



OWEN SOUND POLICE SERVICE

BOARD POLICY

Issued: April 23, 2025

Reviewed:

Revised:

Expires: Indefinite

Rescinds:

OSPSB GP-023 Critical Point Reporting

Table of Contents

1.	Preamble:	1
2.	Purpose of this Policy:	2
3.	Definitions:	2
4.	Policy of the Board:	4
5.	CSPA, Policies and Procedures:	6

1. **Preamble:**

- a) Information sharing between the Owen Sound Police Service and the Owen Sound Police Service Board (the Board) is foundational to the Board's effective execution of its oversight responsibilities. Information sharing is crucial during times of elevated organizational risk, when facing large-scale events;

- b) This Policy defines such Critical Points and sets out a process to guide the Chief of Police and the Board in identifying them and ensuring the flow of relevant information from the Police Service to the Board, so that the Board can effectively carry out its oversight and governance role, including creating and amending Board policies, setting priorities, asking questions, and providing non-binding advice in relation to operational matters; and
- c) This Board acknowledges there are limits to the direction that the Board may give to the Chief of Police. The Board is prohibited by law from directing the Chief of Police with respect to specific investigations, or the conduct of specific operations. The Board may set objectives and priorities for the policing of a Critical Point, the Chief of Police has the authority to determine the methods by which the objective, priority, or outcome will be achieved.

This Policy will not prevent or restrict the Police Service from exercising its policing powers and authorities, in emergent circumstances, to protect community safety.

2. **Purpose of this Policy:**

The purpose of this Policy is to:

- a) Define the term Critical Point and provide clear and consistent assessment criteria for use in identifying Critical Points as they arise;
- b) Describe the type of information the Board requires from the Chief of Police in order to assess potential Critical Points;
- c) Describe the information sharing process between the Board and the Police Service when a Critical Point has been identified/confirmed;
- d) Strengthen oversight of the Police Service, consistent with the Board's legislative responsibilities;
- e) Ensure accountability of the Police Service to the Board; and
- f) Ensure that the Chief of Police can discharge their duties according to law.

3. **Definitions:**

- a) **Critical Point** - means:

- I. **Strategic Significance** - issues that are organizationally significant and require Senior Administrative-level approval;

- II. **Time-Sensitive** - matters that demand immediate attention and/or preparedness to take action; and
- III. **Elevated Risk** – matters that rapidly elevate the Board's operational, financial, reputational, or other enterprise risk, that calls for the Board's immediate attention and/or preparedness to take action.

b) Examples, but not limited to:

- I. Large scale operations for which advance planning and approval by the Police Service's Senior Leadership is required;
- II. Events or operations that are likely to have a material impact on the Police Service's relationship with, and service to, marginalized and vulnerable communities;
- III. Events or operations that raise significant questions of public policy;
- IV. Credible external or internal complaints, including complaints regarding workplace discrimination or harassment, against individual officers and the Service, and findings by other tribunals related to discrimination, where such complaints or findings raise significant systemic issues: or
- V. Major Event - means an exceptional, out-of-the-ordinary Policing operation or event that is characterized by one or more of the following, but not limited to:
 - is a federally designated meeting involving international representatives;
 - involves an "internationally protected person";
 - will tax this Police Service's ability to provide regular policing services to Owen Sound;
 - requires resources from other police agencies; and
 - is a major community event that has the potential to significantly disrupt public peace, order or security.

4. **Policy of the Board:**

It is the Policy of this Board that:

a) The Board shall:

- I. Proactive Oversight - be proactive in its oversight and policy role regarding these types of policing operations. The Board shall report on "critical points" proactively, rather than waiting for a crisis to occur;
- II. Policy Assessment - assess whether existing policies are adequate and create new ones if necessary to address these types of situations;
- III. Collaboration and Information Exchange - ensure there is a collaboration and information exchange between the Board and the Chief of Police for these situations. The Board shall work collaboratively with the Chief of Police to develop strategies for addressing these situations; and
- IV. Accountability and Transparency - ensure there is accountability and transparency in policing operations. The Board shall ensure clear and concise communication of the situation and its potential risks.

b) Reporting on Critical Points:

- I. The Chief of Police will inform the Chair or their designate of any situation in which the Chief of Police believes a Critical Point has emerged or is likely to emerge and provide the Chair, in writing, with further information regarding the Critical Point, including, as appropriate:
 - the general nature of the Critical Point;
 - the elevated risk(s) posed by the Critical Point;
 - relevant operational and other information necessary for the Board to understand the details of the Critical Point, including an outline of the operational plan, and continuity of service plans;
 - any plans to involve other organizations, including requests to the Chief of Police for temporary assistance pursuant to section 19 of the *Community Safety and Policing Act (CSPA)*;
 - an estimate of the financial impact;
 - relevant legislation and other legal requirements that may apply including the need for additional authorities; and

- any ongoing considerations, including resources needed, or policy impacts.
- II. **Major Event** - The Board is provided, at the earliest possible stage, with sufficient relevant operational and other information to allow it to understand details of the major event, what legislation and other legal requirements may apply to the policing of the major event, the role that other organizations may play, any existing Board Policies that may apply, or any new Policies that might be required;
 - III. The Chair will share the information provided by the Chief of Police with Board Members, all of which will be held in the strictest of confidence;
 - IV. The Chair, in consultation with the Board Members, and in accordance with the Board's Policies, will determine whether there is a need to obtain additional information, create or amend Board policies, and/or provide direction to the Chief of Police in accordance with the Board's policies, duties and responsibilities, including setting objectives and priorities, and if so, whether to call a Special Meeting of the Board, or to include the Critical Point as an item on the Agenda of the Board's next regularly scheduled meeting; and
 - V. The Chief of Police will continue to update the Board, through the Chair, on any significant developments, including once the Chief of Police determines that the Critical Point has concluded. In consultation with the Board Members, the Chair may call a Special Meeting of the Board at any time or include an item on the Agenda of a regularly scheduled Board Meeting, to discuss the Critical Point.

c) Identification of Critical Points by the Board:

When the Chair believes, or is advised by a Board Member(s) that they believe, that a planned or anticipated event may constitute a Critical Point, the Chair shall request the Chief of Police to consider whether, in their view, the event may meet the definition of Critical Point, and either report to the Board in accordance with this Policy, or, alternatively, provide to the Chair reasons that the event in question does not meet the definition of a Critical Point.

d) Chief's Autonomy:

- I. Once the Board has been given the opportunity to set objectives, ask questions, and provide non-binding advice in relation to operational matters, where applicable the Chief of Police will maintain the autonomy to finalize and execute the plans; and

- II. If, during the duration of a Critical Point, the Board concludes that, in its view, the Board's objectives are not being achieved, the Board will inform the Chief of Police of its conclusion. The Chief of Police will respond by informing the Board on corrective measures or the operational necessity of deviating from the Board's objectives. However, the Chief of Police will remain autonomous in determining the appropriate execution of the plans in order to achieve the mission, objectives and priorities.

e) Training:

- I. The Chief of Police shall provide training to ensure that all Members from the rank of Inspector and above are trained to recognize the circumstances that may lead to a Critical Point, and to inform the Chief of Police when a potential Critical Point is identified; and
- II. The Board will ensure that all new Board Members receive training to understand the definition of a Critical Point and effectively understand their responsibilities with regards to the consideration of Critical Points.

f) Public Reporting:

- a) Subject to operational considerations, the *CSPA and its Regulations*, this Police Service's Policies, Procedures and the advice of the Chief of Police, the Board will publicly disclose where it is possible to do so without risking the effectiveness of the operation or any other operations, the safety of the Police Service Members or members of the public, or any other operational considerations raised by the Chief of Police:

- I. The nature of the operational matter related to a Critical Point; and
- II. Any directions given to the Chief of Police related to a Critical Point.

5. **CSPA, Policies and Procedures:**

- a) It is not the intent that anything in this Policy be in conflict with the *CSPA* or any other Statute's, reporting and publishing requirements; and
- b) It is not the intent that anything in this Policy be in conflict with the Policies and Procedures of this Police Service reporting and publishing requirements

John Thomson
Chair

April 23rd, 2025
Date

K. Wardell
Board Secretary

April 23rd, 2025
Date