

TORONTO POLICE SERVICE  
**RACE-BASED  
DATA  
COLLECTION  
STRATEGY**



# Use of Force: Measurement & Outcomes

RBDC Video 4 Transcript

## **Slide 1 – Title Page**

*[Text on Slide]*

Toronto Police Service  
Race-Based Data Collection Strategy

Analysis to Action Model: Roadmap to Equity

*Use of Force: Measurement & Outcomes*

---

The next section addresses reported uses of force, a key area of focus as mandated under the Anti-Racism Act.

This video will take us through data considerations, context of use of force in police interactions, and the key findings

## **Slide 2 – Data Considerations**

We took administrative data – information and records designed to support policing operations and accountabilities, and turned them into datasets that can be analyzed. This brings along significant challenges but also important opportunities to identify broad trends and patterns. We note some key considerations around the data:

- There are critical limitations with the provincial use of force report form which we attempted to address by bringing in data from other sources from our internal systems
- By connecting use of force information with general occurrence data in a privacy-protected way, we can ground our understanding in more context
- This includes where incidents occur across the city that are associated with a use of force, and where arrests took place that resulted in a strip search.

## **Slide 3 – Police Interaction Breakdown Graph**

Any use of force is a concern to members of the public and has impacts on officers. To put it into the larger context of all police interactions with the public, there were about 700,000 interactions in response to 911 calls, traffic and pedestrian stops and other policing activities, such as officer-initiated events, premise checks, crowd control at events, etc. This does not including parking enforcement calls or phone reports.

Of those, 86, 520 (or 12.5%) interactions resulted in an enforcement action. Enforcement actions are incidents that result in arrests, apprehensions, diversions, tickets or cautions for serious provincial offences, and includes those classified as suspects or subjects in occurrence records. **Enforcement Actions** were made up of 60.5% 911 or non emergency calls for service and 18% proactive policing events, including vehicle and subject stops, compliance checks, and premise checks.

Of the approximately 700,000 interactions, 0.2% made up reportable use of force incidents, That is, incidents that have involved an individual member of the public and excludes unintentional firearm discharges in a police facility, animal dispatches, and team reports.

There were 949 reported use of force incidents that involved a member of the public, and of those, 371 were incidents where officers pointed a firearm in attempts to bring a situation under control. In 2 incidents, firearms were discharged, resulting in 2 fatalities.

Although the number of reported uses of force was small in comparison to our overall interactions, we recognize that each one is unique and has impacts on individuals, their families and officers involved.

#### **Slide 4 – Association to Proactive Events and Calls for Service**

We often heard concerns about use of force and proactive policing or the kinds of 911 calls that officers respond to and may lead to a use of force.

It is important to understand the nature of the call for service when officers are dispatched to an incident, or initiates an interaction, that are associated with a reported use of force.

The majority of reported use of force incidents started out as a 911 call. The largest category by far, making up almost half of the reported use of force incidents are violent calls for service. Violent Calls for Service include: assault in progress, assault just occurred, assist P.C., homicide, person with a gun, person with a knife, robbery, sexual assault, child sexual assault, shooting, sound of gunshots, stabbing, unknown trouble, wounding, assault, and fight.

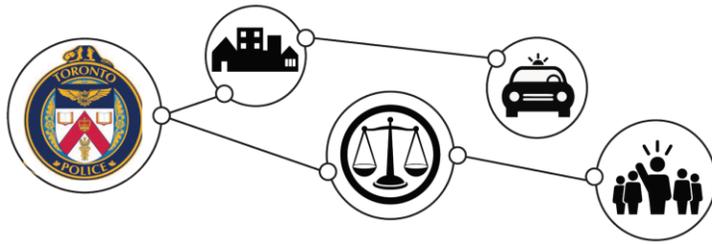
The second most category are calls for service in progress or just occurred events, such as break & enters, assaults, etc. (9%). Calls in progress, just occurred, or violent calls for service are often the highest priority calls for service that police respond to. Proactive events, such as vehicle and subject stops and premise checks made up 8%, or 68 reportable use of force incidents.

#### **Slide 5 – Relationship to Time of Day**

We looked at time trends to see if there were patterns over the course of the day in reported use of force and compared it to interactions due to police enforcement activities at different times of day.

We calculated when enforcement action and use of force incidents were below or above the daily average for each hour of the day.

This graph shows how there are differences in trends by time of day, with use of force incidents increasing throughout the day and peak around 9pm; whereas enforcement actions peaked at 11am, plateaued during the day, and declined throughout the night.



TORONTO POLICE SERVICE  
**RACE-BASED  
DATA  
COLLECTION  
STRATEGY**



### **Slide 6 – Relationship to Violent Calls for Service**

As we saw earlier, violent calls for service made up the largest category of incidents involving uses of force. In particular, we heard how violent calls for service that involved weapons was of highest concern for public and officer safety.

We looked at time trends for these types of incidents to see if they would be more in line with use of force trends than enforcement actions more generally.

We isolated enforcement actions related to violent calls for service involving weapons. These include Person with a gun, person with a knife, shooting, sound of shotgun, stabbing, wounding.

In 2020, there were 1,846 enforcement actions that started as a violent calls for service involving weapons.

We broke it up into five time periods and compared enforcement action incidents that were associated with UFR (172) and those that did not (1, 674).

### **Slide 7 – Association to General Occurrence Reports**

While calls for service help us to understand the description provided by dispatchers prior to the officer arriving on scene, once an officer gets there, the nature of the incident may turn out to be quite different. For example, an event may be described to the dispatcher as a suspicious event but once an officer gets there, it may turn out to be a mental health incident.

Hence, it is helpful to examine reported use of force incidents by the primary offence or nature of incident as described by the officer. We were able to link 93.6% use of force incidents with the associated occurrence information from our records management system.

For this analysis, we grouped Primary Offences into categories. The largest category of primary offence involved in a use of force incident were assaults and crimes against persons, followed by those involving weapons and homicide-related offences, mental health incidents and failure to appear/comply or parolee incidents.

Among these occurrence types, enforcement actions involving weapons/homicides and assaults were more likely to be associated with a reported use of force. For example, weapons and homicide-related offences made up only 2% of enforcement actions but 24% of reported use of force. Assaults made up 13% of all enforcement actions but 29% of reported use of force.

On the contrary, enforcement actions involving mental health issues were slightly less likely to involve a use of force; making up 17% of enforcement actions and about 15% of use of force incidents.

**NOTE:** The totals do not add up to 100%; an incident may involve more than one type of offence, for example, weapons *and* drug-related offences.

## **Slide 8 – Relationship to Overall Crime Rate**

What is the relationship between use of force and crime rates in different Divisions?

As we mentioned earlier, the Use of Force Form does not enable us to identify where the use of force incident took place, so we had to look at the location where the original occurrence (e.g., break & enter, assault, mental health incident, etc.) took place as noted in the occurrence—this may not be the same as the use of force location. To be able to compare to divisional information, such as local crime rate, we aggregated the location to the divisional level.

The Use of Force rate is the percentage of enforcement action incidents that are associated with a use of force incident. They range across the city from 0.8% to less than 1.5% of all enforcement actions.

Comparing use of force rate against overall crime rates helps to understand if it influences how officers respond to calls for service in different areas of the city.

We can see that there is a positive but weak relationship between use of force and crime rates by Division, probably due to the different patterns for the downtown Divisions. Incidents in D31 and D13 had higher use of force rates but average crime rates, while incidents in D51 and D52 had lower use of force rates but higher crime rates.

## **Slide 9 – Benchmarks**

Let's look at the racial breakdown of the City of Toronto and those who had enforcement interactions with police in 2020. We used the projected population counts to understand the make-up of the city in 2020.

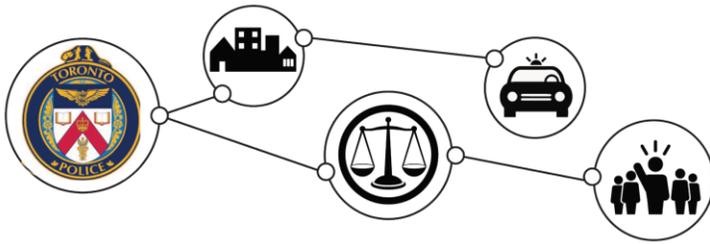
We looked at the population of Toronto compared to the number of people involved in enforcement actions. This helps us see if a group is over or under-represented in police contacts, prior to any potential use of force.

In comparison with the make up of those with police interactions, we can see that Black, Indigenous and Middle-Eastern people were over-represented in having police interactions relative to their proportion in the city. Other groups were under-represented in having similar police contacts.

While a person may experience more than one enforcement action per year, for comparison to resident population, we counted unique individuals, as population counts one person, one time.

**NOTE:** We use counts of unique individuals so that we don't double-count people who have multiple interactions with police during the year when comparing against the resident population.

- Toronto Resident Population (projected, Environics Analytics): Total 2, 886, 585
- Enforcement Actions (unique individuals, 2020): Total 62, 148



TORONTO POLICE SERVICE  
**RACE-BASED  
 DATA  
 COLLECTION  
 STRATEGY**



**Slide 10 – Finding 1**

We worked with the Community Advisory Panel and engagements with stakeholders and Service members to co-develop questions and hypotheses to explore with our data to understand use of force outcomes and racial disparities.

There were four key findings that resulted from this work together:

1. Using a multiple benchmarks approach, we found distinct patterns for different race groups, with Black, East/Southeast Asian, Middle-Eastern and Latino people over-presented in use of force incidents when they have contact with police.

**Slide 11 – There were differences in Use of Force by race**

Let's look at the demographics of those involved in a use of force incident. In 2020, there were 949 reported use of force incidents that involved 1, 224 individuals. A use of force incident may involve more than one person and more than one officer.

We recognize that each incident has an impact for the individual and officers involved. The two largest categories of people involved in use of force incidents were perceived as Black (39%) and White (36%). About 9% were perceived as East/Southeast Asian, 6% Middle-Eastern, 4% Latino and South Asian each, and 2% Indigenous.

The vast majority 760 (80%) of use of force incidents involved only one member of the public; 11% involved two and 9% involved three subjects.

Number of reporting officers per incident (not same as number of officers present): 1, 689

- 56.7% of incidents reported by one officer
- 26.7% of incidents included two officer reports
- 8.3% of incidents included three officer reports
- 8.1% of incidents included reports from 4 to 11 officers.

**Slide 12 – There were differences in Use of Force by race (2)**

We looked at the number of people involved in use of force incidents compared to the group's population in enforcement actions. This helps us see to what extent a group may be over or under-represented in uses of force. For a police use of force to occur, an individual has to have contact with an officer first, whether as a result of a call for service or an officer-initiated interaction.

We provide counts of individuals are involved in an enforcement action and reported use of force incidents. A person may be involved in more than one incident, so these are not unique individual counts. The use of force form does not allow us to identify if a specific person was involved in more than one use of force incident.

- Enforcement Actions: Total 98, 580 (individuals, could be involved in more than one incident)
- Use of force incident: Total 1, 224 (individuals, could be involved in more than one incident)

From here we can see that Black, East/Southeast Asian, Middle Eastern, and Latino people were over-represented in use of force incidents compared to their presence in enforcement action.

### **Slide 13 – Using a Multiple Benchmark Approach**

Use of force is part of a dynamic of interactions involving police and members of the public, starting with initial contact. There are many decision points along the pathway that may result in a use of force, and racial disparities could be introduced, magnified or reduced at different points along that pathway.

By taking a multiple benchmark approach, we can identify which major decision points contribute to differences in use of force outcomes. We found four distinct data patterns in the relationship between police contact and use of force:

- Indigenous people are over-represented in having contact with police (in an enforcement action), but under-represented in use of force once they do have contact. Efforts to address this should focus on prevention, diversion and referrals.
- Black and Middle-eastern people are over-represented in both police contact *and* use of force once they have contact, indicating that efforts to reduce disparities in use of force should focus on what brings police to the scene in the first place as well as use of force decisions.
- Another pattern we found characterized East/Southeast Asian and Latino people's interactions with police, in which they were under-represented in coming into police contact but once they do, there was over-representation in use of force. This pattern is routinely missed when using the resident population as a benchmark. Efforts to address disparities for these groups may focus on use of force decisions and the contexts around that.
- Finally, White and South Asian people were found to be under-represented in both police contact and police use of force.

### **Slide 14 – There were differences in Use of Force by race and *Time of Day***

Occurrences which happen at different times of day may impact differences found in use of force by race group. We looked at enforcement actions involving different groups at different times of day and compared their proportion against uses of force.

Overall, Black people were over-represented in use of force relative to their proportion in enforcement actions, regardless of time of day that the incident occurred.

Incidents involving Indigenous, South Asian and multiple race groups were more likely to involve a use of force at various points of the day.

We also looked at the intersection between race and gender. **The majority (82.5%) of incidents associated to use of force incidents involved men. With regard to youth, The**



TORONTO POLICE SERVICE  
**RACE-BASED  
DATA  
COLLECTION  
STRATEGY**



majority (96.4%) of use of force incidents **did not** involve youth. 32 use of force incidents involved youth under 17. **Overall, youth are less likely to have a use of force compared to their presence in enforcement actions. Please refer to the detailed report for further information.**

### **Slide 15 – Finding 2**

Our second key finding is officers may use different types of force in efforts to de-escalate or bring a situation under control, and we found that when force was used, Black people were over-represented in higher types of force used.

### **Slide 16 – There were differences in *highest type of force* used by race**

All uses of force may have serious impacts on people, and some types of force may have different kinds of impacts and implications. In each use of force incident, there may be more than one officer involved and each officer may use different kinds of force in attempts to de-escalate or control the situation.

We ranked the highest type of force used across all officers in each incident: from lowest (physical or other force), thru intermediate (less than lethal force such as use of a taser), to handgun drawn and firearm pointed as the highest type of force. There were only 4 incidents in which a firearm was discharged, hence we included it with firearm pointed. We recognize that use of firearms in particular has potential for both psychological harm as well as serious injury or death.

Among those who experienced a use of force in 2020, the bar graph shows that incidents with higher types of force had increasing proportions of Black, East/Southeast Asian, South Asian people and multiple race group.

Compared to **White people**, incidents with firearms pointed as the highest level of force were:

- **1.5x** more likely to involve Black people
- **1.6x** more likely to involve East/Southeast Asian people
- **2x** more likely to involve South Asian people

### **Slide 17 – Finding 3**

Officers may use different types of force in efforts to de-escalate or bring a situation under control, and we found that when force was used, Black people were over-represented in higher types of force used.

### **Slide 18 – Differences by race remained after taking into account *perceived weapons***

To address whether disparities could be understood by weapons in those incidents, we looked to see if officer's perception of individuals carrying weapons influenced their decision to use different types of force.

We compared incidents where weapons were perceived by officers and those where there were no weapons, and looked at highest types of force used. As expected, officers were more likely to draw handgun or point firearms where they believed weapons were present and pose a greater danger to public and officer safety. Where no weapons were perceived, lower types of force was more common.

### **Slide 19 – Differences by race remained after taking into account *perceived weapons (2)***

When we compared incidents involving Black or White people, we do see differences in highest types of force used. When force was used, Black people (indicated by yellow bar) were more likely to have firearms pointed, compared to White people (blue bar), regardless of whether weapons were perceived or not. Of particular concern is that the disparity was stronger in situations where NO weapons were perceived. The dashed bars on the chart or Handgun Drawn where no weapons were perceived denote a small number of incidents, and caution should be used in interpreting those numbers.

What we see here are that Black People were 1.5x more likely than White people to have firearms pointed as the highest level of force where weapons were perceived, and 2.3x more likely than White people to have firearms pointed as the highest level of force where no weapons were perceived.

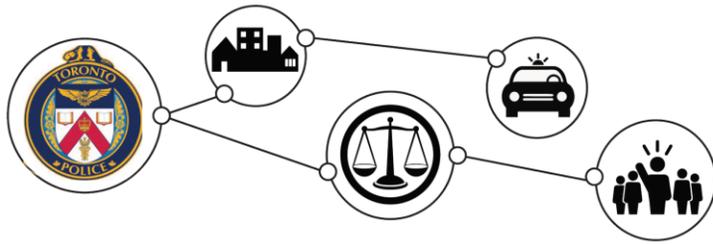
White people were 1.4x more likely than Black people to have less than lethal force as the highest level of force used where weapons were perceived, and 2.7x more likely than Black people to have physical or other force used as the highest level of force where no weapons were perceived.

### **Slide 20 – Differences by race remained after taking into account *types of Calls for Service that result in an enforcement action***

Decisions about use of force may be influenced by the nature of the occurrences which officers were responding to or had initiated contact about. We looked at enforcement actions by the type of calls for service or interaction – for example, violent calls for service, etc.

These interactions were also broken down by race to compare the proportion of groups involved in those types of calls for service against their proportion in use of force incidents associated with those interactions. We highlighted numbers in this chart to show where there was an over-representation in use of force by race within each call type. A **Call for Service Type** is an emergency or non-emergency call for police service that results in an **enforcement action**. The type indicates a brief description of the type of call based on initial information provided to the Communications Operator – for the purposes of this analysis we have grouped them into categories.

Violent calls for service that resulted in an enforcement action (12, 464) were more likely to be associated with a use of force when it involved Black and Indigenous people and multiple race group.



TORONTO POLICE SERVICE  
**RACE-BASED  
 DATA  
 COLLECTION  
 STRATEGY**



Similarly, we found that when responding to persons-in-crisis calls (10, 135), those involving Black, Indigenous and multiple race groups were also more likely to be associated with a use of force, relative to their presence in those types of calls.

Even though proactive events are generally less likely to be associated with a use of force (68), when they do occur, there were differences by race. Enforcement actions from police-initiated enforcement actions (8, 217) were more likely to be associated with a use of force when they involved multiple race groups, Black and, to a lesser degree, South Asian people.

**Slide 21 – Differences by race remained after taking into account *Primary Offence***

Call for service types may tell us what kind of incident officers may believe they were responding to, based on information provided to the dispatcher. However, when they arrive on the scene, the nature of the incident may turn out to be different than described. For example, a suspicious event may turn out to be a mental health incident.

To better understand the nature of incidents and officer decisions to use force and any racial disparities, we look at primary offence type, which indicates the most serious offence involved or type of incident, as recorded by officers.

The highlighted numbers in this chart show where there were racial over-representations in use of force incidents, relative to their involvement in those type of incidents or primary offences. For example, when dealing with incidents of assaults and crimes against persons, those involving Indigenous, Black, Latino and South Asian people were more likely to be associated with a use of force incident.

Incidents where there were notable differences by race varied – that is, where some race groups were over-represented in use of force by 2x or higher than their proportion in those incidents. Robberies involving Black people, drug-related offences involving South Asian people, and mischief or fraud involving Indigenous people.

In contrast, when it comes to dealing with weapons and homicide-related offences, there was none or very little racial disproportionalities in police use of force.

**Slide 22 – Differences by race remained after taking into account *frequency of enforcement action***

Those who have more frequent interactions with police may also have a higher chance that one of those interactions may involve a use of force. We looked at frequency of enforcement actions to see if there were differences by race and if that influenced disparities. Frequency of interactions means the number of times a person had an enforcement actions in 2020.

We found that Black people were over-represented in use of force, regardless of the number of times they had an enforcement action. On the other hand, Indigenous and South Asian people

and multiple race groups had between 2 to 5 police interactions were over-represented in use of force.

We considered whether the nature of repeat interactions mattered, in order to understand what we could do to address this. One of the highest safety concerns in the city are weapons and homicide-related offences. We also know that enforcement actions involving these offences are the most likely to be associated with a use of force (12x) but that there were no differences by race in that pattern. But are those with more frequent weapons offences more likely to experience a use of force?

We found that incidents involving multiple race groups were more likely to be associated with a use of force, regardless of the frequency of weapons offences. For Black people with only one enforcement interaction related to a weapons offence, they were less likely to have a use of force, compared to East/Southeast Asian and South Asian people with one weapons offence who were more likely to have a use of force.

Among those with multiple recent interactions related to weapons offence, Black and multiple race groups were over-represented in use of force, relative to their presence among repeat offenders.

In contrast, White people were less likely to be associated with a reported use of force, regardless of the frequency of weapons offences they were involved in.

#### **Slide 23 – Finding 4**

The fourth key finding is we also found differences across locations by Divisions in use of force rates, taking into account the demographics of the resident population.

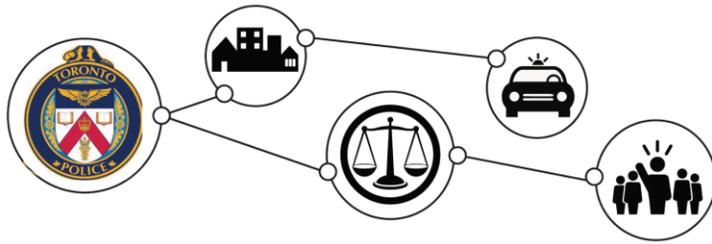
#### **Slide 24 – There were differences by race across locations**

To help us understand and drive concrete actions in collaboration with partners across the city, we looked at use of force rates by location. The location refers where the original occurrence (e.g., break & enter, assault, mental health incident, etc.) took place and which resulted in an enforcement action, not the use of force location. The UFR form does not enable us to identify where the use of force took place. We aggregated the location to the divisional level, as that is a police administrative boundary.

Due to the small numbers when breaking down the 949 use of force incidents across 17 Divisions, we focus the findings on incidents involving White and Black people. The maps show the use of force rates against enforcement actions with darker colours indicating higher rates. As you can see by the overall differences in tone between the two maps, there were lower rates of reported use of force for White people compared to Black people.

Enforcement actions that occurred in central Toronto and west Scarborough had higher use of force rates involving Black people, compared to the rest of the city.

Incidents occurring in the northwest area of Toronto were more likely to be associated with a use of force involving White people, relative to the rest of the city.



TORONTO POLICE SERVICE  
**RACE-BASED  
DATA  
COLLECTION  
STRATEGY**



**Slide 25 – These differences were *not explained* by the demographic make-up of the local resident population**

Through our engagements with the Community Advisory Panel and our members, we heard that we need to take local population demographics into account to understand local trends. We broke down the proportion of each race group in the resident population and use of force rate aggregated to divisional boundaries, and identified the degree of over or under-representation of each group in the local population (on the horizontal axis) and in use of force (vertical axis).

Each colour of dot in the chart here depicts a race group by location, that is aggregated to the TPS division. This allows us to look at the disproportionality between the presence of that race group in the resident population and compare it to the disproportionality in use of force rate (that is percent of enforcement actions that result in use of force incidents).

Values above 1 on each axis indicate an over-representation of that group within that Division.

The patterns we found do not show a clear relationship between use of force and local demographics that explained racial disparities. Looking at the shaded area, there were higher over-representations of Black, East/Southeast Asian, Indigenous, and South Asian people in use of force rates by division where those groups were *under*-represented in the local population.

**Importantly,** Caution should be used in interpreting these findings for Indigenous, Latino, Middle Eastern and South Asian groups due to small numbers in use of force in 2020.

Findings of racial disparity on their own do not tell us how or why they exist. This is an opportunity we must take to better work with local community partners to identify root causes of issues and Divisional needs and how we can do better.