Public Order Policy Submission

Actionable Recommendations for Toronto Police Services.

1. Enforcement of Laws During Protests and Demonstrations

Recommendation:

- Enhance Police Training: Ensure comprehensive training for officers on laws governing protest management, including the enforcement of laws related to mischief, trespassing, unlawful assembly, and other relevant offences.

- Focus Areas: Prioritize maintaining peace and order in major city intersections and predominantly Jewish neighbourhoods where such demonstrations are more likely to occur.

- Outcome: This training will equip officers to effectively manage protests and ensure that all applicable laws are enforced, thereby preventing unlawful activities.

2. Addressing Hate Speech in Public Demonstrations

Recommendation:

- Adopt a Zero-Tolerance Approach: Implement a zero-tolerance policy for any form of hate speech at public demonstrations.

- Update Training: Police training should be updated to include specific content on antisemitism and hate crime enforcement. This includes understanding the historical context, the impact of hate speech, and the tactics and symbols used in hate propaganda. Enhance training for officers to include the definitions of words and phrases which call for violence or harm to any religion, ethnicity, race, or sexual orientation and identity including antisemitism, Jew-hatred and anti-Israeli racism.

- Outcome: Officers will be better prepared to identify and respond quickly to hate speech, ensuring public demonstrations remain lawful and do not incite violence or hatred.

3. Blocking of Streets, Encampments, and Private Property Enforcement

Recommendation:

- Improve Protest Management: Develop and implement strategies to ensure protests do not obstruct traffic or prevent people from conducting their business.

- Establish Safe Access Zones: Implement safe access zones around places of worship, schools, and community service agencies to prevent these locations from being used as venues for protests.

- Support Resources: Acknowledge the resource costs associated with effective protest management and advocate for additional resources to support these activities.

- Outcome: Enhanced protest management will ensure that public order is maintained without infringing on individuals' rights to protest peacefully.

4. Addressing University Campus Encampments

Recommendation:

- Support Campus Security: Provide training and resources to assist campus security in managing encampments and protests on university property. Zero-tolerance policy for those who are blocking students from attending classes and participating in campus activities.

- Enforce Trespassing Laws: Ensure that university leaders enforce laws relating to trespassing on their property, with police support when necessary.

- Outcome: This will help maintain a safe and secure environment on campuses, protecting students from hate speech and other unlawful activities.

5. Masking and Identity Concealment at Protests

Recommendation:

- Zero-Tolerance for Hate Speech: Reinforce the zero-tolerance approach for hate speech, with additional penalties for those who conceal their identity while engaging in such activities.

- Update Training: Ensure police training includes identifying and addressing hate speech, even when masked individuals are involved.

- Outcome: By addressing identity concealment in tandem with hate speech enforcement, police can effectively deter criminal activities at protests.

6. Training and Education on Emerging Hate Groups

Recommendation:

- Expand Training on Hate Groups: Provide updated and comprehensive training for police on emerging hate groups, hate speech, and antisemitism.

- Content Focus: Training should include historical context, the identification of hate symbols, slogans, and foreign language material used in hate propaganda.

- Outcome: Officers will be better equipped to detect and respond to the presence of hate groups and hate speech in public demonstrations.

7. Reporting and Responding to Hate Crimes

Recommendation:

- Enhance Hate Crime Training: Advocate for TPS-wide enhanced training on hate crimes, focusing on the identification of hate symbols, speech, and propaganda.

- Zero-Tolerance Enforcement: Ensure a consistent, zero-tolerance approach to hate speech and symbols at protests and other public gatherings.

- Outcome: Improved training will enable police to effectively identify and prosecute hate crimes, thereby protecting vulnerable communities.

8. Responding to Hate Symbols in Public Spaces

Recommendation:

- Streamline Reporting and Response: Develop a unified approach between police and municipalities for the quick removal of hate symbols and graffiti.

- Support Resources: Advocate for additional resources to support hate crime enforcement and the timely removal of hateful content.

- Outcome: A coordinated response will ensure that hate symbols are promptly addressed, maintaining public spaces that are safe and welcoming for all community members.

Conclusion

These recommendations emphasize the need for comprehensive training, a zero-tolerance approach to hate speech, improved protest management, and enhanced collaboration between police and other stakeholders. By implementing these recommendations, the Toronto Police Service can ensure that they are effectively protecting the community, maintaining public order, and upholding the rights and safety of all residents.