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# CAPG PANEL ON POLITICS IN POLICING: THE ROLE OF POLICE ASSOCIATIONS IN POLITICS AND POLICE GOVERNANCE

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# AGENDA

- Roles of CPA & PAO
- Research Initiatives
- Public Opinion Polling
- Thought Leadership and Evidence-Based Decision Making
- Advocacy Efforts
- Role of Local Associations
- Bridging Local Issues with Federal and/or Provincial Strategies

# THE ROLES OF THE CANADIAN POLICE ASSOCIATION AND POLICE ASSOCIATION OF ONTARIO

- As the national centre for police labour relations, the role of the Canadian Police Association (CPA) includes promoting the interests of our 60,000 police personnel members and the public they serve, in the national legislative and policy fields; advocate for adequate and equitable resources for policing; react and respond, upon request, to local policing issues that may have national ramifications.
- The Police Association of Ontario (PAO) is the official voice and representative body for Ontario's front-line police personnel and provides representation, resource and support for 50 police associations with a membership comprised of over 18,000 police and civilian members of police services. Through lobbying efforts with government principals, the PAO is committed to advancing a number of critical pieces of legislation which impact our membership and the communities they serve.

# RESEARCH INITIATIVES

- The CPA and PAO both conduct regular research in order to be best positioned to support our members, policy goals and advocacy efforts.
  - The CPA has commissioned research projects over the years on a number of issues around the policing narrative in Canada including:
    - Core Policing and the Economics of Policing
    - The Professional Police Officer
    - Measuring Police Performance: Beyond Crime Statistics
    - Civilianization in Policing: Opportunities and Challenges
    - Community Safety Personnel in Policing
    - The Potential and Limits of Private Police
    - The Use of In-Vehicle Video (IVV) and Body-Mounted Video (BMV) in Police Work
    - Policing in Northern and Remote Communities

# RESEARCH INITIATIVES

- PAO Public Opinion polling occurs on annual basis to gain insights on provincial current events and trends on a number of issues including:
  - Privatizing police services
  - School Resource Officers
  - COAST-type programs
  - Ban from participating in Pride parade
  - Street checks
  - Suspension without pay

# EXAMPLE OF PAO PUBLIC OPINION POLLING: IMPRESSIONS BY DEMOGRAPHIC

<i>PAO Public Opinion Survey</i>			
	<i>Straight</i>	<i>Visible Minority</i>	<i>LGBTQ2SA</i>
Total	N=1524	N=314	N=102
<i>Which best describes your feelings when it comes to police presence.</i>			
I want to maintain the current level of police presence.	53%	N/A	46%
I want more police presence in my community	33%	N/A	37%
I want less police presence	3%	N/A	4%
<i>In your opinion, which best describes Ontario's police? They are:</i>			
Just like the police of the past, they haven't changed a bit	11%	14%	14%
Not like the police of the past – they are more progressive/open-minded	32%	25%	18%
Trying to change but still have some work to do	41%	43%	55%
Don't know/not sure	16%	18%	14%
<i>Source (Deshaies, 2017)</i>			

# PAO PUBLIC OPINION POLLING: OBSERVATIONS

- The PAO uses public opinion polling to support our member initiatives, respond to the media, influence government, and develop public awareness campaigns
  - There is not an insurmountable difference in public impressions of policing professionals between marginalized and non-marginalized communities (mental health, visible minorities, LGBTQ2SA, etc.)
  - Cost of policing is not as important a factor when it comes to public safety, in fact most want a higher visibility of police in communities
  - The public is not comfortable with private security companies performing the same functions as police and having access to personal data
  - As the public became more educated about how privatization could be operationalized within the profession, their opposition to the concept increased
  - The public is supportive of programs such as School Resource Officers and COAST-type programs
  - Polling on suspension without pay reveals broad public support for the concept, even after being presented with information critical of the program – the public will not be easily swayed from opinion on this topic

(Sources: Ben-Porat, 2008; Cao, 2011; Deshaies, 2017; Reid, 2018)

# THOUGHT LEADERSHIP AND EVIDENCE-BASED DECISION MAKING

- Police Associations have an opportunity to position themselves as thought leaders on behalf of the policing profession, as a means to assist members to effectively engage the public and governments (provincial and municipal) on matters of public policy, such as:
  - In 2011, the CPA hosted an “Economics of Policing” conference bringing in academics and practitioners from all across Canada, US, and UK
  - PAO municipal costing project used real municipal tax return data to counter the argument that police costs are unsustainable and adding pressure to local city/town budgets as described in AMO’s paper “*Building a New Public Safety Model in Ontario*”

# EXAMPLE: PAO MUNICIPAL COSTING PROJECT

## Overall % of Ontario Municipal Budgets by Category

	2013	2014	2015
Transportation Services	19.3%	19.9%	18.2%
Environmental Services	17.4%	17.4%	18.1%
Social and Family Services	18.1%	17.9%	18.3%
Police	14.1%	13.9%	14.2%
Administrative & Other	9.5%	9.3%	9.3%
Social Housing	6.4%	6.4%	6.4%
Recreation	6.3%	6.2%	6.4%
Fire	4.2%	4.3%	4.2%
Ambulance	3.0%	3.0%	3.1%
Planning and Development	1.8%	1.8%	1.7%
Total	100%	100%	100%

Source: Arifuzzaman, A. & Austen, T., 2016

Retrieved through <https://efis.fma.csc.gov.on.ca/fir>

Represents approximately 65% of Ontario's population. Toronto and Ontario Provincial Police are not included.

# ADVOCACY EFFORTS

- Important to note that jurisdictional challenges exist in our policing model in Canada:
  - Federal government sets out laws; then
  - Provinces have total jurisdiction over policing; but
  - Municipalities are responsible for 70% of the cost of policing yet have the least control over it and fewest options in terms of raising revenue
- As national and provincial police associations, representing a large membership base with varying local interests but common professional priorities, it is important for the CPA and PAO to remain unbiased in our advocacy efforts with government
- Strong relationships with all political parties are required to ensure we are best positioned to influence legislation and political decision-making on behalf of all our members
- Local member associations are able to speak out more in favour of a particular political party and its commitments, decisions and policies when they feel it benefits their members on the local level

# ROLE OF LOCAL ASSOCIATIONS

- Local member associations are the voice of their membership in their communities and to the police services board and management team
- Opportunity exists for there to be better relationships between local associations and police services boards to encourage more comprehensive, representative policy development
- This would help to eliminate the potential for a disconnect to occur between the employer and employees, and head off resulting grievances
- Can be challenging for local association executive members to wear multiple hats, they are seen by some as association leaders and by others as local officers
- Keeping association issues and general policing issues separate can also be difficult as these individuals are dedicated to providing effective policing that best serves their communities.

# BRIDGING LOCAL ISSUES WITH FEDERAL AND/OR PROVINCIAL STRATEGIES

- CPA and PAO both work to identify key national or provincial issues that may impact our local member associations, while also playing a strong role in responding to local policing issues that may have greater provincial or national impact. Examples of these issues include:
  - Street checks
  - Consistent training opportunities and techniques
  - Use of force
  - Resources for working with marginalized communities
  - Body worn cameras