

## Matters of Immediate Strategic Significance (Critical Point)

Original Implementation Date	June 2025	Approved by	BOPC
Date of Last Revision	June 4, 2025	Approved by	BOPC
Effective Date of Last Revision	June 5, 2025	Approved by	BOPC

### **1 - Title**

Matters of Immediate Strategic Significance (Critical Point)

### **2 - Purpose**

The Halifax Board of Police Commissioners is committed to overseeing the delivery of fair, effective, efficient, equitable and accountable policing services in keeping with community values, needs, and expectations of all community members.

The timely and accurate receipt of such information positions the Board to respond to public, and/or media inquiries and demands, and helps to inform the Board's assessment of the Matter of Immediate Strategic Significance, as well as any Board decisions that follow from that assessment.

### **3 – Scope**

This policy applies to all sworn and unsworn members of HRP as outlined in the Department Order #: 04-09 and to the Chief of HRP.

### **4 - Definitions**

In the context of this document:

**Police Act** means the *Police Act*, S.N.S. 2004, c. 31 as amended

**Matter of Immediate Strategic Significance** means a major issue that rapidly elevates the operational, financial, reputational or other enterprise risk to Halifax Regional Police, and therefore calls for the Board's immediate attention and/or preparedness to take action prior to the next regularly scheduled meeting.

**Board** means the Halifax Board of Police Commissioners

**Chair** means Chair of the Board of Police Commissioners

**Chief Officer** means the Chief of Halifax Regional Police

**Chief Superintendent** means the Chief Superintendent of the RCMP, Halifax District

**Chiefs** means the Chief of Police of HRP and the Chief Superintendent of the RCMP

**Council** means Halifax Regional Council

**HRD** means the Halifax Regional Detachment of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police

**HRM** means the Halifax Regional Municipality

**HRP** means the Halifax Regional Police

**Legislative Assistant** means representative of the Municipal Clerk's Office

**Member(s)** means a member of the Halifax Board of Police Commissioners

## **5 - Distribution**

Policies may be distributed to all Board of Police Commissioners, CAO, Municipal Clerk, HRM Councillors, the Chiefs and their respective departments, Nova Scotia Association of Police Governance and posted on HRM website with link to HRP website. This list may be expanded as required.

## **6 - Roles and Responsibilities**

### **General**

- 6.1 The timely and accurate receipt of information regarding Matters of Immediate Strategic Significance positions the Board to respond to public, and/or media inquiries and demands, and helps to inform the Board's assessment of the Matter of Immediate Strategic Significance, as well as any Board decisions that follow from that assessment.
- 6.2 Examples of Matters of Immediate Strategic Significance include but are not limited to:
  - a. Major incidents resulting in mass casualties;
  - b. Incidents where the Serious Incident Response Team (SiRT) has invoked its mandate in response to a death or life-threatening injuries;
  - c. Incidents involving senior police officers or civilian directors, board members or senior public officials that are likely to draw significant media attention;
  - d. In the event that HRP becomes aware of a cyber security incident impacting a police information system, including any loss, destruction, theft, unauthorized or unlawful access, use or modification of, or unauthorized or unlawful disclosure of, any confidential information;
  - e. Any incident that warrants a special media conference involving the chief officer or designate.
  - f. Any incident that places or is likely to place a significant and abnormal strain on police resources.
- 6.3 The chief officer or designate shall ensure that, to the extent possible, policies are in place relating to incidents or operations with a greater potential of becoming a Matter of Immediate Strategic Significance, including, but not limited to, the deployment of the Public Safety Unit, and major incidents.

## Mission, Vision and Values

- 6.4 The chief officer shall ensure that the policies of Halifax Regional Police regarding potential matters of immediate strategic significance align with the mission, vision and values, as outlined in HRP's Strategic Plan,<sup>1</sup> and the Principles of Policing, as outlined in the Police Board By-law.

## Notification Requirements for Matters of Immediate Strategic Significance

- 6.5 Any written electronic communication regarding a Matter of Immediate Strategic Significance shall be transmitted and received using HRM enterprise email services.
- 6.6 The chief officer will notify the Board Chair or designate of Matters of Immediate Strategic Significance as soon as practicable, either verbally or in writing, and provide updates as the chief officer deems necessary, subject to the following qualifications as determined by the chief officer on the basis of security or other operational concerns:
- a. The timing of the provision of information;
  - b. The level of that information;
  - c. The security level of that information;
  - d. The forum or method in which the information is provided;
  - e. The extent of the distribution of the information to Board members or the public;
  - f. The exclusion of any information protected by privacy legislation; and
  - g. The possibility that no information can be provided due to security or other operational concerns
- 6.7 In instances where information is withheld due to security or other operational concerns, the chief officer will notify the Board of the information, once, as determined by the chief officer, those security or other operational concerns are determined to no longer exist
- 6.8 Upon notification from the chief officer or designate, the Board Chair or designate may, following consultation with the chief officer, as appropriate, consult with the majority of the members of the Board of Police Commissioners.
- 6.9 On behalf of the Board, the Board Chair or designate may give advice, in writing, to the chief officer or designate on any Matter of Immediate Strategic Significance within jurisdiction of the board.
- 6.10 Notwithstanding any advice or guidance provided to the chief officer by the Board Chair, the chief officer maintains autonomy to make and execute operational decisions.

## Formal Debriefing Following a Matter of Immediate Strategic Significance

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<sup>1</sup> About Halifax Regional Police, accessed May 26, 2025, <https://www.halifax.ca/safety-security/police/about-halifax-regional-police>

- 6.11 Following a Matter of Immediate Strategic Significance and where appropriate, the chief officer shall ensure that a formal debriefing is held.
- a. The debriefing shall be led by senior officers and provide an opportunity for attendees to openly discuss the events in question.
  - b. The chief officer shall ensure that officers are given the opportunity to provide input in the event anonymously.
  - c. Subject to security or operational concerns, the chief officer shall report the content of the debriefing and lessons learned to the Board of Police Commissioners.
  - d. Subject to s. 51 of the *Police Act*, the report on debriefings may be held in camera.
  - e. Following any debriefing, the Board of Police Commissioners shall review its policies, procedures and practices and determine if any changes are necessary.

#### Halifax Regional Detachment

- 6.12 The Halifax Regional Detachment (HRD) shall review this policy for alignment and integration.

### **7 - Policy Review**

This policy should be reviewed every four years and when the Act is amended.

### **8 - Contact**

Office of the Municipal Clerk

### **9 - References**

None