



EDMONTON POLICE SERVICE

REPORT TO THE EDMONTON POLICE COMMISSION

DATE: 2019 June 14

SUBJECT: VSU Modernization Update

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That this report be received for information.

INTRODUCTION:

This report will provide information, recommendations for action or update the EPC on the continued modernization of the Edmonton Police Service Victim Services Unit (Soon to be re-named "Crime and Trauma-informed Support Services).

BACKGROUND:

In 2017 the integration of the divisional offices of the Victim Services Unit (VSU) commenced and culminated in everyone coming together at the Nexus Business Park in December of that same year.

In the fall of 2018 we implemented a new business model within VSU addressing some noted inefficiencies with the goal of leveraging our current resources to improve our service delivery to Victims of crime and/or trauma.

The business model change is designed to focus on the Victims that really require assistance from VSU at the same time providing the Victims of less serious offences their rights under the Canadian Victim Bill of Rights and the Alberta Victims of Crime Act, as outlined in the Alberta Solicitor General Victims of Crime Protocol.

There are three facets to the new business model: Victim Specialists, Operations, and Court. This was designed to provide a much needed wrap around service to our Victims; at the same time our goal is to provide a more culturally safe and appropriate support service. The Victim Specialists and the volunteers would provide the much

needed front and middle support while our court program will provide the continued support through the final stage; the Justice System.

The concept of having Victim Specialists will assist in providing the culturally safe and specific support suggested by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (Recommendation #40) which states:

"We call on all levels of government, in collaboration with Aboriginal people, to create adequately funded and accessible Aboriginal-specific victim programs and services with appropriate evaluation mechanisms."

We have, and continue to conduct internal education to our membership with respect to our business model and how they can leverage VSU in assisting the Victims in each of their investigations. We have presented to patrol members through the GDM training days, presented to the recruit classes, and continue to speak with specific investigative units. In order to keep Management apprised, Manager Darlene Adams and VSU Staff attended their meeting in December and spoke to the changes in VSU. All of which has begun to increase our referrals from those units/members with the result of supporting Victims earlier decreasing personal trauma and increasing their ability to navigate the Justice System.

The changing of our name from Victim Services Unit to Crime and Trauma-informed Support Services is the final major change in the business model. More information can be found within the attached PowerPoint presentation. There have been, of course, minor procedural changes as we continue to move forward within this new model.

COMMENTS / DISCUSSION:

Attached is a Microsoft PowerPoint presentation with further information on topics such as our Vision, Business model, Volunteers, 40TH anniversary, Upcoming name change, and future plans.

CONCLUSION:

The Edmonton Police Service Victim Service Unit aims to be a nationally-recognized model of best practice. (Vision outlined in PowerPoint) The business model change is a major step toward making this happen. It is the goal of the VSU to provide a trauma-informed and client-centered approach to supporting Victims of crime and/or trauma.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ATTACHED:

Attachment 1 – Microsoft PowerPoint Presentation – VSU Modernization Update

Written By: Sgt. Scott Abbott, Coordinated Policing Division, Victim Services Unit

Reviewed By: A/Supt D. McIntyre, Coordinated Policing Division

Approved By: A/Deputy Chief D. Veitch, Community Safety & Well-being *D. Veitch*

Chief of Police:  Kevin Brezinski *[Signature]*
Acting Chief of Police

Date: 2019-07-08



Victim Services Unit Modernization update

Presented for Information
Edmonton Police Commission

July 18, 2019

Manager, Darlene Adams

Sgt. Scott Abbott



Vision

The vision of the Victim Services Unit is to become a nationally recognized model of best practice within the police community, through trauma-informed and client-centered response and services to reduce future victimization



Mission

The mission of the VSU is to provide timely intervention, prevention, and supports to individuals, families and all our communities affected by crime, trauma, and tragic events



Business Model





Volunteers

- 36 Volunteers (Active)
 - 13 Court, 14 Operational, 8 do both, 1 in the application process
 - Centralization resulted some resigning, a request to sent to revisit schedules
 - Focus on 2019 volunteer recruitment
- 2 Student placements
- Recruit Selection Unit to provide possible Volunteer candidates
- 91,842 of combined Volunteer hours (current)
- 256,583 of combined Volunteer hours (past/present)
- 361 of combined Volunteer years
- 37 years - longest serving Volunteer
- VSU Volunteer appreciation amalgamated with EPS Volunteer appreciation –
- 12,875 – Most volunteer hours by single person – Recognition with certificates, plaques, pins



40th Anniversary

- 2019 July 23 – Anniversary date
- VSU staff to host bbq on 2019 July 17 (Tentative)
- Venue Options – McCauley rink, 96 St block party
- Geared toward partnership agencies and inner-city clients



Future Name Change

- Victim Services Unit to be change to Crime and Trauma-informed Support Services
- Spoke to Calgary, Lethbridge, RCMP, Sol Gen for their thoughts
 - Agreement with moving away from using the word Victim
 - It is the believe that others will eventually follow
- Victims want to be known as survivors and do not like to be labelled as “Victim” as it is stigmatizing
- Better reflects what we do – trauma informed support, not counsellors or therapists which ties into the TRC recommendation of the training received and being trauma informed
- Assistance from the Partnership Centre of Excellence/Integrated Strategic Development Branch – full day exercise
- Does not affect grant funding – “informed” was AJSJG recommendation
- Web searches (Internal EpsNet/External) for Victim Services Unit – Will new name come up? Yes, initial research into this completed



Future

- Growth of the Unit as Victim-centric Policing is thoroughly adopted
- Expanding Court Program to include assistance dog
- Integration of Psychologist/Therapist in VSU
- Continue to build relationship with City of Edm Office of Emergency Management regarding mass victimization/natural disasters



Questions?