



EDMONTON POLICE SERVICE

REPORT TO THE EDMONTON POLICE COMMISSION

DATE: 2021-10-07

SUBJECT: 2021 Street Check Report Audit

RECOMMENDATION(S):

This report be received for information.

INTRODUCTION:

This report provides information on the annual audit of Edmonton Police Service's (EPS) street check reports. In prior years, this audit was conducted by another EPS area. This is the first year Audit and Risk Branch (ARB) coordinated the audit.

BACKGROUND:

As requested by the Edmonton Police Commission (EPC), ARB coordinated the street check reports audit to provide reasonable assurance that street checks are conducted appropriately, and documentation is complete and appropriate. ARB coordinated the audit, assembled five panelists to review the reports, and recorded the decisions of the panel, however ARB did not vote or form an opinion on the appropriateness of the reports. The audit period is from July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021.

COMMENTS / DISCUSSION:

The objective of this audit is to provide reasonable assurance that street checks are conducted appropriately, and documentation is complete and appropriate. The criteria used to determine if the objective was met are:

1. Street checks are initiated due to a clear policing purpose.
2. Reports do not contain inappropriate assumptions about engaged individuals or prejudicial/inflammatory language.
3. Reports only contain relevant personal information.


CONCLUSION:


A total of 3 recommendations were issued. Audit and Risk will follow up and report on the status of these recommendations during its semi-annual recommendation update to Chief's Committee and the Edmonton Police Commission.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ATTACHED:

1. Attachment 1 - 2021 Street Check Report Audit

Written By: Steven Duong, Business Development Division 

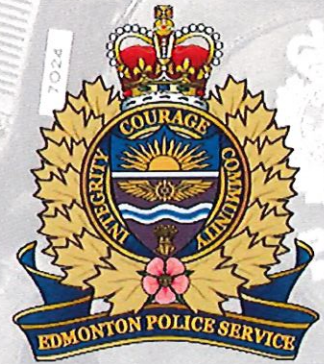
Reviewed By: Louise Fitzpatrick, Business Development Division 
KATHRYN REYNOLDS, T/A FOR:

Reviewed By: Robert Davidson, Business Development Division 

Reviewed By: Deputy Chief Darren Derko, Corporate Services Bureau
Acting CAO Brian Kisilevich 

Chief of Police: _____
Dale McFee

Date: _____



Audit and Risk Branch Street Check Report Audit

For the period July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021

Edmonton Police Commission & Edmonton Police Service

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

OBJECTIVE & SCOPE

The objective of the audit is to provide reasonable assurance that street checks are conducted appropriately, and documentation is complete and appropriate.

Using the above criteria, the Audit and Risk Branch (ARB) facilitated a review of a sample of 168 street check reports with a panel of five individuals. ARB recorded the decisions of the panel and did not have a voting right. The findings do not necessarily reflect the opinions of ARB. The audit period was July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Edmonton Police Service (EPS) defines street checks as "a subject stop when there are no grounds for arrest, but rather the result of proactive policing and/or contact and engagement with a person or group of people. The purpose of a street check is to gather street level intelligence that may assist members in increasing public safety through preventing, intervening and suppressing crime, and to further investigations."

When members conduct street checks and record them in a street check report, the Emergency Communications & Operations Management Branch (ECOMB) reviews the reports for compliance to internal policy. Internal policy requirements include street check reports must state the reason for conducting the street check and that reports must be factual and not contain inappropriate assumptions. If there are any concerns, the reviewer will contact the author to resolve any non-compliance issues.

METHODOLOGY

Panelists were selected from a variety of backgrounds for diversity of thought and perspective. The panel included the following:

- Criminal Intelligence Analyst
- Community Relations Coordinator
- Crime Suppression Branch Constable
- Human-Centered Engagement Liaison and Partnership Constable
- Recruit Training Unit Constable

The panel used the following criteria when reviewing street check reports:

1. Is the reason for initiating the street check articulated and reasonable?
 - *E.g. Missing or ambiguous reason*
2. Are there only facts and no assumptions about the individual?
 - *E.g. Assumed participation in crime*
3. Is inappropriate language used?
 - *E.g. Outdated racial terms, distasteful language*
4. Does the report contain irrelevant personal information?
 - *E.g. Irrelevant criminal history*

FINDINGS

TABLE 1: % OF EXCEPTIONS BY CRITERIA YEAR OVER YEAR

Category	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Compliance rate	92%	87%	96%	96%	96%	83% ¹
Criteria 1: articulated & reasonable	4%	7%	0%	1%	0%	10%
Criteria 2: assumptions	2%	1%	2%	2%	2%	4%
Criteria 3: language	2%	0%	1%	2%	2%	5%
Criteria 4: irrelevant information	0%	4%	1%	0%	1%	1%

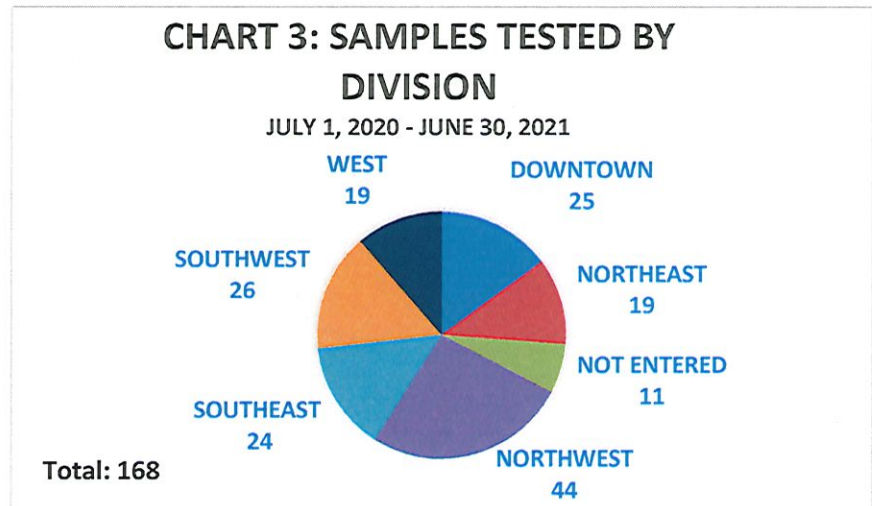
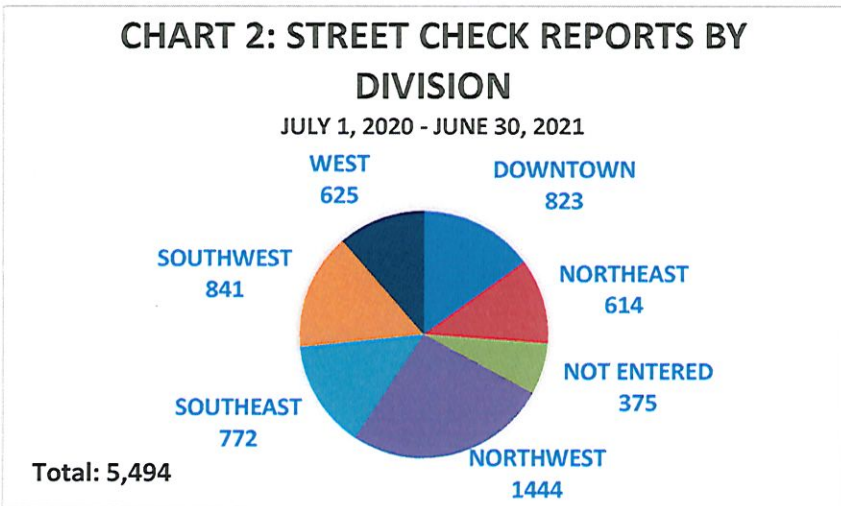
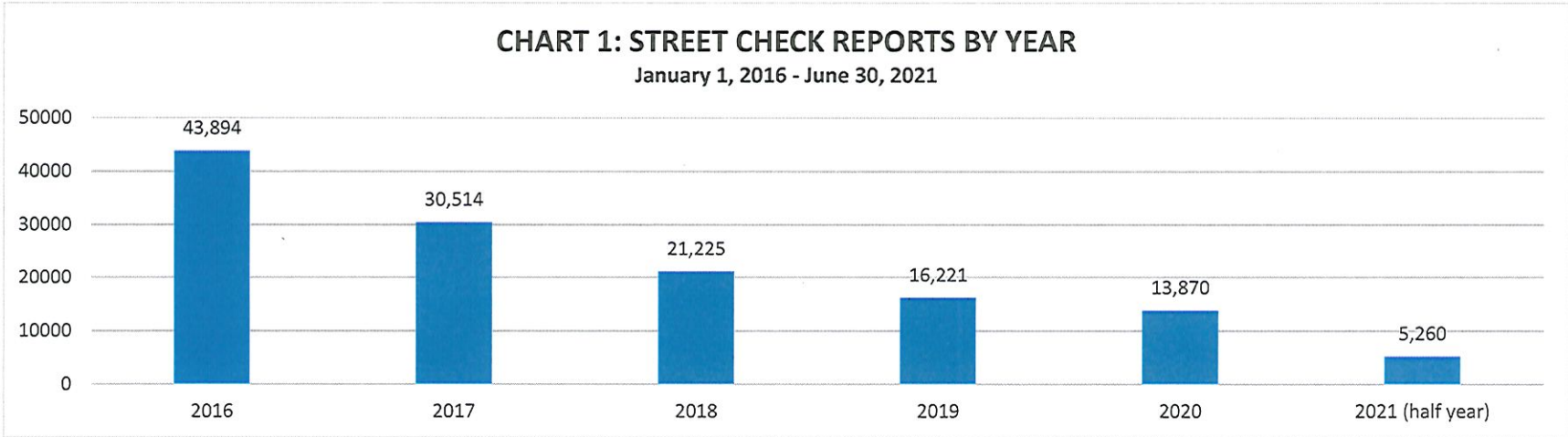
1: The sum of the compliance and exception rates will not equal 100% as some samples contained more than one exception.

Category	Exceptions Found
Criteria 1: articulated & reasonable 17 exceptions identified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6 exceptions were identified because the report either did not indicate why the check occurred or did not provide sufficient information to determine why. 5 exceptions were identified as the street check appeared to occur based on the fact that a person/vehicle was involved in criminal activity in the past but the event itself did not seem to suggest a check was warranted. 5 exceptions were identified because the member described a vehicle or driving as 'suspicious' but did not provide sufficient information to support their assessment. 1 exception was identified because the reason was inappropriate. The check occurred on a residence because there had been increased foot traffic in the area/ an increase in calls for service to that residence. None of the exceptions implied checks were based on protected grounds, such as race.
Criteria 2: assumptions 7 exceptions identified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 assumptions about the individual (e.g. intoxicated, blind) that were not substantiated by evidence. 3 assumptions about an individual's possible affiliations/ ideologies which were not substantiated with evidence/ through confirmation with the individual e.g. stating an individual was 'believed' to be involved in the drug trade'. 1 assumption that individuals were likely committing crimes in an area due to their history of theft and lack of employment. 1 assumption that an individual biked away because they saw the police arriving. No assumptions were made based on an individual's race.
Criteria 3: language 8 exceptions identified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6 instances of using terms "Caucasian" and/or "Aboriginal", as opposed to other preferred terms, such as "white" or "indigenous". 1 instance of describing an individual as "mentally slow". 1 instance of describing something or someone as "dirty". It was not apparent in the report what was being described as dirty and why.
Criteria 4: irrelevant information 1 exception identified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Criminal history of person was documented in the report which appeared irrelevant to the check.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation	Owner	Management Response
<p>ECOMB collaborate with Police Training Branch (PTB) and Equity & Inclusion Branch (EIB) to enhance inclusive language and street check writing education for street check reviewers.</p>	<p>ECOMB</p>	<p>ACCEPTED: Response: <i>We understand the importance and the role street check reviewers play in reinforcing sensitivity and inclusivity with frontline members during street checks. We will review current training provided to street check reviewers for opportunities to reinforce appropriate and inclusive interactions with the community.</i> Status: <i>In progress</i> Expected completion date: <i>Q4 2021</i></p>
<p>PTB collaborate with EIB to include inclusive language education and specific examples of appropriate/inappropriate reasons for street checks into its street check training for all EPS frontline members.</p>	<p>PTB</p>	<p>ACCEPTED: Response: <i>We agree that frontline members could benefit from additional and/or recurring training on inclusive language and requirements when conducting street checks. We will collaborate with Equity & Inclusion Branch to review and update training provided to frontline members for writing street check reports.</i> Status: <i>Not started</i> Expected completion date: <i>Q1 2022</i></p>
<p>EIB improve the use of the Inclusive Language Guide ("guide") by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) collaborating with Corporate Communications to determine how to extensively communicate the guide to EPS staff, b) collaborating with PTB to include the guide into report writing training, and c) making the guide mandatory for report writing. 	<p>EIB</p>	<p>PARTIALLY ACCEPTED: Response: <i>We agree that this guide is a useful resource and that members should be aware of the impact that language can have on the interactions between individuals and police officers as well as assist in creating respectful and inclusive communication within the workplace. We will collaborate with areas to socialize this resource with all EPS employees and specifically work with PTB to include the guide in report writing training. We believe making this guide mandatory will be counterproductive as, historically, mandatory training has not resulted in employee engagement, endorsement and acceptance. Additionally, inclusive language is continuously evolving, and mandatory training would result in an overly rigid approach to an emerging concept. We are investigating other methods to embed inclusive language in EPS training and processes and will revisit this recommendation once Statistics Canada creates national guidance on the collection of race-based data.</i> Status: <i>In progress</i> Expected completion date: <i>Q2 2022</i></p>

APPENDIX: STREET CHECK REPORT AND TEST DATA ANALYSIS





Audit and Risk Branch Street Check Report Audit

For the period July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021

Edmonton Police Commission & Edmonton Police Service

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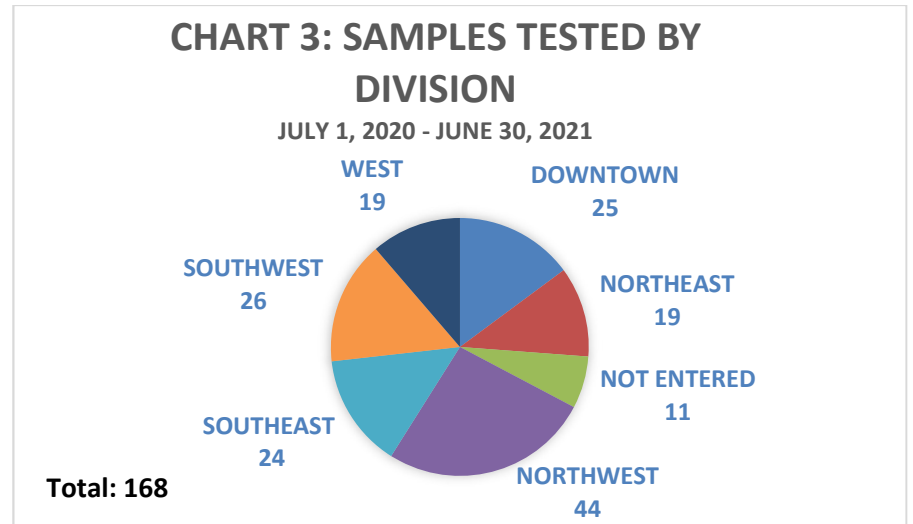
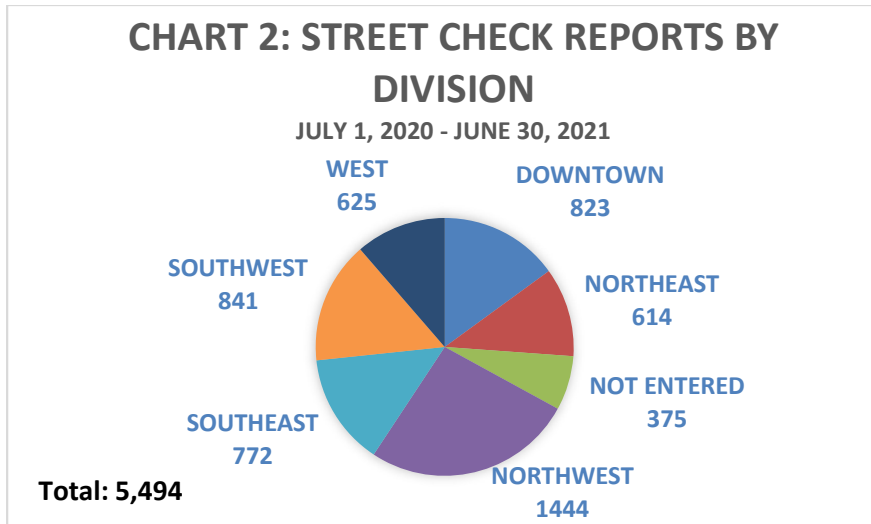
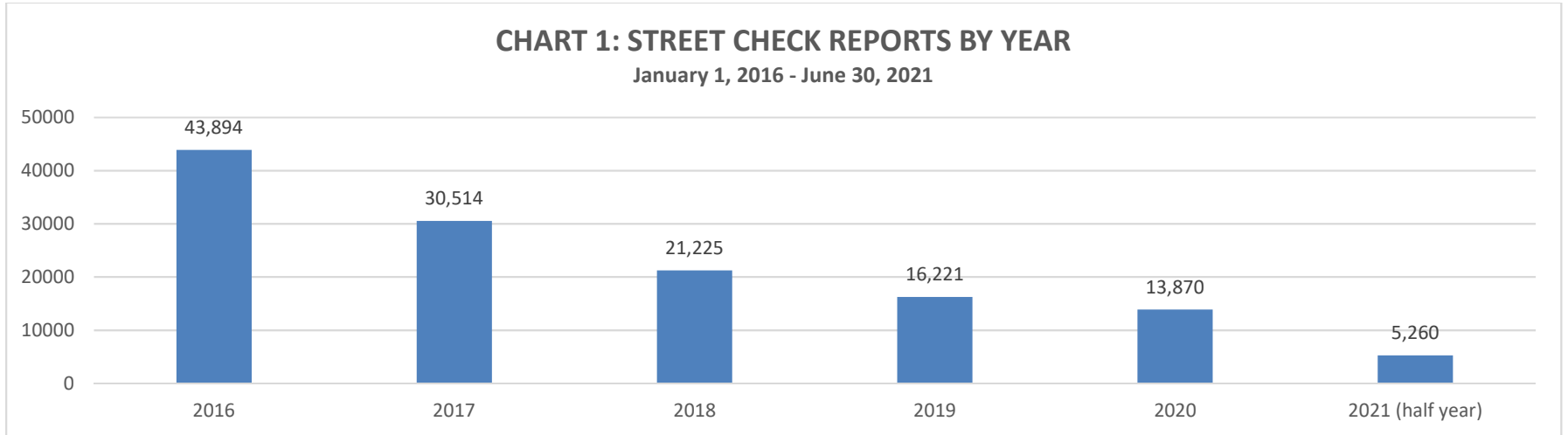
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APPENDIX: STREET CHECK REPORT AND TEST DATA ANALYSIS



Street Check Report Audit

Presented for information to the
Edmonton Police Commission

November 18, 2021

*Presented by:
Steven Duong, Audit & Risk Coordinator*



Agenda

- Audit overview
- Findings
- Recommendations

Audit Overview



Objective & Scope



Background



Methodology

Findings

% exceptions by criteria year over year

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Recommendations

- 1) Street Check Training for Street Check Reviewers
- 2) Street Check Training for Front Line Members
- 3) Inclusive Language Guide

THANK YOU

