

Ottawa Gang Strategy A Roadmap for Action 2013–2016

2-Year Progress Report

September 29, 2015



Second Year In Review

The second year of the *Ottawa Gang Strategy: A Roadmap for Action 2013-2016* (OGS) implementation has shown exciting new partnerships and project growth. Our collective approach continues to encourage a systems and community view of the issues related to gangs and inclusive dialogue on prevention, intervention, enforcement, and community resilience.

The OGS Steering Committee has grown its membership to include:

- City of Ottawa
- Ottawa Aboriginal Coalition
- Ottawa Community Immigrant Services Organization
- Pinecrest-Queensway Community Health Centre
- The Boys and Girls Club of Ottawa
- Wabano Centre for Aboriginal Health

Five new initiatives have been added to the Action Plan. One of these is focused on gang exit and the other initiatives contribute to the collective impact of the OGS, including:

- **Gang Exit Intervention:** assisting identified gang members who wish to transition out of the gang lifestyle through intensive intervention (\$300k annually until 2018)
- **You-Decide: Employment and educational supports:** for at-risk youth (\$100k annually until 2018). This new initiative will build on the success of the current City of Ottawa Youth Futures program
- **United Neighbours, Levers of Change (UNLOC):** developing neighbourhood-level solutions and actions to four priority areas including mental health and addiction, home take-overs, drug dealing and violent crime
- **Youth Opportunities Program:** to bridge the gap that exists between youth in the community and the larger organizations to which they require access
- **Youth Diversion Program:** to improve the manner in which our community deals with youth who are in conflict with the law

This report is intended as an update to the Crime Prevention Ottawa (CPO) Board of Directors covering the period from June 2014 to June 2015. The OGS Steering Committee has demonstrated tangible progress through the initiatives outlined in this report and the leadership of its membership will continue to guide the strategy's focus in upcoming year.

ABOUT THE STRATEGY

The OGS is a multi-year, multi-stakeholder plan for action to achieve collective impact on the issues surrounding gangs in the City of Ottawa. Approved by the CPO Board in June 2013, the plan aims to:

- build resilient children, families and communities through positive relationships in gang-affected neighbourhoods;
- take inclusive and preventative approaches through social development, situational measures, education, awareness and community policing;
- identify intervention opportunities for children, youth and adults, including those at-risk, on the edge of joining a gang, or looking to leave gang life; and
- conduct targeted, sustained and effective enforcement.

GOVERNANCE – OGS STEERING COMMITTEE

Building on the engagement of local stakeholders through the Ottawa Youth Gang Prevention Initiative (OYGPI), the OGS SC was assembled following the 2012 Symposium: *“Taking Action Together: Addressing Gangs in Our City”* to review key findings, identify opportunities for action and together develop the OGS. The OGS gives organizations that have a role to play in addressing gangs in our City a place to share their efforts and collaborate with one another to achieve collective impact on the gang issue. The OGS SC includes representatives from:

- Crime Prevention Ottawa (CPO)
- Ottawa Police Service (OPS)
- Coalition of Community Health and Resource Centres (CHRCs)
- John Howard Society of Ottawa (JHS)
- LASI World Skills (LASI)
- Wabano Centre for Aboriginal Health
- YOUTURN Youth Support Services (youturn)
- Ottawa Community Housing (OCH)
- Ottawa Aboriginal Coalition
- Pinecrest-Queensway Community Health Centre
- School boards
- The Boys and Girls Club of Ottawa
- The Children's Aid Society of Ottawa (CASO)
- Youth Services Bureau (YSB)
- City of Ottawa
- Ottawa Community Immigrant Services Organization (OCISO)

The Steering Committee continues to meet regularly to discuss challenges and opportunities, solve problems collectively, leverage each other's knowledge and resources, and reach into each other's networks to assist when the need arises. The members and their respective organizations continue to play a pivotal role in implementing the strategy by identifying resources, opportunities and initiatives to build on the work accomplished to date.

All member organizations completed a self-assessment survey to gauge its progress to date. The following highlights key findings on mandate, collaboration, and impact.

- The majority of members agreed or strongly agreed that the initiatives:
 - have improved awareness and access to services, and have enhanced cross-agency collaboration and service coordination
 - have allowed individual organizations to progress on their respective mandates and priorities through the work of the OGS
- All members either agreed or strongly agreed that:
 - the initiatives have enhanced cross-agency collaboration and service coordination
 - the Ottawa Gang Strategy and the work of the Steering Committee have added value to community-wide and individual organizations' efforts to addressing gang related issues and challenges
 - the member organizations have accomplished more together through the work of the OGS than they would have likely accomplished through traditional work structures to address gangs in our city.

GANG ACTIVITY – AT A GLANCE

While this report focuses on providing a qualitative summary of the progress made by the OGS, data on gang activity provides important context to the initiatives and the Steering Committee's areas of focus.

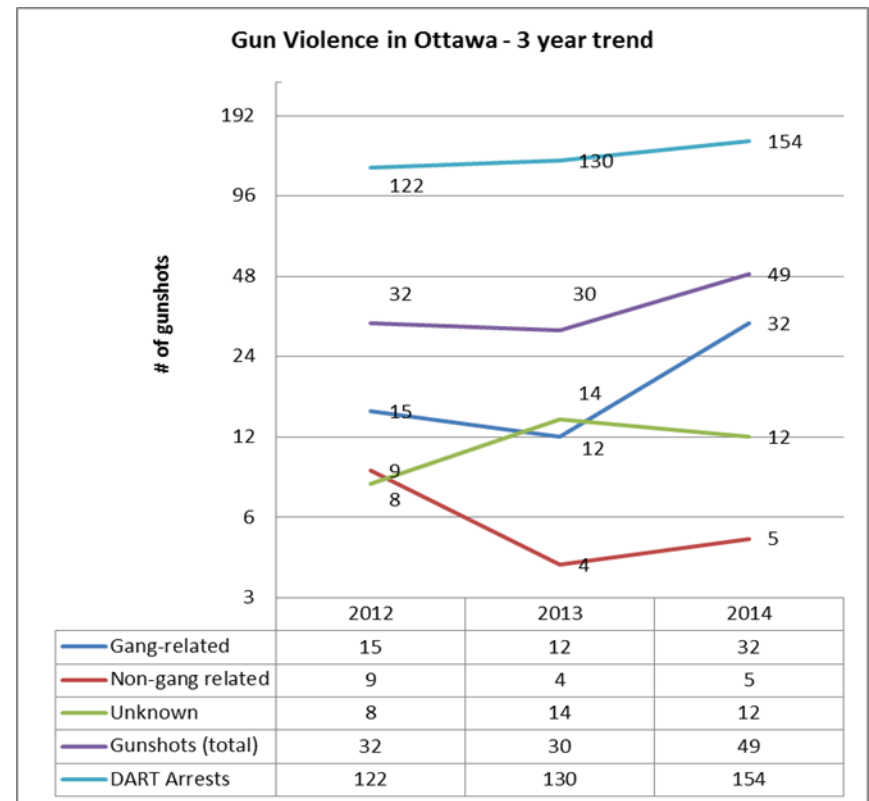
In 2014, the City of Ottawa experienced a record year for gang related gun violence, which is in line with reported statistics from other major cities in Canada. Based on OPS 2014 statistics, the number of street gangs continues to fluctuate between 15 and 19 with a now identified 515¹ gang members and associates by OPS, up from 485 identified in 2013.

The Guns and Gangs / DART Section took carriage of 49 gunshot investigations, up from 30 in 2013. An analysis of the shootings and the

suspects / victims involved provided information that identified thirty two (32) of the gunshots fired as being street gang related.

In response to the increased gang activity and gun violence in late 2014, OPS temporarily reassigned twenty-one (21) police officers from various Directorates to the Guns and Gangs / DART section. Through collaboration and ongoing communication, resources were strategically deployed to various efforts to address the street gang problem.

These efforts successfully suppressed criminal behaviors of gang members and associates identified by the Guns and Gangs / DART section allowing investigators to concentrate their efforts on those members and associates believed involved in, or responsible for the gun violence. The results of these efforts represent over 800 criminal charges laid against 600 individuals including gang members and associates as well as drug offenders. OPS also seized over that period over 50 crime guns, including 27 handguns and 29 long guns.



*Data provided by OPS

¹ Gangs are not static entities, making it difficult to track them with absolute certainty. This number reflects the best available information and should be considered as an indicator.

Project Updates

The Ottawa Gang Strategy was amended in 2014 to include four new projects for a total of 12 projects under four pillars: Neighbourhood Cohesion, Prevention, Intervention and Enforcement/Suppression. Each project is at a different stage of implementation and all have seen progress in 2014, despite continued fiscal constraint.

The strategy continued to build on modest funding from CPO and initiatives underway that continue to be funded through their respective lead organization. The strategy also saw an inject of \$300k from the City of Ottawa in support of the gang exit strategy which were at the early stages of planning in this reporting period. The figure below has been updated to reflect the new steering committee members as well as the addition of three new projects in 2014 and is preceded by updates for each of the 11 initiatives underway by pillar.



A. GOAL: Neighbourhood Cohesion

Build positive relationships in gang affected neighbourhoods to reduce fear; strengthen relationships; increase evidence of positive social interactions; and, increase community capacity to recognize and address unacceptable activities.

A1: Community Leadership Network for Families

Lead Organization(s): LASI World Skills (LASI: Local Agencies Serving Immigrants)

Community Partners/Contributors: LASI Coalition members, CPO, Criminal Justice Services and Agencies (9), Settlement Agencies (11), Community Agencies/Services/Groups (7), Immigrant Community Leaders (Faith leaders, community service workers, cultural association leaders)

Desired Outcomes:

- To increase the trust, understanding, relationships, and collaboration between immigrant communities and the Canadian justice system
- To increase the level of awareness of available resources between agencies and within immigrant communities
- To increase newcomer parents' understanding of the rights and responsibilities in the youth criminal justice system

Progress / Impact to Date

- With its second year of implementation, this initiative has been the catalyst of community engagement, engaging 475 individuals, including
 - 229 service providers: 77 from LASI Coalition, 65 community service agencies, and 87 justice service agencies
 - 246 community members: 61 community volunteers, and 185 community members including parents and caregivers
- It has also been a substantial builder of community capacity through the training of 111 facilitators representing 20 languages, who have to date delivered 15 community workshops to a total of 348 participants in Arabic, English, Farsi, Somali, and Tigrinya.
- Resource materials has been developed in support of the training and has been translated, titled: *Youth Criminal Justice: What Parents Should Know*
- Self-assessment surveys continue to consistently show positive feedback on participants' level of satisfaction and learning.

“It is informative, engaging and needed for all immigrants because it creates possibilities for adequate integration.”

Faith Leader and Community Service Worker who participated a the Ottawa Court House Tour and Information Session

“I have learned a lot today. I understand that I can transfer this knowledge to my community better.”

Settlement Worker and Community Service Worker who attended the train-the-trainer workshop

“It was very nice, clear to understand and we feel so comfortable to ask any question and get the answers from the settlement worker and the lawyer as well.”

Community Workshop Participant

A2: Develop a Post-Incident Neighbourhood Support Protocol

Lead Organizations: CHRCs (Rideau Rockcliffe Community Resource Centre), OCH, OPS

Community Partners, Contributors, and Stakeholders: Staff within OCH, CHRCs and OPS; OCH Residents, community members of various demographic and residing in higher risk communities

Desired Outcomes:

- To support and reassure neighbourhoods affected by traumatic events and increase their trust with service providers, especially the police
- To enhance and better coordinate post-incident response of community stakeholders to traumatic incidents (e.g. drive by shootings, murder, home takeovers and major arrests) that are potentially gang related
- To build community resilience

Progress / Impact to Date

- Engagement of key stakeholders
- Alignment and integration of existing protocols and standard operating procedures of response agencies to neighbourhood resources and assets

Next Steps

- Finalize the protocol and implement the training and pilot project in the Rideau Rockcliffe catchment area
- Roll-out the protocol to other neighbourhoods

B. GOAL: Prevention

Seek to positively engage young people with their families, their schools and their community by addressing risk factors before they are attracted to gang life.

B1: Enhance risk identification tools and building on existing methods and tools with flags for gang involvement with enhanced information sharing

Lead Organization(s): OPS

Community Partners, Contributors, and Stakeholders: YSB, JHS, youturn, CASO, School Boards, vulnerable youth and families needing support

Desired Outcomes:

- To identify the early indicators of a young person at risk of gang involvement
- To increase awareness of officers and service providers around gang indicators and youth strengths
- To increase in information available to assess youth needs and refer to resources
- To increase in families feeling supported due to identification

Key Activities and Impact to Date:

- Successfully amended the YLS-CMI with Professor Hogue to include two addendums that address gang specific risk
- Shifted the conversation between police and services providers with youth by focusing on positive attributes
- The tool is being piloted in project B2

Next Steps

- Review the results of B2 and consider further enhancements to the tool and potential next steps to expand its use

B2: Supporting Families – A Coordinated Response to Preventing Gang Involvement for Siblings at Risk

Lead Organization(s): JHS, youturn

Community Partners, Contributors and Stakeholders: CASO, OPS, Youth Justice Services, Probation Services, Crossroads Children’s Centre, CPO; Parents/legal guardians, Siblings at risk, Youth gang member, Organizations working with families

Desired Outcomes:

- Recognition of the need for providers to transcend service mandates to meet the needs of families
- Commitment to increase sharing of information between providers to benefit families
- Training for all staff in CANS, YLS-CMI, and CPS
- Siblings at risk not entering gang life

Key Activities and Impact to Date:

- Eight families referred to date by Guns & Gangs and additional families are being identified
 - families engaged since Fall 2014 continue to be involved with supports
 - of the referred families, parents, siblings, and gang members themselves have engaged with the supports being offered to them
 - connections to more long term community supports are being made (education, employment, recreation)
 - the creation of regular combined supervision meetings for youturn & JHS staff involved with families
- Incredible efforts and time devoted to reaching out to families by the CASO-OPS liaison with success
- Joint training delivered to JH, youturn and OPS youth officers
- Weekly updates on family outreach provided by OPS/CASO liaison
- Supervision/support meetings for youturn/JHS staff involved with pilot families taking place
- Continued collaboration between OPS, CASO, youturn, & JHS

Next Steps

- Build on the positive momentum created by the 8 families in the program by introducing new families and making important connections to long term services

B3: Host shared training events for service agencies and community-based organizations

Lead Organization(s): Various

Community Partners, Contributors and Stakeholders: Front line staff, teacher, outreach workers, counsellors, police officers, non-custody and in custody programs

Desired Outcomes:

- Improve shared/common knowledge base in the community
- Build stronger relationships/networks of workers
- Make best use of training resources and funding

Key Activities and Impact to Date:

- CPO hosted a one-day conference in February 2015 that brought together 225 participants representing service providers, including: community agencies, teachers, youth workers, and police officers who work with gang members, youth at risk of gang membership and communities affected by gang activity
 - 78 participants completed the conference satisfaction survey:
 - 88% of participants were satisfied or highly satisfied with the event
 - 87% stated that they are likely to apply the knowledge received at the event
 - 82% of participants were either somewhat or very familiar with the Ottawa Gang Strategy

Next Steps

Continue to identify opportunities to engage service providers.

B4: United Neighbours, Levers of Change (UNLOC) – new initiative

Lead Organization(s): Pincrest-Queensway Community Health Centre (PQCHC)

Community Partners, Contributors and Stakeholders: Key partners – Ottawa Community Housing, Ottawa Police Services, 6 west-end Community Houses, Crime Prevention Ottawa, Ottawa Salus; 7 west-end neighbourhoods in the PQCHC catchment area - Winthrop Court, Regina Towers, Britannia Woods, Michele Heights, Foster Farm, Morrison Gardens, Pincrest Terrace and broadly the PQCHC catchment area of approximately 80,000 residents.

Desired Outcomes:

- Strengthened partnerships between residents and service agencies
- increased reported feelings of safety by residents
- More effective organizational responses and practices to identify and respond to safety issues and increased reporting

Key Activities and Impact to Date:

- Engaging partner agencies and resident leaders through Service Provider and Community Engagement Committees to provide direction and oversight to the project.
- Conducting annual resident leadership training
- Reviewing relevant agency practices for effectiveness and implementing needed changes so as to best serve the community
- Identifying and supporting vulnerable individuals and households at risk of home takeovers
- Working with residents to host monthly coffee houses, regular neighbourhood walkabouts, events, activities and beautification initiatives promoting positive use of public space.

Next Steps

Build on the positive momentum and engagement of the community.

B5: YOW Program Ottawa – new initiative

Lead Organization(s): The Boys and Girls Club of Ottawa

Community Partners, Contributors and Stakeholders: MCYS, social service providers, regional partners, community stakeholders and youth

Desired Outcomes:

- to bridge the gap that exists between youth in the community and the larger organizations to which they require access

**The YOW program, funded by MCYS, is not a new program in Ottawa but has been integrated to the OGS collective impact initiative as it make the connection with youth at risk of becoming gang related. There is a mutual benefit in integrating the initiative to the OGS to further enhance collaboration between agencies and the coordination of services in service of common goals.*

C. GOAL: Intervention

Engage youth and adults who are involved or beginning to be involved in gang activity, or who are in correctional institutions or under court-ordered conditions to support those wishing to leave gang life.

C1: Provincial Gang Asset Mapping Initiative

Lead Organization(s): YSB (for local scope of the project)

Community Partners/Contributors: various through the Government of Ontario

Stakeholders: Many service organizations with the Ottawa Region

Desired Outcomes:

- to identify opportunities to collectively improve outreach to affected communities
- to promote existing services and resources
- to explore mechanisms to collectively report on outcomes of existing services

Key Activities and Impact to Date:

- Through the engagement of regional partners, community stakeholders and youth, the Ministry engaged in an extensive data collection exercise from mid-2013 to early 2014, which informed the development of regional and provincial reports that capture the regional and provincial assets. A total of 250 services that specifically work with children and youth have been inventoried and contact information for each will be available as a resource.
- The final project report has been completed and is pending translations prior to public release

Next Steps

- Once released, the findings will be shared with the OGS SC for further discussion and to assess potential next steps within the context of the OGS

C2: Gang Exit Service – *Time for Change?* Long Term Intensive Case Management – *new initiative*

Lead Organization(s): John Howard Society, OCISO, youturn, OPS, CPO

Community Partners/Contributors: volunteer mentors, ethnic, faith based and other grassroots community organizations

Desired Outcomes:

- Assisting gang members willing to exit overcome obstacles to exit through various means, such as:
 - assistance with safety through the exit process;
 - access to education, training and employment opportunities that result in sustained employment to replace money obtained from criminal activity and offer new hope for the future;
 - support for the development or re-establishment of healthy relationships with non-gang involved individuals, especially family members;
 - assistance in re-envisioning their personal identity and in establishing positive behaviours; and
 - assistance with personal issues: some gang members may have untreated mental health or addictions issues which must be addressed along with improved life-skills.

Key Activities to Date:

- Identified partner organization to deliver services (OCISO)
- Developing the program (ongoing)

Progress / Impact to Date

A service model has been approved by CPO Board in May 2015 and contracts have been signed with JHS and OCISO.

C3: The Ottawa Community Youth Diversion Program

Lead Organization(s): The Boys and Girls Club of Ottawa

Community Partners, Contributors and Stakeholders: OPS, Crown Attorney's Office, community agencies

Desired Outcomes:

- to improve the manner in which our community deals with youth who are in conflict with the law

Key Activities and Impact to Date:

- over 350 youth have been referred to the OCYDP through the police to complete an extrajudicial measure, or through the Crown Attorney's office to complete an extrajudicial sanction
- individualized risk/needs assessment is completed with each participant using standardized assessment tools
- based on the outcome of the assessment, a case management plan is implemented outlining the goals that the participant is expected to complete
- a summary report is forwarded to the referring agency (police or Crown Attorney's office) for review once goals are achieved.
- Successful completion of the OCYDP results in no further action being taken by the police or crown attorney's office.

**This initiative has been integrated to the collective impact efforts of the OGS as it shares common goal and creates mutual benefits between participating agencies*

D. GOAL: Enforcement and Suppression

Continue targeted, sustained and effective enforcement aimed at criminal gang activity with law enforcement and community partners, including the prosecution, sentencing, incarceration and court-ordered community supervision after release.

D1: Ottawa Police Service - Guns & Gangs Strategy and Direct Action Response Team (DART) Program

Lead Organization(s): OPS

Community Partners/Contributors: various community partners if and as appropriate

Stakeholders: City-wide and regional efforts

Desired Outcomes:

- mobilize communities and partner agencies in helping prevent gang formation and reduce gang activity
- deter violence and criminal behaviours associated with gangs
- targeted enforcement of gang members and their illicit criminal activities
- successful prosecution and criminal conviction of gang members

Key Activities:

- Continued focus of the DART Team with the assistance of provincial funding to target enforcement of street gang members and their illicit criminal activities through aggressive enforcement of Municipal / Provincial and Federal Laws, through the use of targeted strategies against street gangs, including:
 - offender oriented enforcement where officers maintain communication links with community leaders in identified high risk communities known to be subject to gang related activity; to be familiar and responsive to emerging issues while maintaining statistics in relation to community contacts, compliance checks, and seizures
 - event oriented enforcement where members of DART partake in proactive enforcement measures during events and concerts where street gang members are in attendance or acts of violence (gun) are

anticipated compliance checks targeting known street gang members who have been charged with previous criminal offences, to ensure their compliance to any conditions of judicial release. This also increases police visibility in higher risk areas

- Intelligence led enforcement by monitoring and targeting high risk offenders and youth that may gravitate towards street gangs and gun violence. This has been reinforced by specialized training and leveraging human sources
- integrated services and information sharing within OPS through co-location of DART with the Guns and Gangs Section and the engagement of other OPS units on ongoing operations

OPS Guns & Gangs / DART Statistics

| | Reporting Period (Jan to Dec) | | |
|---|-------------------------------|-------------|------------|
| | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 |
| Guns Seized (OPS-wide) | 64 | 34 | 53 |
| - Shotguns/rifles | - 44 | - 25 | - 24 |
| - Handguns | - 20 | - 9 | - 29 |
| - Pixels for Pistols Amnesty | n/a | 1035 | n/a |
| DART² Compliance Checks | 163 | 127 | 187 |
| DART Public Presentations | 9 | 5 | 5 |
| DART Arrests | 122 | 130 | 154 |
| DART Drug Seizures | 47 | 37 | 17 |
| Crime Prevention/ Intervention (OPS) | 106 | 219 | 301 |
| | | | |

- Build, foster and sustain partnerships, including:
 - continued collaborative working agreement with Canada Border Services Agencies (CBSA) to remove foreign nationals and permanent residents from Canada who pose a risk to the safety and security of Canadian society as per the Immigration and Refugee

² D.A.R.T=Direct Action Response Team funded in part through the Provincial Anti-Violence Intervention Strategy grant to focus on anti-street gang activities.

- Protection Act (IRPA) and related regulations and to interdict the illegal cross border movement of firearms, drugs and contraband
- continued collaboration between DART, Neighbourhood Officers (NHO), OPS Patrol Services, OCH, CBSA, and all affected stakeholders and community agencies on Home Takeovers
- continued collaboration with the Provincial Weapons Unit on firearm matters
- continued collaboration with local police agencies and non-police agencies in the city of Ottawa in the collection, dissemination, and analysis of information surrounding gang activity
- Prevention activities, such as:
 - continued collaboration with local police agencies and non-police agencies in the city of Ottawa in the collection, dissemination, and analysis of information surrounding gang activity continued compliance checks by DART members to suppress street gang activity through the strict enforcement of release conditions imposed on gang members and their associates in the form of an evening supervision program
 - provide a high visibility and on-going presence in those communities particularly affected by street gang violence and drug activity. The on-going presence serves as a deterrent. This assists in reducing the opportunity for individuals to commit crimes. This strategy allows DART officers to maintain contact with the community and encourages cooperation and trust between these officers and community members. Being visible and active within the community further provides an effective and timely response to street gang related crimes and disturbances as they occur
 - participation of OPS on a number of committees and ongoing communication with key local partners

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Special thanks to the OGS SC members for the continued support and engagement as well as for providing information and guidance to prepare this report.

Steering Committee Members

| | |
|-------------------------|--|
| Nancy Worsfold | Crime Prevention Ottawa |
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| Michael Justinich | Children's Aid Society of Ottawa |
| Nenad Nevajda | City of Ottawa- City Operations DCM Office |
| Yacouba Traoré | Coalition of Community Health and Resource Centres / Rideau Rockcliffe Community Resource Centre |
| Jean-Francois Thibodeau | Conseil des écoles publiques de l'Est de l'Ontario |
| Christine MacIntosh | John Howard Society |
| Laili Yazdani | LASI World Skills Inc. |
| Mengistab Tsegaye | LASI World Skills Inc. |
| Wendy Dehler | Ottawa Aboriginal Coalition |
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| Jessica Ripley | Ottawa Police Service |
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