



EDMONTON POLICE SERVICE

REPORT TO THE EDMONTON POLICE COMMISSION

DATE: 2018 09 26

SUBJECT: PACE Pilot Program – Mid-Progress Report

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That this report be received for information.

INTRODUCTION:

This report will provide information, present recommendations for action or update the EPC on the progress of the PACE (Police and Community Engagement) pilot program.

BACKGROUND:

In 2017, the Community & Operations Support Unit (COSU) was requested to participate in over 100 community events. This is over and above what we know is constantly requested of divisions, specialized units, individual members, and the Office of the Chief. In order to meet the needs of the community we are serving, we have developed the concept of the Police and Community Engagement (PACE) Team.

The PACE pilot program, is comprised of a collection of EPS members from across the service who are interested in participating in community engagement opportunities. The application process for PACE was opened to all ranks within the service and all work areas. In total, we interviewed and selected 13 members. A PACE coordinator position was also created to act as a liaison between community members and the PACE team.

The program began with a one day training session for all PACE members, which included bias awareness, cultural safety, and police legitimacy. There was promotion of the program through the Community Liaison Committees and the Chief's Advisory Committee, resulting in numerous requests for community engagement. Mechanisms are in place for both community and PACE members to provide feedback about the value of their experience. An evaluation of the program will take place at the completion of the pilot.

The predicted outcomes for the PACE program include:

- engagement to be considered as a core element of police activity
- positive experiences for members (increasing proactive policing efforts)
- improved relationships with communities that may have historically had barriers with police
- improved cooperation with investigations
- increased reporting of crime and victimization

Event Summary:

May – Pow Wow (2), Dinner Reception to High Commissioner of Canada, Nebula Academy School Presentation, Indigenous Night, Indigenous Pancake Breakfast, Coptic Orthodox Church Easter Celebration

June – Edmonton Islamic School Presentation, Tim Horton's Camp Day, The Salvation Army Community Block Party, REACH AGM Showcase, Community Iftar and Prayers, National Indigenous Day Events (2), and Arab Community Event

July – Somali Youth Graduation, CALM Presentations (2), Newcomer Resource Fair, Stars & Cars, Professional Introduction Day, Youth Camp Presentation

August – Scouts/YMCA Camp Day (2), Africa Centre Camp, After School Care Presentation, Youth Activity (2), Jewish Family Holocaust Picnic, All Nations Celebration (2), and Newcomer Youth Presentation

September – Kites over Callingwood and Stollery Hospital Activity

- Total number of PACE events to date is: **35**
- Total number of officers involved: **13**
- Total hours spent on PACE to date: **140**
- Breakdown of percentages for type of event:
 - youth activity: **8.5% (3)**
 - youth presentation: **34 % (12)**
 - cultural: **29% (10)**
 - celebration: **20% (7)**
 - other: **8.5% (3)**
- Expenditure summary:
 - **\$7300.00** for officer time during PACE engagements
 - **\$800.00** for training and promotions

COMMENTS / DISCUSSION:

Community Feedback:

The following program strengths were identified:

- The officers that participate in the PACE program are enthusiastically engaged with the community, eager to answer questions, and easily approachable.
- Perceptions of police changed from negative to positive, based on the interactions between the police member and the community.
- Community groups are proud to become partners in this pilot program.

Comments:

"An excellent experience as it was great to work with the contact person and officer. I would recommend this to other social service events in the community. Thanks again."

"Both experiences were fantastic! The officers were able to engage the youth and were very patient with all of their questions. Thank you again to all of the officers that came out to our event!"

"Constable Amal Abdi was wonderfully engaged and enthusiastic with the kids. The children were interested and immensely excited to be able to have an in-person experience, examining all the police equipment. Constable Abdi was able to answer all their inquisitive questions with good humour and adequate knowledge."

"I am emailing to express our gratitude to you. Tonight we were privileged to meet Bruce McGregor as he participated in our communities Wahkhotowin night (Indigenous Family Night.) Bruce actively engaged in participating with all of the kids that were present from playing basketball with them on the tarmac, to speaking informally with them. He also took on a key role in serving our community supper and then providing care packages for families as they left. We continue to be impressed with the high caliber, community minded members that you send to our schools. We could not be more proud of this proactive initiative and partnership."

Officer Feedback:

The majority of the officers who completed the evaluations indicated that the communities that they engaged with were very thankful to have them attend the event – it can be expected to receive a warm welcome. It should also be noted that officers relayed the message that community reported that it was often the first time they had interacted with Canadian police. Members felt that many negative perceptions had been changed about police, especially from diverse communities.

Comments:

"People were so excited to see a police officer and to see the police car. Some of the adults were even getting pictures taken with me. It seemed like they had never seen the police in such a positive interaction."

"It was a great opportunity to introduce Canadian Policing to students. Some were interested in becoming police officers."

"People were happy and appreciative to have an officer attend such an event (Breaking Bread – Iftar and Prayers) as a representative of the EPS and not because you are part of the religion. The kids had fun asking questions about the police."

CONCLUSION:

Learnings:

1. Providing the opportunity for meaningful police & community engagement is invaluable to building trusting relationships with diverse communities in the city of Edmonton.
2. The PACE program accommodates a wide range of events because of the diverse set of officers who signed up for the program. These officers value community engagement and have particular strengths and knowledge that are matched with the requests. Effective coordination is important to the program's success!
3. Community values this opportunity and many have requested repeat officer engagements through the program.
4. Promoting the PACE program through Chiefs Advisory Committee has proven effective.
5. The Unit that houses the PACE program needs officers available for last minute changes in schedules and to provide back up and expanded expertise for more complex interactions.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ATTACHED: N/A

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Date:

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