



Violence Reduction Program: Service Delivery Alignment

Item 4E

January 25, 2021

Tenant Services Committee

Report: TSC:2021-11

To: Tenant Services Committee (“TSC”)

From: Senior Director, Community Safety Unit

Date: January 5, 2021

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the implementation status and performance of the Violence Reduction Program (“VRP”).

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that the TSC receive this report for information.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

On November 24, 2020, the TSC received the Chief Operating Officer’s Report on Tenant Services and Initiatives, which included an update on the Violence Reduction Program (TSC: 2020-43). Due to timing, the TSC did not discuss the Violence Reduction Program Update, thus TSC:2020-43 was deferred to the January 25, 2021 TSC meeting. This report provides an update to the information contained in TSC:2020-43.

BACKGROUND

Toronto Community Housing (“TCHC”) provides tenant-focused services in alignment with four pillars: Community Safety and Support, Tenancy Management, Cleaning, and Maintenance.

The Community Safety and Support pillar focuses on improving safety in the community. This is achieved by working with the regions to deliver engagement and support activities, while enhancing security presence.

The VRP is focused on improving safety and security for tenants. It is in response to the disproportionate frequency of violence that occurs on TCHC property rooted in the levels of poverty, addiction, mental health needs and street-involvement present in the TCHC tenant population. It focuses on:

- Community Support: Economic development and community and social supports in collaboration with the City of Toronto; and
- Enhanced Security Presence & Enforcement: Dedicated and on-site Community Safety Unit (“CSU”) presence, in collaboration with Toronto Police Service (“TPS”).

The VRP will be implemented in the regions under the Community Safety and Support Pillar and VRP staff will work with integrated hub teams to support local community safety initiatives.

IMPLEMENTATION STATUS:

Economic Development and Social Supports:

A) VRP Community Service Coordinators (CSC) Staffing: As of November 30, 2020, the full CSC team is in place and space was created during for VRP CSCs to begin working with their VRP CSU colleagues. The VRP CSCs from across all the regions will meet monthly as part of a community of practice to problem solve and share best practices as they carry out their work in each of the regions.

B) Regional CSCs: As the VRP CSCs are in the early stages of implementation, they are currently working to build key relationships with tenants and community partners in their respective regions. In December 2020, the team supported and initiated key activities that will help make the VRP more effective.

West Region: The VRP CSCs held an initial meet and greet with community partners to talk about how best to work together, and have subsequent meetings planned for mid-January to map the best referral pathways for families who need the supports being offered. The West team will also be meeting with TPS in early January 2021 to discuss the Toronto Police Integrated Gang Prevention Task Force. Additionally, they have:

- supported the Lawrence Heights Parent Association to complete a series of harm reduction workshops;
- supported tenants in the Neptune community to apply for crisis response funding in response to a shooting; and

- supported young people to complete 93 community surveys as part of the youth violence prevention grant.

East Region: The VRP CSCs supported various initiatives during December 2020 that focused on food security. It included:

- partnering with a private donor to provide over 150 meals to the Danzig community;
- working with the Malvern Family Resource Centre and TAIBU to distribute over 200 grocery and electronic gift cards; and
- working with TPS to support a weekly breakfast club that provides meals to 30 youth and their family on a weekly basis.

Central Region: Through the Community Crisis Response Program (“CCRP”), the VRP CSCs connected with Wanasah, a mental health service for youth in Regent Park, and will have subsequent meetings to explore use of space possibilities for program and administrative space in one of the Regent Park buildings. Additionally, they have:

- reached out to the Youth Workers network in Regent Park to set up a coordination meeting for January 2021;
- joined the Moss Park integrated team meeting to support service coordination and delivery for residents dealing with unit takeovers; and
- joined the Dan Harrison integrated team meeting to support service coordination and delivery for residents dealing with unit takeovers. They also connected with Fred Victor as a partner.

To ensure oversight on program activities, key metrics will be measured and tracked. The key metrics that will be measured and evaluated on a regular basis are the following: joint patrols, serious acts of violence, arrests, referrals of vulnerable people by CSU, arrests, crimes against persons and property, safety audits, referrals to appropriate agencies/programs, number of safety related initiatives, and number of tenants participating in VRP/Youth Violence Reduction Program (“YVRP”) activities.

C) CSU Staffing Update: As a result of the December 5, 2020 TCHC Board Meeting, it was decided that CSU will suspend the VRP Special Constable hiring of the 12 outstanding positions. Hiring will continue after the proposed community safety working group has worked through the strategy to support enhanced community safety.

As a result of the halt of the VRP deployment, the two last sites (Fleminndon Park & Islington/St. Andrews) and backfilling of joined sites will be delayed accordingly to Q2 2021 or later.

CSU is in the process of reviewing the VRP communities with relevant recommendations to follow. The review will include:

- referral process, tenancy management, wellness checks, CCRP notification, 24/7 role; and
- CSU's integration in the new structure and training (e.g. Confronting Anti-Black Racism ("CABR") initiatives, racism and diversity).

D) Deployment of CSU VRP Officers: With the deployment of CSU VRP officers, it provides enhanced capacity to undertake the following:

- provide visual deterrence and enhanced enforcement;
- coordination of joint patrols in partnership with Toronto Police;
- identify at-risk tenants;
- connect at-risk tenants to Community Safety Advisor;
- identify unit take overs;
- liaise with TPS, OU, and Community Safety Advisors;
- summarize actions, investigations and accomplishments;
- provide safety and security information to tenants;
- respond to radio calls within the assigned communities; and
- perform all other duties of a Special Constable.

E) Diversity and Mental Health training: CSU Special Constables currently deployed receive diversity and mental health training on an annual and as-needed basis (see Attachment 2).

F) Confronting Anti- Black Racism ("CABR") Strategy: The CABR strategy team worked with CSU management to hold four staff sessions with CSU staff in December 2020 with an additional two sessions planned for January 2021. These sessions were held to inform the CSU portion of the CABR strategy and gain insight from CSU staff in relation to the issues, barriers and solutions around community safety and confronting anti-Black racism at TCHC. The goal of the sessions was to get a deeper understanding of the perspectives of CSU staff on anti-Black racism issues either between staff, between staff and tenants, within communities, and in the wider context of their work. The themes and feedback will be included in the larger CABR strategy document.

IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS:

While the VRP program has been operationalized and is on-track, the last two VRP sites at Flemingdon Park and Islington St Andrews are further

delayed with the Special Constable hiring suspension. Phase three staffing and deployment of Special Constables in the 10 high needs VRP communities will not be realized as initially planned.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. CSU 2020 Organizational Chart
2. CSU Mental Health & Diversity Training
3. Performance Measures

SIGNATURE:

“Sheila Penny”

Sheila Penny
Chief Operating Officer

STAFF CONTACTS:

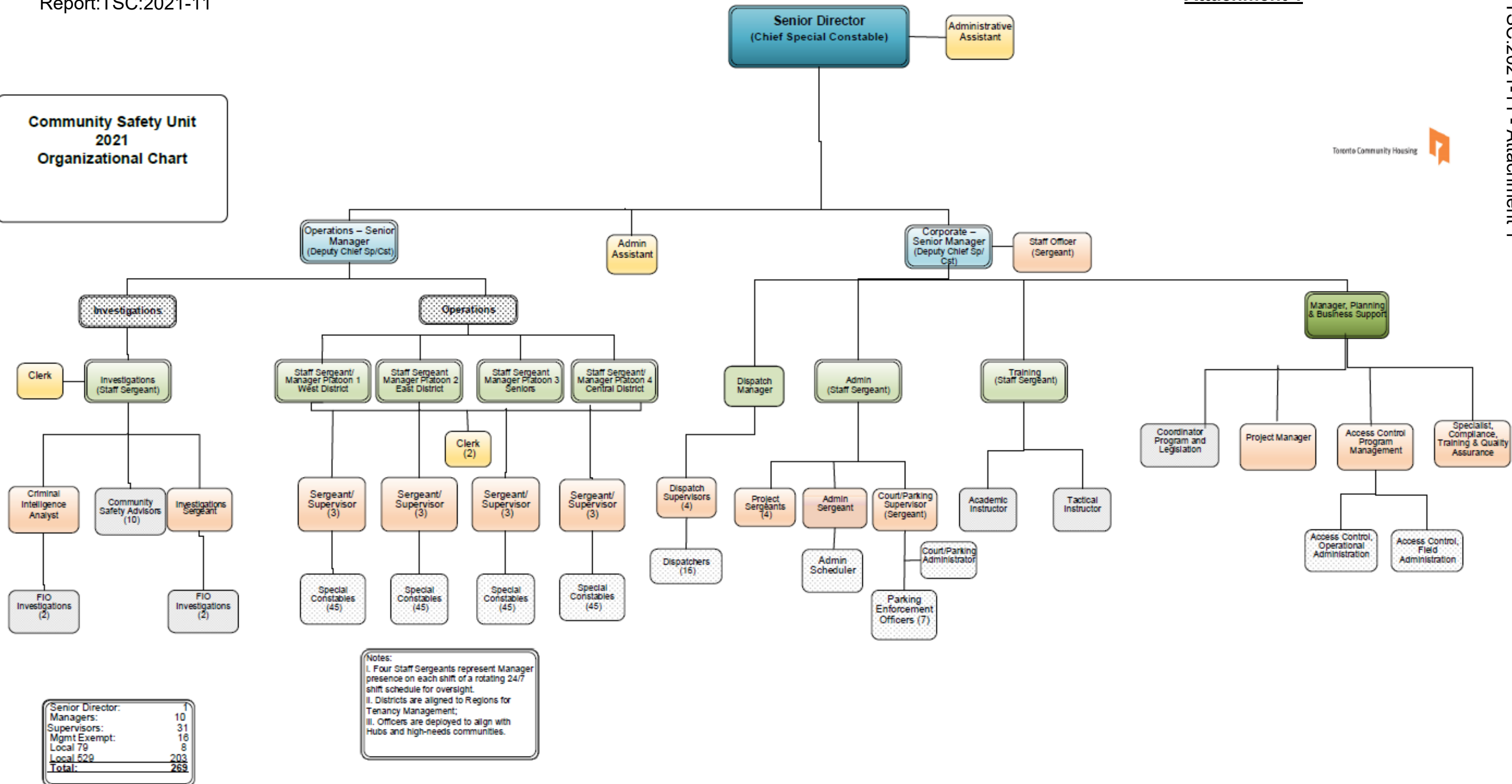
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**Community Safety Unit
 2021
 Organizational Chart**



Updated January 6, 2021

Diversity Training						
New Hire Courses	Provider	Hours	Existing Officers	Provider	Hours	Frequency
Diversity and Inclusion Fundamentals and Unconscious Bias	CCDI	3	Diversity and Inclusion Fundamentals	CCDI	1	annually
Implicit and Explicit Bias	CSU Internal	8	Racially Biased Policing	CPKN	1	annually
Racially Biased Policing	CPKN	1	LGBT Issues	CPKN	1	annually
LGBT Issues	CPKN	1	UnConference: Thawing the frozen Middle (Supervisor)	CCDI	8	as available
			Anti-black racism Training	City of Toronto	5	as available
Total		13	Total		16	

Mental Health Training						
New Hire Courses	Provider	Hours	Existing Officers	Provider	Hours	Frequency
Crisis Intervention and De-escalation	CPKN	3.5	Suicide Awareness and Prevention for Supervisors	CPKN	1	annually
Critical Incident Stress Management	CPKN	3	Critical Incident Stress De-brief training	Mourneau Shepel	16	annually
Recognition of Emotionally Disturbed Persons	CPKN	2				
Autism Spectrum Disorder	CPKN	1				
Suicide Awareness and Prevention	CPKN	1				
Mental health Awareness and First Responders	CPKN	2				
Mental Health Act	CSU Internal	2				
Dealing with people in Crisis	CSU Internal	2				
Communication Skills and De-escalation	CSU Internal	6				

Mental Health Training						
New Hire Courses	Provider	Hours	Existing Officers	Provider	Hours	Frequency
Officer Safety and Excited Delirium	CSU Internal	2				
Nonviolent Crisis Intervention Training	TCHC	8				
Total		32.5	Total		17	

CCDI - Cdn. Centre for Diversity & Inclusion

CPKN - Cdn. Police Knowledge Network

Attachment 3: Performance Measurement

Action	Q4 2020			Q4 2019		
	Oct	Nov	Dec	Oct	Nov	Dec
Joint Patrols	26	32	29	10	30	33
Arrests	36	19	32	38	52	49
Serious acts of violence	26	11	12	17	24	26
Referrals of vulnerable people made by CSU (to TCS)	10	0	1	1	2	10