

July 2017

Directeur Mario Harel, President, Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police

Police Information and Statistics (POLIS) Committee Annual Report 2016/2017

Executive Summary:

The POLIS Committee has extensive representation from police agencies across Canada. It is strongly supported by, and enjoys an excellent working relationship with the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics (CCJS) at Statistics Canada. As well, it has a formal linkage to Federal/Provincial/Territorial (FPT) Deputy Ministers responsible for justice and public safety through representation on the Liaison Officers Committee. The POLIS committee is currently co-chaired by Commander Mary Silverthorn of the OPP, and; Rebecca Kong, Chief of the Policing Services Program at the CCJS.

The POLIS Committee contributes value through the opportunity to develop, improve and deliver accurate statistical and analytical information to the Canadian public, police and government to better understand our environment with respect to offending, victimization and policing, and to thereby facilitate strategic decision making, policy development and resource allocation.

Over the past year, the POLIS committee worked with Statistics Canada to:

- improve the collection of data on the involvement of organized crime (including street gangs) in criminal violations;
- examine the feasibility of collecting national uniform data on calls for service and develop a national set of standard police performance indicators;
- recommend and endorse changes to the UCR survey and records management systems to improve data on cybercrime (accomplished with collaboration with the CACP e-crime committee)
- recommend and endorse other changes to the UCR survey to ensure data relevance
- provide input into the redesign of Statistics Canada's Police Administration Survey and its Homicide Survey
- identify the availability of data to produce performance metrics related to the legalization of marijuana
- continue to advance data quality, comparability and relevance of UCR other police-reported data across police services
- make recommendations regarding the collection of data on unfounded incidents collected via the UCR Survey, and plan work on this issue moving forward
- review nine reports by the CCJS to provide policing perspective and input

Committee Partners / Sponsors:

The POLIS Committee would not be viable without the continuous support (logistical, administrative and financial) of the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics' Policing

Services Program, led by Ms. Rebecca Kong, as well as the many police agencies who contribute the time and resources for their members to participate. POLIS is further strengthened by the active membership and participation of senior representatives from Justice Canada, Public Safety Canada and the Ontario Ministry of Community Safety and Corrections.

Committee Vision / Mission / Mandate/ Objectives / Strategic Priorities

Vision: Quality data for quality policing

Mission: POLIS supports progressive change in policing, in partnership with the Policing Services Program of the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, a Division of Statistics Canada, and other partners, through the development and communication of meaningful public safety information.

Mandate/Objectives (revised April 2017):

- With the support of the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police, continue to address data quality and comparability issues within the UCR;
- In collaboration with Statistics Canada and police organizations, structure policing data so that Social Domain Linkage can occur, and prepare UCR data to be linked.
- Represent the police community in ensuring that emerging police issues, priorities and concerns are addressed by Statistics Canada surveys and products;
- Facilitate the development of partnerships among governments and criminal justice agencies to further the integration of justice information systems;
- Collaborate with Statistics Canada and police organizations in the development of standard police performance indicators;
- Promote improved police management and decision making by identifying, developing and communicating best practices in the collection, analysis and application of statistical information;
- Ensure that, in the development of new and ongoing surveys of crime and police resources, data can be provided by the police community in a standardized and cost-effective manner, minimizing respondent burden and costs;
- Promote innovation in information systems, collection techniques and other matters that improve the production and utility of police information;
- Review Statistics Canada reports before public release to ensure that appropriate context surrounding issues and trends is included to explain differences in local and regional comparisons, as well as to explain changes in trends.

Strategic Priorities 2014 – 2016:

- Continue efforts to collect via the UCR2.2 data on the involvement of organized crime in criminal incidents that occur in Canada.

- With the support of the Data Quality Managers Working Group and the CACP, continue to address data quality and comparability issues within the UCR.
- In working with other working groups and experts, recommend to CACP a suite of national, uniform police performance and community safety indicators that are or will be feasible to collect.
- Through the assistance of a POLIS working group, establish common categories for classifying calls for service.

Strategic Priorities 2017 – 2019 (endorsed April 2017):

- In working with other working groups and experts, recommend to CACP a suite of national, uniform police performance and community safety indicators that are or will be feasible to collect.
- Establish common categories for classifying calls for service and support feasibility work for common data collection.
- In collaboration with the CACP E-crimes Committee and other relevant stakeholders, improve the availability of cybercrime data via the UCR and other sources. Work with the E-crimes Committee to validate statistical needs of policing organizations, as well as an inventory of police and non-police measurements.
- Support the redesigns of the Police Administration Survey and the Homicide Survey.

Summary of Major Activities and Initiatives in 2016/2017:

1. Organized crime data collection:

Background: Since the launch of the organized crime variable as a part of the 2.2 Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) survey in 2005, police agencies have consistently produced low numbers of offences linked to organized crime. POLIS believes that the data being submitted to Statistics Canada represents a vast under-count of organized crime's involvement in police-reported crime. For this reason, it was decided in 2009 to suspend release of the data. As such, the data remain unusable for academics, federal and provincial/territorial governments, policy makers and other important stakeholders whose mandate it is to prevent and respond to the organized crime threat in Canada.

In 2009, a POLIS sub-committee was struck to conduct a consultation with the police services represented by POLIS to determine whether the under-counting is related to the nature and complexity of organized crime itself, or if it is the result of a lack of quality assurance processes and/or training.

The 12 recommendations as a result of that consultation have all been carried out, some with financial support from Public Safety.

A key piece of the work were seven recommendations that came from police services that participated in a data collection pilot. These recommendations lay squarely on police services to implement in order to ensure complete and quality data on organized crime are submitted via the UCR.

Despite efforts, UCR data on organized crime remains unusable. To date, Statistics Canada is aware of **just one municipal police service** that has implemented the seven recommendations and is producing and using their UCR data on organized crime to monitor issues and make information-based decisions.

Activity in 2016/2017:

- POLIS and the CACP Organized Crime Committee received endorsement of the seven recommendations to police services to improve the accuracy and completeness of organized crime data reporting via the UCR survey (August 2016).
- CCJS released a *Juristat* Bulletin report that presented data from the pilot as well as highlight the issue with data collection, work done to date to improve data, as well as the recommendations for police services (January 2017). This was sent to all police chiefs, along with a request to communicate with the CCJS should police services be implementing the recommendations.
- This issue was removed from the list of POLIS's strategic priorities for 2017-2019 as the committee considers sufficient effort has been made by Statistics Canada and POLIS to assist police services in improving the quality of the UCR organized crime data.

Policy implications: Organized crime is a **threat** to the police community and the Canadian public. Further, with the **proposed legislation to legalize marijuana**, national standardized data on the involvement of organized crime in the production and distribution of cannabis will be needed to assess whether the legislation has the following policy objective: *deter illicit activities in relation to cannabis through appropriate sanctions and enforcement measures.*

Accurate and timely data are required to quantify the threat that organized crime groups pose and to determine if their activity is increasing. The need for these data have been raised in the discourse on the economics of policing in terms of the need to illustrate the changing nature of crime and the growing complexity of policing.

2. Development of national uniform categories for calls for service and police performance metrics

Background:

With the discourse on the economics of policing and community safety, police leaders are looking to measures of police workload and the efficiency and effectiveness of police performance. In the absence of national indicators of police workload and performance, police services are overly reliant on traditional metrics that do not reflect the complexity and scope of contemporary policing responsibilities. Recognizing the need for the development of data that will support police leaders in decision-making and management, in Spring 2014 the POLIS committee established a Working Group on Calls for Service to work with the CCJS to develop common categories for classifying calls for service and call priorities. The CCJS and POLIS also undertook broader parallel work on the development of national police performance metrics.

In 2015/2016, the CCJS completed a Phase I pilot project which evaluated the feasibility of collecting standardized calls for service data on a subset of call types: mental health related calls, domestic disturbances, and missing persons. The key issues that were identified for the pilot were: number and type of units dispatched; amount of service time spent on calls; amount of hospital wait time; criminal incidents and charges, if any, and; persons involved. Results of the Phase I pilot project were presented to the POLIS and LOC committees as well as the National Municipal Network for Crime Prevention (NMNCP) in Fall 2015. Valuable feedback was received from each of these stakeholders, which was incorporated into the second phase of the project.

Activity in 2016/2017:

In Fall 2016, the CCJS received the endorsement of the Saskatchewan Association of Chiefs of Police to begin a Phase II province-wide pilot project. The focus of Phase II is to: (a) test a complete set of approximately 100 uniform call types reflecting the full spectrum of reactive police work; (b) refine a number of definitions including call types, call priorities, dispatchable units, and involved-person roles; (c) address challenges and data gaps identified in the first phase of the pilot project; and (d) expand analysis of persons involved in calls for service. While data collection and analysis are currently

ongoing, preliminary results were presented at the Spring 2017 POLIS meeting held in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. Final results of Phase II will be used to solidify recommendations for data collection and key indicators based on calls for service data in 2017/2018.

In 2016/2017, the CCJS produced the first iteration of a police performance metrics framework, organized around four primary dimensions: (1) crime and victimization, (2) police workload, (3) police resources, and (4) measures of trust and confidence in police. The framework advances a standardized set of national indicators of police performance based on current data holdings, as well as data which will require future development, including calls for service data. The framework was presented to POLIS in Spring 2017, where it received the endorsement of the committee.

Policy implications:

In the current climate of fiscal restraint and enhanced public expectations, the discourse on the Economics of Policing in Canada has emerged as a priority of the policing community and the FPT Ministers of Justice and Public Safety. As was articulated at the 2012 Summit on the Economics of Policing, police services and governments are being challenged to find more efficient and effective methods to sustain current levels of policing services to ensure public safety. Police leaders are being asked to provide evidence-based business cases to justify resource needs and to demonstrate value for money. For police to rise to this challenge, comparable national metrics beyond crime statistics are needed. Uniform information on all types of calls for service and a standardized framework for the interpretation of police performance metrics will assist police leaders to strategically manage and plan priorities and resources.

3. Recommend and endorse changes to the UCR survey to improve police-reported data on cybercrime

Background

In 2005, the UCR2.2 was developed and included the addition of a cybercrime flag. The intention of this amendment to the survey was to allow police services to flag any criminal incident as “a criminal offence involving a computer as the object of the crime, or the tool used to commit a material component of the offence.”

While the CCJS collects, verifies and publishes these data annually, POLIS has identified limitations. For instance, some challenges include: incidents being stored on servers and not in the records management system (the location from which UCR records are pulled); backlogs in the entry of reports, and; inconsistencies in methods of counting of incidents, victims and accused and a need for the UCR to modify and/or clarify current scoring rules (it should be noted that the UCR was designed to capture unique incidents that occur in a specific geographic place in Canada and have a clear beginning and end date). In this current environment, the need for accurate police-reported information on the nature and extent of cybercrime in Canada is essential for public policy development, strategic policing and crime prevention.

POLIS discussed UCR cybercrime counts at their spring 2015 meeting and it was agreed that research is needed to better understand the operational challenges to reporting to UCR; to examine the unit of count and potential changes to UCR scoring and counting methods; to review methods of counting by others; to identify complementary data sources. The goal of this work is to identify the extent of the limitations and make recommendations for improvement.

Activity in 2016/2017

With financial support from Public Safety Canada, and in close collaboration with the CACP E-crime committee, the POLIS committee accomplished the following:

- * Presentation at the CACP 2016 Annual conference of new national definition of cybercrime and scoring categories for the purpose of uniform data collection.
- * Implementation of “smart edits” into records management systems that will ensure the cybercrime flag is completed for certain offences likely to be committed via or targeting information communications technology;
- * With funding from Public Safety Canada, development of a short on-line training course with CPKN that focuses on scoring cybercrime.
- * Communication with E-crimes committee, Public Safety Canada and the RCMP on the need/development of a national cybercrime reporting, similar to the model in Australia (i.e., ACORN).
- * Provided input on the content for the 2019 General Social Survey on Victimization to advocate for new and enhanced content to better measure cyber-victimization in Canada.
- * At the April 2017 meeting, adoption of renewed strategic priority related to improved measurement of the nature and extent of cybercrime in Canada (see new strategic priorities above).

Policy implications

The rapid growth in Internet use and technology has allowed for the emergence of new criminal opportunities. Criminal offences involving a computer or the Internet either as the target of a crime or as an instrument used to commit a crime are collectively known as cybercrime. Frauds, identity theft, extortion, criminal harassment, certain sexual offences, and offences related to child pornography are among the criminal violations that can be committed over the Internet using a computer, tablet, or smart phone.

As technology advances, new ways of using computers and the internet to commit crime continue to evolve. The continued evolution and complexity of cybercrime pose various challenges for police services and the criminal justice system as a whole. Investigations can become complex and costly, requiring advanced expertise and costly technology and hardware.

4. Data quality, comparability and relevance of UCR data

Background: In 2007, upon recommendation by POLIS, a national UCR Data Managers Data Quality Workshop was held in 2007 at Statistics Canada. This represented a

significant achievement in bringing together Statistics Canada staff and records managers from across the country to address major data quality issues and concerns.

Among the many Workshop recommendations were those to create an ongoing Data Managers Working Group to deal with emerging UCR data quality issues, information sharing and identification of new data needs; for Statistics Canada to work closely with police services to provide multi-level training; and, for Statistics Canada to continue their regional training workshops.

Since then, the UCR Data Managers Working Group hold tele-conference calls quarterly. Recently, the group has been dealing largely with identifying UCR violations that are subject to differences in reporting across police services, and the reasons driving these differences.

Activity in 2016/2017:

The first UCR Data Quality Workshop was held September 25 & 26 in Ottawa. There were over 100 attendees from almost 50 police services. The written evaluations and verbal feedback demonstrate the workshop was a success. The CCJS then held a second workshop in February 2017 to accommodate those who were unable to attend first workshop due to limited space. The agenda covered data quality assurance processes; best practices; risks; upcoming and recent changes to the UCR; quality assurance with homicide counts, and; presentations from VPD and Cape Breton on best practices.

Policy implications: The credibility of police-reported crime statistics ultimately boils down to data reported in a uniform, consistent and timely manner. Only the ongoing communication and data quality efforts between Statistics Canada and police services will ensure that Canada will continue to be at the forefront in terms of the quality of its incident-based crime data.

5. Redesign of Statistics Canada's Police Administration Survey (PAS)

Background

Since 1964, the Police Administration Survey has collected aggregate data on police service personnel and expenditures from police services in Canada. It has seen little modification except for a new section added in 2012 to collect characteristics of police officers to assist in human resource planning. It is Canada's source for accurate and detailed data police service personnel, both uniform and civilian, and one of the only surveys collecting expenditure data to shed light on the cost of justice and public safety. With the recent discourse on the economics of policing and community safety, police leaders and policy-makers now more than ever are looking to metrics to monitor and report on policing efficiencies. Together with workload measure, data on police personnel and expenditures are in high demand to inform this discourse. The level of detail collected on police service personnel and expenditures is insufficient to address the current data needs with respect to the economics of policing and community safety.

Statistics Canada has invested in the redesign of this survey over the fiscal years 2016/2017 and 2017/2018 to collect new and relevant data, and to move the survey from paper to an electronic on-line questionnaire. The survey is planned for launch spring 2018.

Of note, some of the key revisions to the survey include more detailed information on salary and benefit costs for officers and civilian personnel; more detailed information on civilian personnel positions; expenditures on IT and capital costs, and; use of long-term leave.

Activity in 2016/2017:

By performing the following, the POLIS committee has been instrumental in assisting with the development and testing of the new questionnaire:

- Providing feedback on data gaps, potential new content, definitions of concepts and indicators, and feasibility of collection of new information.
- Endorsement of directions and decisions in order to move the development forward.
- Voluntary participation in 2 rounds of on-site testing with police services: content testing (Fall 2016) and Electronic Questionnaire testing (Spring 2017).
- Facilitating communication with key human resource and finance experts within their police services.

6. Redesign of Statistics Canada's Homicide Survey

Background

This Statistics Canada survey collects detailed data on homicide in Canada. The survey has collected police-reported data on the characteristics of all murder incidents, victims and accused persons since 1961 and all homicides (including murder, manslaughter and infanticide) since 1974. It is Canada's source for accurate and detailed data on homicides which are used to monitor trends in Canada, contribute to national research and to international metrics homicide. The homicide rate is an internationally-recognized and comparable barometer of nations' levels of violence and public safety.

Statistics Canada has invested in the redesign of this survey over the fiscal years 2016/2017, 2017/2018 and 2018/2019 to collect new and relevant data, and to move the survey from paper to an electronic fillable questionnaire. The survey is planned for launch January 2019.

Activity in 2016/2017:

By performing the following, the POLIS committee has been instrumental in assisting with the development and testing of the new questionnaire:

- Providing feedback on data gaps, potential new content, definitions of concepts and indicators, and feasibility of collection of new information.
- Endorsement of directions and decisions in order to move the development forward.
- Voluntary participation in on-site testing with police services to test new content testing (Winter 2017).
- Facilitating communication with key experts within their police services.

7. Development of Performance Metrics related to the legalization of cannabis

Background

Canada is currently proceeding to legalize the non-medical use of cannabis. At the April 2016 POLIS meeting, the POLIS member from Public Safety Canada gave a presentation on the baseline metrics needed to measure before and after the change in policy. These are needed to understand if the policy has had the intended impact. A reading of the Liberal Party of Canada (2016) policy position indicates the goals of the policy change are to:

- *reduce the rate at which “young people” are consuming cannabis;*
- *reduce to zero the rate of consumption of cannabis for “children;”*
- *reduce the total number of people with criminal records for cannabis possession offences;*
- *reduce the total cost of enforcing cannabis laws to all parts of the criminal justice system;*
- *reduce the net profits from the cannabis market to people offending as organized criminals;*
- *specifically, reducing the net profits from the cannabis market to people offending as organized criminals, who also offend as human traffickers or are involved in “hard drug” markets; and*
- *Divert a portion of cannabis market profits to legitimate taxation.*

(Liberal Party of Canada)

Based on a literature review and an analysis of the performance metrics that can be applied to cannabis regimes, Public Safety Canada identified 45 metrics (Maslov, Lawrence, and Ferguson 2016). For 18 of these, police are identified as the best source for these data. Of the 18, it seems that 3 are actually collected and publicly-available, 6 are partially collected by police and 9 are not presently collected as part of the public record. These are the 18 performance metric areas:

1. Police-reported incidents – Partially measured
2. Illegal production and Cultivation (Seizures) – Partially measured
3. Crop eradication – Not measured
4. Potency – Partially measured
5. Police Calls for service – Not measured

6. Crime around dispensaries – Partially measured
7. Organized crime – Not measured
8. Diversion to other jurisdictions – Not measured
9. Transfer using parcel services – Not measured
10. Traffic accidents and driving under the influence of drugs – Measured
11. Testing information and law enforcement training – Measured
12. Value of electricity used by grow-ops – Partially measured
13. Market origin – Partially measured
14. Sharing and sales by users – Not measured
15. Pricing – Partially measured
16. Economic impact of legislation – Not measured
17. Police-reported incidents among youth - Measured
18. Exportation across borders – Not measured (combined in this document with Diversion to other jurisdictions)

The need for metrics both pre- and post-legalization are in demand.

Maslov, A., Lawrence, A., and M. Ferguson. 2016. "Cannabis Performance Metrics for Policy Consideration: What Do We Need to Measure?" *Public Safety Canada*. Research Report: 2016-R009

Liberal Party of Canada. (2016) *Marijuana*. Accessed June 20, 2016 from <https://www.liberal.ca/realchange/marijuana/>.

Activity in 2016/2017:

The POLIS committee participated in a consultation by the CCJS to determine the availability and feasibility of police collecting and reporting data on the above-mentioned metrics. The findings were reported to the Federal Partners Marijuana Data Working Group chaired by Health Canada and will inform reports coming out the Working Group.

8. Resuming the collection of data on unfounded incidents through the UCR Survey

Background:

Statistics Canada collected data on unfounded sexual assaults beginning in 1962, with the introduction of the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Survey. At the time, police services were required to submit counts of unfounded incidents along with other crime data. Over time, however, inconsistent reporting led to poor data quality. The last time unfounded incidents were published as part of an annual crime statistics publication by Statistics Canada's Centre for Canadian Justice Statistics was in December 1994. The last time rates of unfounded sexual assault were published was in July 2003.

In 2006, Statistics Canada and the Police Information and Statistics Committee (POLIS) of the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police (CACCP) conducted a review of police-reported unfounded data. It was found that not all police services were reporting unfounded incidents and among those that were, not all unfounded records were being sent. It was therefore recommended that data on all unfounded incidents, not just sexual assaults, should no longer be collected or released by Statistics Canada. The report also makes recommendations for police and Statistics Canada to improve the classification of incidents.

Following national media attention in February 2017, several police agencies across the country announced that they would review sexual assault cases investigated in the last few years that were labelled as “unfounded”. The members of the POLIS committee have worked together to make a number of recommendations regarding the reinstatement of the collection of UCR data on unfounded criminal incidents.

Activity in 2016/2017:

This item was a significant part of the agenda of the April 2017 POLIS meeting. The meeting addressed the feasibility of reinstating collection, processing and dissemination of unfounded incidents and reviewed definitions for unfounded and founded incidents. The objective of the meeting was to arrive at recommendations to ensure clarity, consistency and comparability in the data.

Recommendations were provided to and endorsed by the CACP Board of Directors on April 6 2017. These included recommendations on resuming collection and making amendments to the UCR survey to ensure quality and useful information are collected. See <https://cacp.ca/news/statement-april-26-2017-recommendations-regarding-the-collection-of-‘unfounded’-incidents-via-the-un.html>

The POLIS committee also endorsed a workplan moving forward which includes:

- Making recommendations on operational questions associated with implementing the changes (currently underway with end date of Fall 2017).
- Developing in-person and on-line training (Fall 2017).
- Delivering of in-person training by the CCJS to police via a series of workshops (Winter 2018).

9. Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics’ Products

Each year, the POLIS committee provides suggestions for special topic reports and input into the final selection of reports that the CCJS will release in the next fiscal year. The committee also reviews and provides feedback on all policing-related articles.

The POLIS committee reviewed the following *Juristats* between August 2016 to July 2017:

- Homicide in Canada, 2015;
- Impaired driving in Canada, 2015;
- Emergency preparedness and resilience: Community-based fact sheets, 2014
- Measuring organized crime in Canada: Results of a pilot project
- Family violence in Canada: A Statistical Profile, 2015;
- Police resources in Canada, 2016;
- Police-reported hate crime, 2015;
- Self-reported sexual assault in Canada, 2014;
- Police-reported crime in Canada, 2016.

Meetings Held :

September 28-29, 2016 in Ottawa

April 4-5, 2017 in Saskatoon

Meetings Planned:

September 25-26, 2017 Ottawa

POLIS committee members as of August 2016:

See list submitted.