

Street Checks

**A brief review of the White Rock RCMP's street checks
from January 1, 2018 to June 20, 2020**

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White Rock RCMP
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**STREET CHECKS:
A BRIEF REVIEW OF THE WHITE ROCK RCMP'S STREET CHECKS
FROM JANUARY 1, 2018 TO JUNE 20, 2020**

Objective:

This is a proactive review of street checks conducted by the White Rock RCMP to examine for indicators of racial bias - unconscious, perceived or real. This is prepared for Mayor & Council and the citizens of White Rock to provide context into the operations of their RCMP detachment in a transparent and accountable manner.

Data source:

'Street check' files are generated when an officer initiates an interaction with a person for a justifiable check. This is typically a pedestrian, cyclist, or a person(s) in a parked car. This does not include traffic enforcement related stops, checks conducted due to reports from the public, or general community/police interactions.

During the documentation of the street check the officer will write a narrative detailing the reason for the check and any relevant details in the Police Records Information Management Environment (PRIME), an electronic databased used by police throughout BC. There is a mandatory prompt on PRIME for the officer to enter the ethnicity of the person being street checked.

Definitions:

Street check: A police interaction where no detention occurs and the interaction serves a policing purpose, such as inquiring into suspicious behaviour/circumstances, checking known offenders, checking high risk people (possible missing persons, hitchhikers, etc). Street checks cannot be random or arbitrary.

Carding: Police stopping a person for the purpose of gathering their identification and other details to add to a police computer databased, with or without a justifiable reason, and otherwise random or arbitrary. **This practice is not allowed in British Columbia.**

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| <p>The definitions of 'carding' and 'street checks' are not consistent in Canada and the USA, and have been used interchangeably leading to a misunderstanding of its purpose and process.</p> |
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Results:

Between January 1, 2018 and June 20, 2020 there were 469 street checks in White Rock, an average of 15 checks per month. However, in the first half of 2020 there was an average of 5 street checks per month. This decrease is likely due to changes in the provincial policing standard on street checks that concisely defined them, leading to some checks becoming general occurrence files (i.e. traffic stops where the officer also discovered criminal intelligence, checks where an individual was issued a provincial violation ticket, etc).

A random sample of street checks in the first part of 2020 provided the following reasons for the street check:

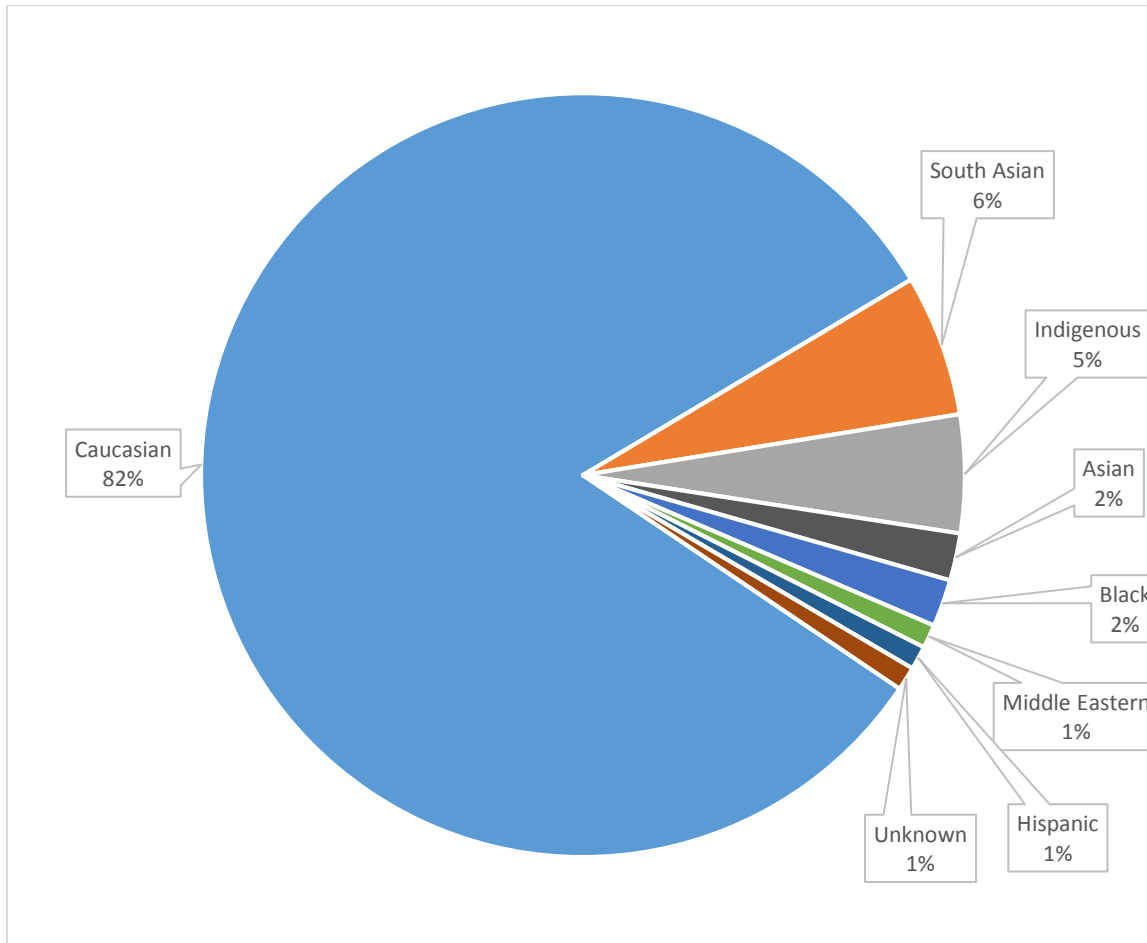
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| Person looking into a business window at 3am |
| Person riding bike with no helmet at 2am |
| Known property offender in parking lot at 2am |
| Person talking to themselves in parking lot at 4pm |
| Person parked in front of business at 4:20am who changed their behaviour when police drove past |
| Teen sitting by themselves at 4am |
| Two people making noise in a business parking lot at 12am |
| Person wandering with backpack in business alleyway at 3am |
| Check on two people sleeping in business alcove at 10:30pm, advised of cold weather shelter. |
| Known property offender riding bike without helmet with full backpack at 7am |
| Known property offender behind business at 11pm |
| Check on person behind business at 10pm, directed to cold weather shelter |
| Check on person stumbling while walking uptown, police waited with person until ride came |

The 2016 demographics for White Rock indicate that 16.4% of the residents are visible minorities. 18% of street checks from 2018 to present by the White Rock RCMP were with visible minorities. As the White Rock demographic data is four years old and the trend from 2001 to 2016 shows an increase in the percentage of visible minorities (6.5% to 16.4% over 15 years), the 18% of police street checks attributed to visible minorities appears to be consistent with the community demographics. However, approximately 70% of the street checks were conducted with people that, at the time of this review, had an address outside of White Rock. Of this 70%, 69% were residents of Surrey, which has a much greater visible minority population (approximately 58%).

Viewing the street checks in context: out of the 469 street checks over a 30 month period, 27 individuals were South Asian, 26 were Indigenous, 11 were Asian, 9 were Black, 13 were other ethnicity or unknown, and 383 were Caucasian.

Street checks do not account for incidents where a police interaction results in a criminal or other offence. For example, if it is determined that the person was breaching conditions, listed as a missing person, issued a trespass ticket, or had a warrant, the interaction likely did not result in a street check file and will instead be documented on an occurrence report in PRIME.

Ethnicity of individuals street checked in White Rock from Jan 2018 to June 2020:



Conclusion:

This brief examination of street checks in White Rock provides an indicator that the checks are being conducted bias-free, and for purposes consistent with community expectations. Although it was not determined why more visitors vs residents were subject to street checks, speculation includes that many of the property offenders that were checked in White Rock reside outside the community (primarily Surrey). The fact that 69% of non-White Rock residents that have been street checked are from Surrey support this.

Continued accountability:

The following steps have been implemented to monitor street checks to ensure that they are in line with RCMP policy, provincial policing standards, and are monitored for unconscious or real racial bias:

- The White Rock detachment commander will conduct a monthly review of all street checks.

- The reason for the street check and ethnicity of the individual(s) being checked will be monitored monthly and any abnormal trends will be examined further. It is recognized that due to the small number of street checks, a property offender that is also a visible minority may create an anomaly in the data if street checked frequently due to the circumstances of their actions in White Rock. In any event, anomalies will be justified and accounted for.
- The digital retention of street checks will be monitored to ensure that they are purged in compliance with the two-year retention period, unless associated to a related criminal file. In this case the retention period will mirror that of the criminal file.
- Public reporting of street checks in White Rock will be conducted annually (each calendar year).

-End of report-