

The City's Diversity and Aboriginal Policing Section helps build and maintain positive relations with Vancouver's diverse communities, to ensure that all are treated with respect and have equal access to police services.

Building a Police Force as Diverse as the City it Serves

IMPROVING PUBLIC SAFETY BY RESPECTING DIVERSITY

Vancouver is one of Canada's most diverse urban centres and home to a mosaic of people from many backgrounds. We value diversity as a source of our unique character and vitality – a shared value that drives and shapes the City's inclusive policies.

Within the Vancouver Police Department (VPD), the Diversity and Aboriginal Policing Section (DAPS) works to bring people together and build the trust that officers need to work effectively across different communities.

DAPS works to help groups that are the victims of prejudice-based crimes and those who often fear for their safety. Its programs build confidence in the police, encourage victims to report crime, and encourage sharing of information to forestall criminal activity.

RECRUITMENT—REFLECTING DIVERSITY

To build trust within communities and understand culturally significant issues, the VPD promotes the recruitment of officers from within the communities they police. The aim is to recruit and retain a diverse police force that reflects the cultural makeup of the city's neighbourhoods. Initiatives like the Aboriginal Cadet Mentorship program support First Nation's youth who are interested in becoming police officers. DAPS also takes part in community forums and reaches out through the local media.

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS BUILD TRUST

DAPS meets regularly with community representatives to better understand developing issues and cooperate in finding solutions. DAPS members also help train other police sections and front-line members in cultural competencies and reducing barriers to mutual understanding and trust.



ABORIGINAL DAPS PROGRAMS

DAPS works with the Vancouver Aboriginal Community Policing Centre to develop direct relationships with both organizations and individuals. It collaborated with the Vancouver Aboriginal Friendship Centre on an Aboriginal Awareness pilot program, which brought VPD members together with people from the urban aboriginal community. That community has suffered with high frequencies of physical and sexual abuse, and alcohol and drug abuse, and is over-represented in both crime statistics and victimization. The program hopes build the community's trust in the police.

Sex Trade Workers DAPS Programs

DAPS participates in the Sex Industry Workers Safety Action Group to address the violence perpetrated against sex industry workers, and improve the workers' historically poor relationship with law enforcement.

LGBT Community DAPS Programs

In 2008, the Diversity and Aboriginal Policing Section teamed with Omunity, BC's Queer Resource Centre, on the Aaron Webster Anti-Violence Project. Together, they presented five public forums that addressed gay bashing, domestic violence, and under-reporting of violence against and within the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) communities.



Left to right: Mayor Gregor Robertson, Chief Constable Jim Chu and City Councillor Ellen Woodsworth

DIVERSITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

In 1996, the Vancouver Police Department created a Diversity Advisory Committee, overseen by the Diversity and Aboriginal Policing Section. This dynamic group of culturally diverse citizens provides another link between the police department and Vancouver's tapestry of communities. It assists in the development of VPD training courses, helps communications between police, media and communities, and has initiated changes to the Criminal Code of Canada in relation to issues of sexual orientation and hate crimes.

