



# *Quality Assurance Review Report - 2017*

Policing Standards and Contract Management  
Public Safety



## ***Grand Falls Police Force***

### **Overview**

Pursuant to paragraph 1.1(2)(c) of the New Brunswick *Police Act*, the Minister of the Department of Public Safety (DPS) may establish a system of inspection and review of police forces. The *Policing Standards – New Brunswick* are issued as ministerial directives pursuant to subsection 1.1(3) of the *Police Act*. The Standards set out the police force Quality Assurance (QA) program in ORG 5 with the current QA Program in place since 2013. The system of inspection and review of police forces is conducted by policing consultants Jennifer Smith and Rick Votour of the Policing Standards and Contract Management (PSCM) branch of the Department of Public Safety (DPS).

While the QA program follows a cyclical process, it is flexible enough to respond to any newly identified risk activities facing municipal police forces. The program examines facts and realities facing modern day law enforcement agencies to identify gaps as well as best practices.

### **Objective**

The purpose of the QA review is to assess adequacy and effectiveness of the policing services provided by the police force by examining common risks to police agencies on behalf of the Minister.

The report is intended to summarize the data collected from the police force, analyze the findings, identify gaps, and present any recommendations and observations that could improve police service to the Director of Policing Standards and Contract Management.

### **Scope**

The QA Program operates on an annual cycle beginning in the fall when the PSCM Director announces to the New Brunswick Association of Chiefs of Police (NBACP) those activities that are mandatory to risk. The 2017 risk activities announced were:

- Sex crimes investigations;
- UCR scoring (data integrity); and
- Community policing.

Members of the police force in collaboration with the PSCM review team conduct a fall risking exercise that examines the mandatory risk activities and any police force specific risks that could benefit from an examination.

In January police forces begin their reviews using either review guides created by the PSCM review team or developed by the police force. The police force can also employ any other review technique they deem appropriate. All documentation is submitted to the PSCM

review team.

In the spring of 2018, the PSCM review team conducted an internal risking exercise to identify municipal police forces that will be scheduled for an on-site review.

This report serves as an overview of the police force QA program performance for the 2017 cycle to ensure the management of selected risk activities is in compliance with the *Policing Standards – New Brunswick*, the Municipal/Regional Police Forces Operational and Administrative Manuals (Operational Manual and Administrative Manual, respectively) and legal requirements. The PSCM review team monitors recommendations to completion.

A snapshot of the reviewed activities is summarized in this report (see table 2) and includes a rating based on the following scale (table 1).

| <b>TABLE 1</b>          |  |
|-------------------------|--|
| <b>Rating</b>           | <b>Description</b>   |
| Needs Improvement (NI)  | Practices and controls are not adequate to ensure the objectives are achieved effectively in this activity.  |
| Meets Expectations (ME) | The activity's management meets current provincial policing requirements. Any issues/opportunities for improvement noted are not major in that they do not affect the ability to achieve its objectives. |

## Findings

**TABLE 2 - Summary of findings**

| <b>Review by police force</b>        |    |   |
|--------------------------------------|----|---|
| NI                                   | ME | <b>Comments</b>   |
| <b>UCR scoring (data integrity)</b>  |    |   |
|                                      |    | GFPF is working diligently to increase the effective and efficient use of their RMS to ensure data quality and accurate reporting to the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics (CCJS).<br><i>See recommendation - #1</i> |
| <b>Community policing</b>            |    |   |
|                                      |    | Formal planning for crime reduction initiatives should be examined; GFPF offers a transitional level of community policing, the Policing Standards requires contemporary.<br><i>See recommendation - #2</i>               |
| <b>Mental Health Act calls (MHA)</b> |    |   |
|                                      |    | Consultation with medical professionals by GFPF changed service provided to clients; better articulation in MHA files is required.<br><i>See recommendation - #3</i>  |
| <b>Performance evaluations</b>       |    |   |
|                                      |    | Performance evaluation changes have been noted in the past; Chief is committed to ensuring a process that best meets the needs of GFPF.<br><i>See recommendation - #4</i>   |
| <b>Search / seizure</b>              |    |   |
|                                      |    | Low number of executed warrants; members would benefit from training; officers should be reminded of articulation and documentation required in the file.<br><i>See recommendation - #5</i>                               |

| Review by PSCM                         |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Intimate Partner Violence (IPV)</b> |   |
|  | Marked improvement in the provision of services to the victims and the handling of these incidents. Good articulation and documentation.<br><i>See observation – PSCM #1</i>                                      |
| <b>Workflow management</b>             |   |
|  | The review team noted an improvement in the supervision of investigations and a decrease in overdue investigations compared to previous years.<br><b>No recommendations</b>                                       |
| <b>Equipment</b>                       |   |
|  | There have been recent upgrades to officer safety equipment and acquisition of new equipment. Addition of an unloading station for firearms would increase officer safety.<br><i>See recommendation – PSCM #6</i> |
| <b>Exhibits</b>                        |   |
|  | Meets operational policy requirements. Alterations to one piece of equipment and acquisition of additional refrigerator/freezer are required.<br><i>See recommendations – PSCM #7 and #8</i>                      |

## Findings of the GPF self-review

### UCR Soring / Data Integrity

**Objective:**

To ensure that data entered into the Records Management System (RMS) is complete, consistent, accurate and void of duplication while conforming to policies, legislation and the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Incident Based Survey reporting to Statistics Canada.

**Findings:**

A civilian staff member responsible for CCJS validation completed this self-review using the PSCM review guide. GPF has been working towards a more effective use of their RMS and has solicited assistance from the Fredericton Police Force and the Edmundston Police Force in this regard. Member training was given in 2017, however with the changes to UCR reporting additional training is required for the sergeants to ensure proper reporting.

**Recommendation - #1:**

The Chief or delegate will arrange RMS refresher training for members.

### Community policing

**Objective:**

To ensure that the police force responds to the needs of the community based on the principles of partnership, ownership and problem solving with a focus on delivering quality service. The police force will maintain an ongoing dialogue by working in collaboration with others for the purpose of remaining proactive and will strive to achieve a



contemporary community policing service delivery model that is evidence based, flexible and responsive.

**Findings:**

A member of patrol completed this self-review using the PSCM review guide. The reviewer stated that the police force and its members understand the importance of community policing and crime reduction initiatives. Members of the force are engaged in community policing activities.

The reviewer found that GPPF offers a transitional level of community policing. The Policing Standards in ORG 1 states that:

*“The police force service delivery model is contemporary community policing. Strategies to implement community policing will vary according to community needs and available resources”.*

The reviewer noted that there was no formal community policing or crime reduction plan.

**Recommendation - #2:**

The Chief or delegate will create a formal community policing policy with specific guidelines that would guide and motivate members.

## Mental Health Act calls

**Objective:**

To ensure that appropriate policies, protocols, standards and legislation are followed and documented on the handling of persons requiring care or treatment at a medical facility.

**Findings:**

A sergeant on patrol completed this self-review using the PSCM review guide and matrix. This self-review resulted in a change of practice with the medical professionals who had requested that persons suffering from a mental health crisis be locked in a holding facility. GPPF initiated conversations with the medical professionals and this is no longer occurring. The reviewer found that officers could better articulate the actions taken in these incidents and while the mobile crisis unit is used, it is not being used in all incidents.

**Recommendation - #3:**

The Chief or delegate will ensure that guidelines are established and an information session is held with the members.

## Performance evaluations

**Objective:**

To ensure the police force has in place an appraisal system meant to encourage and support the development of employees. It should identify an assessment of performance

and encourage career goals and potential.

**Findings:**

The Chief completed this review using the PSCM review guide. Performance evaluations are the same for all members of the GPPF. The Chief feels that the performance evaluation process is important to help identify areas for improvement and realize goals more efficiently. Career and training goals should also be documented. The Chief is examining implementing an alternate performance evaluation process to better meet the needs of the GPPF staff.

**Recommendation - #4:**

The Chief or delegate will implement a performance evaluation process that accurately assesses the competencies of the GPPF members and support staff. This process will also focus on the personal growth of the employee, management communicating expectations and for all employees to feel included in this process.

**Search and seizure****Objective:**

To ensure that proper documentation was completed and that the search & seizure complied with legal requirements.

**Findings:**

A member of patrol completed this self-review using the PSCM review guide and matrix. GPPF executed a low number of warrants that were deemed to have been properly applied for and executed in accordance with the law. The reviewer did note some areas for improvement with respect to articulation and documentation in the file. GPPF uses the detail pages in the RMS relating to search warrants however it is not done in all instances.

**Recommendation - #5:**

The Chief or delegate will ensure that officers document consultations with supervisors and the Crown; place photocopies of the entire warrant in the file prior to the original being returned to the courts and complete the search warrant detail page of the RMS. Also offer the search warrant drafting course to members as training becomes available.

**Review by PSCM****Intimate Partner Violence (IPV)****Objective:**

To ensure that appropriate investigative procedures and established protocols are followed and documented and that where appropriate, charges are laid in cases involving intimate partner violence (IPV)

**Findings:**

Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) has been reviewed at GPF for the past four QA reviews. The PSCM reviewers examined files using the PSCM review guide and matrix and noted an improvement in file articulation. Members and the IPV Coordinator are consistently using the IPV Checklist as per policy. Flagging of files is being done by members and verified by the IPV Coordinator.

More than one member routinely responds to IPV incidents in Grand Falls. Referrals to Social Development and Victim Services are made where appropriate and documented in the file. Officers are informing victims of their rights under the *Intimate Partner Violence Intervention Act* and their right to apply for an Emergency Intervention Order (EIO).

Officers are documenting their attempts to interview victims, suspects and witnesses. When a suspect is arrested, they were always released on an undertaking and the victim informed of the conditions. Officers are completing queries on the RMS and CPIC to determine previous incidents of IPV and it is documented in the file. The risk assessment tool is being completed when the IPV incident meets the criteria.

Supervisors are providing direction on files and the Head Reader is cognizant of the priority of IPV files which was evident in his notes on files. Files are scanned into the RMS system making a complete electronic file.

**Observation - PSCM #1:**

After reviewing the GPF IPV files over the last five years, the PSCM review team noted an improvement in the diligence applied to the investigation of these incidents and the service provided to victims. GPF meets expectations in the area of IPV investigations.

**Workflow management****Objective:**

To ensure that workflow practices are efficient and effective and that safeguards are in place to best meet the needs of the public as well as stakeholder groups and partners that interact with the police force.

**Findings:**

The PSCM review team examined this activity by interviewing employees that included administrative support staff and members of the management team.

GPF has workflow policy that was last revised in August 2016. File flow and responsibility for supervisory oversight for all CAD events ultimately rests with the Deputy Chief. As chief reader, the Deputy Chief relies on each Sergeant leading a platoon to ensure that calls for service requiring a GO are documented in the RMS and reviewed for quality and thoroughness. The chief reader designated an area of the GO for sergeant notes and another for notes from the Deputy Chief or Chief. The Deputy Chief indicated that there have been gains made in file articulation and supervisory oversight over the past year. The chief reader reviews all files prepared for court and all files deemed ready for conclusion

by supervisors.

The PSCM review team examined the chief reader and platoon sergeants' workflow. The review team noted an improvement in the supervision of investigations and a decrease in overdue investigations compared to previous years.

## Equipment

### **Objective:**

To ensure police personnel have the necessary equipment to fulfil their obligations, that equipment inventories are maintained and that operational personnel maintain a state of operational awareness and readiness necessary to enhance their safety and the safety of the communities they serve.

### **Findings:**

The PSCM reviewers used the PSCM review matrix to examine GFPP's operational police equipment in three areas: worn by police officers, used in the office and vehicle equipment needed to respond to calls for service.

GFPP operate out of the Grand Falls municipal building. The police station provides service to walk-in clients. Front line service delivery is 24 hours a day with calls to the police dispatched out of the Edmundston telecommunications centre. Officers return to the station during their shifts for briefings, interviews of clients and writing of reports.

Flashlights, cellphones, and portable radios are available to all members on shift. GFPP police officers were issued new police force side arms in 2017. There are carbines available in addition to shotguns and one rifle. Hard body armor and ballistic helmets are available to members. Equipment and firearms are stored according to policy and relevant legislation. Officers reporting for duty use a check sheet to record the equipment being used for the shift and any issues related to condition or function are recorded. Motorola radios and portables are used for communications and there is no scheduled date for the police force to move to the Trunked Mobile Radio system (NBTMR) announced in 2016 by the Province of New Brunswick.

Equipment inside the police station was examined. The station does not have a holding facility for detainees; rather they are transported to the RCMP detachment in St. Leonard. The police station does not have a loading / unloading station for firearms. Body worn cameras have just been received and will be put into service in the coming weeks.

A room just off the constable bullpen houses both the Live Scan fingerprinting unit and the Intox EC\IR II. Both pieces of equipment are new and maintenance logs are up to date.

There are three marked police vehicles and one unmarked vehicle. All vehicles were examined and found to be in good condition, very clean and well organized. Equipment kept in the trunk is securely fastened. Marked vehicles are equipped with new first aid kits, fire extinguishers, spike belts, traffic control triangles, flares, 360 degree lighting, audible



sirens and moving radar units.

Administrative files with inventory records for all police force firearms were examined. The files containing information on the radar equipment and tuning forks were examined and it was noted that certificates of accuracy are readily available for officers who are required to give evidence in court on contested speeding charges laid under the *Motor Vehicle Act*.

GFPF have upgraded key pieces of police equipment in recent years and meet the equipment required under the Policing Standards.

**Recommendation – PSCM #6:**

The Chief or delegate will obtain an unloading station designed to provide safe and easy unloading of service weapons and safely containing accidental discharges to the necessary rated ballistic level.

## Exhibits

**Objective:**

To ensure articles seized or otherwise coming into police custody are properly reported, securely stored, and properly disposed of.

**Findings:**

The PSCM review team reviewed this activity using the PSCM review guide and matrix and examined the bond room. The bond room custodian is the Deputy Chief and the back-up custodian is the Chief. The room is alarmed and a key control log is maintained inside the exhibit room. The room itself is ventilated and metal shelving is used to store all exhibits.

Officers complete a hand written exhibit form that is attached to the exhibit and placed in a secure locker that can only be accessed by the bond room custodian. The continuity of the exhibit is tracked on the reverse side of the paper exhibit form. GFPF are the only municipal police force not using the property control subsystem on the RMS. The advantage of using the RMS system is that reports are readily available and there is a disposal review date function.

A random sampling of exhibits was selected and examined. The exhibits selected were adequately described on the exhibit form. Most exhibits examined were marked with the investigating officer's initials, date and time of seizure but several exhibits had the date but no time. Several exhibits had only the investigating officer's initials with a file and exhibit number. GFPF provide clear plastic evidence bags that come in several sizes and when an evidence bag is used the notations on the evidence bag are almost always completely filled in.

The exhibit custodian was able to quickly locate every exhibit examined for this review. The destruction of exhibits is witnessed by a second police officer. GFPF has a small number of firearm exhibits and it was noted that it is not possible to determine from a

visual inspection prior to handling if the firearm was incapable of firing a bullet. In addition to ensuring the firearm breech is left open, the use of trigger locks, nylon ties, a plastic plug or a combination thereof can make it immediately obvious the firearm has been rendered safe for handling.

A small refrigerator located in a common purpose room is used to store any biological exhibits such as blood. Investigators using the refrigerator place red evidence tape across the door and notify the exhibit custodian there is an exhibit stored there for processing. The door to the small refrigerator is not secured by a lock or locking device. There is no refrigerator / freezer located inside the main exhibit room for use by the exhibit custodian.

GFPF meet operational policy requirements that exhibits are regulated and controlled to maintain accurate continuity and accountability as evidence. Improvements are needed for the handling of biological exhibits.

**Recommendation – PSCM #7:**

The Chief or delegate will place a lock or locking device on the temporary refrigerator used to store biological exhibits and ensure that an approved refrigerator/ freezer be obtained and placed inside the main bond room for the future storage of biological evidence.

**Recommendation – PSCM #8:**

The Chief or delegate will set a date and begin using the property control subsystem of the RMS for all future exhibits seized by police for evidence or safekeeping.

## Concluding Summary

The PSCM review team would like to thank the Grand Falls Police Force for their contribution during the 2017 QA review process. As a result of the review, GFPF has created an action plan to track recommendations to completion. The PSCM review team remains available to GFPF for assistance and looks forward to continued collaboration for the fall 2018 risking process.

## Policing Standards and Contract Management (PSCM)

### Quality Assurance (QA) Review Team

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Date report submitted to Director: October 15, 2018

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