Inspectorate of Policing

Decision Regarding Findings Report INV-25-75 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 concerning the Ottawa Police Service ("OPS"), alleging that police failed to respond in a timely fashion to a call-for-service to remove a disorderly male from a workplace. 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 OPS has complied with the Act and the regulations.

II. BACKGROUND

[3] The complainant called the OPS in relation to an unwanted person who was disorderly and making racial remarks at their place of work.

[4] The call-for-service was received at 8:32 pm. The complainant reported that the male was not violent and there was no sign of threat. On-site security eventually successfully escorted the male off the premises. OPS officers subsequently arrived at the location after it was closed for the day and the complainant had left.

[5] On his way home, the complainant observed two OPS police cars in a nearby parking lot. In the complainant's view, the officers in the cars were not engaged in any work. The complainant was upset that those units had not attended earlier to assist them.

[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.

III. ISSUES

[6] Did the OPS deliver adequate and effective policing in compliance with the Act and its regulations?

IV. ANALYSIS

OPS Records

[7] The computer-assisted dispatch ("CAD") records of the OPS revealed the complainant's call-for-service was received at 8:32 p.m. The complaint was categorized as an "unwanted person to be removed" and assigned a Priority 3. OPS officers were dispatched at 9:10 p.m. and arrived at 9:13 p.m. Officers found the matter had been resolved and all was in order.

[8] OPS CAD records also revealed that there were two OPS units in the nearby parking lot of the Canadian Museum of Science at the time in question. Both were involved in two separate investigations. These were the two units the complainant observed on his way home after leaving work that evening. One unit was completing a collision report for a matter they had attended 15 minutes before the complainant's call. The other unit had responded to a call-for-service in respect of an unconscious male, which had been dispatched 10 minutes after the complainant's call. However, the unconscious male call-for-service was a Priority 2 call – *i.e.* a higher priority call – and so superseded the complainant's call.

[9] At the time of the complainant's call, the OPS call queue showed 42 active calls-for-service.

[10] Finally, the inspector's review of the audio recording of the call-for-service confirmed that, based on the complainant's report at the time, the unwanted person had not been violent and there was nothing to suggest any specific urgency beyond wanting the male removed. The complainant was also reminded by the call-taker to call 911 again if the situation escalated.

Legal Test

[11] "Adequate and effective policing" is defined in subsection 11(1) of the Act, and requires that all six (6) of the described policing functions are provided in accordance with the standards set out in the regulations, and with the requirements of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* and the *Human Rights Code*.[2]

[12] The standard prescribed by regulation is defined in subsection 2(1) of the *Adequate and Effective Policing (General)*, O Reg 392/23 (the "Regulation"). It requires that every policing function be provided in a reasonable manner, having regard to the following factors:

a. The policing needs of the community.
b. The geographic and socio-demographic characteristics of the police service's area of policing responsibility.
c. The extent to and manner in which the policing function is effectively provided in similar communities in Ontario.
d. The extent to which past provision of the policing function by the police service has been effective in addressing the policing needs of the community.
e. Best practices respecting the policing function.

[13] The two policing functions primarily engaged by the complainant's allegations are i) emergency response, and ii) dispatching members of a police service.[3]

[2] The six (6) required policing functions are:
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.

[3] "Dispatching a member of a police service" is one of the prescribed policing functions, and is established by section 15 of the Regulation.

[14] In this case, OPS received the call-for-service, assessed its seriousness, and assigned it a priority level based on criteria established by OPS policy. The call-taker obtained the relevant information from the complainant to assess the seriousness of the call-for-service so that a proper prioritization category could be assigned to it. OPS officers were then dispatched in accordance with that priority category.

[15] Given the nature of the call, there is nothing to indicate that the OPS's broader decision-making approach to call prioritization is inadequate. In these circumstances, relative to other policing demands that existed at the time, and given no indication of a threat of violence or bodily harm, the OPS's prioritization of this type of call and the policing response that was ultimately deployed was reasonable.

[16] The OPS did attend the scene – and quickly, considering the other calls-for-service in the queue. The unwanted person had already been escorted from the premises by private security – a perfectly reasonable response in the circumstances, and one that should have led to the OPS being notified that there was no longer a need for police to attend. This could have better enabled the OPS to deploy those resources elsewhere, faster, given the 42 pending calls-for-service.

[17] I also wish to comment briefly on the complainant's suggestion that the OPS units they observed while travelling home were not working. The OPS CAD records plainly refute that assertion. This highlights an important reality of modern policing: members of the public are often not in a position to know what duties an officer is performing at any given moment. The absence of a visible enforcement action, active pursuit, or attendance at a scene should not be mistaken for an absence of work.

[18] Police service extends far beyond the activities most visible to the public. Every call-for-service generates investigative, administrative, and reporting obligations that must be completed accurately and in accordance with legal and organizational requirements. Much of policing occurs away from public view and does not present as dramatic or urgent – unlike in the movies or on TV. Accordingly, the mere fact that a police vehicle is parked or that officers are not visibly engaged in enforcement activity provides no basis to conclude they are not working. To the contrary, some of the most essential aspects of police work are often carried out behind the scenes, without any outward indication to the casual observer.

V. CONCLUSION

[19] I am satisfied that the OPS provided adequate and effective policing in these circumstances. No further action is required.

Date: October 29, 2026

Original Signed By

Ryan Teschner
Inspector General of Policing

Inspectorate of Policing

FINDINGS REPORT

Ottawa Police Service

Section 107(1)(a) Policing Complaint Investigation
(INV-25-75)

Submitted to:
Ryan Teschner
Inspector General of Policing of Ontario

July 20, 2026

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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 investigation under Part VII of the *Community Safety and Policing Act, 2019* (CSPA).

OVERVIEW OF INVESTIGATION

The Complaint

A written complaint was forwarded by the Law Enforcement Complaints Agency (LECA) to the Inspector General of Policing under the provisions of section 108 of the CSPA. It was alleged that at approximately 8:32 p.m. the complainant, while at their place of work in the City of Ottawa, called the Ottawa Police Service (OPS) because there was a disorderly male swearing and making racial remarks. The complainant asked that the police attend and remove the male from the premises. The complainant further reported that their workplace closed at 9:00 p.m. At closing time, the police had not yet attended, and the disorderly male was escorted out of the facility by on site security. The complainant then reported that they left their place of work, and a few blocks later observed two Ottawa Police vehicles parked in a parking lot near the Ottawa Police station apparently not doing anything. The complainant was upset that the police did not attend their workplace to remove the disorderly male as there were Ottawa Police Service vehicles in close proximity to the call for assistance.

The Subject Police Service

Name of Police Service: Ottawa Police Service
Service Headquarters: 474 Elgin Street, Ottawa, Ontario, K2P 2J6
Chief of Police: Chief Eric Stubbs
Chief of Police since November 2022
Service Total Strength: (Actual & Authorized)

- Number of sworn members:
  Actual: 1584
  Authorized: 1570
- Number of civilian members:
  Actual: 706
  Authorized: 717

Geographic Service Area

- 2778 Square Kilometers
- Community Population of 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.

Ontario Regulation 392/23: ADEQUATE AND EFFECTIVE POLICING (GENERAL) was reviewed having regard to the allegations made in the complaint.

SUMMARY OF THE INVESTIGATION CONDUCTED

Complainant Interview

An interview was conducted with the complainant regarding their complaint.
The complainant confirmed that they did call the police regarding a disorderly male at their workplace on October 30, 2024, at approximately 8:30 p.m. and requested that police attend and remove the male.

The complainant stated that they were upset that the police did not attend the call for the disorderly male who was swearing and making racist remarks in the 28-minute period between their call to police, and the time that the facility closed. The complainant confirmed that on site security directed the disorderly male to leave the premises and he complied. The complainant was upset that the police did not attend leaving two employees to fend for themselves with an unpredictable male, and the complainant felt anything could have happened in that period.

The complainant then confirmed that they left their workplace and travelled through the city in an eastbound direction. The complainant advised that they observed two OPS vehicles in a parking lot only blocks away from the location of their complaint, and it appeared that those officers were not doing anything. The complainant found this very upsetting. The complainant indicated that the police did eventually show up at their workplace after the male had been directed to leave.

Ottawa Police Service Records

Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) records show that on October 30, 2024, that a call was received from the complainant as described in the complaint. The call was identified as an unwanted person to be removed (in progress) and was assigned as a priority 3 call. The CAD records show that the call was received at 8:32 p.m., dispatched at 9:10 p.m. and that officers arrived on scene at 9:13 p.m. Attending officers advised the dispatcher that they had spoken to on-site security officers and that they were advised that the disorderly male had already left the scene. They advised that all was in order.

CAD records show that on October 30, 2024, that there were two Ottawa Police Service vehicles involved in two separate investigations in the parking lot of the Canadian Museum of Science. These were the two units which the complainant passed by after leaving work.

One of the police units was involved in the investigation of a vehicle accident where a garage door had collapsed on a vehicle at a nearby address. The call was a priority 4 call for service which required a mobile response. The call was received at 8:07 p.m., the call was dispatched at 8:13 p.m., and the officer arrived on scene at 8:17 p.m. The officer arrived at the scene of the collision 15 minutes before the complainant called the police and was completing a collision report.

The other unit was involved in the response to an unconscious male collapsed outside of a nearby restaurant, and paramedics were requesting assistance. The call was a priority 2 call for service which indicated that were indicators of dangerous bodily harm for persons. The call was at 8:42 p.m., dispatched at 8:43 p.m., and the officer arrived at 8:48 p.m. The call was dispatched 10 minutes after the complainant called the police but was a higher priority call. The officer was completing the required paperwork for that call in the parking lot around the corner from the location of the incident.

The call queue at the time of the complainant's call showed a total of 42 active calls in the call queue. The OPS records also show that at 8:32 p.m., a total of 3 different 9-1-1 calls were received.

Audio Recording of The Call for Service to Communications

The Ottawa Police Service provided the audio recording to investigators for review. The recording was reviewed and although the disorderly male's voice could be heard in the background, there was no evidence of urgency in the voice of the complainant, nor in the nature of the call beyond a request to have a noisy disorderly male escorted from the premises. The caller is heard clearly advising that the male had not been violent. The call taker was also heard instructing the caller to call back should the situation escalate further, and to use 9-1-1.

Ottawa Police Service Procedures

The OPS Communications/Dispatch Procedure was reviewed in relation to this call. A priority 3 call has an established response time of 30 minutes 90% of the time. In this case the response time was 41 minutes, however there were multiple higher priority calls in the call queue at the time of the complainant's call.

Ottawa Police Service Staffing Levels

The OPS Patrol Procedure was also reviewed in relation to this complaint. This procedure sets out minimum staffing levels for the service supported by this procedure and the collective working agreement. [Redacted – s 1(1)1 – O Reg 317/24]. The city is divided into east division, central division, and west division. There is built in flexibility to move officers from one division to another division should the need arise.

INVESTIGATION FINDINGS

I make the following findings, relying on the material and information collected during the investigation and now contained in this report:

1. **On October 30, 2024, at approximately 8:32 p.m. the complainant called the Ottawa Police Communications Unit to report a disorderly male in their workplace.**

    a. The complainant provided information to the call taker that there had been no violence by the disorderly male.
    b. The call was placed in the call queue at 8:34 p.m. and was assigned as a priority 3 call. At the time of this call, there were 42 calls in the OPS communications call queue, and at the time of this call, 3 different 9-1-1 calls were received.
    c. The call was dispatched at 9:10 p.m. and units were marked enroute at 9:10 p.m., and on the scene at 9:13 p.m.

2. **The complainant's workplace closed at approximately 9:00 p.m. at which time the disorderly male was asked to leave by on site security and complied.**

    a. The complainant left their workplace and travelled eastbound from their workplace and passed two OPS units that were parked at the location indicated by the complainant.
    b. Each of the units observed was assigned to a different call for service, and although parked at that location, the officers were completing paperwork for the two different calls to which they were assigned.

3. **On the evening of October 30, 2024, the OPS had staffing levels above their minimum mandated staffing and officers were distributed evenly across the 3 divisions.**

Inspectorate of Policing

777 Bay Street, 7th Floor
Toronto, ON M5G 2C8
Tel: +1-416-873-5930 or 1-888-333-5078
www.iopontario.ca

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