status: In the process of being implemented by July 2025.

Details

In our 1998, 2005 and 2012 audits of the OPP, we found that officers' shifts were not scheduled to correspond to peak workload periods. In our 2021 audit, we found this continued to be the case, and that the OPP had made limited progress toward making more efficient use of staff time in order to reduce staffing costs and improve officer availability during peak times. Our analysis of 2019 shift data for all detachments found, for example, that OPP detachments received their peak number of calls for service in the six hours between 11 a.m. and 5 p.m. Detachments received the fewest calls in the six hours between 1 a.m. and 7 a.m., when the number of calls were 75% lower than during peak hours. However, the number of frontline constables on duty during this time was only 25% lower than during peak hours.

Our 2021 audit also found that in February 2020, the OPP had established a multi-phase scheduling project with the goal of creating an organization-wide scheduling platform that would increase scheduling effectiveness and efficiencies based on demand for service, and allow centralized monitoring of how shifts were being scheduled across the organization.

In our follow-up, we found that the OPP and the Ontario Provincial Police Association (OPPA) had entered into a memorandum of agreement (MOA), with the goal of assessing the feasibility of various shift scheduling models at select detachments. The MOA states that the parties agree to test four alternative scheduling models, such as staggered start times, or a

modified day shift. The OPP informed us that now that the MOA was in place, it planned to assess the alternative shift scheduling models, and expected to use data from its organization-wide scheduling platform to adjust shift rotations that better aligned with the demand for services by July 2025, depending on negotiations with the OPPA.

- *develop a strategy, in consultation with the Ontario Provincial Police Association, for implementing these alternative rotations at depending that can most benefit from them.*

Status: Fully implemented.

Details

In our 2021 audit, we found that the OPP developed its shift scheduling manual in partnership with the Ontario Provincial Police Association (OPPA), which represents the majority of OPP uniformed and civilian staff. The manual lays out a number of factors to consider and criteria that a detachment commander must meet in order to make changes to shift schedules, but does not provide any suggested alternative shift types that could be implemented. We noted that while OPP management had to consult with the OPPA, and follow the shift scheduling manual when making changes, there was nothing in the collective agreement that would prevent the OPP from moving away from current scheduling practices, other than its popularity among frontline officers.

In our follow-up, we found that the OPP met with the OPPA throughout late 2022 and 2023, and began discussing alternative rotations at detachments. We noted that the OPP and the OPPA entered into a memorandum of agreement (MOA), with the goal of assessing various shift scheduling models at select detachments to assess the viability and feasibility of new shift scheduling models. The MOA states that the parties agree to engage in an assessment to test four new different scheduling models, such as staggered start times, or a modified day shift. The term of the MOA is expected to conclude in September 2024. At this time, the parties are to convene to discuss any mutually agreed upon provincial implementation of shift schedule changes.

Oversight

Recommendation 7

To improve detachment and officer compliance with legislative requirements and Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) policies, we recommend that the OPP:

- *track, analyze and compare detachment inspections for trends and repeated incidents of non-compliance, and track and analyze best practices at high-performing detachments;*

Status: In the process of being implemented by December 2023.

Details

In our 2021 audit, we found that detachment inspections often showed recurring compliance violations by OPP officers, and the number of violations identified during inspections appeared to be increasing. We also found there were no consequences for officers responsible for violations that posed a significant safety or liability risk, and that there was no central trend analysis of the results of inspections or issues identified.

We observed that the OPP's Quality Assurance Unit, which is responsible for detachment inspections of high-risk areas, did not consistently attempt to compare inspection results to a detachment's previous inspection results to determine improvement or regression, or to identify trends. In addition, there was no scoring of inspections, limited analysis of a detachment's overall performance on inspection, and no comparison of inspection results to other detachments. We selected a sample of 10 detachments and compared their most recent inspection results conducted between 2018 and 2020 with the results from their previous inspection. We found that nine of the 10 detachments had more violations identified in their most recent inspection than in the previous inspection.

Our follow-up found that the OPP had made improvements to the existing quality assurance inspections process. The OPP completed its 2022 Quality Assurance Detachment Inspections Annual Report in April 2023. The updated report now includes a comparison of current property management (e.g., seized

items) inspection results to the previous inspection results for individual detachments. For other areas of inspection, notable non-compliances were categorized to help identify systemic issues. The OPP also updated the Quality Assurance Standard Operating Procedure in March 2023 to reflect these changes to its annual reporting process.

To track and analyze best practices at high-performing detachments, in November 2022, the OPP updated its Guidebook for Detachment Inspections by providing further details and timelines on remediation of action items identified during a quality assurance inspection. In October 2023, the OPP further updated the Guidebook and included a new list of best practices and additional details for the follow-up stage of the inspection process. The OPP plans to continuously update the best practice list and make recommendations to detachment staff in the Detachment Inspection Report based on these best practices. We noted that best practices are now included in the Executive Summary of all Detachment Inspection Reports.

Our follow-up found that to identify non-compliance trends at detachments the OPP planned to update its Detachment Compliance Report to include a comparison of the detachment's current compliance percentage by area (e.g., gun lockers, vaults) to their previous inspection and the provincial average. The OPP also planned to update the Compliance Trend report by December 2023 to allow data extraction from current and previous inspection cycles.

- *standardize consequences for officers whose non-compliances pose a safety or liability risk, including warnings, documentation in personnel files and disciplinary actions;*

Status: In the process of being implemented by March 2024.

Details

We found in our 2021 audit that detachment commanders were responsible for taking corrective action based on issues identified during a detachment inspection, and the Quality Assurance Unit was responsible for confirming that violations identified during inspections were addressed in a timely manner. The Quality

Assurance Unit did not issue penalties or impose consequences on detachments or officers for violations identified during an inspection. Consequences, if any, were at the discretion of detachment or regional commanders.

While the OPP advised us that there were multiple actions detachment commanders could take when violations were found during inspections, in our sample of inspections we found that, generally, there were limited consequences chosen. In the majority of cases, the action taken was simply for the supervisor to remind the officer of policy requirements. In our sample of 10 detachments, only one indicated it had disciplined an officer based on the results of the inspection, and only two detachments indicated they had annotated officer personnel files documenting a violation.

In our follow-up, the OPP informed us that it was currently developing a separate Officer Compliance Report, which will be included as part of the Detachment Inspection Report (described above). The report will provide details on individual officer non-compliance and the corresponding actions taken by detachment commanders to address the violations. The OPP told us that before it could draft an internal guidance document to assist detachment commanders with a standardized approach to disciplinary consequences, the OPP would need to conduct internal consultations as well as consult with stakeholders, including the Ontario Provincial Police Association, and the Commissioned Officers Association. It expected to conduct these consultations, begin centrally tracking officer non-compliance and associated disciplinary action, review historical disciplinary action, and subsequently develop its internal guidance document for disciplinary action by the end of 2023. The OPP expected to publish a framework for standardizing consequences for non-compliances by March 2024.

- *conduct a portion of inspections without providing notice to detachments, and compare results to inspections where notice is provided, to determine if the results of surprise inspections are*

more representative of the day-to-day state of detachments.

Status: In the process of being implemented by March 2024.

Details

In our 2021 audit, we found that the Quality Assurance Unit contacted the detachment commander in advance to confirm that the date planned for an inspection was convenient for all parties; the Quality Assurance Unit did not conduct surprise visits to detachments.

In our follow-up, we found that the OPP had begun conducting inspections without advance notice to detachments in April 2022. In 2022, seven of the 29 detachment inspections conducted by Quality Assurance Unit, or 24%, were unscheduled. The OPP conducted an analysis of the results of scheduled inspections compared to unscheduled inspections, for 2022, and included the analysis in its 2022 Detachment Inspections Annual Report. The report noted that unscheduled inspections demonstrated lower compliance in terms of property management, gun lockers, and detachment assets.

The OPP advised us that it planned to continue to select detachments for unscheduled inspections every year, including seven unscheduled inspections in 2023. Once 2023 inspection data is collected, the OPP will develop the 2023 Detachment Inspections Annual Report for release in March 2024, which will include an analysis and comparison of results between scheduled and unscheduled inspections. The results of this analysis are expected to be used to determine the percentage of inspections that will be unscheduled in the next inspection cycle.

Recommendation 8

To improve the quality, efficiency and effectiveness of its investigations, we recommend that the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP):

- *implement a process to monitor and analyze investigative trends, such as changes in crime clearance rates, to identify if they are reasonable, and to take corrective action where necessary;*

Status: In the process of being implemented by December 2024.

Details

In our 2021 audit, we found that the OPP generally did not have processes in place to review the results of the investigations completed by its specialized investigation units to identify trends that may require follow-up and corrective action to ensure investigations were completed efficiently and effectively.

We found that between 2016 and 2019, the average time (in days) it took for three of the OPP's specialized units to clear incidents of crime had decreased by 58%, from approximately 36 days in 2016 to 15 days in 2019, before increasing slightly to 18 days in 2020. However, between 2017 and 2019, the crime clearance rate decreased from 98.3% in 2017 to 87.8% in 2019, before increasing to 91% in 2020. We also found that the OPP and these specialized units did not have a process in place to review such trends to assess whether the differences from year to year were reasonable, or whether follow-up and/or corrective action was necessary. For example, they had not analyzed why the crime clearance rate had declined while at the same time they had drastically reduced the time it took to clear cases.

In our follow-up, we found that the OPP had made progress toward implementing this recommendation. The OPP developed a report to measure the efforts and outcomes of the investigations completed by its specialized investigation units with the goal of improving future investigations. The report includes items such as key findings, analyses, methodology used, and conclusions reached. The OPP told us that it planned to expand the data it collects and analyzes for investigations, including crime clearance rates; court dispositions; human resources utilized; and intelligence probes generated through investigations. The OPP informed us that it planned to use this data to monitor and analyze these trends, and take corrective action if necessary. The OPP expected to implement any changes to its processes by December 2024.

- *implement a post-investigation quality assurance process for all specialized units to review whether conclusions reached are appropriate and*

sufficiently documented, and to take corrective action where they are not.

Status: In the process of being implemented by December 2024.

Details

In our 2021 audit, we found that two of the OPP's specialized units, the Investigation and Enforcement Bureau, and the Organized Crime Enforcement Bureau, did not have a post-investigation quality assurance process to review whether the conclusions reached in investigations were appropriate and the rationale sufficiently documented. In contrast, we found that the Anti Rackets Branch had a process to review each completed investigation for lessons learned.

In our follow-up, we noted that the OPP developed a quality assurance process for specialized units, which included an intake process identifying the type of investigation and its objectives, monitoring and assessing investigations, completing conclusion reports, presentation to the Crown, if necessary, and data tracking and analyses of investigation results. The OPP informed us that investigative files are reviewed by the unit supervisors and that it planned to track these reviews. The OPP expected to implement this quality assurance process by December 2023. Once implemented, the OPP advised us that in cases where its quality assurance process identified shortcomings, it would take corrective action in the form of performance management discussions. The OPP planned to review the quality assurance process by December 2024, after it had been in place for a year, to ensure it was addressing the recommendation, and to make any necessary updates.

Recommendation 9

To provide effective oversight of the policing services delivered by the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP), we recommend that the Ministry of the Solicitor General:

- *establish key performance indicators in consultation with the OPP for monitoring the adequate and effective delivery of policing services;*

Status: In the process of being implemented by October 2024.

Details

In our 2021 audit, we found that the Ministry of the Solicitor General (Ministry) did not have specific metrics or key performance indicators it was monitoring on an ongoing basis to ensure that the police services the OPP provided were adequate and effective. We also found that the Ministry did not appear to be fulfilling its responsibility to inspect the OPP. In the last 20 years, the Ministry had only inspected the OPP twice, once in 2017 regarding use-of-force investigations and reporting, and once in 2019 regarding major case management. These inspections were not specific to the OPP and included other police services.

In our follow-up, we found that the Ministry had not yet established key performance indicators for monitoring the adequate and effective delivery of policing services. The Ministry indicated that performance indicators would be implemented once draft regulations under the *Community Safety and Policing Act, 2019* (CSPA) were finalized. The CSPA regulations would update the definition of “adequate and effective” policing, and provide a framework for monitoring adequate and effective policing in Ontario. The Ministry posted multiple draft regulations on the Ontario Regulatory Registry for stakeholder feedback in summer 2023. We noted work was underway between the Ministry and the OPP to align potential performance indicators with the CSPA and its draft regulations. The new CSPA regulations were expected to come into force by April 2024, subject to government decision, and the Ministry expected to fully develop and implement key performance indicators by October 2024.

- *implement controls that ensure the independence of the Inspector General of Policing when monitoring and inspecting the OPP.*

Status: In the process of being implemented by April 2024.

Details

In our 2021 audit, we found that when the *Community Safety and Policing Act, 2019* (CSPA) comes into force, it will establish an Inspector General of Policing (Inspector General) position under the Ministry of

the Solicitor General. The Inspector General will be responsible for monitoring and conducting inspections of police services in Ontario, including the OPP, for compliance with the CSPA and its regulations. We noted that the CSPA includes provisions to protect the independence of the Inspector General, including that the Solicitor General shall not direct the Inspector General or any inspector appointed by the Inspector General. Nevertheless, having both the Inspector General and the OPP within the Ministry of the Solicitor General and reporting to the same person could pose a risk to the independence, or the appearance of independence, of the Inspector General.

In our follow-up, we found that the Ministry had reviewed the provisions of the CSPA and determined that they provided sufficient controls to ensure the independence of the Inspector General. The Ministry stated that the Inspector General was responsible for implementing controls set out under the CSPA to ensure its independence. The Inspector General was also expected to put in place additional administrative processes and operating procedures with respect to the independence of its core functions, including public communications, legal advisory services, and internal Ministry information-sharing, prior to the CSPA coming into force in April 2024.

Recommendation 10

So that police officers are held accountable for their actions on a timely basis, we recommend that the Ontario Provincial Police work with the Ministry of the Solicitor General to review the impact of delaying disciplinary hearings for officers who cannot participate due to medical reasons and to identify options to expedite such hearings.

Status: In the process of being implemented by December 2024.

Details

In our 2021 audit, we noted that OPP internal investigations into officer conduct can lead to charges against officers under the *Police Services Act* (Act). These are not criminal charges. The penalties they carry include demotion, suspension and termination. However, in

cases where the officer successfully demonstrates with supportable medical evidence that they were unable to participate in their hearing, the OPP cannot legally advance with prosecuting an officer it has charged under the Act.

As of July 31, 2021, the OPP's prosecutions office was unable to advance with prosecuting 22 OPP officers it had charged between 2005 and 2021 in a timely manner because the officers had provided sufficient medical documentation to indicate they were unable to fully participate in their hearing. We also found that some of these 22 OPP officers had been on medical leave for several years and as a result, these officers may have avoided penalties that can be as severe as termination, while continuing to be paid. The 22 officers had been paid approximately \$4.2 million by the OPP since being charged, including one officer who had retired and one who resigned in 2021 and as a result can no longer face any disciplinary action.

We also found in our follow-up, that in January 2022, the OPP convened a project team to review the impact of delayed disciplinary hearings and to identify options to expedite such hearings. The project team subsequently consulted with the Ministry in March 2022, which reported that there were limited options to expedite hearings due to legislation such as the *Human Rights Code*.

In May 2022, the OPP implemented the Occupational Medical Program (OMP) that the OPP noted may also contribute to expediting hearings. For example, under the OMP, when court adjournments for an officer are requested for medical reasons, an independent medical doctor will determine the length of the adjournment upon the initial assessment of the officer based on medical evidence received from the officer's medical practitioner. Previously, the OPP's Professional Standards Branch Unit would revisit these matters monthly, resulting in delays and higher costs.

The OPP expected to complete its assessment of the OMP, as well as the impacts of delayed hearings due to medical reasons, by December 2024.

Procurement

Recommendation 11

So that procurement policies are followed, and essential services, goods and equipment are procured efficiently and without delay, we recommend that the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP):

- *develop controls that eliminate the ability of OPP staff to send purchase orders over \$5,000 to vendors through internal systems rather than IFIS, as required by OPP policy;*

Status: Fully implemented.

Details

We found in our 2021 audit that the OPP did not have effective controls in place to prevent duplicate purchases and purchases that were not properly authorized. In some cases, when the OPP decided to purchase a product, service or equipment, it generated a purchase order in its internal systems. If a purchase order exceeded \$5,000, it was sent to Ontario Shared Services, who then recreated the purchase order in the government's Integrated Financial Information System (IFIS) with all required terms and conditions—such as on the delivery of goods, confidentiality and conditions under which the purchase order could be terminated. Ontario Shared Services also ensures that all appropriate levels of approval have been obtained. Only the IFIS purchase order is to be sent to the vendor. However, we found that there were no controls in place to prevent an internal purchase order from also being sent to the vendor. Due to the lack of controls, there is a risk of duplicate purchase orders being issued, and the opportunity exists to issue purchase orders without obtaining the required level of approval needed when processing a transaction in IFIS. We reviewed a selection of purchase orders, including purchases that had not been subject to competitive procurement, and large value purchases that required higher levels of authorization to process, and found multiple examples where OPP staff did not follow the procurement process.

In our follow-up, we found that the OPP had developed controls that limited the ability of OPP staff to send purchase orders over \$5,000 to vendors

through internal systems rather than through IFIS, as required by OPP policy. According to the OPP, all relevant documentation, communication and training materials on purchasing now state that purchase orders must be created in IFIS for any amount larger than \$5,000. In addition, the OPP indicated that as of December 1, 2022, it updated its internal systems to no longer produce reports called “Purchase Orders,” but rather “Order Details.” These documents are to be approved and sent to vendors only once an IFIS Purchase Order is issued by Ontario Shared Services to a vendor. The Standard Operating Procedure for creating IFIS purchase orders was also updated in March 2023.

- *provide sufficient procurement training to managers and supervisors throughout the organization who are responsible for procurement;*

Status: In the process of being implemented by December 2023.

Details

We found in our 2021 audit that new managers and supervisors throughout the OPP who had procurement responsibilities received only one hour of procurement-specific training. Procurement staff in the OPP's Business Management Bureau, who were ultimately responsible for ensuring procurements were executed effectively and assisting other areas of the OPP with their procurements, stressed the need for additional procurement training for managers and supervisors throughout the organization. We also found that one of the reasons OPP staff did not follow procurement policies and procedures appeared to be the last-minute purchase of items before contracts expired—suggesting a lack of proper planning. For instance, the OPP hired a vendor under a non-competitive procurement process to provide daily meals for as many as 160 officers over a period of eight months at a cost of over \$444,000. While the Ontario Public Service Procurement directive allows for non-competitive procurement in urgent situations, an exemption must be sought and the reasons documented. We found that the OPP had not sought an exemption or documented why they had not conducted a competitive procurement.

In our follow-up, we found that the OPP's Procurement Services Section provided training about finance and procurement processes to new detachment commanders and civilian senior managers in June and November 2022. It also provided purchasing staff and managers with training in December 2022 on the new process surrounding Order Details, described above. In addition, the OPP's Fleet, Supply, Weapons, and Services Bureau had hosted training sessions in February 2023 with bureau managers and staff involved in purchase ordering to answer additional questions about the revised process.

In our follow-up we learned the OPP planned to develop procurement-specific training materials for managers and supervisors, which would include topics such as delegation of authority, procurement dollar amount thresholds, contract management, and executing internal OPP and Ontario Public Sector procurement procedures. The OPP planned to offer these sessions bi-annually for new managers, beginning in December 2023.

- *put in place an ongoing process to monitor and confirm that staff involved in procurement follow the OPP's procurement rules, including that required levels of approval are obtained before purchase orders are sent to vendors.*

Status: In the process of being implemented by June 2024.

Details

In our 2021 audit, we found that there was a risk of duplicate purchase orders being issued, and the opportunity existed to issue purchase orders without obtaining the required level of approval when processing a transaction in IFIS. For example, we found that on March 9, 2019, a significant contract with a vendor to provide the OPP with laptop mounting stations for OPP vehicles was set to expire. On March 8, 2019, one day before the contract expired, OPP staff decided to issue a \$1.89 million purchase order to the vendor. The purchase order was sent from the OPP's internal systems, rather than from IFIS. The purchase order did not have the required terms and conditions that are part of IFIS purchase orders, and did not include the approval of

the Deputy Solicitor General, required for purchases over \$1 million.

In our follow-up, we found that the OPP had begun work to implement a process to monitor and confirm that staff involved in procurement follow the OPP's procurement rules, including that proper approval levels are obtained before procurement. For example, the OPP informed us that its Procurement Services Section is in the process of creating training videos, a new Standard Operating Procedure for Procurement Coordinators and checklists for procurement officers and advisors, which are expected to be created by December 2023. These checklists will accompany approved procurement packages to guide staff through the process, including directing staff to complete a requisition in IFIS to create a purchase order.

The Financial Controllershship Unit of the OPP planned to conduct an audit of financial transactions and internal monitoring mechanisms. This would include a review of amounts over \$5,000 to ensure that IFIS purchase orders were issued to support the transactions. The audit and any related findings from it were expected to be completed by December 2023, with recommendations being implemented by June 2024. The OPP expected to complete this type of audit every one to two years, depending on the findings and recommendations from the initial audit.

Recommendation 12

To maximize the capital and operational cost effectiveness of its vehicle fleet, we recommend that the Ontario Provincial Police:

- *establish an internal benchmark for vehicle utilization;*

Status: Fully implemented.

Details

Our 2021 audit found that the OPP did not consider minimum vehicle utilization levels and actual staffing levels when determining its fleet strategy and vehicle procurement decisions. While the OPP did not have a guideline or benchmark for its road vehicles related to minimum annual kilometric use, we found that the Ministry of Transportation (MTO) published a utilization guideline for both directly assigned and

shared enforcement vehicles within the Ontario Public Service. MTO's guideline states that shared vehicles (such as frontline vehicles), which account for nearly 40% of the OPP's fleet, should be driven at least 1,200 kilometres per month (1,600 for directly assigned vehicles), or 14,400 kilometres per year. We found that where the OPP had recorded the kilometric travel of its frontline road vehicles, between 16% and 34% of them had been underutilized relative to MTO's guideline of 14,400 annual kilometres.

In our follow-up, we found that the OPP used MTO's guideline to establish its own guideline for vehicle utilization. Those vehicles driven under 1,600 kilometres per month were considered underutilized, and those over 7,500 kilometres per month were considered over-utilized. These benchmarks had been included in the Guide to OPP Fleet Management and the OPP's Mileage Compliance and Utilization Report. In November 2022, the OPP completed a jurisdictional scan and found that the 1,600-kilometre benchmark was similar to that of York Regional Police, which had a benchmark of 1,250 kilometres per month. This benchmark is now included in a draft operating procedure within the OPP.

- *using this benchmark, conduct a review of fleet utilization, with the goal of maximizing cost-effectiveness while maintaining operational readiness;*

Status: Fully implemented.

Details

Our 2021 audit found that 241 of the OPP's fleet of frontline road vehicles were underutilized. We estimated that the cost to purchase these vehicles identified as underutilized in 2019/20 was over \$9 million, and the cost to repair and maintain them was nearly \$640,000 in 2019 alone. Given these costs, even a modest reduction in vehicles owned and operated by the OPP, based on actual utilization data, could result in significant savings in capital and operating costs.

A 2016 review of OPP fleet management conducted by the Ontario Internal Audit Division also found that a significant number of OPP vehicles were underutilized, and recommended the OPP critically examine

underutilized vehicles. However, we found that the OPP had not conducted any significant analysis of underutilized vehicles.

In our follow-up, we found that the OPP had conducted an assessment of vehicle use from September 2022 to February 2023. The assessment utilized the vehicle manufacturer's software in over 260 patrol-enforcement vehicles to record kilometric travel. The assessment found that manual kilometric travel entries were under-reported by approximately 780 kilometres per vehicle, per month. The OPP also launched a fleet optimization dashboard in February 2022, which allowed management to review fleet utilization data in a timely fashion, flagging potentially underutilized vehicles for follow-up. The OPP's fleet vehicles are now assessed quarterly against the 1,600-kilometre per month utilization benchmark to assess which, if any, fleet vehicles are being underused or overused so as to promote a more balanced use of fleet vehicles at detachments.

- *consider historical utilization, actual staffing levels and projected staffing, rather than authorized staffing, in its fleet strategy and procurement of vehicles.*

Status: Little or no progress.

Details

In our 2021 audit, we found that the OPP's fleet management and procurement strategy did not consider the historic utilization of vehicles, or the significant vacancies in frontline policing the OPP was experiencing. We found that, instead, its latest fleet management strategy was to procure and allocate vehicles primarily based on the number of officers it was authorized to employ. Rather than reducing the number of vehicles in accordance with their utilization, from 2016 to 2020 the OPP increased the number of road vehicles in its fleet from 4,035 to approximately 4,090, even though the number of police officers employed by the OPP decreased from 5,785 in 2016 to 5,577 in 2020.

In our follow-up, we found that the OPP had made little progress in implementing this recommendation. Starting in January 2022, the OPP had begun considering the historical allocation of fleet patrol-enforcement vehicles, and staffing levels and

roles, against the Service Delivery Model's projected staffing. The intent was to ensure that fleet allocation was related to the actual staffing and roles at a detachment rather than what the detachment was authorized to staff.

The OPP told us it planned to create a framework to provide more flexibility within the regions to address staffing and role changes, as well as a tool to assess vehicle requirements and re-allocations for maximum utilization. This plan included a 12-month pilot program in the OPP's Central Region with a regional fleet allocation review, including a physical inventory of assets and a comparison to actual staffing levels and roles. The OPP expected to complete this framework and to make relevant recommendations for the utilization of vehicles using the framework by March 2024, with implementation of these recommendations to follow.

By September 2024, the OPP also planned to implement a process to assess current and projected staffing levels for fleet demands and deployments, given the impact of the Service Delivery Model and scheduling. This process would be rolled out to all detachments as the Service Delivery Model was expanded across the province by the end of 2029. (See **Recommendation 1.**)

Performance Measurement

Recommendation 13

To more effectively assess its performance in delivering adequate and effective policing services in Ontario, we recommend that the Ontario Provincial Police:

- *select key performance indicators from the Canadian Police Performance Metrics Framework, including indicators with targets, and report these publicly;*

Status: In the process of being implemented by December 2024.

Details

From our value-for-money audit, we learned that the OPP had not identified key performance indicators with targets and did not use such indicators to measure

the effectiveness and efficiency of its operations. The OPP's annual reports provided some information that could help to measure efficiency, such as frontline officer hours allocated to administration, and municipal policing costs per household served. However, the OPP had not set targets for these measures, nor did it use the results to assess its efficiency and cost-effectiveness. The OPP also did not report publicly on other potential efficiency and effectiveness indicators that could provide valuable insight into its operations, such as time taken to respond to calls, and officer time lost to illness.

In 2014, Statistics Canada, in collaboration with the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police, undertook a review of current performance measures being used by police services in Canada, including the OPP. The review led to the development of the Canadian Police Performance Metrics Framework in 2017, which was contributed to and endorsed by the OPP. The framework outlines 47 performance indicators across four general categories.

In our follow-up, we noted that in March 2023, the OPP completed its review of the Canadian Police Performance Metrics Framework (CPPMF) and identified four CPPMF performance indicators on which to report publicly. The indicators are crime rate, crime severity index, clearance rate, and police officer strength. Reporting is scheduled to begin with the OPP's 2023 Annual Report, to be issued in 2024. The OPP expects to set goals for these four indicators by December 2024. The OPP stated it would review the appropriateness of the other indicators once "adequate and effective policing" had been defined under the *Community Safety and Policing Act, 2019*.

- *compare and benchmark indicators against other Canadian police services.*

Status: In the process of being implemented by December 2024.

Details

In our 2021 audit, OPP staff told us the scope and mandate of the OPP was unique and unlike that of any other police service in Ontario, limiting comparability across the province's policing sector. However,

we found that the OPP's stance on targets and key performance indicators, and comparability across jurisdictions, did not align with contributions it had made in developing a national performance framework for policing, the Canadian Police Performance Metrics Framework (CPPMF).

In our follow-up, we found that the OPP had completed a jurisdictional scan in January 2023, to determine which police services within Ontario and Canada had adopted CPPMF performance indicators and which specific indicators were adopted. The OPP informed us that the 13 police services it surveyed (including the RCMP and the Sûreté du Québec) did not use all CPPMF performance indicators. The commonly reported indicators used were the four that the OPP selected to report publicly on in 2023: crime rate, crime severity index, clearance rate, and police officer strength. The OPP expected to complete its comparison to other police services by the end of 2023, and to report on its results in its 2023 annual report—which will be released by the end of 2024. The OPP also planned to compare its progress on these four indicators against the national and provincial average in future annual reports. The OPP told us that it would also consider whether other CPPMF performance indicators were appropriate for comparison.

Recommendation 14

To help monitor response times to calls and to minimize detachment response times throughout the province, we recommend that the Ontario Provincial Police:

- *identify the causes of issues with response-time data, and take steps to improve the accuracy and reliability of the data through controls and officer training;*

Status: In the process of being implemented by December 2023.

Details

We found in our 2021 audit that the OPP did not analyze how much time elapsed between receipt of a call by one of its regional communications centres and when an officer arrived on the scene. Consequently, the OPP did not know whether its average response

times were reasonable, particularly for more serious or higher-priority calls. Unexpectedly, we found that the highest priority calls requiring an immediate response, such as those that involve a catastrophic event, injury, threat of injury or death, had a significantly longer response time than non-urgent calls that only require the officer to respond as soon as practical. However, we found several clear indications these results were not accurate. For example, we found that the OPP's data included a large portion of calls with a blank (empty) dispatch time, and a large number of calls without the time the officer arrived.

Our follow-up found that in January 2022, the OPP had extracted three years of response-time data in order to examine the quality of the data, and had determined that the primary cause of inaccurate data was the failure of officers to report their status when attending calls for service. In response to this, the OPP communicated to officers in November 2022, to remind officers to report their status when attending calls for service. The OPP also created and distributed a tip sheet to all Provincial Communication Operators in April and November 2022, reminding these operators that they may need to change statuses should an officer arrive on scene but fail to update their status. The OPP planned to conduct an audit to ensure compliance and improved accuracy and reliability of data by December 2023, and on a yearly basis thereafter.

- *set individual response-time benchmarks for each detachment based on local variables;*

Status: Little or no progress.

Details

In our 2021 audit, we found that accurate tracking of response times on a detachment-by-detachment basis would allow the OPP to evaluate the deployment and scheduling of officers throughout the province, and potentially identify areas where longer response times posed a risk to public safety. We found examples of several jurisdictions that measured and publicly reported response times to calls for service. For example, the Vancouver Police Department and the Ottawa Police Service both measure and publicly report their response times for high-priority calls,

and the Edmonton Police Service has set a target of responding to its highest priority calls (where a person's safety is at risk) of arriving on the scene in under seven minutes, 80% of the time.

In our follow-up, we found that the OPP established individual response-time benchmarks for each detachment based on available data between 2019 and 2021 for Priority 0 and 1 calls (calls for service that require an immediate response) in January 2023. However, the OPP simply used the average response time for each detachment over the time frame as its individual benchmark. The OPP did not consider local variables to set appropriate detachment response time benchmarks such as, for example, area covered, population density, detachment vacancies, and road quality and speeds.

- *take corrective action when benchmarks are not met;*

Status: In the process of being implemented by January 2024.

Details

In our follow-up, we found that the OPP had made some progress in implementing this recommendation. Although we found, as noted above, that the OPP set individual response time benchmarks for each detachment, these benchmarks were not set based on an assessment of what is appropriate based on local variables—instead, they were simply based on historical average response times. Nevertheless, we did note that the OPP conducted a six-month review of available response times and compared them against its established three-year average benchmarks for detachments in June 2023. The OPP planned to review this data on an annual basis, starting in January 2024 to identify and take corrective action where needed.

- *report response times to municipal police services boards.*

Status: In the process of being implemented by January 2024.

Details

In our 2021 audit, the OPP explained that it would be impractical to set a standard response time for calls because the areas serviced by each detachment had significant geographic differences. However, we found several international police services that were responsible for policing large territories similar to the OPP that measured and reported on response times. For example, the New Zealand Police measure, report and have standards for response times to emergency events in both urban and rural areas. Similarly, the state police service of New South Wales, Australia, set individual urgent call response-time targets for each district within the state, and publicly reported the percentage of calls responded to within those targets.

In our follow-up, in January 2023, the Commissioner of the OPP agreed to monitor response times, and share them with municipal police service boards during in camera meetings. The OPP stated that the first in camera meeting to share response time data with municipal police service boards would occur in January 2024.

Recommendation 15

To ensure it is identifying areas that require improvement and allocating resources appropriately, we recommend that the Ontario Provincial Police regularly compare its clearance rates against those for similar Canadian police services.

Status: In the process of being implemented by December 2024.

Details

We found in our 2021 audit that although crime clearance data from other Canadian jurisdictions was publicly available, the OPP did not benchmark its incident clearance (crime clearance) results to other jurisdictions to assess its performance and identify areas for improvement. We compared the OPP's crime clearance rates to those for similar police services in Canada from 2016 to 2020. We found that the OPP compared favourably with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) in British Columbia and Alberta, but lagged behind the Sûreté du Québec,

Quebec’s provincial police service. We noted that the Sûreté du Québec had consistently outperformed the OPP in clearing crime over this period, indicating there was still room for improvement.

In our follow-up, we found that in between November 2022 and January 2023, the OPP reviewed the following criteria across similar Canadian police services to assess comparability: policing structure, number of detachments, policing coverage area, municipal contracts, and police service responsibility of large municipalities. The OPP surveyed 11 police services

across Canada, including the RCMP in British Columbia and Alberta and the Sûreté du Québec—which it selected as comparators. At the time of our follow-up, the OPP had was awaiting clearance rate data for 2021 and 2022 from these parties. The OPP anticipated completing a comparative analysis by December 2023. The OPP also indicated it planned to compare its rates to the national and provincial overall clearance rates, and would determine how to regularly complete this exercise by December 2024.