

NWPD Response to the Calls For Justice

Listening and Learning through Respect and Understanding

Report prepared by New Westminster Police Department Inspector Diana McDaniel



New Westminster Police Department

Acknowledgements

The New Westminster Police Department proudly serves its community and acknowledges that the City of New Westminster is located on the unceded territories of many Halkomelem-speaking nations and that through the City of New Westminster's process of seeking stronger relationships with these nations, there is hope to arrive at a land acknowledgment that is acceptable to all those communities declaring interests in it.

The New Westminster Police Department acknowledges that there are differing opinions on the appropriate use of terminology. For the purposes of this report, and in observance of the Federal Government's recognition of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis as Indigenous Peoples, we refer to these populations as Indigenous; this is also consistent with standard terminology used in the United Nations Declaration on the rights of Indigenous Peoples. On September 13th, 2007, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples which was more than 20 years in the making and with the participation of more than 100 Indigenous organizations annually, the declaration is the most comprehensive statement of the rights of Indigenous peoples ever developed.¹



Figure 1. New Westminster as seen from the Fraser River. Indigenous person in a canoe on the river. - [ca.1866].

In the 1980's, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on discrimination against Indigenous Populations, Jose Martinez Cobo, developed a working definition for use with the working Group of Indigenous Populations:

Indigenous communities, peoples and nations are those which, having a historical continuity with pre-invasion and pre-colonial societies that developed on their territories, consider themselves distinct from other sectors of the societies now prevailing in those territories, or parts of them. They form at present non-dominant sectors of society and are determined to preserve, develop and transmit to future generations their ancestral territories, and their ethnic identity, as the basis of their continued existence as peoples, in accordance with their own cultural patterns, social institutions and legal systems.²

¹ United Nations. (2008). United Nations declaration on the rights of Indigenous peoples. Retrieved from http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/DRIPS_en.pdf

² Indigenous Foundations – Arts.UBC.ca

Executive Summary

In September 2016, the Canadian Government initiated the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG).³ The federal government and the 13 provincial and territorial governments mandated that this inquiry report on systemic causes of all forms of violence, which has contributed to violence and vulnerabilities of Indigenous women and girls. In addition, the Inquiry recommended institutional policies and practices be implemented in response to violence experienced by Indigenous women and girls in Canada, including the identification and examination of practices that have been effective in reducing violence and increasing safety.

On June 3, 2019, the final findings from the National Inquiry into MMIWG were released to the public. The extensive review found that there are 231 steps, or Calls for Justice, that are required by all levels of government to end violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA (Two-Spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, intersex, and asexual) people. All Calls for Justice are aimed at tackling root causes of violence, and improving the safety, and thus lives, of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people. As stated in the Calls for Justice, “An absolute paradigm shift is required to dismantle colonialism within Canadian society, and from all levels of government and public institutions. Ideologies and instruments of colonialism, racism, and misogyny, past and present must be rejected.”

The MMIWG Inquiry identified 28 Calls for Police Services, which are reviewed in this report. The New Westminster Police Department (NWPD) accepts those voices heard by the Inquiry into MMIWG. Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people have the right to be protected and feel safe; their human rights must be upheld. The NWPD concurs that Indigenous Peoples have rights to culture, health, security, and justice. They acknowledge the courage of the survivors and families and recognizes that all police services, including the NWPD, have a role to play in ending the violence, death, and unexplained disappearances of Indigenous women and girls and 2SLGBTQQIA people. “Thousands of women’s deaths or disappearances have likely gone unrecorded over the decades, and many families likely did not feel ready or safe to share with the National Inquiry...” The NWPD is committed to action with respect to the results of the MMIWG Inquiry.

Canada has a disturbing history of systemic discrimination against Indigenous Peoples – the legal system, correctional institutions, government policies, and the police have administered policies and practices in ways that discriminate against women, Indigenous Peoples, and other racialized or marginalized groups. The NWPD recognizes that this discrimination has led to substance use, poverty, homelessness, and overrepresentation of Indigenous people in the criminal justice system. The National Inquiry into MMIWG outlines an imperative component to re-examine police practices that reduce the violence, death, and unexplained disappearances of Indigenous women and girls and members of the 2SLGBTQQIA community. In response to the Calls for Justice in the National Inquiry into MMIWG, this report provides an overview of the following NWPD practices and procedures:

³ National Inquiry. (2019). *Reclaiming power and place: The final report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls* (Vols. 1a & 1b). Retrieved from <https://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca/final-report/>

- Recruiting Practices:** This included a full review of NWPDP's recruiting practices as they relate to the Calls for Justice for Police Services. Covered in this section is the NWPDP's Indigenous and gender diversity, specialized recruitment programming, and the process the NWPDP has in place for screening recruits for racial, gender, gender identity, and sexual orientation bias. In collaboration with the City of New Westminster, the NWPDP Recruiting Section will undertake a review of their Indigenous outreach efforts and host information sessions with Indigenous communities in an effort to attract qualified candidates.
- Commitment to Strengthen Community Relations:** The NWPDP is dedicated to expanding Diversity, Inclusion, and Indigenous outreach and developing partnerships, maintaining relationships with various communities and interest groups. Relationships are developed with communities at both the Executive and frontline levels. To address safety issues, members regularly meet with representatives from diverse communities to provide advice, suggestions, and recommendations.
- The NWPDP commits to provide extensive resources to community partnerships and acknowledges that partnerships between police, Indigenous communities and 2SLGBTQQIA people need to be expanded. This can be accomplished by the creation of an Indigenous Advisory Committee which would consist of members of New Westminster's Indigenous community and executive representation from NWPDP.
- Culturally Appropriate and Gender-Neutral Policy, Practices, and Procedures:** The NWPDP implements departmental policy with gender-neutral language. The NWPDP's policies, practices, and procedures are developed, and consistently reviewed, so they do not impact people differently based on any identifying factor such as gender. Furthermore, policy analysis is done beyond gender, and includes potential impacts on other identifying factors including age, sexual orientation, sexual expression, race, ethnicity, religion, and culture. In developing policy and procedures, the NWPDP incorporates the principles of the *B.C. Human Rights Code*⁴ and the *Canadian Human Rights Act*.⁵ We commit to continue extensive policy review guided by the lens of culturally appropriate and gender-neutral language and interpretation.



⁴ *Human Rights Code*, RSBC 1996, c 210.

⁵ *Canadian Human Rights Act*, RSC 1985, c H-6.

- **Training – Increase Cultural Competence and Ensure Trauma Informed Practices:** The NWPD is committed to making all employees more culturally fluent. To that end, it provides a number of training initiatives to officers and civilians, including: 2SLGBTQQIA people sharing their experiences, and to address discrimination, the NWPD offers training on gender frameworks and models, contextualizing 2SLGBTQQIA history in Canada, and reflections on 2SLGBTQQIA lived experiences. We endeavour to provide additional cultural competency training and Indigenous awareness courses to our officers.
- In addition, the NWPD has recently implemented mandatory Fair and Impartial Policing (FIP) training, a full day of training delivered to all officers. This important training illustrates how implicit biases may affect police perception and behaviour, and as a result negatively affect community members. Notably, the training provides specific focus to the effect of bias on Indigenous communities.
- Furthermore, NWPD is sensitive to the fact that trauma has a neurobiological impact and for these reasons, sections of the NWPD introduced trauma informed investigative practices in 2017. The Major Crime Unit, Domestic Violence Unit and Special Investigation Units continue to educate members on the impact of trauma since the concept was first introduced in 2014. In November, 2019, our Domestic Violence Detective provided Trauma Informed training to all officers. The NWPD were one of the first police agencies to provide this training in British Columbia. Currently, NWPD members have taken a mandatory on-line CPKN Trauma Informed Practice training.
- **Investigative Practices:** The NWPD follows the same investigative process regardless of a victim's race, gender, sexual orientation, or any other identifying factor. Nevertheless, NWPD investigators are keenly aware of the unique historical and cultural sensitivities surrounding Indigenous victims and consider those during investigations, both to provide resources for the victim and families, and to aid the investigation.

NWPD recognizes that receiving information about a missing and murdered loved one is vital to begin the healing journey; families need to receive timely information. NWPD maintains communication with the family members if required and desired by the family, as mandated by provincial standards.

Important to investigative success and to provide support for victims and families, NWPD collaborates with community partnerships. For example, Spirit of the Children Society, ACCESS (Aboriginal Community Career Employment Services Society) Aunt Leah's Place, North Métis Association and Circle 5 which is the branch of MCFD that works with Indigenous families. We provide court support during interviews with Crown Counsel and during trials, sentencing and bail hearings.

NWPD recognizes that receiving information about a missing and murdered loved one is vital to begin the healing journey; families need to receive timely information. NWPD maintains communication with the family members if required and desired by the family, as mandated by provincial standards.

Important to investigative success and to provide support for victims and families, NWPD collaborates with community partnerships. For example, Spirit of the Children Society, ACCESS (Aboriginal Community Career Employment Services Society) Aunt Leah's Place, North Métis Association and Circle 5 which is the

branch of MCFD that works with Indigenous families. We provide court support during interviews with Crown Counsel and during trials, sentencing and bail hearings.

The NWPD also supports the Calls for Justice that will necessitate a nationwide response. This includes support for provincial and territorial governments to establish a nationwide emergency number. Furthermore, if a national task force to review and, if required, to reinvestigate each case of all unresolved files of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people is established, the NWPD will support it and commits to submitting all such cases to the task force.

The NWPD recognizes that police have played a role in the historical trauma to Indigenous Peoples; some of the effects of this trauma have been lasting and passed across generations. Acknowledgement of both the history and trauma, as well as the current state, is important to move forward. All police agencies, including the NWPD, have an imperative role to ensure that systemic racism and discriminatory practices do not continue. In addition to the responsibility the criminal justice system has, NWPD understands why the National Inquiry into MMIWG has called for action from other sectors including educators, health and wellness service providers, media and social influencers amongst others – there is a responsibility for all to act.

Inspector McDaniel contacted Chief Rhonda Larrabee of the Qayqayt First Nation, also known as the New Westminster Indian Band. Chief Larrabee did not provide comments regarding the MMIWG Calls for Justice but did state that education is her main focus. She stated her desire to “come back home” and claim the Qayqayt lands in New Westminster. The NWPD respect her point of view and the development of positive relationships with Indigenous Peoples and 2SLGBTQQIA people, will remain a priority. The NWPD engages in ongoing initiatives with diverse communities and will commit to improving these initiatives by responding in the most caring and thoughtful ways to these Calls for Justice. The NPWD commits to working towards the safety of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people.

The NWPD commits to being an ally to Indigenous people and will endeavour to strive to meet the responsibilities and as stated in Dr. Lyn Gehl’s Ally Bill of Responsibilities⁶, “Understand that they are secondary to the Indigenous people that they are working with and that they seek to serve. They and their needs must take a back seat.”

Introduction

Background

In September 2016, the Canadian Government initiated the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG).⁷ The federal government and the 13 provincial and territorial governments mandated that this inquiry report on:

⁶ <http://www.lynngehl.com>

⁷ National Inquiry. (2019). *Reclaiming power and place: The final report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls* (Vols. 1a & 1b). Retrieved from <https://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca/final-report/>

- Systemic causes of all forms of violence – including sexual violence – against Indigenous women and girls in Canada, including underlying social, economic, cultural, institutional, and historical causes contributing to the ongoing violence and particular vulnerabilities of Indigenous women and girls in Canada; and
- Institutional policies and practices implemented in response to violence experienced by Indigenous women and girls in Canada, including the identification and examination of practices that have been effective in reducing violence and increasing safety.

Family members and survivors of violence who wished to participate in the Inquiry could do so and share their testimony, as part of the Truth-Gathering Process. Other components of the Truth-Gathering Process included Institutional hearings regarding the systemic causes of institutional violence and institutional responses. Expert and Knowledge Keeper hearings involved Elders, academics, legal experts, among others, who provided insight on systemic causes of violence and offered solutions. In addition, groups that represent non-government organizations, Indigenous women's groups, civil societies, and some police services participated in the Inquiry.

The MMIWG Inquiry encompassed the voices from:

- over 2,380 individuals who participated in the National Inquiry into MMIWG;
- 819 people created artistic expressions through the MMIWG Inquiry's Legacy Archive;
- almost 750 people shared by providing statements;
- a total of 468 family members and survivors shared their experiences and recommendations at 15 Community Hearings;
- over 270 family members and survivors shared their stories in 147 private, or in camera sessions; and
- 84 Expert Witnesses, Elders, and Knowledge Keepers, front-line workers, and officials provided testimony in nine Institutional and Expert and Knowledge Keeper Hearings.

Review of MMIWG Cases

The NWPD fulfilled all requests received from the National Inquiry into MMIWG. The NWPD received a request for information regarding any outstanding missing indigenous women or girls. As part of the 's submission for the national inquiry into MMIWG, a file review process was completed in accordance with the Province of British Columbia (B.C.) Police Services guidelines. In addition, as part of NWPD's commitment to the National Inquiry into MMIWG, questions and data requests were tracked in accordance with the national reporting standards. This process was adopted by municipal agencies in B.C.

Key Findings from the National Inquiry into MMIWG

On June 3, 2019, the final report for the National Inquiry into MMIWG was released to the public. The report found that there are 231 steps that are required by governments and Canadians, to end the genocide against Indigenous women and girls. These steps or “Calls for Justice” are imperative, and not optional, according to the Inquiry’s final report. Some Calls for Justice are directed at federal, provincial, and Indigenous governments, while others are directed at media, educators, correctional services, and police, among other sectors. Finally, the findings call on all Canadians to have a role in creating change.

An important element of the Inquiry was to identify how police practices can assist in reducing the violence, death, and unexplained disappearances of Indigenous women and girls along with members of the 2SLGBTQQIA community. The MMIWG Inquiry identifies 28 Calls for Police Services (see Appendix A for full list of all Calls for Police Services), which are examined in this report.

In general, expressions in the review included but were not limited to:

- an overall lack of trust in police;
- fear of reporting crimes to the police;
- a desire for improved relationships between police services and Indigenous communities;
- increased Indigenous representation in police services;
- designated investigators, police units, protocols or regional offices to address violence against Indigenous women;
- a need to determine how best to protect Indigenous women involved in survival sex work;
- calls for improved cooperation between police departments;
- improved communication between the police and Indigenous families;
- greater awareness of 2SLGBTQQIA issues, including the history and culturally specific solutions for 2SLGBTQQIA people;
- increased knowledge of Indigenous issues and distinctive realities, cultural competency and practical supports for Indigenous families;
- more immediate, proactive, and thorough investigations into the deaths and disappearances of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people; and
- 17 more responsive, transparent, and accountable policing (including comprehensive and independent police oversight).

The following Calls for Justice have been abbreviated and categorized for ease of reference in this report. Please refer to Appendix A for the complete version of the Calls for Justice.

Review of the Calls for Justice

9.1	Acknowledge that the historical and current relationship between Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA people and the justice system has been largely defined by colonialism, racism, bias, discrimination and fundamental cultural and societal differences. Acknowledge that, going forward, this relationship must be based on respect and understanding, and must be led by, and in partnerships with, Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA people.
-----	--

The NWPD's Acknowledgement of the Findings

The NWPD trust the power of voices, and accepts those voices heard by the Inquiry into MMIWG. Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people have the right to feel safe and be protected; their human rights, like all individuals, must be upheld. Unfortunately, violence permeates the lives of many of these individuals and many lives have been lost due to this violence. The NWPD acknowledges the courage of the survivors and families and recognizes that all police services, including the NWPD, have a role to play in ending the violence, death, and unexplained disappearances of Indigenous women and girls and 2SLGBTQQIA people.

Canada's history includes systemic discrimination against Indigenous Peoples. Historically, the legal system, correctional institutions, and the police have administered policies and practices in ways that discriminate against women, Indigenous Peoples, and other racialized or marginalized groups. When coupled with discriminatory government policies, the generational effects of colonization, displacement, and the Residential School system have disadvantaged and impoverished Indigenous Peoples. The NWPD recognizes that this discrimination has led to substance use, poverty, homelessness, and overrepresentation of Indigenous people in the criminal justice system. We have a responsibility to acknowledge that as a society, we have failed Indigenous Peoples, and a responsibility to ensure that systemic racism and discriminatory practices do not continue.

Developing a positive relationship between the NWPD and Indigenous Peoples will remain a priority. Several of our main strategic goals with respect to the NWPD's new draft Strategic Plan (2020-2023) is to build relationships, maintain and build trust, focus on community, partner and stakeholder engagement. We seek to improve our engagement with our community with a focus on Reconciliation with Indigenous peoples and the improvement of relationships with marginalized or disadvantaged groups.

The NWPD has met with Castlemain Group, a Vancouver-based Indigenous advisory firm, to find ways to help build and plan Indigenous engagement strategy. The NWPD are currently reviewing the Castlemain Group Proposal (this initiative was delayed due to Covid-19). There are two phases to the proposal: first to research the history of colonialism in New Westminster and second, to develop an Action Plan to implement the recommendations around reconciliation as set out the NWPD Strategic Plan. The NWPD's goal is to build trust with diverse communities and to equally serve all citizens. The NWPD endeavors to engage in ongoing initiatives with Indigenous Peoples and realized that in light of the findings in the National Inquiry into MMIWG, the NWPD accepts that this work needs to be a focus and priority where the NWPD will continue to listen and act to work towards safety for everyone, including all Indigenous women and girls and 2SLGBTQQIA people.

The NWPD recognizes that building relationships must be based on respect and understanding, and led by and in partnerships with Indigenous communities and 2SLGBTQQIA people.

Reviewing of Recruiting Practices

9.3(i)	Achieve representative Indigenous and gender diversity through specialized recruitment.
--------	---

9.3(ii)	Indigenous language capacity
9.3(iii)	Screen recruits for racial, gender, gender identity and sexual orientation bias; and
9.3(iv)	Include Indigenous community in recruitment process

The City of New Westminster is a very unique place that is in the center of the Greater Vancouver area. It's able to maintain a small town atmosphere although has all the benefits of a larger city. It is very diverse and represents a vast cross section of people. A major objective of the NWPD Recruiting unit is to attract diverse applicants that are a reflection of the community it serves. The Recruiting unit was signed up to attend a conference in Vancouver, "Overcoming Unconscious Bias of Hiring Processes, Indigenous Inclusion, Gender and Sexual Diversity" but sadly it was cancelled due to Covid-19. We will endeavour to attend these conferences in the future.

Statistics Canada 2016 Census of Population of New Westminster states that approximately 3% of the population of New Westminster identify as Indigenous.⁸ The NWPD Recruiting unit is dedicated to hiring the most quality applicants through outreach and community engagement on many platforms including social media and other strategies to connect with communities, individuals, and groups. The NWPD Recruiting unit upholds a philosophy of inclusion and strives to connect with our Indigenous population along with other diverse groups in our community. The following sections outline a review of NWPD recruiting practices based on recommendations from the National Inquiry into MMIWG that speak to hiring police officers. This includes the recommendation in the Inquiry of achieving Indigenous and gender diversity through specialized recruitment.

Promoting Ethnic Diversity

The NWPD is committed to diversity in the workplace, with the goal of proportionately representing the citizens of New Westminster. In New Westminster there are 38% visible minorities according to the 2016 Statistics Canada Census⁹. The NWPD ensures that it reaches out to ethnic communities in their recruitment initiatives to hire personnel that is reflective of New Westminster's population. Specifically, through recruitment initiatives that place value on diversity, NWPD police officers represent numerous ethnic backgrounds. Diversity in recruiting efforts remain a priority - for example, 36% of the recruits hired between 2015 and 2020 are visible minorities.

Programming and Initiatives to Recruit Indigenous Peoples and 2SLGBTQQIA People

The NWPD Recruiting unit is making efforts to engage communities including the 2SLGBTQQIA and Indigenous communities. For example, the Recruiting unit participates in programming and events to recruit members of the Indigenous community. Current examples include the following:

⁸ Statistics Canada (2016) New Westminster, City data

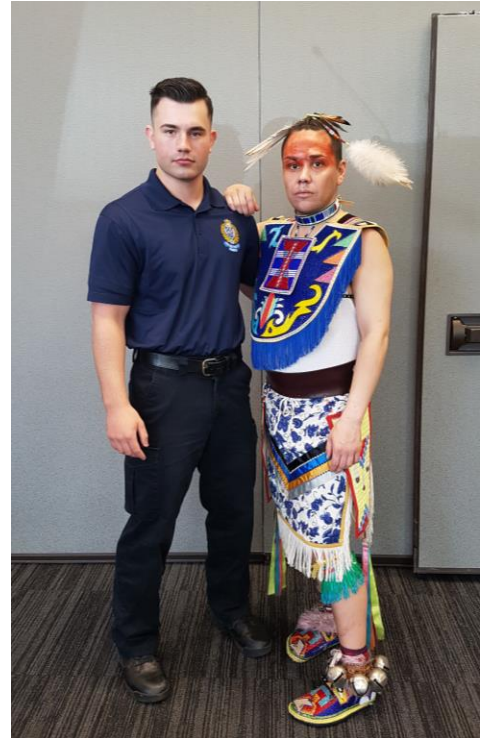
⁹ Statistics Canada (2016) New Westminster, City data

Reserve Constable Program

The Reserve Constable Program is funded by the Provincial Government and is intended to mentor and coach youth aged 19 to 31 years who demonstrate a desire to become police officers with the NWPD. They have specialized training and upon successful completion, they graduate from the program. The training is a condensed version of police recruit training and they participate in riding along with members from various sections, engage in cultural activities, the NWPD Soccer School and in the annual Pulling Together Canoe Journey. Many individuals that have completed the Reserve Program have been eventually hired as police officers at the NWPD and other police agencies.

Student Police Academy

The NWPD Student Police Academy runs every year in the first two weeks of July. Various students aged 16-19 are recruited for the two week academy which includes participating in scenario training, firearms, driving and an introduction to all the various units of the police department.



National Indigenous People's Day

National Indigenous Peoples Day is celebrated annually across Canada on June 21, and in New Westminster it is a full day of events, activities, and performances. The NWPD Community Services Section and Management Team attend this annual event most recently hosted at Moody Park. This celebration brings together a large population of the Indigenous community, including First Nations, Métis, and Inuit People along with participation from the New Westminster School District.

Indigenous Link

The NWPD Recruiting Unit will be forming a partnership with Indigenous Link, an online employment search portal that reaches out to an Indigenous audience on a national level. With a virtual presence on this career website, the NWPD Recruiting Unit is seeking to provide an opportunity for the Indigenous community to connect with the NWPD and engage Indigenous persons and present career opportunities with the NWPD.

2SLGBTQIA

The NWPD has always maintained an ongoing healthy relationship with our local Pride Society and seek to ensure that diverse communities are represented. Most recently in October, 2019, NWPD officers attended a Pride Society Board meeting to further our relationship with the hopes to creating a recruiting link to the NWPD. The NWPD recruiting process was discussed at the meeting and this was very well received. These officers have maintained communication with Pride although COVID-19 has restricted some recruiting initiatives.

In the future:



Indigenous Groups

- Meetings were set up between the NWPD Recruiting section and Indigenous groups at Douglas College, but COVID restricted this. This meeting will be revisited in the fall of 2020.
- Our Recruiting Unit will be connecting with Tsawwassen First Nations from his own personal connections in their youth and young adult community.
- An Indigenous community in the interior has invited the NWPD Recruiting Unit to visit their community and do a presentation with the hopes of building connections.
- Attendance at “Gathering our Voices” which is hosted in Kamloops BC every year in March. It’s where Indigenous youth come together in a supportive and encouraging environment. There is an opportunity for the NWPD Recruiting unit to attend and promote the NWPD and present job opportunities.

Marginalized Community Groups

The NWPD Recruiting section has made their application process as accessible as possible by the following initiatives:

- Recruiting has lowered the barrier for applying by having a digital process so there is no cost in printing documents or obtaining a passport photos.
- The vision and hearing exams have been deferred in certain cases until an applicant knows they are competitive (and we have the option to send them to Medisys and incur the cost on their behalf).
- Social media analytics are leveraged for promotions as social media is a free platform for anyone to join.

- Recruiting is working with our Youth Resources Unit to build connections with students at Alternate, RECAP, POWER, and Purpose (one example is of a female student from Alternate that is now in the JIBC LESD program).
- Recruiting is working closely with the NWPD Student Police Academy and LEAD Program which also promotes cultural and gender diversity in its selection of participants.

With all diversities, genders, and sexualities, the Recruiting unit leverages social media and promotional material to highlight our diversity and promote our equal opportunity employment standards. The key with marginalized groups is found in the long-term connections by our officers, and employing the ideology that “everyone is a recruiter.” Many of the NWPD’s current serving police officers have been instrumental in this respect. NWPD’s Community Based Resource Officer has been building connections with “at-risk” youth in our community. While this is not a direct recruitment strategy, the recruitment angle is that barriers to policing are removed by the Community Based Resource Officer’s efforts. Community connections and relationship development with marginalized teenagers helps build trust that allows for career opportunity conversations to occur.

The Community Services Officer’s work with the LEAD program and the Reserve Constable program develops a pathway for young people to enter into a career in policing. The LEAD program is extremely diverse, and represents many cultures, sexualities, and genders. An NWPD detective spoke with youth at the New Westminster Sikh temple, Gurdwara Sahib Sukh Sagar, located in Queensborough. An NWPD patrol officer has built connections with Indigenous communities through participating in the Pulling Together canoe journey.



Relationships and personal connections are important from a recruitment perspective for many reasons. In addition to the personal connections, the communications team strategically highlights diversity through images of current serving police officers, photos of community events and connections, and highlighting our participation with New Westminster PRIDE. The communications team takes our personal connections and publically shares them through social media so the broader community can experience the diversity of the NWPD. By highlighting NWPD connections, we demonstrate our equality as an employer and our equality as a department.

Law Enforcement Applicant Development (“LEAD” Program)

An NWPD Community Services Officer began this initiative in June, 2019. It is a program that develops pathways and mentorship for students who have completed the Student Police Academy but who are too young to apply to the Reserve Constable Program and have demonstrated the desire to pursue a career as a police officer. This program will teach, mentor and guide students in the knowledge, skills, abilities

and lifestyle choices that will make them an increasingly competitive applicant for the Reserve Constable Program and eventually the police officer recruitment process. There are currently 43 participants in the LEAD program. The participants are diverse and are representative of the community we serve including Southeast Asian, Chinese, Indigenous, Guatemalan, Iranian, amongst others. The Transgender and SLGBTQQIA community are also represented.

Gender Equality

Gender balance in recruitment is a priority for the NWPD. Currently, females represent 30% of all police officers at the NWPD which is well above national average of 22%.¹⁰ Females represent 84% of all civilian staff while 16% are males. The NWPD remains dedicated to ensuring gender diversity through ongoing outreach efforts. For example, in 2014, the NWPD began a women's only recruiting session that was successful in attracting women to the NWPD and this initiative continues today. Respect for equity, diversity and inclusion is of the upmost importance to the NWPD and all forms of communication will be examined to ensure gender diverse options are provided as a selection criteria when identifying gender in internal and external correspondence.

The Preservation and Revitalization of Indigenous Languages

In 2019, the UN General Assembly declared 2019 as the *International Year of Indigenous Languages*.¹¹ Many languages are disappearing over the years and the United Nations wanted to raise awareness so we can all appreciate the important contribution they make to cultural diversity. This was followed by the federal government announcement that the *Indigenous Languages Act* received Royal Assent. The NWPD recognizes that language is intrinsic to the expression of culture. As a means of communicating values, beliefs and customs, it has an important social function and fosters feelings of group identity and solidarity. It is the means by which culture and its traditions and shared values may be conveyed and preserved.¹² For these reasons, the NWPD considers the continuity of Indigenous languages, regardless of where they are practiced – in urban or rural areas, as important and supports the MMIWG Inquiry's recommendation on Indigenous language capacity within police services.

In addition, the NWPD offers an incentive system for police officers which includes specific criteria which, when met, can be considered as part of this incentive. NWPD members have the option of selecting an Indigenous language course and upon review, may obtain an increment for the completion of the course.

¹⁰ Statistics Canada, Police Resources in Canada, 2018

¹¹ 2019 International Year of Indigenous Languages
<https://en.iyil2019.org/#:~:text=The%20United%20Nations%20declared%202019%20The%20Year%20of,they%20make%20to%20our%20world%E2%80%99s%20rich%20cultural%20diversity.>

¹² <https://racismnoway.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/guide.pdf>

Language Diversity in the NWPD

In the NWPD, there are police officers from different ethnic backgrounds. These individuals often bring with them unique skills including second languages. The NWPD employs officers that speak over 16 different languages. The NWPD encourages applicants with diverse language skills to apply to the NWPD. As recruiting from diverse communities begins to increase, the NWPD expects the language diversity to also increase. When requiring language services that cannot be found within the NWPD, police officers may also use external resources such as the Office of the Multi-Lingual Orientation Service Association for Immigrant Communities (MOSAIC). These services are made available to all officers to reduce communication barriers with citizens.

Testing for Bias in Police Recruits

To hire police officers that treat citizens with fairness and equality, the NWPD Recruiting unit assesses biases that police recruits might have as part of the hiring process. Once applicants pass written and physical testing, they are invited to an intake interview with the Sergeant from the Recruiting unit. The intake interview includes reviewing the integrity and lifestyle questionnaire and personal history of the applicants. In addition, it assesses the applicants' integrity, problem-solving abilities, respect for diversity, community service orientation, self-initiative, and acceptance of responsibility. These traits are relevant in determining biases that do not meet NWPD standards, thus rejecting applicants from being hired. Furthermore, specific questions target biases in the intake interview and are revisited during the polygraph phase and again in the Panel Interview (conducted by Senior Management).

When applicants approach the polygraph stage of the recruiting process, they have already passed through a significant part of the selection process including the intake interview and psychological testing. The polygraph testing is an integral part of the NWPD selection process to determine if applicants are honest and forthright, especially around at-risk behaviours that lead to integrity issues. Often, information withheld from the previous stages is determined during polygraph testing.

Prior to the final approval process, a thorough and extensive background investigation is conducted. Several references are interviewed to provide more context and information on the applicant. Background investigators conduct reference checks with people not on the reference list supplied by the applicant which provides objectivity. The background interview includes questions on the applicant's character, employment history, ethics and personality traits. In order to further assess biases, the background investigator explores beyond the standard questions to look for any biases that may come up as a part of the overall picture of the applicant. References will have the opportunity to disclose whether they think an applicant has shown any biased tendencies.

The NWPD agrees with the MMIWG recommendation to assess biases in recruits and has protocols in place to ensure that applicants with biases are not hired by the NWPD. The NWPD recruiting process is comprehensive and arduous to ensure screening of recruits for racial, gender, gender identity and sexual orientation bias.

Indigenous Perspective on Hiring NWPD Officers

The NWPD Recruiting Unit will be developing a strategy to collaborate with Indigenous groups in New Westminster and beyond. We will improve our outreach efforts by communicating with our local Indigenous groups including Spirit of the Children Society to obtain their perspective and insight on our hiring process.

Strengthening Community Relations

9.2 (ii)	Build respectful working relationships with Indigenous Peoples by knowing, understand, and respecting the people they are serving.
9.4 (ii)	Specialized Indigenous policing units to lead community liaison work, relationships building, and crime prevention within and for Indigenous communities;
9.7	Partner with front-line organizations that work in service delivery, safety, and harm reduction for Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQIA people to expand and strengthen police services delivery;
9.8	Establish and engage with a civilian Indigenous advisory committee;
9.5 (i)	Establish communication protocol with Indigenous communities to inform them of policies, practices, and programs that make communities safe;

The NWPD Community Services Section and Victim Assistance Unit works with at risk and vulnerable people experiencing significant public safety issues or who are distrusting of the police. Cultural, economic, ethnic, sexual, sexual expression, racial, religious, marginalizing, or other distinguishing characteristics may define these populations. It is the goal of these units to build trust within the community so they will feel more comfortable coming forward to the police.

NWPD's Community Services Section provides outreach, develops partnerships, and maintains relationships with various communities and interest groups. Members in this section act as resources for other members who have questions surrounding specific individuals, community resources or culturally sensitive situations. There are two Community Constables, two Mental Health Officers, three Youth Resource Officers, a Domestic Violence Detective, Special Investigations Detective and three Counsellors from Family Services. A Staff Sergeant and Sergeant lead the unit.

Strategies used by the Community Services Section to address safety issues and cultural factors and relationships are developed with communities at both the management and frontline levels. Outreach is also accomplished through local media and participation in community forums and workshops. To address safety issues, members regularly meet with representatives from diverse communities and provide advice, suggestions, and recommendations.

The NWPD embraces New Westminster's blend of diverse cultural groups and ethnicities from all over the world, and Indigenous communities in Canada. The NWPD ensures active engagement with the culturally diverse communities it serves. The NWPD builds trust and confidence with Indigenous, and other vulnerable communities. The NWPD Community Services Section engages actively with the community,

including participation in Indigenous community events. These events promote cultural awareness, safety, and help build trust in police. The events are as follows:

The NWPD Soccer School

The NWPD Soccer School has been a flagship event in the community for almost 40 years. This event is held every July and hosts approximately 340 children ages 5-10 years old from New Westminster and surrounding areas. The program is a highly sought after event within the community and sells out on the first day of registration. NWPD Officers, civilian staff and volunteers work the event and the goal is to promote and provide all children with a positive interactive experience with the NWPD, teach them soccer skills and provide them with a fun and memorable experience. The children are exposed to many different aspects of policing as representatives from all areas of the department participate in the program. The NWPD work with many local organizations to ensure that children that may not have the ability to attend are sponsored and their registration fees are paid. The NWPD sponsor new immigrants each year and children from all backgrounds, including Indigenous children, that all participate in the program.

The annual Pulling Together Canoe Journey

The NWPD has had a long history in participating in the Pulling Together Canoe Journey. The Pulling Together canoe journey is aimed at recognizing the past and strengthening future relations between law enforcement agencies and Indigenous Peoples. The Journey provides an innovative way to connect with Indigenous youth and elders to share culture, build partnerships and nurture respect between our communities in a positive setting. A now retired officer, with the



assistance of Vancouver Circle of Eagles Lodge Society, organized the Journey from New Westminster to Victoria in 2007. He was enthusiastically involved and a great advocate of the Journey. The NWPD's most recent member to take part in the Journey is patrol constable and she has participated in the last three years and has stated that the Journey was excellent way to connect with Indigenous youth and that it was an invaluable experience.

Orange Shirt Day

Wearing an Orange shirt on September 30th encourages Canadians to learn about the history of residential schools and to raise awareness of Indigenous history. The NWPD Youth Resource Officers take part by purchasing and promoting the wearing of orange shirts at the schools they attend in New Westminster. The NWPD started a new tradition in 2020 by having all patrol officers wear orange shoulder flashes to

honour Indigenous history. In response to seeing a photo of NWPD Officers wearing orange shoulder flashes, Jason La Rochelle, Director of the Office of Indigenization, sent an email stating, “It is so great to see this kind of support and it is an important step towards Reconciliation.”

National Indigenous Peoples Day

Our Community Services Section, Senior Management Team and other units attend these celebrations, engage with the community and provide information on recruiting and volunteer opportunities within the NWPD.

LGBTQS+ Liaison Officer

As part of the Community Services Section, the NWPD Community Services Officer has taken the lead on working with various interest groups in the 2SLGBTQQIA community. The Safe Place program has been the most recent initiative as well as attending the local Pride Society Board meetings. The Community Services Officer works with 2SLGBTQQIA community groups and organizations (youth groups – senior groups – sex worker groups – transgender groups and individuals) and has oversight of the Safe Place Program. This program is an initiative that distributes rainbow decals to businesses, schools, and other locations, to provide a safe refuge for members of the 2SLGBTQQIA community, who feel their safety is threatened.

At Risk and Vulnerable Person Liaison Officer

The NWPD has created the Vulnerable Person Liaison Officer (VPLO) in May, 2020. This position assists and supports those experiencing homelessness, mental health issues, substance abuse and street entrenched individuals. The VPLO engages with people from a variety of backgrounds and ethnicities, including Indigenous people within New Westminster. Strong partnerships between all levels of government, non-profit and co-operative housing providers, and community support services are required to build safe and inclusive neighbourhoods. Organizations such as BC Housing, Ministry of Social Development, faith-based organizations, non-profit housing operators working in single room occupancy and shelter systems, as well as community members, partner to provide support to the marginalized population. The VPLO conducts outreach work with the homeless and coordinates with mental health, addiction, housing serving sectors, and municipal and provincial governments. The VPLO also acts as an excellent resource to all these services for our Patrol officers.

Culturally Appropriate and Gender-Neutral Policy, Practices, and Procedures

9.2(i)	Review and revise all policies, practices, and procedures to ensure service delivery that is culturally appropriate and reflects no bias or racism toward Indigenous Peoples, including victims and survivors of violence.
9.3(vi)	Retain Indigenous officers through relevant employment supports, and offer incentives to Indigenous officers to meet their unique needs as Indigenous officers serving Indigenous communities, to ensure retention and overall health and wellness of the service.

9.3(vii)	End the practice of limited duration posts in all police services, and instead implement a policy regarding remote and rural communities focused on building and sustaining a relationship with the local community and cultures.
9.11	Develop and implement guidelines for the policing of the sex industry in consultation with women engaged in the sex industry, and create a specific complaints mechanism about police for those in the sex industry.

The NWPDP Policy Group is responsible for policy development and they are responsible to ensure that all policy uses gender neutral language, and to ensure that policy is written so that it is equitably applied. The NWPDP ensures that its policies, practices and procedures do not impact women and men differently. Furthermore, policy analysis is done beyond gender, and includes potential impacts on other identifying factors including age, sexual orientation, sexual expression, race, ethnicity, religion, and culture. In developing policy and practice, the NWPDP incorporated the principles of the *B.C. Human Rights Code*¹³, as well as the *Canadian Human Rights Act*¹⁴ which prohibit discrimination against any person on personal characteristic grounds. Collectively, the NWPDP regularly revises and reviews policies, practices, and procedures to ensure culturally appropriate and bias-free service delivery, compliant with the recommendation in the Inquiry for police services to do so.

Culturally Appropriate Policy

The NWPDP recognizes the many diverse cultures and religions co-exist in New Westminster and surrounding area, each with unique customs, beliefs and traditions. This may include wearing special garments, carrying cultural or religious items or observing traditional ceremonies and practices. In the course of their duties, members may be required to search arrested persons in possession of cultural, religious or spiritual items. These items may pose unique considerations for members when balancing the need to ensure safety, enforce the law and conduct criminal investigations while preserving the person's dignity and respecting the sanctity of their culture.

NWPDP policies and practices balance officer safety, legal authority and investigation, with cultural sensitivity and respect. In 2019, the NWPDP amended its search policy as such so that members must refer to guidelines referencing cultural considerations; this includes when NWPDP officers are searching an individual with an Indigenous medicine bag, for example. A medicine bag is a small pouch containing objects of spiritual significance to its owner, such as stones, herbs and other objects intended to bring health, protection or healing. The medicine bag is considered sacred and traditionally the objects within should only be handled by its owner or an Elder. If a search of a medicine bag or other religious or spiritual articles is required, the examining officer should request the owner open the pouch and manipulate the objects for visual inspection if possible and if safe to do so.

The arresting officer, with approval of the Watch Commander, should allow the person to keep the medicine bag in their possession while in custody if it is deemed safe to do so. If the owner cannot be permitted to retain their medicine bag, the owner should place the medicine bag into a property bag separate from other possessions, and place the property bag into the larger property bag containing their

¹³ BC Human Rights Code, RSBC 1996, c 210.

¹⁴ Canadian Human Rights Act, RSC 1985, c H-6.

remaining possessions. This is because a medicine bag should only be handled by its owner or an Elder, and should not be touched by others. When returning the item, the owner should be permitted to remove the medicine bag from the property bag so that no one else touches it.

Respecting Gender Identity

The NWPDP have respect and compassion at their core set of values. Effectively serving diverse communities begins with understanding and respecting the sensitivities of individuals. With these values in mind, persons may identify, or present themselves, as a gender that is different to their perceived appearance or what is stated on their official identification. The courts have established that transgender people are protected from discrimination because they are covered by the ground of 'sex'. As such, NWPDP police officers, in departmental policy, are advised to make reasonable attempts to avoid mislabeling a person during interactions and when recording the name and gender of a person in police documentation and reports. NWPDP has policy in place when conducting searches of transgendered persons and the strict rules and procedures that must be followed (NWPDP Search Policy OD120.)

Connections through Victim Services Unit

The *BC Victims of Crime Act*¹⁵ and the *Canadian Victims Bill of Rights*¹⁶ stipulates that victims of crime must receive information on the services available to them. In line with this, the NWPDP Victim Services Unit provides victims and witnesses with professional, supportive, and timely assistance, to lessen the impact of crime and trauma. Services may include emotional support, practical assistance, justice-related information and referrals to other agencies. Target outcomes include improved safety, reduced risk of further victimization, access to information and support, enhanced criminal investigations and increased willingness to participate in the criminal justice system.

Victim Services Unit follows mandated protocols to refer clients to specific community agencies, several of which are tailored towards Indigenous clients. When a victim of crime self-discloses that they are Indigenous to one of the NWPDP caseworkers, they refer them to Indigenous-focused services such as the Spirit of the Children Society, Aboriginal Community Career Employment Services Society (ACCESS), Indigenous Court Support Worker, Circle 5, which is the branch of MCFD that works with Indigenous families. Referrals are also made to Battered Women's Support Services, Women Against Violence Against Women (WAVAW) and other community partner agencies that also offer culturally-specific services as required by the victim.

¹⁵ Victims of Crime Act, RSBC, 1996, c 478

¹⁶ Canadian Victims Bill of Rights, SC2015, c 13.

Safe Place

The Safe Place program was approved by the Police Board in September, 2019 with the goal to increase 2SLGBTQQIA community safety. Due to Covid-19, there has been a delay to have this program initiated. Safe Place is a partnership program with the business community. Partnering businesses welcome people in need of police assistance and provide safe shelter until officers arrive. Participating businesses display the Safe Place decal and will be vetted by the NWPD. Participating businesses sign a pledge indicating their support for the community and acknowledge their willingness to assist any potential victims. The NWPD hopes to have this program up and running very soon.

Indigenous Supports for Indigenous Police Officers

Health and Wellness Officer and CISM

The NWPD are currently piloting a Health and Wellness Officer Position. This police officer provides support to members and mirrors that of a “peer support” mechanism. The Health and Wellness Officer along with Critical Incident Stress Management team supports act independently from Management and provide confidentiality to members seeking assistance. Resources and referrals are provided and follow up conducted. It is easily accessible and is provided on a 24/7 basis. Participating members assist in problem solving and emotional supports. These teams provide employment support and offer culturally sensitive referrals upon requests.

Policy

Policy on Limited Duration Posts

A recommendation in the National Inquiry into MMIWG is for police services to end the practices of limited-duration posts, and instead implement a policy regarding remote and rural communities focused on building and sustaining a relationship with the local community and cultures. Limited-duration posts generally applies to Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) detachments in communities that are considered remote or have a reduced level of community services, such as education or health care. RCMP posts typically last three to four years, with possibilities of extension by up to two years.

The NWPD does not have limited-duration posts.

The NWPD has tenure in its positions and allows the majority of officers to remain in a specialty position for a duration of three to four years. There are certain specialized units such as the Lower Mainland Emergency Response Team and the Lower Mainland K-9 Unit that have longer terms associated due to the specific training involved.

Guidelines for Policing the Sex Industry

Stemming from long-term systemic issues resulting from colonization, racism, and the Residential School system, the NWPD recognizes that Indigenous Peoples are overrepresented among survival sex workers.¹⁷ The “overrepresentation” is not only in Canada but a serious global issue. “Prostitution of Aboriginal Women occurs globally, in epidemic numbers, with Indigenous women at the bottom of a brutal race and class hierarchy in prostitution itself (in addition to being at the bottom of race and class hierarchies in other walks of life).¹⁸

In response to “*Forsaken – The Report of the Missing Women Commission of Inquiry*” (“MWCi”) ¹⁹ which was released in December, 2012, the NWPD has created policy entitled, “Sex Work Enforcement Policy OB185” This new policy assisted officers in understanding the NWPD’S philosophy and expectations regarding the investigation of crime in the sex industry. The policy is created to enhance the safety of all persons involved in the sex work. The policy is intended to maintain the safety of sex workers by targeting those that exploit, abuse, and or use violence against sex workers, especially youth and other vulnerable sectors of our community. The NWPD values building relationships with those involved in the sex industry to increase the safety of the workers, reduce victimization and violence, and where appropriate (such as with youth) assist with exit strategies. In all situations, NWPD officers will treat those in the sex industry with respect and dignity. The NWPD will also ensure the safety of 2SLGBTQQIA people in the sex industry, outline response strategies, and ensure a consistent and respectful message when NWPD officers deal with anyone involved in the sex industry.

Training: Increasing Cultural Competence & Ensuring Trauma Informed Practices

9.3(v)	In training, include history of police in the oppression and genocide of Indigenous Peoples, anti-racism and anti-bias training and culture and language training;
9.2(iv)	Train all staff on culturally appropriate and trauma-informed practices, especially when dealing with families of MMIWG and 2SLGBTQQIA people.

The NWPD is sensitive to unique needs associated with particular communities. For example, the Indigenous Peoples of Canada include diverse groups of Peoples with distinct cultural and social characteristics. For police and other law enforcement personnel, understanding the unique history and culture of Indigenous Peoples is an important part of effective communication and interaction with the Indigenous Peoples and communities they serve. The NWPD ensures staff are educated with cultural competency training, and working with vulnerable groups. Several NWPD officers have taken “Aboriginal and First Nations Awareness” course via the Canadian Police Knowledge Network (CPKN) The NWPD seek to continually improve our skills in this area. The following sections outlines NWPD training initiatives that speak to recommendations in the Inquiry which include appropriate training and education for officers.

¹⁷ Cler-Cunningham, L., & Chirstenson, C. (2001). Studying violence to stop it: Canadian research on violence against women in Vancouver’s street level sex trade. *Research for Sex Work*, 4, 25-26.

¹⁸ UNICEF, 2004

¹⁹ Oppal, W. (2012). *Forsaken: The report of the Missing Women Commission of Inquiry-executive summary*. British Columbia: Library and Archives Canada

Recruit Training at the JIBC

All municipal police officers in British Columbia receive their foundational training at the JIBC. The NWPD supports recommendation 9.3 (v) to train police recruits on the oppression of Indigenous Peoples as well as anti-racism and anti-bias training. The training at the JIBC includes anti-bias and anti-racism woven throughout its programming. More specifically, they are providing Fair and Impartial Policing (FIP) and “Aboriginal/Police Relationships” which include the following:



- Outline the post-colonial history of Indigenous Peoples in Canada;
- Explain the long term impacts of the Residential School System on Indigenous populations;
- Content reference: *The Spirit Has No Colour* and *The Circle of Understanding Workshop*.

All recruits are also required to complete a Diversity Project with the goal to develop understanding of the unique experiences, needs and concerns for the communities they will serve. The JIBC will be including Trauma Informed Practices (TIP) as part of recruit training by the end of 2021.

The NWPD agrees with the Inquiry’s findings that Canada’s historical mistreatment of Indigenous people needs to be a core component of police recruit training. Further, it is NPWD’s position that this training may be best facilitated by Indigenous Elders and persons who can best convey the intergenerational effects that have resulted.

Trauma Informed Investigators

Experts agree that the attitude conveyed by police is “the single most important factor in determining the success of the victim interview, and therefore the entire investigation.”²⁰ Effective investigations, including sexual assaults files, require unbiased, capable, empathic, and well-trained investigators. Research has found that victims of sexual assault often omit information during police interviews, if they perceive the officer is rushed, impatient, aggressive, or unfriendly.²¹ Furthermore, the NWPD is aware that inadequately trained officers may contribute to assaulted victims experience with secondary

²⁰ Archambault, J., & Lonsway, K.A. (2007). *Interviewing the Victim: Techniques based on the realistic dynamics of sexual assault*. End Violence Against Women International (EVAWI): US Department of Justice.

²¹ Holmberg, U. (2004). Crime Victims Experiences of Police Interviews and their Inclination to Provide or Omit Information. *International Journal of Police Science & Management*, 6(3), 155-170.

victimization; if victims feels unsafe during interviews, they may not be able to retrieve certain memories.²²

In response to the MWCI Report, the NWPDP took an active role in the creation of training for all police in regards to trauma informed practices (TIP) have evolved out of the neurobiological understanding of how trauma influences the brain's ability to process, retain, and relay information. Traditional police interview methods were not based on this knowledge and did not yield the best information. The NWPDP is sensitive to the fact that trauma has a neurobiological impact and for these reasons, it has adopted trauma-informed practice. The NWPDP Special Investigations Unit began exploring a trauma informed investigative practice in 2017. The section continues to educate members in other investigative areas on the impact of trauma since the concept was first introduced in 2014. The NWPDP recognizes the importance and is compliant with the recommendation to ensure all staff understand and implement culturally appropriate and TIP practices.

All NWPDP police officers will be completing "Introduction to Trauma and Sexual Violence Investigations" and "Consent Law and Common Sexual Assault Myths" These courses are completed online via the Canadian Police Knowledge Network. The deadline for completion is September 30th, 2020. These courses will assist all officers including Patrol and MCU investigators.

Fair and Impartial Policing

In 2018, the NWPDP implemented mandatory Fair and Impartial Policing (FIP) training, a full day of training delivered to all operational members. Developed in the United States, FIP was adopted and redesigned by the Provincial Government in response to the MWCI. Specifically, the Inquiry recommended that police officers in B.C. undergo mandatory training concerning vulnerable community members. The training illustrates how implicit biases may affect police perception and behaviour, and as a result negatively affect community members. The objective of the FIP training is to help police officers recognize "implicit-bias" and develop skills and tactics to reduce the influence of bias on police practice. There is specific focus given to the effect of bias on Indigenous and Black communities. A fundamental concept in the training is that all people can have biases that could influence actions and that policing based on stereotypes can be unsafe, ineffective, and importantly—unjust. Learning objectives in FIP training include the following:

- explain why persons who are part of a vulnerable population are likely to be subject to implicit bias;
- explain how implicit bias played a role in investigations of missing women in the DTES of Vancouver (as described in the MWCI);
- reflect upon and articulate the impact biased policing has on community members;
- explain the importance of police legitimacy and the threats to it;
- describe some historical examples of threats to police legitimacy in Canada;
- explain how procedural justice produces police legitimacy and be able to articulate the major components of procedural justice;

²² Department of Justice. (2019). *The impact of trauma on adult sexual assault victims*.

- explain and demonstrate strategies that will help them be aware of personal biases; and
- explain and demonstrate strategies (i.e., FIP skills) to ensuring that their behaviour is bias free.

As part of the FIP, NWPDP reflected on the lived experience of an Indigenous person who experienced racial profiling by a police officer and how it impacted them and the experience of an Indigenous person who suffered through the trauma of Residential Schools; NWPDP understand biases are normal and that all people, even well-intentioned, have biases.

To learn more about how bias can impact decision making, in 2019, the NWPDP Management Team, all staff in supervisory positions (civilian) and all Staff Sergeants have completed the Gender-Based Analysis Plus course online through the Federal Government. GBA+ is an analytical process used to assess how diverse groups of women, men and non-binary people may experience policies, programs and initiatives. The “plus” in GBA+ acknowledges that GBA goes beyond biological (sex) and socio-cultural (gender) differences. In 2021, all Supervisors will be required to take GBA+.

Police Stops – New Provincial Policing Standards

On January 15, 2020, all B.C. Police agencies drafted new policies to reflect the new Policing Standards regarding Police Stops in B.C.²³ These Standards detailed the obligations police will have when interacting with the public to ensure they are consistent with the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* (sections 7,9,10 and 15). There are a series of safeguards in place so that members of the public are not arbitrarily detained and/or asked for personal information by the police. The NWPDP complied with the deadline and the policy “Street Checks (and Police Stops) OB235 is in place that is reflective of the standards. All patrol officers were provided training in January, 2020 to ensure compliance with the standards and subsequent policy.

Developing Awareness on At Risk and Vulnerable Populations

CPKN has a Homelessness Awareness course available which provides information about homelessness and the impact it has on Canadian society. Inspector McDaniel also conducted a Homelessness Study which resulted in guidelines for all police officers to follow when dealing with at risk and vulnerable persons in our community. These guidelines share the NWPDP philosophy of the commitment to protecting the safety and security of all persons while respecting their human rights. These guidelines provided officers with the procedures for interacting with people experiencing homelessness and highlighted the priority of providing resources as opposed to conducting any type of enforcement.

²³ British Columbia Provincial Policing Standards. (n.d.) Section 6.0 – Promotion of Unbiased Policing, 6.2 Police Stops. Retrieved from <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/law-crime-and-justice/criminal-justice/police/standards/6-2-1-police-stops.pdf>

Community Based Youth Resource Officer

The NWPDP has a Community Based Resource Officer and he provides information about at risk youth in relation to anti-social/delinquent behaviours and sexual exploitation. NWPDP police officers utilize the Community Based Resource Officer's expertise along with his knowledge of the *Youth Criminal Justice Act*. He attends Patrol Briefings on a regular basis and provides information regarding the awareness of adolescent brain development and its impact on decision making, how youth at risk can be impacted by gangs, develops an awareness of sexual exploitation and at risk youth and key points of the *Youth Criminal Justice Act*. He conducts outreach with youth and also provides resources to parents.

LGBTQ2S+

Offered in 2017, the *Gay, Trans and Blue LGBTQ2S+* training provided all NWPDP members an awareness and appreciation for the LGBTQ2S+ community. The training developed an understanding of the importance of the NWPDP's role within this community. The *Gay, Trans, and Blue LGBTQ2S+* training was delivered in-class, where participants were required to complete an eight-hour session that included instructor led presentations, videos, group activities and discussions with a guest speaker. The training addressed the following topics based on the Human Rights Tribunal Recommendations:

- LGBTQ2S+ language and terminology competency;
- gender frameworks and models;
- LGBTQ2S+ pronouns;
- contextualizing LGBTQ2S+ histories in Canada; and
- reflection on LGBTQ2S+ lived experiences.

Learning outcomes for this training include:

- identify appropriate language or terminology for the LGBTQ2S+ Community;
- acknowledge the sensitivities of the LGBTQ2S+ community;
- define the language used in the LGBTQ2S+ community;
- identify appropriate communication methods with the LGBTQ2S+ community;
- identify challenges for transgendered persons; and
- review of NWPDP policies and legal authorities.

Training on Missing Persons Investigations

As a result of the MWCI, new Provincial Policing Standards were created in September, 2016.²⁴ On September 1, 2016, the B.C. Policing and Security Branch launched an online course for *Missing Person Investigations in British Columbia* for police services in B.C. This 30 minute eLearning course is designed to orientate the learner to the BCPPS on Missing Person Investigations and the *Missing Persons Act* (the Act). The course promotes awareness of standards, highlights key aspects for police services at the

²⁴ BCPPS 5.1 Missing Persons Investigations/Provincial Policing Standards.

organization level, and identifies key procedural elements of the standards. The course also promotes awareness of the tools available to police under the Act, and the circumstances and constraints governing their use.

The NWPDP participated in a full day of training which included the following key concepts:

- all missing person reports are high risk until a risk assessment is completed;
- it is acknowledged that Indigenous women and girls are at an increased risk of harm;
- there are strict timelines that must be followed in regards to supervisory oversight and risk assessments; and
- families must be kept informed of the progress of an investigation and treated with compassion and respect.

The NWPDP recognizes the value and importance of training designed to increase cultural awareness and enhance service delivery. The NWPDP will continue to deliver training that is timely, trauma informed, and sensitive to the unique requirements of the culturally diverse communities of New Westminster.

The NWPDP are open to all areas of training and education and seek to broaden its perspective and seek new experiences. In November, 2019, Inspector McDaniel attended a workshop at the Anvil Centre entitled, “Raven Spirit Dance” which helped develop understanding and empathy toward women of colour. The NWPDP know that they have a legal and ethical responsibility to remove the systemic barriers to employment and dignity from the workplace. Inspector McDaniel was a part of this transformational experience in which the journey of women of colour became relatable and was shared in a very intimate setting. It was an enlightening experience that opened up opportunities to develop practical actions for a positive shift to social equity.

Reviewing Investigative Practices

9.5(vi)	Establish standardized response times to reports of missing Indigenous persons and women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people experiencing violence, and conduct a regular audit of response times to monitor and provide feedback for improvement.
9.5(ii)	Improve communication between police and families of MMIWG and 2SLGBTQQIA people from first report with regular communication through investigation.
9.5(iv)	Recognize and have protocols to mitigate impacts of high turnover among officers may negatively impact progress of investigation and relationship with family members.
9.9	Establish a national task force to review and, if required, to reinvestigate each case of all unresolved files of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA people to the national task force.
9.10	Produce all unresolved cases of missing or murdered Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA people to the national task force.
9.4(i)	Specialized Indigenous policing units are to be staffed with Indigenous investigators, who will be the primary investigative teams and officers overseeing the investigation of cases involving Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people.

9.6	Establish an independent, special investigation unit for the investigation of incidents of failures to investigate, police misconduct, and all forms of discriminatory practices and mistreatment of Indigenous peoples within their police service.
9.2(iii)	Ensure appropriate Indigenous and 2SLGBTQQIA representation on police boards and oversight bodies.

The NWPD follows the same investigative process regardless of a victim's race, gender, sexual orientation, or any other identifying factor. This involves thorough investigations for all victims, including crimes against 2SLGBTQQIA people. However, when crimes are motivated by bias, prejudice, or hate towards an identifiable group, they may be referred to the Provincial Hate Crimes Unit. Furthermore, NWPD investigators are keenly aware of the unique historical and cultural sensitivities surrounding Indigenous victims and consider those during investigations, both to provide resources for the victim and families, and to aid the investigation.

The NWPD Major Crime Unit reviews, co-ordinates, and investigates all missing person files. When the missing person is not located during the initial investigation conducted by patrol officers, MCU continues the investigation and retains the file until the missing person is located. The MCU's investigators and Sergeant reviews and oversees file management, ensuring provincial and departmental standards are maintained. From the initial report of a missing person, the NWPD applies several review layers and continual risk assessments dependent on varying situational factors. Furthermore, there is an MCU investigator on call at all times.

Crossing Jurisdictions and Improving Coordination

Like all NWPD investigative units, missing person investigations follow the same investigative process regardless of any demographic factor. Nonetheless, MCU investigators are also aware of the sensitivities around Indigenous Peoples and missing person investigations. MCU has worked, and continues to work, on fostering new community partnerships, and maintaining those already established. These community partnerships, both inside and outside of the Indigenous communities are with, but not limited to; outreach workers (e.g., WISH, UNYA,), MCFD, VACFSS, group home staff, supportive housing staff (E. Fry Society) and the Canadian Centre for Child Protection, and many others. These partnerships are vital to build trust and work effectively together to shorten the time a person is missing and lessen the likelihood of repeat missing reports on the individual.

In June 2015, new provincial legislation, the *British Columbia Missing Persons Act*, came into effect, improving police access to information that could help locate a missing person. This *Act* allows police to apply for court orders to access records or conduct searches, in cases where a criminal offence is not suspected. The *Act* also allows police officers to directly demand access to records in emergency situations. The MCU regularly works with other police jurisdictions in requesting and providing assistance during ongoing investigations. This can range from checking addresses, obtaining video, to interviewing witnesses or family in order to further each jurisdiction's investigations. The ease in which people are able to move about is a factor that the MCU is highly cognizant of; the need to cooperate with other jurisdictions on a daily basis is paramount to finding missing people.

Crossing boundaries, the NWPD also works with the British Columbia Missing Persons Centre (BCMPC) a “provincial force unit that provides guidance and support to all police in the province for missing person investigations, and coordinates and supports unidentified human remains investigations.” The MCU works efficiently with the BCMPC, especially in relation to coordination of the DNA and dental databases for Unidentified Human Remains. The MCU, therefore, works with both government and non-government organizations to cross jurisdictions and improve communication, meeting the recommendation in the National Inquiry into MMIWG to improve coordination. These partnerships exist at the Lower Mainland, provincial, national, and international levels.

Standardization of Protocols

Provincial Police Standards for Missing Person Investigations

In December 2012, The Honourable Wally T. Oppal released MWCI report²⁵, which provided 63 recommendations with 33 directly related to policing. Among those recommendations, Commissioner Oppal called for improved missing person policies and practices and recommended that provincial standards be developed.

The BCPPS for Missing Person Investigations came into effect on September 1, 2016.²⁶ The intent of these provincial policing standards is to ensure that all missing person investigations in BC are prioritized and undertaken at a high standard, appropriate to identify risk, and that a consistent approach is maintained throughout the province. The standards and associated guiding principles establish the overall approach to missing person investigations for all B.C. police agencies. The standards recognize the necessity for officer discretion to address the unique needs of each case, with accountability for decisions through supervisory review. These standards guide NWPD investigations and jurisdictional responses. The NWPD has carefully reviewed the standards and updated policies and procedures where required to ensure compliance. A risk assessment template (an investigative aid that assists the initial investigating officer in assessing risk) is an excellent example that resulted from the MWCI recommendations. This template must be completed upon initial contact with the complainant, reviewed by a supervisor, and immediately if any risk is identified, or as soon as practicable otherwise. Another example is the implementation of a checklist of initial investigative steps to ensure consistency and thoroughness of missing person investigations.

The NWPD acts in accordance with provincial standards, and all reports, as outlined in BCPPS Section 5.1.1., are accepted at the time they are made and given full consideration and attention regardless of gender, age, race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sexual orientation, belief, or lifestyle. Furthermore, there is no length of time an individual needs to wait to be able to report someone as missing. In summary, there should be “no barriers” in reporting someone as missing.

²⁵ Oppal, W. (2012). *Foresaken: The report of the Missing Women Commission of Inquiry-executive summary*. British Columbia: Library and Archives Canada.

²⁶ British Columbia Provincial Policing Standards. 9n.d.) *Principles: BCPPS 5.1 Missing Persons Investigations*.

An important issue in all missing person investigations is the jurisdictional ownership of the file. In other words, determining which department takes the leadership role on a file. The BCPPS sets out the following criteria²⁷ to determine which police force has jurisdiction in relation to a missing person report:

- *The police force for the jurisdiction in which the missing person was last seen is the police force of jurisdiction; or*
- *If the location where the missing person was last seen is not known or their presence there was transient in nature, then the police force for the jurisdiction where the missing person resides or last stayed is the police force of jurisdiction;*
- *If jurisdiction is unclear and cannot be resolved between police forces, the police force contacts the Officer in Charge BC Police Missing Person Centre/designate as soon as practicable, who makes the decision regarding jurisdiction.*

Importantly, NWPD officers conduct risk assessments immediately and do not delay pending any questions concerning jurisdiction. Therefore, the NWPD, in accordance with provincial standards, views all Indigenous missing person investigations as high risk until the risk assessment is completed. The NWPD conducts risk assessments with urgency and without delay; a timely response is critical to the well-being of the missing individuals and to a successful investigation. The NWPD acknowledges that Indigenous women and girls are at an increased risk of harm; Indigenous background is considered when determining the appropriate response and resources.

Major Case Management Principles

Provincial standards for consistent investigative approaches across the province have also been created for the management of major crimes. The is compliant with BCPPS 5.2, Major Case Management (MCM)²⁸ designed to ensure that the police response to a major crime is appropriate to the needs of an investigation while maintaining substantive services to the community. The need for systematic MCM practices and standards was a recommendation made by the MWCI Commission, which recommended that the Provincial Government mandate that MCM be used during all major crime investigations and that provincial standards be established. The Commission further recommended that these standards address multi-jurisdictional and multi-agency investigations, and called for the creation of a protocol to support the timely and seamless implementation of multi-agency teams.

The standards identify the required minimum elements of MCM to be applied by all police agencies in B.C. to enhance consistency in investigations and to facilitate cooperation and coordination on multi-jurisdictional investigations. The standards allow the NWPD to improve coordination across departments and jurisdictions, as called for in the National Inquiry into MMIWG.

²⁷ British Columbia Policing Standards. (n.d.) *Principles: BCPPS 5.1 Missing Person Investigations*. From: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/law-crime-and-justice/criminal-justice/police/standards/5-1-missing-persons-principles.pdf>

²⁸ British Columbia Provincial Policing Standards. (n.d.) *Principles: BCPPS 5.2 Major Case Management*. Retrieved from: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/law-crime-and-justice/criminal-justice/police/standards/5-2-mcm-guiding-principles.pdf>

The NWPD was the first department to create an online training course and all members were provided in person training on the new policy. NWPD created new policing regarding MCM which highlighted the procedures that follow.

Standards on Inter-Agency Cooperation and Coordination

The purpose of the B.C. Provincial Policing Standards for Inter-Agency Cooperation and Coordination is to support information-sharing, consistency in practices, and collaboration between all forces in B.C. when conducting investigations involving serious crimes. These standards also bring B.C. in line with other provinces where compliance with Violent Crime Linkage Analysis (ViCLAS)²⁹ reporting requirements is mandatory. Underlying principles of the Inter-Agency Cooperation and Coordination standards include:

- public interest is best served when police agencies communicate and work together to identify and pursue common objectives; and
- the power of systems and tools is enhanced when used consistently within and across policing jurisdictions.

Violent Crime Linkage Analysis System

ViCLAS is national computer database program created for the collection of information on Serial offences. Stemming from a series of complex serial homicides that spanned multiple jurisdictions, law enforcement officers recognized there was the need for a central repository system accessible by all policing agencies. In 1991, the RCMP, in collaboration with several other police services, developed and operated the ViCLAS system to track, identify, and compare specific violent or interpersonal crimes and criminals. Used as an important investigative tool to identify links between crimes, investigators are able to discover crimes committed by the same offender. Police agencies across Canada contribute to ViCLAS by submitting comprehensive and detailed information booklets about violent, especially sexual, crimes in their jurisdictions. Information from each incident includes all aspects of victimology, modus operandi, forensics, and behavioural patterns. Reportable incidents include but are not limited to homicides, sexual assaults, and missing persons.

In accordance to BCPPS, NWPD must comply with the reporting requirements and timelines of ViCLAS. NWPD provides completed ViCLAS booklets to meet the 30-day compliance deadline. A Sergeant in Prevention Services is our current ViCLAS Coordinator who is responsible for collecting and assessing files for completion and following-up with officers when necessary to ensure NWPD meets the deadline. The coordinator also serves as the NWPD liaison to the ViCLAS specialists of RCMP “E” Division. Due to the sensitive nature of ViCLAS incidents, some victims do not wish to report an incident to the police. Instead, they are able to report to a third party agency such as Women Against Violence Against Women (WAVAW), a rape crisis centre. Staff at WAVAW can fill out an anonymous report where the victim wishes to remain anonymous. Alternatively, staff can also take reports from a victim’s friend or family member, reporting on the victim’s behalf.

²⁹ Royal Canadian Mounted Police. (n.d.) Violent Crime Linkage System (ViCLAS. Retrieved from <https://www.rcmp-grc.ca/en/violent-crime-linkage-analysis-system>

Real Time Intelligence Centre

The MWCI also recommended the creation of a regional Real Time Crime Centre, scalable to the province. The BC Ministry of Justice incorporated this recommendation in the 2013 B.C. Policing and Safety Plan.³⁰ Established in January 2015, the Real Time Intelligence Centre of B.C. (RTIC-BC) is a centralized data system that provides analysts with multijurisdictional records, databases, and other information. The goal is to accelerate serious criminal investigations and investigations of missing persons and locate suspects at the earliest opportunity through information sharing. RTIC-BC delivers real-time operational support to frontline officers and investigators by providing actionable intelligence. The centre operates 24/7 and is accessible by all BC police agencies. RTIC-BC provides real time situational awareness and a coordinated response, as suggested in the National Inquiry into MMIWG; recognizing that importance, the NWPD has secured a permanent position for a NWPD officer to RTIC-BC, in a full-time capacity.

The Healing Journey - Improving Communications with Families

Healing is a vital concept in Indigenous culture, bringing together knowledge, spirituality, and ways of restoring connections. Necessary for the healing journey is receiving information about a missing and murdered loved one. Families will often have questions about the police investigations, or decisions made by government agencies such as Crown Counsel. Families need to receive timely information. Improving communication between families and NWPD investigators is and will remain a priority, towards the call for justice to improve communication with families.

Family Liaison Roles

Members of the NWPD understand that communication is vital with partners and other police services, but most importantly with the families of the missing. When a person is missing, the unknown outcomes and circumstance of the cases are very trying for the family and loved ones. Communication between police and families is vital to ensure loved ones are updated and informed regarding the status of the investigation. For some families, the particulars of an investigation may bring some calmness to what otherwise is a very emotional ordeal. The MCU assigns an investigator as the “family liaison” who updates the family on the status of the investigation and planned next steps. This is in accordance with BCPPS on Missing Person Investigations, which require families and reportees to be kept informed on the progress of an investigation.

MCU communicates with all families, including Indigenous families, to give them hope, knowledge, and insight into the investigation and to instill confidence that the NWPD will continue to work relentlessly to find their family member.

³⁰ Government of BC; Retrieved from <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/law-crime-and-justice/criminal-justice/police/publications/community/bc-policing-plan.pdf>

FILU

The BC Family Information Liaison Unit (FILU) is a relatively a new service for families of MMIWG which helps families access available information about their missing and murdered loved ones from multiple government sources, including police services. FILU is available in every province and territory and builds on the existing victim services frameworks in each region. FILU is designed to be a “one-stop information service” for all families of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls. In addition to working with police, BC FILU works with families to coordinate information gathering from government agencies and services, including Crown Counsel, social services, and FILU offices from across the country.

NWPD Victim Services Unit

The NWPD Victim Services Unit has a working knowledge of various community agencies that offer services tailored towards Indigenous clients. If a Victim of crime self-discloses that they are Indigenous to one of the Victim Services Caseworkers, they are then provided with options for community resources which may best suit their needs. Some of these community resources include, but are not limited to, Spirit of the Children, Battered Women’s Support Services and Women Against Violence Against Women (WAVAW), both of which have developed Indigenous culturally-focused support groups.

The Impact of Officer Turnover

For a variety of reasons, investigators may leave sections. For example, often NWPD investigators may work in a section for several years and then either seek promotion or other sections for a new experience. Alternatively, investigators may reach their “tenure level” in a designated position. The NWPD has a set tenure for each position within the police department. This also provides a structure that creates a level of equity in the workplace. A goal of the tenure is to provide sworn staff an opportunity to work in varied assignments throughout the organization. Tenure also provides opportunities for career development, promotes succession planning and creates an atmosphere conducive to the sharing of knowledge and skills between experienced and less experienced staff.

The NWPD recognizes that high turnover has the potential to negatively impact an investigation and communication with families. However, the NWPD, in line with a recommendation in the MMIWG Inquiry, has provisions in place to mitigate these potential effects and has succession and transition plans between changes in personnel in a section.

First, within the NWPD, extensions may be provided for the investigating officer to remain on the file, if it is in the best interest of the investigation, including if no other investigator has the skills or abilities for the specified assignment. This may include the rapport an investigator has established with families or if the family liaison role would not be suitable for another investigator. However, in those situations when NWPD investigators are transferred in the midst of an investigation they will continue to provide investigational continuity.

Importantly, NWPD officers are not transferred to other cities or outside the province, as many are with the RCMP. Therefore, if an officer were to be transferred, but has a key role in an investigation (e.g., family liaison), they may still serve in that capacity. Finally, the NWPD is compliant with BCPPS on Missing Person Investigations, which require that the family/reportee be aware of who they should contact so that open lines of communication between police and families are maintained.

Unresolved Files of MMIWG

A recommendation in the MMIWG Inquiry is for all levels of government, including police services, to establish an independent specialized national task force to review and reinvestigate unresolved files of MMIWG and 2SLGBTQQA people.²⁸ The NWPD supports this recommendation. The NWPD supports the establishment of a national task force and should it be created, the NWPD agrees to voluntarily disclose all unresolved cases of MMIWG, and 2SLGBTQQA people to this task force.

Investigative Teams at NWPD

The NWPD encourages all its police officers to pursue career options that are suitable or of interest to them. Therefore, the NWPD cannot assure that all investigations involving Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQA people are investigated by primary investigators of Indigenous descent. However, regardless of the investigation, the NWPD does ensure, as outlined in earlier sections, that all major crime investigations and missing person investigations are compliant with provincial policing standards. Furthermore, during investigations involving Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQA people, NWPD investigators engage culturally appropriate resources and victim services, as described.

Ensuring Public Trust: Independent Civilian Oversight of the NWPD

The NWPD prides itself on transparency and regularly provides information about policing to the citizens of New Westminster. The NWPD understands that when police investigate themselves, there may be concerns about conflict of interest from the public. That is, the public may believe that police officers investigating other police officers from the same agency may not be impartial; even if this were not to occur, the perception may undermine public trust. The NWPD recognizes that concept of public trust, does not equate to a unified public; experiences and a range of variables shape and influence perceptions of the police. For example, Indigenous Peoples may not have trust in police given past negative encounters (e.g., the role of police in enforcing Residential Schools). The history between Indigenous Peoples and police makes police oversight a sensitive issue. In a review on police oversight that had extensive consultation, Indigenous people sensed that filing complaints is ineffective; perceptions were that if complaints were filed about police, they would face retribution, and many felt that oversight bodies were inaccessible. The NWPD must ensure that police do not engage in criminal behaviour and agrees that where criminal conduct occurs, the law must be applied the same, to police and public alike. In addition, police officers must be held to standard for offenses under the *BC Police Act* and violations of *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. Overall, the NWPD is subject to a high degree of civilian oversight and meets the recommendation in the National Inquiry into MMIWG for independent oversight.

Officer of the Police Complaint Commissioner

The Office of the Police Complaint Commissioner (OPCC)³¹ is a civilian, independent office of the Legislature that is responsible for overseeing and monitoring complaints and investigations involving municipal police in BC, including the NWPB. The OPCC is responsible for the administration of discipline and proceedings under the *Police Act*. It is the role of the OPCC to ensure, with transparent civilian oversight, that *Police Act* investigations taken by the NWPB are conducted with impartiality and fairness, to enhance public confidence.

Independent Investigations Office

Public trust may be tested when a police officer is involved in the death or serious injury of a civilian. The Independent Investigations Office (IIO) of B.C. provides independent civilian oversight to the NWPB in these situations. The IIO is responsible for investigations into incidents of death or serious harm, which may have been the result of a police officer, on duty or off duty. The NWPB, under the *Police Act*, must notify the IIO of any incident that falls within its jurisdiction. Undertaking public interest, all IIO investigations are conducted to a criminal law standard, with civilian-led transparency.³²

BC Human Rights Tribunals

The NWPB also maintains oversight through the BC Human Rights Code, which maintains a process, through the BC Human Rights Tribunal (Tribunal), for dealing with complaints of discrimination. The complainant must have a personal characteristic that is protected under the Human Rights code, or be seen to have one. These personal characteristics include, race, colour, sex, gender identity or expression, ancestry, among other protected characteristics.³³

Civilian Governance: The New Westminster Police Board

Established as an independent and autonomous authority pursuant to the *Police Act*, the New Westminster Police Board (NWPB) is the employer and governing body of the NWPB, providing civilian governance and oversight of the NWPB. More specifically, the NWPB provides governance as the employer of all sworn and civilian NWPB staff, service and policy and direction setters, oversees finances, and provides authority for policy and service complaints. NWPB board members are appointed with considerations of diversity and knowledge of communities. At present, our current board does not have Indigenous representation as recommended in the National Inquiry into MMIWG. We hope that this will change in the future as the NWPB support Indigenous representation on our NWPB.

³¹ Office of the Police Complaint Commissioner (OPCC). (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://opcc.bc.ca/about-us/>

³² Independent Investigations Office of BC, (n.d.) Retrieved from <https://iio.bc.ca/about-us/what-we-do/>

³³ BC Human Rights Tribunal, (n.d.) Retrieved from <http://www.bchrt.bc.ca/>

Civil Lawsuits

The NWPD is also subject to civil lawsuits that include liability including abuse of public office, negligent investigations, and Charter damages. Everyone is subject to the rule of law and legal oversight allows independent courts to assess police behaviour.

Review of Police Conduct in Criminal Cases

Oversight of police conduct occurs during criminal cases, through the judiciary. Judges review police actions and conduct; their role is to assess whether the Charter, Criminal Code, or case law were violated within the investigation. Through their case decisions, they provide remedies that may be pertain to exclusion of evidence, stays of proceedings, or sentence reductions should be awarded.³⁴ These court decisions have significant ramifications to police practice.

Public Inquiries and Coroners Inquests

Public inquiries, “the gold standard” of independent review, are high profile and frequently requested for review of police conduct. Governments must order a public inquiry and reserve the right to refuse to appoint them. Coroner’s inquests lack the high profile nature of public inquiries but serve an important role in cases of police related-deaths and lead to recommendations regarding police training. All deaths in police custody necessitate a coroner’s inquest.³⁵

Provincial Oversight

Under the *Police Act*³⁶ the Policing and Security Branch, a component of the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General, is responsible for overseeing law enforcement by a variety of functions. These include developing and coordinating policy and legislation, and as outlined in earlier sections, establishing policing standards. They are also responsible for inspecting the quality of police services, thereby providing an external oversight.

³⁴ Roach, K. (2014). Models of civilian police review. *Issues in Civilian Oversight of Policing* (Toronto: Canada Law Book, 330-331

³⁵ Province of British Columbia, Coroners Service Inquests (n.d.) Retrieved from <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/life-events/death/coroners-service/inquest-schedule-jury-findings-verdicts>

³⁶ *Police Act*, RSBC 1996, c 367

Inspiring Change: Future Directions for the NWPD

9.5(vii)	Lead the provincial and territorial governments to establish a nationwide emergency number.
9.5(v)	Create a national strategy, through Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police, to ensure consistency in reporting mechanism.
9.4(iii)	Specialized Indigenous policing units, within non-Indigenous police services, are to be funded adequately by governments.

The NWPD is committed to ensuring that police practices are applied judiciously and do not infringe on citizen rights; the NWPD will continue to work on initiatives that support this commitment. The NWPD also remains dedicated to preventing violence against Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQIA people. The NWPD will continue to work on initiatives that support this commitment, as described below.

Continued Education for NWPD Officers

The NWPD will continue to review its training in an effort to ensure that its police officers are culturally aware and serve the citizens of New Westminster in fair and impartial ways. The NWPD will continue to offer the materials from the courses that were detailed in this report. The NWPD Training section will continue to update its courses as required with the perspectives of the National Inquiry into MMIWG.

Supporting Calls for Justice at a National Level

The National Inquiry into MMIWG identified Calls for Justice for police services that require cooperation and efforts at a national level. The NWPD acknowledges that the efforts must be collective and supports working at a national level towards the shared goal of ending violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQIA people.

Supporting a Nationwide Emergency Number

The NWPD supports the National Inquiry's call for the establishment of a nationwide emergency number.

Unresolved Files of MMIWG

As outlined earlier, a recommendation in the MMIWG Inquiry was for all levels of government, including police services, to establish an independent specialized national task force to review and re-investigate unresolved files of MMIWG and 2SLGBTQIA people. The NWPD is in full support of this national task force.

National Strategy to Ensure Consistency in Reporting Mechanisms

The CACP sought and was recognized as a party with standing for the National Inquiry into MMIWG. The CACP attended seven of the nine institutional and expert hearings, submitted oral and closing submissions, and put forward Retired Chief Clive Weighill as a witness for the Police Policies and Practices hearing in Regina, Saskatchewan. Within the submission, the CACP provided over 20 recommendations ranging from improvements in socio-economic funding by governments, culturally sensitive and trauma informed missing persons manuals and policies, civilian oversight, and increasing officer knowledge relating to traditional, spiritual and cultural awareness.

The CACP will be responsible for leading a national strategy to ensure consistency in reporting mechanisms for reporting MMIWG and 2SLGBTQQIA people (as outlined in MMIWG recommendation 9.5 (v)).³⁶ The NWPD will be supporting this strategy and will work with CACP towards this important approach.

Funding for Specialized Indigenous Police Units

A call for justice in the National Inquiry into MMIWG is for adequate funding by the government for specialized Indigenous policing units (within non-Indigenous police services). The NWPD is supportive of this recommendation for additional funding for specialized positions tailored for the Indigenous community.

Enhancing Investigative Practices

As described earlier, NWPD engages culturally appropriate resources when dealing with investigations of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls. However, the NWPD is in the preliminary phases of formalizing the process to ensure engagement and consultation with Indigenous police officers. The NWPD agrees that this perspective is important to investigations, opening lines of communication with families, and building trust.

Remaining Dedicated to Build Community Relationships

In addition to the dedicated positions discussed throughout this report, the NWPD will continue its commitment to building and sustaining relationships with the local communities and cultures. Members of the NWPD will continue to meet regularly with community representatives to develop programming to enhance community safety, and to participate in community forums, workshops, and rallies. The NWPD will also continue to build relationships with the 2SLGBTQQIA people and work on programming to ensure the safety of this community. The NWPD has made strides with programming such as Safe Place, and will continue to engage community members so that the NWPD can serve and protect them.

Commemorate the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls

The NWPD is currently in the exploration phase of locating Indigenous artwork to display in the reception area of the police department. This would act as a memorial to all the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and girls.

Commitment to Continue NWPD Indigenous Advisory Committee

The NWPD prioritizes the elimination of barriers between police and the Indigenous community and acknowledges that these barriers exist and have existed for too long. Towards building trust with the Indigenous community, the NWPD will endeavour to create an Indigenous Advisory Committee and include local leaders such as the Spirit of the Children Society and Chief Rhonda Larrabee.

Continued Programming for Indigenous Youth

With programs such as LEAD, the Student Police Academy and the Reserve Constable programs, we hope to develop long term relationships with Indigenous youth. We hope to have this be a recruitment tool for various positions within the NWPD.

Extensive NWPD resources are committed to youth engagement, namely through programming that provides positive interactions and nurture relationships, understanding, and trust between youth and police. The NWPD Soccer School is a very successful program in our community and many relationships have been nurtured and developed over the 40 years it has been held. Police officers, volunteers, children, parents and local businesses have all contributed to the success of the program. These efforts serve to develop self-esteem and positive life skills among youth, while deterring them from engaging in criminal activities such as gang involvement. The NWPD will continue these programs, as well as develop new youth oriented programming in the future.

Conclusion

A collective responsibility to end the systemic causes of violence and increase the safety of Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQIA people is required. The NWPD accepts the voices in the National Inquiry into MMIWG and will continue to take action to address the concerns raised. Sexism, racism, stereotypes, and any other discriminatory behaviour does not have a place in the NWPD; *all* citizens have the right to feel safe in their communities and all citizens have human rights to be upheld. Efforts are made to ensure that the police officers that comprise the NWPD treat people with respect, fairness, and compassion. Once hired, the NWPD provides regular training to ensure that NWPD officers serve citizens with cultural competence. The NWPD will commit to learning, growing and listening to the community it serves.

The NWPD is committed to transparency in its actions and remaining accountable in its service to the public. The NWPD acknowledges that its success in serving the public is inherently reliant upon improving, listening and learning from its existing relationships with the communities it serves.

NWPD Action Plan – Next Steps

The NWPD are committed to taking action as set out in our response to the Calls for Justice. The following is a summary of steps that we will continue to take along with goals that we will strive to achieve.

The NWPD Recruiting Section

The Recruiting Section will enhance their recruiting practices to include targeted recruitment strategies to recruit Indigenous persons. The NWPD Recruiting Section will continually review and update their current Indigenous outreach efforts by hosting information sessions with Indigenous communities and connecting with Indigenous recruiting agencies. The NWPD will form partnerships with Indigenous groups to ensure the success of the outreach taken. The application process will continue to be easily accessible to everyone in the community. Collaboration with community stakeholders will assist with bridging the gaps between police and Indigenous peoples along with other marginalized members of our community. The NWPD are committed to an unbiased and transparent hiring process.

Community Relationships

The NWPD are dedicated to building community relationships to expand diversity, inclusion and Indigenous outreach and developing partnerships with various communities and interest groups. We will seek assistance from the Restorative Justice Committee and the JIBC Office of Indigenization in the creation of an Indigenous Advisory Committee. The creation of an Indigenous Liaison Officer position within our Community Services Section will help us bridge the gap between the police and our Indigenous Community. The NWPD are committed to working with Indigenous youth in community programs such as the “LEAD” Program, Community School Resource Officer, the Restorative Justice Committee, Reserve Program, Student Police Academy and the NWPD Soccer School. The NWPD will continue to attend community events such as the Pulling Together Canoe Journey and National Indigenous Peoples Day with the intention of building lasting relationships.

Policy, Practices and Procedures

The NWPD will refer to the principles of the *B.C. Human Rights Code* and the *Canadian Human Rights Act* to ensure that culturally appropriate and gender neutral policy, practices and procedures are in place. The NWPD commit to extensive policy review guided by the lens of culturally appropriate and gender-neutral language and interpretation. The NWPD will be working with the City of New Westminster on the Diversity, Inclusion, Equity and Anti-Racism Framework. This work will be facilitated by Level Up, a Planning and Consulting firm that has been chosen by the City to complete a comprehensive scan and report of all City departments.

Training and Education

The NWPDP endeavor to provide continuous and inclusive education for NWPDP Officers. This will include up to date, cutting edge training, including any expansion/updates to Trauma Informed Practices. Educating our officers in the area of Fair and Impartial Policing will remain of the utmost importance. Police Services continues to work on the promotion of unbiased policing to ensure that police services are delivered in a manner that is fair, equitable and responsive to the needs of vulnerable groups. We expect to see Policing Standards in the near future and commit to providing additional training to our officers.

Enhancing Investigative Practices

The NWPDP will continue to ensure that Provincial Policing Standards are followed in every respect which includes Missing Persons Investigations and the creation of any additional new Standards. We will continue to provide support for victims and families along with our community partnerships. The NWPDP will maintain consistency in investigations and to facilitate cooperation and coordination on multi-jurisdictional investigations.

National Level Support

The NWPDP supports the Calls for Justice on a national level which includes support for provincial and territorial governments to establish a nationwide emergency number.

The NWPDP will, if established, support a national task force to review and, if required, to reinvestigate each case of unresolved files of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA people and will submit all such cases to the task force.

The Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police will be responsible for leading a national strategy to ensure consistency in reporting mechanisms for reporting regarding MMIWG and 2SLGBTQQIA people. The NWPDP will advocate for this strategy and ensure consistency in reporting mechanisms.

Display of Indigenous Artwork

The NWPDP are currently undergoing a renovation of the reception area of the police station. The NWPDP would be honored to have Indigenous artwork on display to commemorate the Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women and Girls and will take steps to identify a local Indigenous artist.

Strategic Plan

The NWPDP commit to relationship building, maintaining and building trust in our community and to increase partner and stakeholder engagement in our new Strategic Plan. We seek to improve our

engagement with our community with a focus on Reconciliation with Indigenous peoples and the improvement of relationships with marginalized and underrepresented groups.

Engagement of a Professional Advisory Firm Specializing in Indigenous Relations

The NWPD will look to engage with professional advisory groups to provide expertise in our Indigenous engagement strategies.