



**LAW ENFORCEMENT REVIEW BOARD
2015-2018 STRATEGIC DIRECTION**

FEBRUARY 12, 2015

Mission and Purpose

The Law Enforcement Review Board is an independent civilian appeal tribunal established under Alberta's *Police Act*. The Board's principal activity is to hear appeals from members of the public or police officers who are not satisfied with the disposition of their complaint by the relevant police service. The Board's jurisdiction extends to municipal police services and to designated First Nations police services (but not the RCMP). The Board is also mandated under the *Peace Officer Act* to hear appeals from peace officers who have had their appointments cancelled.

Because public trust and confidence in the integrity and appropriate conduct of police officers are of critical importance for the proper functioning of police services, there is a significant public interest in ensuring the accountability of police officers through the discipline process. Both the public and the law enforcement community must have confidence in the integrity and fairness of the discipline system. To that end, the *Police Act* establishes discipline standards and processes that aim, among other things, to meet the public's demand for police officer accountability, for external review of police discipline decisions, and for openness and transparency. The Board plays a key role in overseeing the discipline system and in providing independent review of discipline decisions and processes.

The Board's mandate aligns with one of the priority initiatives of the Ministry of Justice and Solicitor General, which is to ensure that strong structures and accountability mechanisms are in place for Alberta's law enforcement and oversight system.

Vision

Appeals by complainants and by police officers from decisions made in the police discipline process are reviewed fairly and impartially, and Board decisions are rendered in a timely manner and are of high quality.

Significant Opportunities and Challenges

After struggling for some years to issue its decisions in a timely manner, in 2013 the Board succeeded in significantly improving timeliness. This effort must continue, as the public interest requires timely, and high quality, decisions.

The Board will in 2015 implement appeal guidelines aimed at ensuring fair, efficient and timely conduct of appeals. The Board also will continue to work to issue its decisions to the highest quality achievable and in as timely a manner as possible. The Board also will continue to enhance the variety and quality

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of information materials posted on its website. This will assist parties to appeals, the public and the media in understanding the Board's work.

Priorities and Performance Measures

Ongoing priorities for the Board are as follows:

1. Continue to strive to issue decisions within the 60-day timeframe imposed under the *Police Act* unless it is not practicable to do so in a given case despite using reasonable best efforts.
2. Procure and implement in a cost-effective manner an electronic case management system to support efficient and timely processing of appeals.
3. Through process efficiencies, reduce as far as practicable the time between the filing of an appeal and the hearing of the merits of the appeal.
4. Monitor experience with the Board's appeal guidelines to ensure that they are fair, practical and effective. This will include ongoing stakeholder consultations and amendments as necessary to achieve the goals just mentioned.
5. Complete a comprehensive suite of information resources for parties to appeals, the public and the media, ensuring that these are written in plain language.
6. Streamline the number of notices and other process documents issued by the Board to the parties to an appeal, while ensuring that these documents are written in plain language.
7. Continue to assess the performance of individual Board members against the Board's established performance standards and expectations. This will help the Board achieve its priorities, meet the Board's own performance expectations, and discharge its statutory functions efficiently and in accordance with the law. These assessments will be done in a manner that preserves adjudicative independence of Board members in substance and appearance.
8. Continue to engage stakeholders regularly, including through consultation sessions, outreach on an individual basis, and speaking at relevant conferences and other events.
9. Support the public interest through analysis of the existing *Police Act* discipline regime and proposing such amendments as are necessary to ensure that Alberta's police discipline system leads the way in view of public expectations and modern approaches to police discipline.

[THIS DOCUMENT UPDATES AND REPLACES THE BOARD'S STRATEGIC DIRECTION 2013-2016]