



18 April 2019

Commissioner Steve Craig  
Chair  
Board of Police Commissioners  
P.O. Box 1749  
Halifax, N.S. B3J 3A5

Dear Commissioner Craig:

In response to your letter dated April 15, 2019, on the Board of Police Commission recommendations to suspend street checks and a joint apology, I wanted to provide my response after reflecting on both recommendations.

Regarding the first recommendation *"suspend street checks pending the receipt and adoption of policy from the report requested September 18, 2017, to establish a street check policy after receipt of the Halifax Street Checks Report"*, the Minister of Justice's directive addresses the first part of this recommendation. We have begun the work internally to provide related communications to employees. As to the second part of this recommendation regarding policy, along with the Board of Police Commissioners, we are actively participating in the Department of Justice working group and crafting related internal documentation.

Regarding the second recommendation *"recognize that the practices of police checks has disproportionately affected the African Nova Scotian community and prepare a joint statement with the Chief of Police and Chief Superintendent to formally apologize to the African Nova Scotian community"*, respectfully, I cannot action this recommendation at this time. I do not minimize the thought that the Board put forward in this motion, but it is important to recognize that issues related to organizational apologies are very complex and sensitive. Our focus is to work collaboratively with our staff, the various community representatives, the Board of Police Commissioners and the Department of Justice on what action we need to take regarding the Wortley recommendations.

I can assure you that the issue of over-representation of racialized communities in our street checks data is something HRP is fully committed to addressing. It is important to understand that traffic stops, police complaints, formal police actions such as responding to calls for service and how people are treated during these interactions are not in this data set. I feel strongly that speaking exclusively to the street checks data, when the community is clearly speaking to much more, would appear disingenuous and be frustrating to both our communities as well as our staff.

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We do recognize that implicit bias in our society has had a significant impact on some of our community members for generations. We have publicly acknowledged this, and our actions will reflect this acknowledgement. We understand the lack of trust in our systems, including Police, has been impacted by decades of decisions that have had negative impacts on access to services and fair treatment. This will not be addressed overnight, and we recognize that as a Police service, we have a significant role in supporting the community in making this better.

Your insights and guidance as our civilian oversight body will continue to help shape our work as we go forward.

Yours truly,



Robin McNeil  
A/Chief of Police