

Civilian Review and
Complaints Commission
for the RCMP



Commission civile d'examen
et de traitement des plaintes
relatives à la GRC

ANNUAL REPORT

2020 - 2021

The Civilian Review and Complaints Commission for the RCMP (the Commission) is an agency of the federal government, distinct and independent from the RCMP.

VISION: The CRCC will become the national leader for independent review of policing activities through the provision of a relevant, timely and transparent complaint process.

MISSION: Deliver a robust complaint process which holds the RCMP accountable for its activities and the conduct of its members.

MANDATE: As set out in Parts VI and VII of the *Royal Canadian Mounted Police Act*, the mandate of the Commission is to:

- receive complaints from the public about the conduct of RCMP members;
- conduct reviews when complainants are not satisfied with the RCMP's handling of their complaints;
- initiate complaints and investigations into RCMP conduct when it is in the public interest to do so;
- review specified RCMP activities;
- report findings and make recommendations; and
- promote public awareness of the complaint process.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES:

- Strengthening the public complaint process.
- Strengthening the Commission's review and investigative capacity.
- Enhancing relations with provincial and territorial governments, as well as police and federal review bodies.
- Conducting specified activity reviews of RCMP programs, policies and practices.
- Increasing outreach, public education and engagement efforts.

The Civilian Review and Complaints Commission for the RCMP can be found online at:
www.crcc-ccetp.gc.ca or www.complaintscommission.ca.

Telephone from anywhere in Canada: 1-800-665-6878

TTY: 1-866-432-5837

Minister of Public Works and Government Services

Cat. No.: PS75-2

ISSN: 2369-3118

The Honourable Bill Blair, P.C., C.O.M., M.P.

Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0A6

Dear Minister,

Pursuant to section 45.52 of the *Royal Canadian Mounted Police Act*, I hereby submit the annual report of the Civilian Review and Complaints Commission for the RCMP for the 2020–2021 reporting period for tabling in Parliament.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in white ink, appearing to read 'Ms. Lahaie', is positioned above the printed name.

Michelaine Lahaie
Chairperson

June 2021

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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRPERSON



There is an ebb and flow to public views of policing. Moreover, public confidence is not static.

In 1974, the Marin Commission, charged with examining, among other things, complaints from the public with regard to the RCMP, called for the establishment of a People's Watchman to "bring the lamp of scrutiny to otherwise dark places, even over the resistance of those who would draw the blinds."

However, the legislation enacted in 1988 fell short of the recommended model, and the inadequacies of the Commission's mandate have been highlighted by a number of Chairpersons in the intervening years.

The Commission's 2008–09 annual report to Parliament stated:

"A credible and effective regime of civilian oversight of the RCMP is an essential mechanism whereby the public and their police may jointly participate in a respectful dialogue, the ultimate goal of which is to restore and maintain the public trust in the police individually and as an institution.

With the passage of 20 years, the time to replace modest steps in the advancement of civilian oversight of policing with purposeful strides is upon us."

However, it wasn't until 2014 that additional legislative enhancements were made to the Commission's mandate, including the authority to initiate systemic investigations of RCMP activities.

Over the past year, policing in Canada has come under intense scrutiny, magnified in part by events in the United States. Police-involved shooting deaths, use of force incidents, and wellness checks gone wrong led to calls for reform. The public is no longer asking for change but demanding it—demands to address systemic racism in policing, bolster accountability, and increase transparency, among others.

Today, amidst a growing public thirst for information and calls for stronger assurances that police conduct is being independently examined and reported upon, there are yet again renewed calls for enhanced civilian oversight of Canada's police services.

Following testimony to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security, I submitted a number of recommendations in relation to its study on systemic racism in policing in Canada aimed at strengthening oversight of the RCMP.

Among the recommendations, I called on the Government of Canada to appoint an Indigenous person as a member of the CRCC and to make public education and outreach to Indigenous and racialized communities a statutory requirement for the CRCC.

To that end, the CRCC is committed to collecting and reporting on disaggregated race-based data.

Without race-based data, it is difficult to determine whether certain groups are making use of the complaint process. The collection of this data is critical to our efforts to address barriers to accessing the system.

As the prime minister made clear, systemic racism is an issue right across the country, in all our institutions, including the RCMP. Reforming policing and police oversight must be viewed through a lens of improving outcomes for all and must include eliminating barriers that result in disproportionately negative results for certain groups—particularly Indigenous and racialized peoples.

This past year, the Commission found that a prima facie case of discrimination was established with respect to the RCMP's conduct when notifying an Indigenous mother of her son's death. Achieving the deeper change to the RCMP's organizational culture that will prevent the type of discrimination found in this case from reoccurring will require more than cultural awareness training.

This year also shone a spotlight on the way that police conduct themselves when dealing with both vulnerable individuals and vulnerable populations.

Amidst police wellness checks gone awry, there were calls to defund the police in favour of greater resources going to mental health initiatives and a number of experts echoed the CRCC's recommendation for greater focus on de-escalation training in the police use of force model.

Both cisgender and transgender women taken into police custody are often from marginalized groups, survivors of gender-based violence and in Canada, they are disproportionately from Indigenous communities.

As demonstrated in our systemic review report published in October and in two notable cases where the CRCC found that both women were subjected to unwarranted strip-searching including the forcible removal of their undergarments, failure to comply with national and divisional personal search policy can result in gender inequality for detained persons.

While the ongoing work of the CRCC contributes to the RCMP's improved delivery of policing in Canada, there remain a number of gaps in the current oversight framework that need to be addressed.

For example, at present, the RCMP Act does not require the RCMP to implement public complaint service standards. The Commissioner is mandated to respond to CRCC interim reports "as soon as feasible"—the definition of which is currently being challenged in Federal Court—and indicate whether the recommendations are accepted.

I have recommended to the Minister of Public Safety that the RCMP Act be amended to include:

- statutory timelines for the RCMP Commissioner to respond to CRCC reports; and
- a requirement for the RCMP to report annually on the implementation of CRCC recommendations.

Statutory reporting requirements would increase the transparency of the complaint system while improving timeliness, which is both in the public interest and in the interest of RCMP members.

On that note, this past year marked an increase in the number of RCMP responses to CRCC reports. It is evident that significant efforts were made to address the backlog of long overdue—some dating back over four years—RCMP responses to CRCC reports.

For our part, the CRCC has committed to being more transparent, and summaries of all public complaint decisions are now posted on our website.

However, along with much-needed legislative changes, the CRCC also requires adequate funding to be effective. Without it, our ability to initiate investigations of public complaints or undertake broader, vital examinations of RCMP policing activities is limited.

One thing the CRCC has noted is that Indigenous people do not make use of the public complaint system. We need to work on this issue. The best way to do so is through better public education and better outreach, and the only way we get to that place is through a statutory requirement to perform those activities and increased resources.

Public education aimed at restoring trust and confidence in the complaint system is critical, and outreach to Indigenous and racialized communities is a vital component of a robust oversight regime. Adequate funding of police oversight is an investment in public trust.

I firmly believe that independent civilian review is an essential aspect of maintaining public trust in the police. The confidence of the public is essential—without it, police services lack legitimacy and effectiveness.

As I stated to the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security last July:

“The only way that the public complaint process works is if people trust the system.”

THE COMPLAINT & REVIEW PROCESS

THE PUBLIC COMPLAINT PROCESS

The CRCC accepts complaints about the on-duty conduct of RCMP members from individuals:

- Directly involved;
- Who witnessed the conduct itself;
- Authorized to act on behalf of the complainant.

When a complaint is made, typically the RCMP carries out the initial investigation into the complaint and reports back to the complainant.

The Chairperson can also initiate a complaint. Chairperson-initiated complaints allow the Chairperson to set the scope of the investigation of a public complaint. These complaints are investigated in the same manner as a complaint from a member of the public.

A complaint must be made within a year of the alleged conduct occurring.

Requests to review the RCMP's handling of a public complaint must be made within 60 days of receiving the RCMP's formal response to a complaint.

THE REVIEW PROCESS

If a complainant is not satisfied with the RCMP's handling of their complaint, they may request that the CRCC conduct a review of the RCMP's investigation.

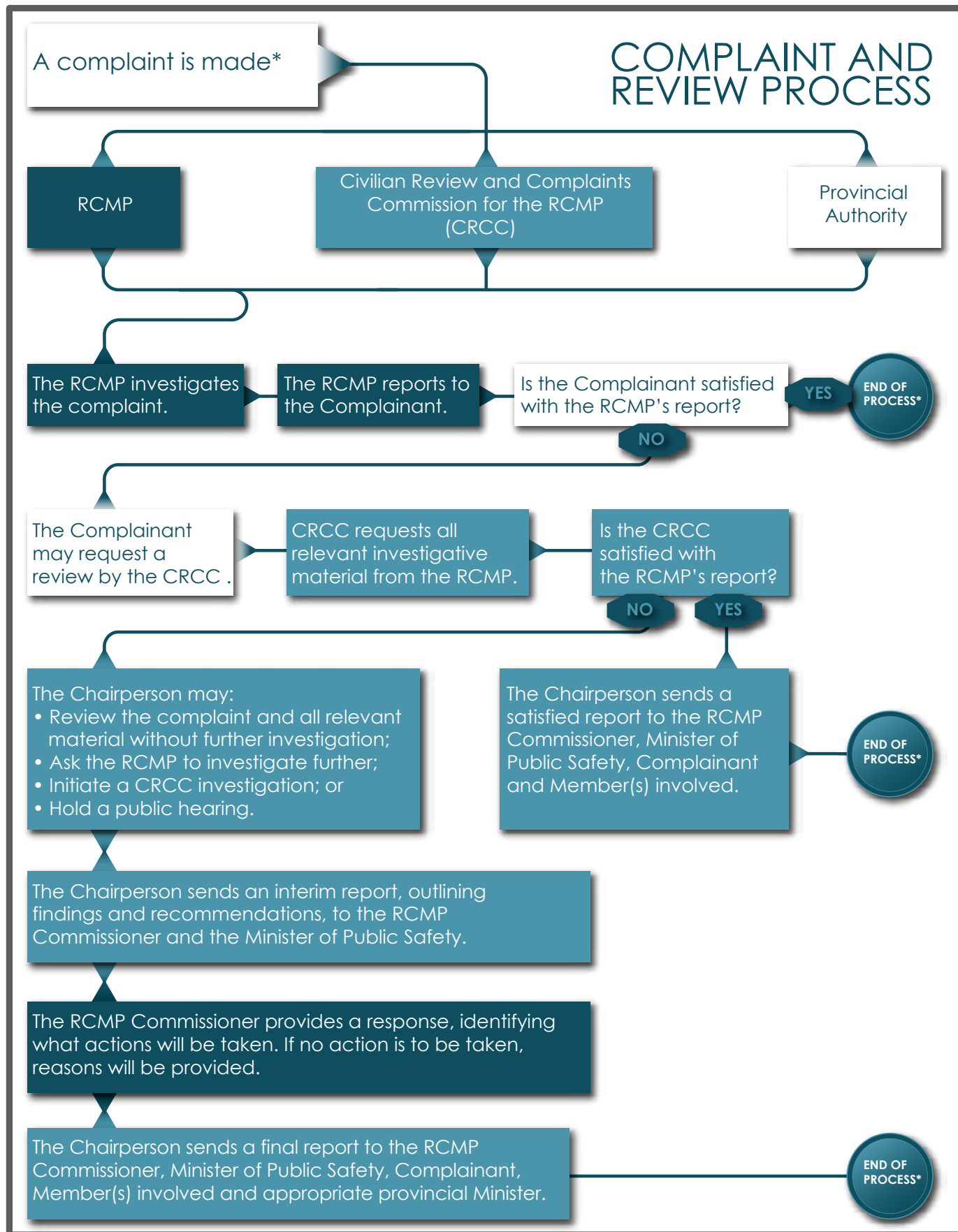
If the CRCC is satisfied with the RCMP's investigation, the Chairperson issues a **Satisfied Report**, thereby ending the review process.

If the CRCC finds that the RCMP did not conduct a thorough investigation, the Chairperson can request that the RCMP make further enquiries.

If the CRCC is not satisfied with the RCMP's handling of the complaint, the Chairperson will issue an **Interim Report**, outlining various findings and recommendations directed at the RCMP.

Once the **Interim Report** has been reviewed by the RCMP, the RCMP Commissioner gives notice, identifying which recommendations the RCMP will act on. If no action is to be taken, the Commissioner must provide reasons.

After receiving the **Commissioner's Response**, the Chairperson considers the RCMP's position and prepares a **Final Report**. This completes the CRCC's review process.

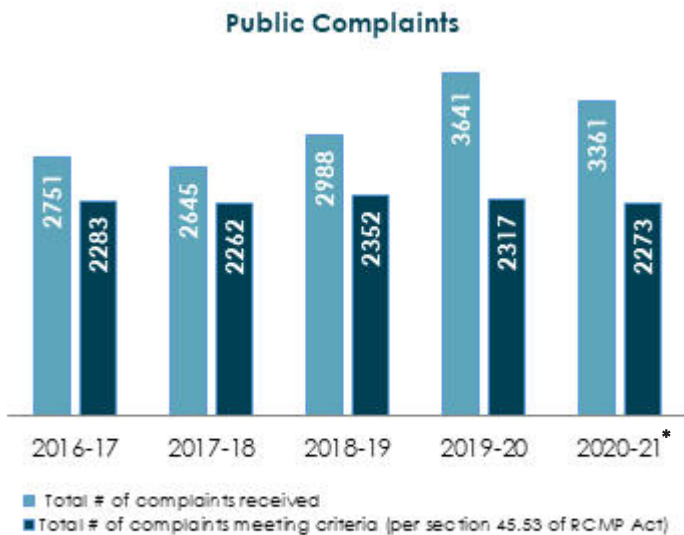


* The Chairperson can initiate a complaint. In addition, at any stage of the process, the Chairperson may institute an investigation or a hearing where it is considered in the public interest to do so.

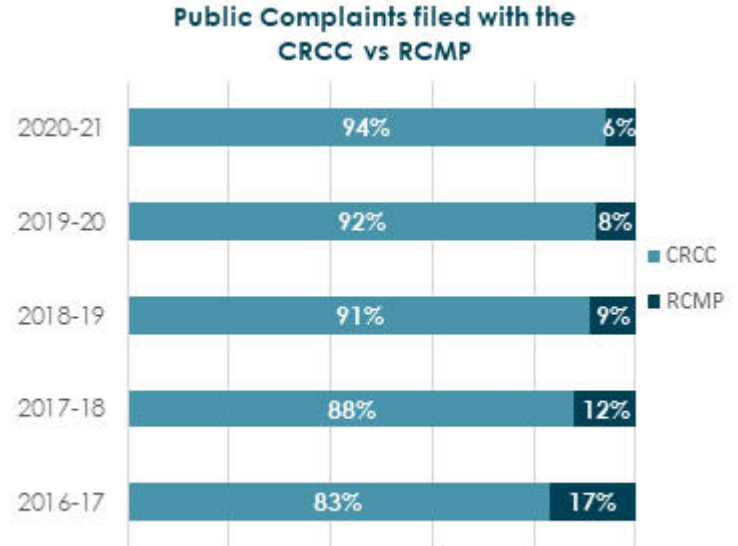
To learn more about the complaint and review process, visit the [CRCC website](#).

2020 • YEAR IN REVIEW • 2021

Public Complaints



The breakdown by RCMP division is available on the CRCC website.



Number of public complaints

up 22%

since 2016-17

Number of public complaints filed directly with the CRCC

up 12%

since 2016-17

* The slight decrease in complaint numbers filed in 2020-21 is expected given several months of lockdown measures across the country due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Of the 3,361 public complaints filed, 2,273 were sent to the RCMP for investigation, while 1,088 did not meet the criteria set out in Part VII of the RCMP Act.

Complaints that were not sent for investigation may include:

- Complaints from an individual who was not directly involved and/or was not physically present during the incident
- Complaints filed outside the one-year time limit
- Complaints about the conduct of non-RCMP police officers
- Complaints that are trivial, frivolous, vexatious or made in bad faith
- Complaints that are more appropriately dealt with under other Acts of Parliament e.g. privacy, human rights, official languages)

TOP ALLEGATION CATEGORIES

- Neglect of duty
- Improper attitude
- Improper use of force
- Improper arrest
- Irregularity in procedure
- Mishandling of property

The Classification of Complaints is available on the CRCC website.

2020 • **YEAR IN REVIEW** • 2021

Reviews

The CRCC issued **322** review reports

196
Satisfied
Reports

48
Interim
Reports

78
Final
Reports

and made **239** recommendations

In response, the RCMP accepted approximately

88% of CRCC
recommendations

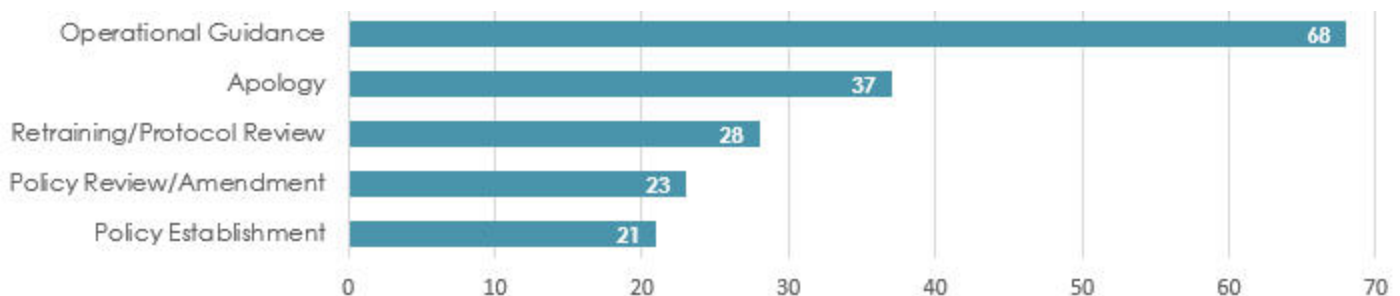
87% of adverse CRCC
findings

Sample recommendations the CRCC can make:

- RCMP member(s) receive operational guidance from a supervisor
- RCMP issue an apology
- RCMP member(s) receive additional training or review of existing protocol
- RCMP review, amend or establish policy

A full list of recommendations is available on the CRCC website.

Top five Recommendations made by the CRCC



| | Policy Establishment | Policy Review/ Amendment | Retraining/ Protocol Review | Apology | Operational Guidance |
|---------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|---------|----------------------|
| Number of Recommendations | 21 | 23 | 28 | 37 | 68 |

The CRCC received **308** new requests to review the RCMP's handling of public complaints

Systemic Investigations



Did you know?

The CRCC has the authority to conduct reviews of specified RCMP activities for the purpose of ensuring accordance with legislation, regulation, ministerial direction, or RCMP policies, procedures or guidelines. These reviews can be initiated by the CRCC, or at the request of either the Minister of Public Safety or a provincial minister responsible for policing in a province where the RCMP provides service.

The CRCC released two systemic investigations of RCMP activities:

- The RCMP's Policies and Procedures regarding Strip Searches; and
- The RCMP's Use of Crime Reduction-Type Units.

Both of these reports are available on the CRCC website.

The CRCC made **27** findings and **15** recommendations

In response, the RCMP accepted

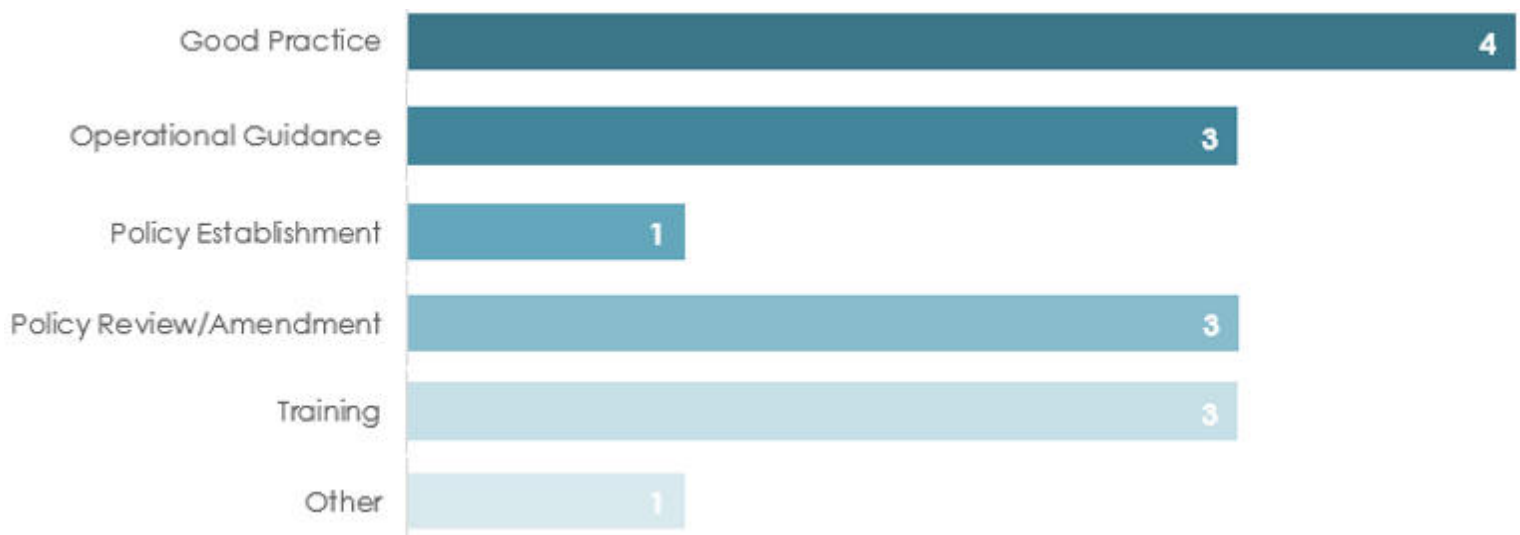
93% of CRCC **recommendations**

100% of CRCC **findings**

Sample recommendations include:

- The RCMP implement more widely a method, procedure or protocol worthy of emulating
- RCMP members receive guidance regarding specific roles and responsibilities
- RCMP policies, procedures, or guidelines be developed, clarified or amended
- RCMP members receive new and/or additional training regarding roles and responsibilities

Number and Type of Systemic Recommendations made by the CRCC



A full list of recommendations is available on the CRCC website.

2020 • YEAR IN REVIEW • 2021

SERVICE STANDARDS

| Public Complaint Process | Response Time |
|--|------------------------|
| The CRCC forwards public complaint to the RCMP. | 30 days* |
| The RCMP investigates and delivers a report to the complainant. | Determined by the RCMP |
| Where a complainant requests a review of an RCMP public complaint investigation, the CRCC notifies the RCMP and requests relevant materials. | 10 days |
| The CRCC conducts its review and sends either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a Satisfied Report to the complainant, the RCMP and the Minister of Public Safety; or an Interim Report to the RCMP with findings and recommendations. | 120 days |
| The RCMP responds to the CRCC Interim Report. | Within 6 months |
| The CRCC issues its Final Report. | 30 days |

97%

of complaints were sent to the RCMP within the **30-day*** service standard

* Due to changes in business processes during the COVID-19 pandemic, the CRCC and RCMP agreed to adjust the 10-day service standard to 30 days for 2020-21.

63%

of Satisfied & Interim reports were completed within the **120-day** service standard

71%

of Final reports were delivered within the **30-day** service standard

OUTSTANDING RCMP RESPONSES TO CRCC INTERIM REPORTS

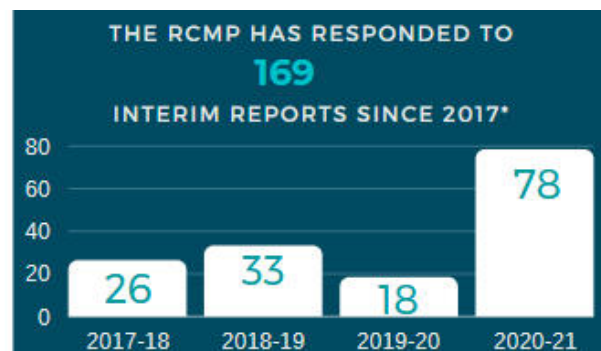
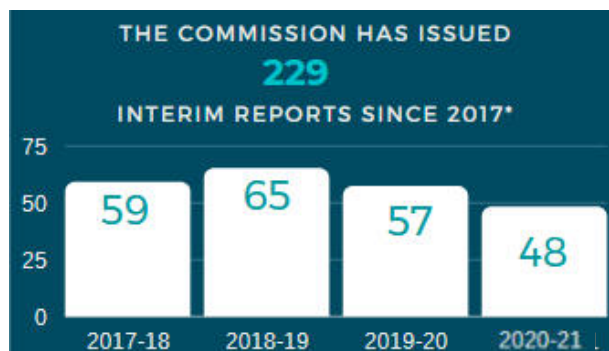
Delays lessen the immediacy of findings and reduce or eliminate the value of recommendations. The public's perception of the RCMP's commitment to accountability is impacted, causing anxiety and frustration to those who come forward to be heard and potentially undue stress for RCMP members.

108

AS OF MARCH 31, 2021
A TOTAL OF **108** INTERIM REPORTS WERE WAITING FOR RCMP RESPONSE

This is down from 174 on March 31, 2020

THE AVERAGE TIME THAT AN INTERIM REPORT HAS BEEN WAITING FOR RCMP RESPONSE IS **493** BUSINESS DAYS

**493 days**

The RCMP made efforts in 2020-21 to address the backlog of overdue responses to CRCC reports and has committed to observing the timelines set out in the CRCC-RCMP Memorandum of Understanding (available on the CRCC website).

FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Amidst renewed public scrutiny and high expectations of police, the CRCC remains committed to delivering a robust complaint process that holds the RCMP accountable for its activities and conduct and delivering effective, independent review of Canada's national police service. Greater police accountability is achieved through effective oversight, not only for public complaints, but also through investigations of systemic issues.

The CRCC's role is remedial in nature, identifying gaps and recommending improvements to existing RCMP policies, procedures and training in order to enhance public confidence.

In 2020, the CRCC issued reports containing findings and recommendations related to both ongoing and emerging issues for policing in Canada.

PUBLIC ORDER POLICING

Everyone in Canada has the right to express themselves, assemble peacefully, and associate freely with each other. This freedom enshrined in the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* empowers people to voice dissent by engaging in lawful, non-violent protest. The CRCC recognizes the challenges of policing protests, which include balancing the right to peaceful demonstration while enforcing the law and maintaining police and public safety.

This year, the CRCC finalized reports that examined issues arising from the policing of protests, including

- the use of arrest, detention and search powers;
- the handling of spiritual items, and/or interference with the spiritual practices of Indigenous peoples involved in the protests;
- the role of the RCMP in the policing of protests by Indigenous peoples pertaining to Indigenous land rights, and whether there was differential treatment of Indigenous peoples compared to other protesters;
- the use of force;
- the planning, management, and execution of the arrests at protest camps;
- the adequacy of communication with the public.

RCMP's response to anti-shale gas protests in Kent County, New Brunswick

A number of issues identified in this report will resonate in many parts of Canada, where the RCMP is responsible for maintaining public order as police of jurisdiction.

The CRCC's report emphasizes that police may only establish "buffer zones" in accordance with parameters set by the courts and that RCMP members must be aware of the bounds of police powers. As such, decisions to restrict access to public roadways or sites must be specific, reasonable, and limited to minimize the impact on people's rights. The CRCC recommended that the RCMP provide its members engaged in policing protests with detailed, accurate interpretations of the conditions of any injunction they are to enforce, and to obtain legal advice as necessary.

The full report is available [here](#).

RCMP enforcement actions in Wet'suwet'en territory

In its reply to the British Columbia Civil Liberties Association, the Wet'suwet'en Hereditary Chiefs and the Union of BC Indian Chiefs concerns with the RCMP's "checkpoint and exclusion zone" in the ongoing dispute over the Coastal GasLink pipeline project, the CRCC noted that many of the public interest issues highlighted by these organizations were addressed in the Kent County report.

The CRCC's response is available [here](#).

CULTURAL AWARENESS AND DISCRIMINATION

The RCMP has committed to implementing a continuum of Indigenous cultural awareness learning opportunities, including mandatory cultural training for all RCMP employees. However, achieving the deeper change to the RCMP's organizational culture that will prevent the recurrence of the type of discrimination detailed in a number of public complaints this year will require more than cultural awareness training.

Investigation into the conduct of the RCMP members involved in the investigation of the death of Colten Boushie

The CRCC's investigation found that the RCMP members who notified Mr. Boushie's mother of his death treated her with such insensitivity that her treatment amounted to discrimination. Further, the CRCC and the RCMP agreed that the manner in which the next-of-kin notification was communicated to the family was insensitive and demonstrated poor judgement. The RCMP acknowledged the existence of a link between the manner by which the service was provided in this case and the Indigenous historical context, as indicated by the CRCC in its report

The full report is available [here](#).

RCMP's response to anti-shale gas protests in Kent County, New Brunswick

While video evidence shows that RCMP members working at the protest sites generally appeared to be aware of the need to respect sacred ceremonies and items, the CRCC recommended that the RCMP require all members to review its Native Spirituality Guide, and that all members involved in Indigenous policing, including those who may police protests, receive training on indigenous cultural issues.

The full report is available [here](#).

Public complaints alleging discrimination and bias

This past year, the CRCC made findings of discrimination in two other public complaint files. In both cases, the CRCC has provided its interim report to the RCMP, and is waiting for the RCMP Commissioner's response.

Once the responses are received and the reports are provided to the parties, the summaries will be published to the website.

PERSONAL AND STRIP SEARCHES

Strip searches are inherently degrading. Regardless of the circumstances that may sometimes warrant such action by police, without appropriate policy, training and supervision, strip searches can easily violate protections guaranteed to each of us under the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*.

Systemic investigation of the RCMP's policies and procedures regarding strip searches

Following a 2017 report focused exclusively on the North District, headquartered in Prince George, British Columbia, the RCMP implemented seven of the CRCC's ten recommendations.

However, as outlined in this year's report, expanded to review compliance with national and divisional strip search policies across seven RCMP divisions, a number of concerns remain in critical areas. The CRCC recommended that the RCMP emphasize that removal of undergarments is not routine protocol and provide closer supervision and approval of such searches, a clearer rationale for employing strip searches, as well as better documentation of strip searches in operational files

The CRCC's report is available [here](#).

Public complaints related to RCMP use of strip search

In the case of two public complaints finalized this year where RCMP members forcibly removed and seized the women's bras, the CRCC recommended that the RCMP amend its "Cell Block Searches" policy to ensure consistency with strip search policy and provide clarity for RCMP members on acceptable removal and search of detainees' bras. The RCMP agreed with the CRCC's recommendation that the policy be reviewed, that members receive further guidance and, in the case of one woman, that the RCMP issue an apology and conduct a restorative justice meeting.

Summaries of these reports can be found [here](#).

WELLNESS CHECKS

Over the past year, there has been heightened public interest in police responses to persons in crisis and wellness checks. Over the past four years, the CRCC has issued 14 reports concerning individual cases where the RCMP's actions concerning a wellness check or person in crisis was unreasonable.

With respect to interacting with people in crisis, the CRCC's findings have consistently highlighted concerns about police adopting a "command and control" approach—an authoritative style of dealing with a non-compliant person, and the CRCC has repeatedly found that this approach has led to the RCMP's unreasonable use of force in apprehending persons in crisis.

The CRCC has recommended a review of RCMP policies and training with respect to communication and the use of force, and highlighted the need for the RCMP to involve mental health professionals in its response to persons in crisis.

Summaries of these reports can be found [here](#).

CRIME REDUCTION UNITS

As part of a trend towards evidence-based policing, the RCMP and other police agencies in Canada have created crime reduction policing units. Generally, there are two approaches used by RCMP crime reduction units. They are person or offender-focused enforcement and place-focused crime reduction.

Systemic investigation of the RCMP's crime reduction-type units

The CRCC's report evaluated crime reduction-type units in New Brunswick, Alberta and British Columbia, and examined:

- the RCMP's accountability frameworks in relation to crime reduction units;
- whether RCMP national and divisional policies and training were adequate, appropriate, sufficient and clear; and
- what measures the RCMP has in place to evaluate the efficacy of crime reduction-type enforcement units.

The success of crime reduction units in enhancing community safety was evident in places like Surrey and Mission, British Columbia; rural parts of Alberta; and in the Codiac Regional Detachment in New Brunswick, and the RCMP has implemented a national crime reduction policy.

The CRCC's report is available [here](#).

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND PRIVACY

Over the course of the past year, the CRCC finalized reports related to the RCMP's collection and retention of information. In one instance, the RCMP lacked clear guidance for collecting and retaining personal information and in the other, the RCMP failed to retain records related to ongoing public complaint investigations.

Investigation into the events and the actions of the RCMP members involved in the National Energy Board hearings in British Columbia

While there are legitimate reasons for the police to collect personal information from open sources, Canadians have the right to expect that the police will not retain their personal information simply for engaging in peaceful protest.

The CRCC found, and the RCMP agreed, that, among other things, RCMP policies lacked clear guidance when it comes to the collection, use and retention of such information.

A report on protests related to National Energy Board hearings in British Columbia made a number of recommendations, to which the RCMP agreed, to clarify policies on video-taping protests, to dispose of such recordings as soon as possible to respect privacy rights, and to manage personal information from open-source intelligence responsibly and in line with the information retention policies and the *Privacy Act*.

The full report is available [here](#).

Investigation into the conduct of the RCMP members involved in the investigation of the death of Colten Boushie

When the CRCC requested various recordings and transcripts of telephone calls and radio communications from the night Mr. Boushie died, the RCMP indicated that these records had been deemed to have no evidentiary value to the criminal investigation, and had been destroyed upon the two-year anniversary of their creation pursuant to RCMP document retention policies.

In correspondence sent to the RCMP, the CRCC noted its disappointment with the RCMP's failure to retain these records and pointed out that both the family's complaint and the CRCC Chairperson's complaint had been initiated before the end of the two-year retention period, and that the materials were relevant to these complaints.

The full report is available [here](#).

RCMP's response to anti-shale gas protests in Kent County, New Brunswick

While much of the RCMP conduct with regard to open-source dossiers and certain undercover operations was not unreasonable in the circumstances, the CRCC found that RCMP policy did not provide clear guidance as to the collection, use and retention of personal information obtained from social media or other open sources, particularly in situations where no criminal nexus was determined.

The CRCC recommended that RCMP policy: describe what personal information from social media sites can be collected, its permitted use, and what steps should be taken to verify its reliability; and impose limits on its retention.

The full report is available [here](#).

SEXUAL ASSAULT INVESTIGATIONS

A Chairperson-initiated complaint and investigation resulted in recommendations that included the formation of a sexual assault review team, a national course for investigators, earlier training in sexual assault investigation at the RCMP academy, a best-practices guide for investigators, and enhanced training in the trauma-informed approach for employees who interact with the public. These actions were either underway or upcoming when the RCMP responded to the CRCC.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE INVESTIGATIONS

A CRCC investigation led to policy changes to improve guidance on the taking of statements in domestic violence cases, a national-level course on violence in relationships, more information to RCMP members on the photographing of injuries, and closer monitoring of prisoners released from custody.

WELL-BEING OF PERSONS IN RCMP CUSTODY

Following the review of a public complaint, the RCMP agreed to post information in cells to help assess prisoner responsiveness, in light of RCMP members failing to recognize a stroke suffered by an intoxicated prisoner.

In another case, the RCMP clarified the meaning of “acutely agitated or delirious state” in policy regarding mentally ill persons and prisoners and committed to better informing members that behaviours appearing as signs of mental illness may be a serious non-mental medical illness requiring medical intervention.

Following a CRCC investigation, the RCMP agreed to modify policy so that the requirement to limit or seek alternatives to detention for incidents of public intoxication would also apply to other circumstances where intoxication may be the overriding reason a person was taken into custody.

SYSTEMIC RACISM IN POLICING IN CANADA

Events of the past year shone a spotlight on systemic racism in Canada's institutions.

Systemic racism is when the system itself is based upon and founded upon racist beliefs and philosophies and thinking and has put in place policies and practices that literally force even the non-racists to act in a racist way*

*SECU, Evidence, 2nd Session, 43rd Parliament, Meeting 11, 7 December 2020, 1530 (Alain Babineau, Consultant, Law Enforcement and Social Justice Advocate, As an Individual). Quoting Senator Murray Sinclair, as quoted in Sierra Bein, "Morning Update: RCMP commissioner 'struggles' with definition of systemic racism, but denies it exists on force," *The Globe and Mail*, 11 June 2020.

Study by the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security (SECU)

The SECU undertook a study of systemic racism in policing in Canada, in particular the RCMP in 2020.

The CRCC's Chairperson [presented](#) to the SECU and indicated that consultation with stakeholders in 2019 confirmed for the CRCC that many Indigenous people are either unaware of the public complaint process, do not trust it or find it excessively bureaucratic and difficult to navigate.

The Chairperson further stated to the SECU that the CRCC needs to consult Indigenous and racialized communities to identify systemic barriers that exist within our current system and commit to implementing the changes they suggest to break down barriers and better serve all communities.

The committee's full report can be found [here](#).

Collection of disaggregated demographic data

The CRCC is developing a plan for the collection and use of disaggregated demographic data—including, but not limited to race/ethnicity, Indigenous identity and gender identity—with the goal of implementing a method trusted by the communities it serves.

The CRCC is engaging with academia and internal and external stakeholders to ensure that data collection and use are inclusive and consistent. The CRCC will work with the RCMP and the CBSA to ensure consistency in collection of disaggregated data amongst business lines, to ensure interoperability and be responsive to the needs of Canadians while considering open government initiatives.

Additionally, the CRCC will consult with government privacy officials to ensure strong data governance and stewardship. Given the necessity of collecting this information via informed voluntary consent, community stakeholders, including racialized and Indigenous communities, must also be involved in the development of any collection and analyses plans. Ultimately, planning and consultations will determine how data will be used and how to communicate these intentions to the public.

Public education and stakeholder engagement

For over a decade, the CRCC has hosted an annual Heads of Agency meeting, which brings together the senior leadership of police oversight bodies from across Canada, to discuss issues that shape the future of policing and police accountability.

In recent years, we heard from experts on issues such as:

- challenges facing Indigenous people in the Canadian justice system;
- trauma-informed investigative techniques;
- mental health and policing; and
- systemic racism in Canada in relation to policing and police oversight.

The CRCC remains committed to ensuring that all Canadians policed by the RCMP are aware of the complaint process. The CRCC has taken action to improve the accessibility of the public complaint system, including making the public complaint form available in 16 different languages, and recently worked closely with the territorial government of Nunavut to ensure that the complaint form and additional materials on the complaint process were available in Inuktitut. Efforts are underway to develop similar public education materials in cooperation with provincial and territorial governments.

IMPROVING POLICING & OVERSIGHT

As the only national police complaints and review body in Canada, the CRCC is uniquely positioned to provide leadership in fostering excellence in policing through oversight.

To that end, in 2020–21, the CRCC participated in the following:

- Legislative Assembly of British Columbia's Special Committee on Reforming the Police Act (presentation available [here](#))
- BC Advisory Committee on Provincial Policing Standards (ACOPPS)
- Alberta Police Act Review, Department of Justice & Solicitor General Public Safety Directorate stakeholder discussions
- Canadian Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement
- BC Independent Investigation Office Community–Police–Oversight Joint Forum
- Federal Government Investigators Community of Practice, Advisory Committee
- Council of Federal Tribunal Chairs
- Canadian Federal Ombuds Offices

TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Searchable findings and recommendations

In 2020–21, the CRCC began publishing depersonalized summaries of all its complaint reviews. This new feature includes summaries of reports where the CRCC is satisfied with the RCMP's handling of a public complaint as well as reports that include recommendations for the RCMP.

The summaries are searchable by year, report type, keywords, and issue.

To learn more, click [here](#).

Accessible public complaint policies

To be transparent in the administration of the public complaint process, CRCC policies and agreements are published online. These include:

- Discretion to Change or Restrict Access to Staff or Services due to Unreasonable Complainant Behaviour
- Discretion to Refuse to Deal with a Complaint
- Extension of the Time Limit to Submit a Complaint to the CRCC
- Memorandum of Understanding between the CRCC and the RCMP

TOTAL EXPENDITURES

| TOTAL EXPENDITURES | |
|------------------------|--------|
| Salaries | 8.3 M |
| Operating Costs | 1.8 M |
| Employee Benefit Plans | 1.2 M |
| Total | 11.3 M |

Note: Numbers represented are in millions