

Decision Regarding Findings Report INV-24-10 Concerning Policing Provided by the Ottawa Police Service

Decision By:

Ryan Teschner, Inspector General of Policing

I. INTRODUCTION

[1] This decision addresses a complaint received by the Inspector General of Policing against the Ottawa Police Service (“OPS”), alleging that the OPS failed to respond to a 911 call from a daycare related to an aggressive person within a reasonable time. An inspector with Ontario’s Inspectorate of Policing (“IoP”) investigated the complaint to determine whether the OPS failed to comply with the *Community Safety and Policing Act, 2019*, SO 2019, c 1, Sch 1 (the “Act”) or its regulations.

[2] Following a review of the inspector’s Findings Report,¹ which is attached to this Decision as Appendix A, and for the reasons that follow, I conclude that the OPS has met the requirements within the Act and the regulations. However, I have concerns related to the initial classification of the call priority and a time lag between when additional information was received by OPS and then actioned, which I will also address. I urge the OPS to review this Decision with a view to making improvements to internal processes to minimize the potential for similar situations.

II. BACKGROUND

[3] The OPS Communications / Dispatch Policy includes a Call Response Protocol outlining the criteria for call classification. Priority 3 calls are considered incidents where there is a reasonable belief that an extended delay may place persons, property, or evidence at risk. The objective is a response within 30 minutes, 90% of the time, and backup includes those close to the zone where the call originates. In contrast, Priority 2 calls are those that require a rapid response where there is a potential for serious bodily harm to occur. In those cases, the objective is a response within 15 minutes, 90% of the time, and backup includes anyone near the area, including those within other divisions.

[4] On May 6, 2024, at 2:32 p.m., the OPS received a call from an employee at a daycare in Ottawa reporting that an individual, displaying erratic behavior and speaking incoherently, was trying to enter the facility. The person had grabbed at a person’s phone, tried to enter the building twice and was refusing to leave. The call was received by the call-taker while the situation was still live and unfolding.

¹ Section 123 of the Act requires an IoP inspector who completes an investigation of a complaint to report their findings to the Inspector General. This report is redacted to comply with the *Publication of Findings Reports and Directions under Sections 123 and 125 of the Act* Regulation, O Reg 317/24.

[5] The call was initially classified as a Priority 3 call. No officers in the zone where the call originated were immediately available at the time, and Priority 3 calls only require backup from other officers from within the same zone.

[6] Nine minutes after initial call, additional information was received by OPS, at 2:41 p.m. The additional information, including that the daycare was now in lockdown, was only provided to Dispatch at 3:02 p.m. – 21 minutes later. The call was then re-classified to Priority 2 by a Supervisor. Priority 2 calls require backup from officers from outside the same zone.

[7] Officers were then on route at 3:06 p.m. and on scene at 3:13 p.m. The total time from the initial call at 2:32 p.m. to the response on scene at 3:13 p.m. was 41 minutes.

III. ISSUES

[8] The sole issue that I must address is whether the OPS provided “adequate and effective policing” as defined by the Act.

IV. ANALYSIS

[9] Based on the Findings Report, I find that the technical call-taking dispatch requirements within the Act and regulations, which set the standards for adequate and effective policing in this context, were complied with.

[10] Section 11 of the Act defines “adequate and effective policing” as the delivery of statutorily defined policing functions in accordance with the standards contained in the Act’s regulations:

11 (1) Adequate and effective policing means all of the following functions provided in accordance with the standards set out in the regulations, including the standards with respect to the avoidance of conflicts of interest, and with the requirements of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* and the *Human Rights Code*:

1. Crime prevention.
2. Law enforcement.
3. Maintaining the public peace.
4. Emergency response.
5. Assistance to victims of crime.
6. Any other prescribed policing functions.

[11] Dispatch of emergency policing calls is an “other prescribed policing function,” with specific requirements. Section 15 of the *Adequate and Effective Policing (General) Regulation*, O Reg 392/23 (the “Adequate and Effective Policing Regulation”), defines standards related to dispatch:

15. (1) For the purposes of paragraph 6 of subsection 11 (1) of the Act, adequate and effective policing includes dispatching members of a police service.

(2) The following standards for adequate and effective policing, relating to the dispatching of members of a police service, are prescribed:

1. A communications centre that operates 24 hours a day with one or more communications operators or dispatchers to answer emergency calls for service and that maintains constant two-way voice communication capability with police officers who are on patrol or responding to emergency calls must be used for the purposes of dispatching members of a police service.

2. A member of a police service must be available 24 hours a day to supervise police communications and dispatch services.

3. Police officers on patrol must be provided with portable two-way voice communication capability that allows the police officers to be in contact with the communications centre when away from their vehicle or on foot patrol.

4. A member of a police service who supervises communications operators and dispatchers must have successfully completed the training prescribed by the Minister on that subject.

(3) Every chief of police shall establish written procedures on communications and dispatch services.

[12] There is no evidence in the Findings Report to suggest the OPS failed to comply with the standards for dispatch contained in the Adequate and Effective Policing Regulation. It is apparent that there was an operational communications centre at the time of the call and procedures in place related to communications and dispatch services.

[13] However, despite technical compliance, I am concerned about the initial decision to classify this as a Priority 3 call, based on the information that was known at that time. This information included two attempted entries by an unauthorized person who was exhibiting erratic behaviour and had displayed violence towards a daycare employee, damaging their property. Importantly, the incident occurred at a daycare, with a vulnerable population – children – at risk.

[14] I realize that the priority level assigned to a call is based on the facts known at the time, the application of internal procedure, and judgment. I also empathize with the very difficult job that 911 call takers and dispatchers do. Their vital work is often unseen, can often be traumatic, and it is only because of them that people across this province can access the emergency help they need. They must make split-second decisions, often on the basis of incomplete information. Nevertheless, I am of the view that given the facts that were presented during the initial 911 call and the risks present, the priority level should have been higher than that assigned. Assigning a higher priority level would have been appropriate, and also would have provided for a more immediate policing response.

[15] I am also concerned about the passage of 21 minutes between the time additional information was received by the OPS call-taker (i.e. daycare is in lockdown) and when that information was shared with Dispatch. Only at this point did the 911 supervisor elevate the call priority – a decision I commend.

[16] Finally, I commend the quick and effective response of the OPS officers, once the supervisor elevated the call priority and unlocked the additional requirement for backup.

V. CONCLUSION

[17] The OPS provided “adequate and effective” policing in these circumstances by complying with the standards related to dispatch in the Adequate and Effective Policing Regulation.

Date: December 30, 2025

Original Signed By

Ryan Teschner
Inspector General of Policing

FINDINGS REPORT

Ottawa Police Service

**Section 107(1)(a) Policing
Complaint Investigation
(INV-24-10)**

Submitted to:
Ryan Teschner
Inspector General of Policing of
Ontario

August 19, 2025

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ABOUT THE INSPECTOR GENERAL OF POLICING AND THE INSPECTORATE OF POLICING

The Inspector General of Policing drives improved performance and accountability in policing and police governance by overseeing the delivery of adequate and effective policing across Ontario. The Inspector General ensures compliance with the province's policing legislation and standards, and has the authority to issue progressive, risk-based and binding directions and measures to protect public safety. Ontario's Community Safety and Policing Act embeds protections to ensure the Inspector General's statutory duty is delivered independently from government.

The Inspector General of Policing leads the Inspectorate of Policing (IoP). The IoP provides operational support to inspect, investigate, monitor, and advise Ontario's police services, boards and special constable employers. By leveraging independent research and data intelligence, the IoP promotes leading practices and identifies areas for improvement, ensuring that high-quality policing and police governance is delivered to make everyone in Ontario safer.

In March 2023, Ryan Teschner was appointed as Ontario's first Inspector General of Policing with duties and authorities under the Community Safety and Policing Act. Mr. Teschner is a recognized expert in public administration, policing and police governance.

For more information about the Inspector General of Policing or the IoP, please visit www.iopontario.ca

INTRODUCTION

This is a report to the Inspector General of Policing by an inspector appointed by the Inspector General, who has completed an inspection under Part VII of the *Community Safety and Policing Act, 2019* (CSPA).

OVERVIEW OF INVESTIGATION

The Complaint

A written complaint was received by the Inspector General of Policing alleging that the Ottawa Police Service (OPS) failed to provide adequate and effective policing by not attending a daycare on lockdown within an appropriate response time.

An individual at a daycare made threats of violence and exhibited aggression towards the daycare employees and children. The daycare went into lockdown and proceeded to call police for assistance with the individual in question. It is further alleged that it took over an hour for the Ottawa Police Service to respond to the call.

The Subject Police Service

Name of Police Service: Ottawa Police Service

Service Headquarters: 474 Elgin St, Ottawa, ON, K2P 2E6

Chief of Police: Eric Stubbs

Chief of Police since November 2022

Service Total Strength: (Actual & Authorized)

- **Number of sworn members:**
Actual: 1,584 (as of June 25, 2025)
Authorized: 1,570
- **Number of civilian members:**
Actual: 706 (as of June 25, 2025)
Authorized: 717

Geographic Service Area

- Total area covered: Approximately 2,778 square kilometres
- Population served: Approximately 1.11 million

Applicable Legislative and Regulatory Provisions

Section 11(1) of the CSPA provides that adequate and effective policing means all of the following functions provided in accordance with the standards set out in the regulations, including the standards with respect to the avoidance of conflicts of interest, and with the requirements of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* and the *Human Rights Code*:

1. Crime prevention.
2. Law enforcement.
3. Maintaining the public peace.
4. Emergency response.
5. Assistance to victims of crime.
6. Any other prescribed policing functions.

The following regulation was reviewed having regard to the allegations made in the complaint:

[Ontario Regulation 392/23: Adequate and Effective Policing \(General\)](#)

SUMMARY OF THE INVESTIGATION CONDUCTED

Complainant Interview

Follow-up with the complainant was attempted with no response. Nevertheless, given the detail in the original complaint, no further information was required to proceed.

Ottawa Police Service Records Review

After completing a thorough review of the material provided by the OPS, the following information was revealed.

On May 6, 2024, at 2:32 p.m., a call was placed to 911 by a daycare employee regarding a disturbance in progress outside of the daycare centre. The call was regarding an individual with no association to the business who was attempting to gain entry to the facilities. The individual was exhibiting highly erratic behavior and vocalizing incoherent statements. File information indicated that the individual grabbed at the director's phone while they were speaking outside, causing it to fall to the ground and smashing the screen. The individual was not granted access to the building and refused to leave when directed to do so.

A review of the Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) revealed that at 2:33 p.m., OPS communications staff gathered additional information from the caller regarding the individual and the incident. The communications staff classified the call as a priority 3. The caller indicated that the individual had attempted to enter the building twice, sat in front of the daycare for 45 minutes and briefly left and returned.

A second call was made to 911 by the same caller at 2:41 p.m. The caller indicated that the individual was in the parking lot disturbing staff.

The CAD transcript indicates that dispatch was informed at 3:02 p.m. that the individual was in front of the daycare, and they were now in lockdown. A message was sent to a supervisor by communications staff at 3:04 p.m., and at this time, the priority of the call was changed from priority 3 to priority 2.

Once the priority of the call was changed to a priority 2, police officers were dispatched at 3:05 p.m. and were on route at 3:06 p.m. The CAD transcript indicated that at 3:13 p.m. officers were on scene, and the call was cleared at 4:34 p.m.

Ottawa Police Service Procedures

The OPS Communications/Dispatch Policy No: 2:01 was reviewed. This procedure includes a Call Response Protocol, which outlines the criteria to determine the priority of a call, definitions of types of calls, goals, and objectives for each priority.

As the call was initially categorized as a priority 3, the Call Response Protocol was reviewed. Priority 3 calls are defined as incidents in which there is a reasonable belief that an extended delay in response may place persons, property, or evidence at risk. The goal is a response time between 0-30 minutes, 90% of the time. The objective is to ensure appropriate and timely response to all priority 3 calls. The protocol states that backup location is anyone close to the zone.

Here, the priority of the call was changed by a supervisor from a priority 3 to a priority 2 due to the additional information gathered by the call taker. Priority 2 calls are defined as all events that require a rapid police response where there is potential for serious bodily harm to occur.

The goal is a response time between 0-15 minutes, 90% of the time. The call response protocol also indicates that backup location is anyone in the Division and other divisions where an officer is in close proximity.

The Dispatch Matrix in the Call Response Protocol provides a quick reference for each priority call, describing the criteria for each priority, the response time for each priority, and the backup location for each priority call.

A review of staffing levels and other calls for service at the time of the incident reported in this complaint show that all officers in the zone where this call originated were assigned to calls for service. As a result, when the call was re-classified as a priority 2, units were dispatched from two other patrol zones to respond.

The queued calls pending for May 6, 2024, were also reviewed. At the time of the call from the daycare at 2:32 p.m., there were five priority 3 calls, two priority 4 calls and one priority 6 call pending for the Division. Of the eight pending calls, four were within the same zone as the daycare incident and were categorized as either a priority 3 or a priority 6.

As part of the investigation, the *OPS Patrol Directorate Standard Operating Procedures Policy* was also reviewed. This policy is currently under review due to the CSPA coming into force. The purpose of the policy is to provide related expectations on several factors impacting effective resource management for Frontline Platoon and Fixed Shift Operations. The policy outlines general staffing levels, unit complements, sector and city-wide staffing, time off and deployment.

Ottawa Police Service Call-taker / Dispatcher Training

When an individual is hired within the Communications Centre at the OPS, they are placed in-class for the start of their training. Within the in-class portion, new members are exposed to the roles and responsibilities of a call taker and dispatcher, as well as the provincial adequacy standards, as directed by the Ministry of the Solicitor General. A sample of other topics covered include: 911 Tiered Response, Liabilities & Ethics, Wellness and Ergonomics, OPS Boundaries, Call Response Protocols, Dispatch Matrix, Policies and Procedures, Call Paths, Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) training, Canadian Police Information Centre (CPIC) training, Suspect Apprehension Pursuit (SAP) training, Frontline Ride-Along, as well as various online courses through the Canadian Police Knowledge Network (CPKN).

Once the in-class portion has been completed, the member is paired with a trainer for on the phone training. New members are trained on answering 911 calls as well as the non-emergency line for the OPS. After approximately 350-400 hours of training, the member is “released” and works independently from their trainer. After a couple of months, the member gets paired with a trainer to begin dispatch training. The dispatch training is hands on and not done in a classroom style. Typically, a member trains on dispatch for another 2-3 months before being fully released.

In addition, there are mandatory courses required throughout communications staff members’ careers. A sample of ongoing training includes, Cultural Awareness and Humility, Accessible Customer Service in a Policing Environment, Bill 168 Occupational Health and Safety, Active Bystander in Law Enforcement (ABLE), Anti-Black racism, and many more. Generally, the Chief of Police will issue orders on mandatory training that OPS members are required to complete.

Involved Call-taker / Dispatcher Training Status

The length of service for the dispatcher at the time of the incident was [redacted – s 1(1)2 – O Reg 317/24].

The call takers, at the time of the incident each had approximately [redacted – s 1(1)2 – O Reg 317/24].

The dispatcher for this incident was originally trained in [redacted – s 1(1)2 – O Reg 317/24], which included an initial three weeks of in-class training. The two call takers involved in this incident were originally trained in [redacted – s 1(1)2 – O Reg 317/24], and also received three weeks of in-class training. All have completed ongoing training updates as required. Since [redacted – s 1(1)2 – O Reg 317/24], the OPS' training program has developed and new members joining the Communications Centre now receive five weeks of in-class training.

The type of call for service in this incident was covered in the training curriculum for all involved staff members.

INVESTIGATION FINDINGS

I make the following findings, relying on the information collected during the investigation and summarized in part above:

- 1. The Ottawa Police Service received a call regarding a disturbance at a daycare on May 6, 2024.**
 - a. On May 6, 2024, at 2:32 p.m., a call was made to 911 by an employee from the daycare.
 - b. The initial 911 call was classified by the call taker as a priority 3.
 - c. The CAD transcript revealed that a call for service was generated and sent to dispatch.
 - d. At the time of the initial call, all officers in the zone were unavailable and there were an additional four calls in the zone pending to be assigned.

2. Updated information was received, and the initial call priority was changed.

- a. Additional information was gathered by the call taker at 2:41 p.m., including that the individual was in the parking lot disturbing staff.
- b. Updated information was provided to dispatch at 3:02 p.m., indicating that the individual was in front of the daycare, and they were now in lockdown.
- c. Dispatch sent a message to a supervisor at 3:04 p.m. At this time the supervisor re-classified the call from a priority 3 to priority 2.
- d. The CAD transcript shows that officers were dispatched at 3:05 p.m. and they were on route at 3:06 p.m.
- e. At 3:13 p.m., the CAD indicates that officers were on scene dealing with the matter.
- f. At the time that the call was dispatched, officers within the zone were dealing with other matters, therefore officers were dispatched from neighboring zones in accordance with the OPS Call Response Protocol policy and procedure.

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