

# PLATFORM FOR CHANGE:

Ending Violence Association of Canada  
Recommendations for the RCMP  
Sexual Assault Investigations  
Review Committee Program



Ending  
Violence  
ASSOCIATION OF CANADA

MAY 2024

**Report Author:** Sunny Marriner

**Suggested citation:**

Marriner, Sunny. (2024) *Platform for Change: Ending Violence Association of Canada Recommendations for the RCMP Sexual Assault Investigations Review Committee Program*. Ottawa, ON: Ending Violence Association of Canada

The Ending Violence Association of Canada (EVA Canada) is a national non-profit based that works to amplify the collective voice of those who believe it is possible to end sexual and gender-based violence. Through research, policy-change and advocacy, EVA Canada works collaboratively with gender-based violence organizations from coast to coast to coast, and serves as an umbrella organization for provincial/territorial sexual violence networks, as well as other community-based organizations committed to ending sexual violence.

Ending Violence Association of Canada acknowledges that the work it does in Ottawa takes place on the traditional, unceded territories of the Algonquin Anishnaabeg people.

This report is a joint initiative between the Ending Violence Association of Canada and the Improving Institutional Accountability Project.

**Ending Violence Association of Canada**

**Address:** 1903 – 130 Albert St., Ottawa, Ontario

**Phone:** 613-290-2070

**Email:** [info@endingviolencecanada.org](mailto:info@endingviolencecanada.org)

**Website:** [endingviolencecanada.org](http://endingviolencecanada.org)

**Social Media:** [@endingviolence\\_canada](https://www.instagram.com/endingviolence_canada)



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May 2024

# Summary

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**This document outlines the Ending Violence Association of Canada’s (EVA Canada) Platform for Change, aimed at improving the transparency, accountability, and impact of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) Sexual Assault Investigations Review Committee (SAIRC) program.**

Through their signature 2017 document [The Way Forward: The RCMP’s sexual assault review and victim support plan](#)<sup>1</sup> the RCMP identified thirteen action items including the creation of sexual violence advocate review committees (SAIRCs) as “an extension of the RCMP’s sexual assault investigation process.” In a 2022 update document entitled [The Way Forward II: An update on the implementation of the RCMP’s sexual assault review and victim support action plan](#),<sup>2</sup> the RCMP listed the creation of the SAIRCs as complete, saying, “As of December

2021, SAIRCs are active in ten RCMP divisions. One remaining division encountered delays due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Planning is underway to establish the remaining SAIRC in 2022.”

Over five years starting in 2019 EVA Canada has been initiating engagements with sexual violence advocate experts to gather feedback and evaluation of the effectiveness of the SAIRC initiative through their experience as reviewers. From this on-going national consultation, and our partnerships with sexual violence advocate leaders, **seven key recommendations** to strengthen the transparency, accountability, and effective functioning of the SAIRCs have emerged.

EVA Canada takes the position that each of these much-needed improvements must be implemented if the RCMP are to fulfill the commitments of their sexual assault review and victim support action plan, and the four pillars of their modernization efforts.<sup>3</sup>

## About the Ending Violence Association of Canada (EVA Canada)

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The Ending Violence Association of Canada (EVA Canada)<sup>4</sup> is a national organization of provincial and territorial members across the country that works to amplify the collective voice of those who believe it is possible to end gender-based violence.

EVA Canada leads national research, policy, and advocacy initiatives with a focus on sexualized violence. We work collaboratively with gender-based violence organizations from coast to coast to coast to identify and implement the systemic and institutional changes necessary to address the root causes of gender-based violence. EVA Canada regularly submits input to the federal government, Ministers, and institutions, and provides a critical network through which the collective voice of GBV advocates across the country can speak and be heard.

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<sup>1</sup> Royal Canadian Mounted Police Government of Canada, “The way forward: The RCMP’s sexual assault review and victim support action plan | Royal Canadian Mounted Police”, (13 December 2017), online: <<https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/the-way-forward-the-rcmps-sexual-assault-review-and-victim-support-action-plan>> Last Modified: 2017-12-14.

<sup>2</sup> Royal Canadian Mounted Police Government of Canada, “The way forward II – An update on the implementation of the RCMP’s sexual assault review and victim support action plan | Royal Canadian Mounted Police”, (18 February 2022), online: <<https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/the-way-forward-ii-an-update-the-implementation-the-rcmps-sexual-assault-review-and-victim-support>> Last Modified: 2022-05-04.

<sup>3</sup> Royal Canadian Mounted Police, “Vision150 and beyond: RCMP Strategic Plan: 3. The RCMP of 2023 and Beyond”, online: <https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/vision150/strategic-plan-strategique/beyond-plus-eng.htm>

<sup>4</sup> EVA Canada, “Ending Violence Association of Canada”, online: [Ending Violence Association of Canada <https://endingviolencecanada.org/>](https://endingviolencecanada.org/).

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# Background

Over the past decade Canada saw an upheaval in social awareness of sexual violence. The advent of social media allowed survivors to tell their stories to the world without filters, and further linked survivors together through hashtags like #MeToo, #BeenRapedNeverReported and #TimesUp. Explosive reports of sexual assault involving high profile figures like Jian Ghomeshi, Harvey Weinstein, and Bill Cosby broke into public consciousness leading to an increase in media interest and reporting on what really happens when sexual assault is reported to the criminal justice system.

In the height of public discussion, the Globe and Mail released an investigative series on police-reported sexual assault in Canada. Early in the series, the Globe and Mail reported on the work of Canadian violence against women (VAW) advocates to bring attention to hurdles facing victims of sexual assault who choose to go to the police<sup>5</sup>, exposing attrition rates as high as 4 out of 5 reports. Efforts by sexual assault centres spanning over 50 years had thus far failed to substantively impact these alarming statistics, leading some VAW advocates to develop a unique, first-of-its-kind model<sup>6</sup> of oversight of municipal police sexual assault investigations, dubbed Violence Against Women Advocate Case Reviews (VACR). The reviews, Globe and Mail readers were told, follow a distinct methodology designed to achieve measurable goals, the first of which being ensuring **all** reports of sexual violence that fail to proceed to charges are reviewed by an independent community-based sexual assault expert as the last link in the investigative chain.

As a result of mounting public pressure, municipal police services around the country began announcing their intention to seek assistance from the advocate founders of VACR to implement review teams in their own communities. While this represented the beginning of a sea change in Canadian municipal police oversight, the intricacies of case review's goal/outcome design weren't well understood, leaving provincial, federal, and military police to demonstrate

that they were also implementing "case reviews" using a range of dissimilar and sometimes arbitrary definitions. Accordingly, a patchwork of models began to spring up in these other arms of policing, with the majority drawing on sample case conferencing practices rather than detailed oversight of each report.

It was in this context that the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) released "The Way Forward: The RCMP's Sexual Assault Review and Victim Support Plan"<sup>7</sup> in which the service committed to the creation of what is today known as the Sexual Assault Review Team (SART). The plan further committed to developing "a process to ensure appropriate supervisory oversight of sexual assault files", which included the creation of Sexual Assault Investigations Review Committees (SAIRCs). These roundtables are convened and led by RCMP divisional coordinators and draw on case conference models to discuss sample cases and provide feedback to the SART.

Early in the process of SAIRC creation the RCMP consulted with the VAW advocate developers of VACR to learn more about their case review methodology. This led the service to adopt selected VACR core elements, in particular sourcing some SAIRC participants from non-institutional frontline sexual violence advocate organizations, the vast majority of whom are part of the membership of EVA Canada. Despite their shared sexual violence expertise and SAIRC terms of reference, under the RCMP plan advocate reviewers have no forums in which to meet with one another, discuss the work and the successes or challenges thereof, or make collective recommendations to improve the process or its outcomes.

Recognizing this gap EVA Canada independently undertook to hold national meetings for SAIRC reviewers to create both an ad hoc community of practice, and a mechanism to track the progress and effectiveness of the SAIRC model in the estimation of the reviewers themselves.

<sup>5</sup> Robyn Doolittle, "How do you fix a broken system? One U.S. city offers a model for handling sex-assault cases", The Globe and Mail (10 February 2017), online: <<https://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/investigations/unfounded-one-us-city-offers-a-model-for-handling-sex-assault-cases/article33982423/>>; Robyn Doolittle, "Unfounded: These Canadians are working on the front lines of a changing system", The Globe and Mail (12 December 2017), online: <<https://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/investigations/unfounded-these-canadians-are-working-on-the-front-lines-of-a-changing-system/article37305356/>>.

<sup>6</sup> While Canadian advocates drew on the success of US VAW organizations who led the way on access to police investigations through what is known as the Philadelphia Model, VACR designed new processes to emphasize the oversight impact by ensuring full **review of all sexual assault investigations that did not proceed to charges** (as opposed to random samples), through methodologies, tools, and privacy safeguards unique to Canada.

<sup>7</sup> Royal Canadian Mounted Police Government of Canada, supra note 1.

# EVA Canada's Advocate Engagement Process

EVA Canada used four methods to gather information to build a robust national scan of RCMP actions to improve responses to sexual assault reports, and the SAIRC program in particular.

## STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

In 2019 EVA Canada began a strategic partnership with the Improving Institutional Accountability Project (IIAP)<sup>8</sup>, the national leader on sexual violence policing and case review models. The organizations combined resources to form a pan-Canadian analysis of advocate case review models and practices, including the SAIRC tables. Through this collaboration EVA Canada and IIAP have been able to generate both regional and aggregate data about existing and proposed municipal, provincial, federal, and military sexual violence case reviews.

## NATIONAL ADVOCATE EVALUATION AND FEEDBACK

From 2019 to 2023, EVA Canada held seven national meetings with advocates to gather input on their evaluation of the effectiveness and impact of the SAIRC tables, and the SAIRC program overall. Advocates have further been invited to provide written feedback and recommendations, most recently in an April 2023 national survey distributed to all SAIRC reviewers in the EVA Canada membership.



## DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

EVA Canada reviewed and analyzed the many documents and reviews that have addressed the RCMP's internal<sup>9</sup> and external relationship to gender-based violence, with a particular focus on the RCMP's commitments set out in the RCMP-authored reports *The Way Forward* and *The Way Forward II*.

## RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTIONS ANALYSIS

In addition to the recommendations and actions set out in RCMP-authored and/or RCMP-specific reports and reviews, EVA Canada reviewed policing adherence and actions on recommendations as made in a broader set of inquiries and action plans such as *Reclaiming Power and Place: The Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (2019)*<sup>10</sup>, *Turning the Tide Together: The Final Report of the Mass Casualty Commission (2023)*<sup>11</sup>, and the *National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence (2022)*.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Improving Institutional Accountability Project, "VAW Advocate Case Reviews (VACR)", online: VAW Advocate Case Reviews <<https://vacr.ca/>>.

<sup>9</sup> Organizations with members who perpetrate violence against women cannot be relied upon by the community to investigate reports of violence against women, nor can they safely engage with victims. See *Broken Dreams, Broken Lives: Final Report on the Implementation of the Merlo Davidson settlement agreement*, The Honourable Michel Bastarache, 2020.

<sup>10</sup> National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, "Reclaiming Power and Place: The Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls", (29 May 2019), online: <<https://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca/final-report/>>.

<sup>11</sup> The Independent Commission into the April 2020 Nova Scotia Mass Casualty, "Turning the Tide Together: The Final Report of the Mass Casualty Commission", online: <<https://masscasualtycommission.ca/>>.

<sup>12</sup> Women and Gender Equality Canada, "National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence", (9 November 2022), online: <<https://women-gender-equality.canada.ca/en/gender-based-violence/intergovernmental-collaboration/national-action-plan-end-gender-based-violence.html>> Last Modified: 2023-07-24.

# Findings and Recommendations



## AREAS FOR CHANGE

The engagement findings highlighted needed changes in three thematic categories:

- 1 Transparency, Accountability, and Impact.**  
This theme emerged from concerns about lack of clarity in purpose, measurability, outcomes, and availability of public facing information and results.
- 2 Workload and Sustainability.**  
This theme emerged from concerns about heavy expectations on advocates, capacity and resource challenges, and longer-term sustainability for the program.
- 3 Coordination.**  
This theme emerged from concerns about how the SAIRC program is organized, coordinated, and carried out on the ground.

The recommendations were each developed to address one or more of the concerns identified in the themes. The thematic areas targeted in each recommendation are identified by the numbers 1, 2, and/or 3 under the recommendation title. In addition, the specific areas of concern addressed through the recommendation are listed following each recommendation.

# RECOMMENDATION #1:

## Clearly Articulate the Purpose and Goals of the SAIRC Program

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### Rationale:

Measuring the effectiveness of initiatives requires evaluating whether they are achieving the stated purposes and goals for which they were designed. When we define our target outcomes, we are better positioned to build and employ methodologies that will achieve them. A further question is “what does success look like? Are the goals ever met, and if so, how is this being measured and by whom?” Activities that have little or no impact on the problems they were developed to address may need to be re-tooled, adopt new methods, or even be scrapped altogether in favour of a new approach.

To the best of our knowledge, the RCMP has not articulated its purpose for its implementation of the SAIRC program beyond listing it as an action contributing to “investigative accountability”.<sup>13</sup> What’s unclear is how the teams do this, and how their impact and effectiveness can be measured, particularly by those contributing their time and expertise. Articulating a clear purpose that answers the question, “what is the RCMP hoping to get from this exercise?” is required for evidence-based evaluations of the program’s effectiveness, and whether the methodologies being employed can accomplish the goals.



### Actions for the RCMP:

- › Articulate a clear purpose for the reviews that is measurable through regular evaluation to see if target outcomes are being met.
- › Clarify whether the goal of the SAIRCs is investigative oversight or identifying trends.
- › Provide a transparent plan with short-term, mid-term, and long-term benchmarks.



### Concern Areas Addressed:

- › Lack of measurability
- › Lack of a link between goals and methods
- › Unclear impact

<sup>13</sup> Supra note 1

# RECOMMENDATION #2:

## Demonstrate Commitment to the SAIRC Program

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### Rationale:

Attending SAIRC tables requires advocates to donate hundreds of hours annually to the RCMP. This comes at a cost, as no core funding increase or compensation has been provided to advocates to offset this work, and thus the cost of operating SAIRCs is coming from scarce dollars earmarked for survivor support as opposed to the far more

robust funds budgeted annually to public safety. Respecting the advocates and their contribution includes developing on-going communication and coordination at the SART level, demonstrating efficiency and preparedness, and providing reviewers with the necessary tools for the task.



### Actions for the RCMP:

- › Designate a SART lead on SAIRCs responsible for maintaining consistent national communication to reviewers, being known and accessible to reviewing organizations, accountable for program delivery, and being a consistent liaison over time.
- › Ensure basic logistical readiness, including:
  - Computers available for all reviewers
  - Review spaces booked and available
  - Attention to basic needs of reviewers (food, coffee, parking, building access, etc.)
  - Annual set schedules with communications from Divisional Coordinators



### Concern Areas Addressed:

- › Lack of organization
- › Burden falling on advocates to sustain the process
- › Lack of consistency
- › Lack of national coordination and communication



# RECOMMENDATION #3:

## Deliver the SAIRC Program Consistently Across Jurisdictions

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### Rationale:

Different implementation across jurisdictions has led to confusion about the framework and delivery of the SAIRC model. Advocates report disparities in who drafts their recommendations (divisional coordinators or teams themselves), participation in file selection, numbers and timing of reviews per

year and, most significantly, types or availability of report-back on their findings, if any. These differences create the impression of a haphazard approach to the SAIRC program that suggests it may be a low priority in RCMP initiatives.

### ✓ Actions for the RCMP:

- › In consultation with advocate case review leaders, adopt a national standard for numbers of reviews per year that is informed directly by the goals and targets the program is intended to achieve.
- › Schedule and follow through on a regular report back system on dispositions of cases and actions taken by the RCMP in between reviews to advance and implement recommendations.
- › Consider possible benefits of an alternating schedule of review-report-review-report (e.g. first quarter = review; second quarter = report-back; third quarter = review; fourth quarter = report-back).

### ✓ Concern Areas Addressed:

- › Scheduling inconsistencies
- › Failure of some reviews to occur at all, often without explanation, and others to occur sporadically or even annually
- › Burden of kickstarting next reviews falling to advocates, forcing them to sustain the process
- › Significant unpaid time commitment for advocates without a clear rationale tying the number of reviews to goals
- › Lack of clarity/transparency on if or how RCMP is addressing investigative issues identified in reviews

# RECOMMENDATION #4:

## Demonstrate Transparency, Accountability, and Impact through Annual Reports

1



### Rationale:

In key documents the RCMP has made commitments to Canadians to embrace a new approach to policing, one that underscores the importance of transparency to the public. Recommendations from inquiries, commissions, and reports have repeatedly identified that there can be no accountability without transparency and that the modernization of policing requires parting ways with secrecy and instead adopting an openness to data and information-sharing, research, and oversight. Despite this, information about the SAIRC program is thoroughly obscured from even basic summary questions like ‘how many files were reviewed by SAIRCs in 2023’,

‘how many had additional investigative steps taken’, ‘were any re-opened’, ‘did any of those proceed to charges’, ‘how many were reviewed by divisions and detachments’? Even the very advocates doing the actual work of reviews remain in the dark about results, both national and even basic reporting relating to their own work. It’s impossible to determine the value, impact, or activities of the initiative without any public-facing data, and it precludes independent and NGO research into what is, internationally, a previously unheard of and untested practice.

### ✓ Actions for the RCMP:

- › Generate a public annual report per division, including which detachments files came from and how many per detachment
- › Generate a public annual roll-up report that includes a national overview and an appendix with all divisional reports
- › These reports should include (but not be limited to):
  - a. Number of files reviewed
  - b. What themes were identified (by division and nationally)
  - c. How many files resulted in individual investigative action
  - d. How many files resulted in a charge being laid
  - e. Overall findings, and actions

### ✓ Concern Areas Addressed:

- › Showing outcomes
- › Creating measurability and return on investment (ROI)
- › Increasing transparency
- › Implementing themes identified in multiple national inquiries and commissions, including underscoring the importance of “working with governments and community organizations to promote coordinated, transparent, and consistent monitoring and evaluation frameworks”<sup>14</sup>

<sup>14</sup> The independent Commission into the April 2020 Nova Scotia Mass Casualty, “Turning the Tide Together: The Final Report of the Mass Casualty Commission”, online: <<https://masscasualtycommission.ca/>>.

# RECOMMENDATION #5:

## Demonstrate Transparency, Accountability, and Impact through a SART/SAIRC Microsite

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### Rationale:

The creation of the SART as “the internal centre of expertise on sexual assault investigations”<sup>15</sup> is not well known. Details of their structure, staffing, activities, mandate, etc. are unavailable outside of the RCMP, leading to confusion about how their activities should intersect and coordinate with leaders and stakeholders working in sexual violence and the criminal justice system in Canada. In the 21st century a first step for any new government ministry, organization, or public entity

is the creation of a website explaining who they are, what they do, how they are accessible, and how their work contributes to and integrates with the body of work on their subject. Despite this there is no central source of information about the SART or the SAIRC program. To better understand and work collaboratively with this new unit both the public and sexual violence advocates need an information source with a roadmap to the work of the SART and the SAIRCs.



### Actions for the RCMP:

- › Create a SART/SAIRC microsite linked off the main RCMP page with data, outcomes, etc.
- › Ensure the microsite provides full transparency into the organizational structure, staffing, activities, mandate, etc. of the SART
- › Supply divisional information, including statistics on sexual assaults reported, clearances by CCJS code (introduced in 2018), SAIRCs and their members by advocate organization



### Concern Areas Addressed:

- › Communications and coordination
- › On-going data transparency
- › Outcomes measurement
- › Detachment/Divisional level data
- › Clarity of organizational structure, leadership, and SART role in the overall RCMP organizational hierarchy

<sup>15</sup> Royal Canadian Mounted Police Government of Canada, supra note 2.

# RECOMMENDATION #6:

## Demonstrate Collaboration, Communication, and Accountability through Annual National Advocate/RCMP Meetings

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### Rationale:

Some lack of cohesiveness identified by SAIRC reviewer organizations is exacerbated by teams operating in divisional silos despite each being one piece of a larger whole. Together the reviewing advocates make up “the workforce” of the SAIRC tables but they’re linked only tenuously to the RCMP through divisional coordinators who often change, sometimes unexpectedly. Divisional coordinators may also vary widely in their judgement of the value of the SAIRC initiative and the legitimacy of advocate expertise, which can impact the effectiveness of SAIRC teams.

Like all fragmented workforces and geographically isolated groups, advocates attending SAIRCs require opportunities to communicate with one another, and to see the value of their collective efforts, the

data generated, and the outcomes thereof if they are to remain committed to this practice. In essence what’s absent for advocates – and from RCMP/ SART accountability – is the equivalent of an annual shareholders or annual general meeting.

The gap is well illustrated by the fact that the RCMP has communicated no intent to implement consistent national systems of communication with SAIRC advocate reviewers that recognize them as a distinct expert constituency.

This oversight is all the more startling when one considers that the continuation of the SAIRC program relies entirely on the invisible unpaid labour of these frontline experts to generate a body of work that will ultimately be both attributed, and credited, to the national force itself in the public mind.

### ✓ Actions for the RCMP:

- › Budget for and hold a national annual meeting bringing together SAIRC reviewers and RCMP senior leadership, with advocate travel expenses covered by the police service.
- › If funds cannot be reallocated within the existing SART budget, grants or project funds applied for by the RCMP should be drawn only from Public Safety budget lines, as opposed to Women and Gender Equality Canada or social service funds earmarked for services to survivors or community-led projects to improve equality of outcomes for victims of sexual assault.
- › The purpose and agenda of the annual meeting should focus on RCMP accountability through the presentation of annual review round-up results to advocates, divisional reports, policy and/or Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) changes, and training initiatives. The meeting should also create opportunities to shape future oversight of investigations through advocate participation and input into SART/SAIRC results implementation planning with RCMP senior leadership.
- › The national annual meeting should also serve as a vehicle to release and present both the divisional and national annual reports referenced in Recommendation #4

### ✓ Concern Areas Addressed:

- › Communication & Coordination
- › Measurability
- › Accountability
- › Transparency
- › National cohesion

# RECOMMENDATION #7:

## Uphold Commitments through Publishing Findings from Internal Reviews

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### Rationale:

In early 2022 the RCMP released [The Way Forward II - An update on the implementation of the RCMP's sexual assault review and victim support action plan](#). The update reported the completion of internal reviews of “over 30,000 [sexual assault] files across all contract divisions where the RCMP is the police of jurisdiction”.<sup>16</sup> The reviewed investigations spanned the years 2015 through 2017, the years leading up to the release of the *Globe and Mail Unfounded* series.

Despite this unprecedented inspection of prior sexual assault investigations, the totality of publicly shared results in the update report was a mere 18 words: “The review found consistent deficiencies in some files, which required action to address gaps in training and oversight.”<sup>17</sup>

The update went on to say that the SART was reviewing both “recently concluded sexual assault investigations” while committing to a 2022 review of investigations involving youth aged 12 to 17.

During the same time period the RCMP was releasing multiple plans, roadmaps, and overhauls committing to modernization plans prioritizing a culture of transparency and accountability. The 2020 strategic plan, *Vision 150 and beyond*,<sup>18</sup> commits to “addressing issues of public confidence and the requirement for increased accountability. Openness and transparency will foster trust and respect for policing efforts and increase community cooperation.” Accountability and transparency are identified as one of the 5 key pillars of RCMP modernization efforts,<sup>19</sup> and create the scaffolding of the 2023 Transparency and Trust Strategy.

Standing in stark contrast to all the above is the reality that no detailed results or findings from the 30,000 historical sexual assault investigation reviews, the recently concluded investigations, or the planned youth review have ever been released publicly.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Royal Canadian Mounted Police, “Vision150 and beyond: RCMP Strategic Plan”, (7 April 2021), online: <<https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/vision150/strategic-plan-strategique/index-eng.htm>> Last Modified: 2021-07-12.

<sup>19</sup> Royal Canadian Mounted Police, “RCMP Transparency and Trust Strategy Enabled by Open Government - Open Government Portal”, online: <<https://open.canada.ca/data/en/dataset/40b50513-1356-4211-ae08-53580dbd32fa>>.

# RECOMMENDATION #7:

## Uphold Commitments through Publishing Findings from Internal Reviews

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### ✓ Actions for the RCMP:

- Release a comprehensive overview and break down of the 30,000 file reviews noted in “The Way Forward II” and all subsequent SART reviews
- Ensure the overview is publicly available through publication on the recommended SART microsite, including downloadable formats
- Ensure the overview addresses (but is not limited to):
  - Identification of files group by clearance codes, division, and detachments
  - Aggregate demographic data including complainant/subject age, racial and ethnic origins, sex, ability, gender identity and other markers, where available
  - The methodologies and mechanics of the reviews, including the selection criteria for reviewers, whether files were reviewed singly or in groups, ensuring all video statements were watched in their entirety, handwritten officer notes available for comparison to formal reports, etc.

### ✓ Concern Areas Addressed:

- Transparency
- Measurability
- Evaluation
- Impact

# Conclusion

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## **EVA Canada created this Platform for Change as part of our call for Canadian policing to live up to its promises to survivors of sexual violence.**

Over six decades innumerable measures have been taken, and dollars spent, to shift known logjams that contribute to high attrition rates in police reported sexual assault, including gender bias and rape myth acceptance. Despite the enduring and global nature of the problem, and the persistence of survivors demanding change, few truly public facing and measurable frameworks have emerged to shine light on what have traditionally been invisible investigations. This platform has been developed to offer Canadian policing a blueprint to practicing transparency, tracking progress, and revealing gaps before they are felt most keenly by survivors already facing the impacts of often devastating crimes.

A summary page of these recommendations is included at the end of this report for brevity, ease of use, and distribution. The recommendations summary is also available as a downloadable one-pager on the EVA Canada website. It's our hope that partners and allies in the fight against gender-based violence share them widely and feel free to reference them in initiatives, submissions, and actions relating to sexual violence and policing, as appropriate. We hope those on the frontlines of the fight against violence against women and gender-based violence – including survivors – may also find the platform useful. We invite you to join us in calling for the RCMP to adopt the Platform for Change recommendations, and to work with advocates to set clear benchmarks, milestones, and a concrete implementation schedule.

# References

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# PLATFORM FOR CHANGE:

## Ending Violence Association of Canada Recommendations for the RCMP Sexual Assault Investigations Review Committee (SAIRC) Program

### Findings and Recommendations:

#### **RECOMMENDATION #1: Clearly Articulate the Purpose and Goals of the SAIRC Program**

Articulate a clear purpose for the reviews that can be measured and evaluated against short, medium, and long-term benchmarks.

#### **RECOMMENDATION #2: Demonstrate Commitment to the SAIRC Program**

Designate a national SART lead on SAIRCs responsible for readiness, communication and accountability.

#### **RECOMMENDATION #3: Deliver the SAIRC Program Consistently Across Jurisdictions**

Consult with advocates to develop national standards and a consistent report-back mechanism.

#### **RECOMMENDATION #4: Demonstrate Transparency, Accountability, and Impact through Annual Reports**

Release annual reports with comprehensive detachment, divisional, and national data on reviews, findings, and actions.

#### **RECOMMENDATION #5: Demonstrate Transparency, Accountability, and Impact through a SART/SAIRC Website**

Create a public website for SART with full unit transparency, data, reports, and divisional information.

#### **RECOMMENDATION #6: Demonstrate Collaboration, Communication, and Accountability through Annual National Advocate/RCMP Meetings**

Foster national communication, accountability, and evaluation through an annual national results meeting with reviewers and RCMP.

#### **RECOMMENDATION #7: Uphold Commitments through Publishing Findings from Internal Reviews**

Release comprehensive data on 30,000 previously reviewed files and all subsequent SART reviews.

For more information on each of these recommendations please access the complete report, A Platform for Change at <http://endingviolencecanada.org/reports-recommendations>



Ending  
Violence  
ASSOCIATION OF CANADA

MAY 2024