Evaluation of the Implementation of the Protective Behavioural Analysis Unit

**Final Report** 







Aussi disponible en français sous le titre : Évaluation de la mise en œuvre du Groupe d'analyse du comportement de protection

Information contained in this publication or product may be reproduced, in part or in whole by any means, for personal or public non-commercial purposes without charge or further permission, unless otherwise specified. Commercial reproduction and distribution are prohibited except with written permission from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

For more information, contact: Internal Audit, Evaluation and Review Royal Canadian Mounted Police 73 Leikin Drive Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K1A 0R2

www.rcmp.ca

© (2025) HIS MAJESTY THE KING IN RIGHT OF CANADA as represented by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

Catalogue Number: PS64-242/2024E-PDF

ISBN: 978-0-660-74806-1

# Table of Contents

	Slide #
Acronyms	3
Executive Summary	4
Evaluation Approach	5-8
Program Context	9-11
Key Findings	12-26
Conclusions	27
Recommendations	28
Appendices	29-33



# Acronyms

BSIS	Behavioural Sciences Investigative Services
PBAU	Protective Behavioural Analysis Unit
POCC	<b>Protective Operations Coordination Centre</b>
PoJ	Police of Jurisdiction
PIID	Protective Intelligence and Investigation
	Directorate

PPPOI	Protective Policing Persons of Interest
PROS	Police Reporting and Occurrence System
PSE	Public Service Employee
RM	Regular Member

RM Regular Member SOI Subject of Interest

SOPs Standard Operating Procedures

TAs Threat Assessors







## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

#### Context

In 2019, the RCMP conducted a review of the processes employed to review, assess, and manage threats / persons / subjects of interest (SOI) targeting very important persons (VIP) and protected persons.

In 2020, the Protective Behavioural Analysis Unit (PBAU) was initiated to address gaps associated with the rigour of analysis, and review and update risk rankings. [REDACTED] were hired with the understanding that they would complete RCMP training to become certified threat assessors (TAs) while providing threat assessment services and support.

In April 2024, the PBAU organizational structure and resourcing were approved to support ongoing implementation.

#### **Evaluation Objective and Scope**

The objective of the evaluation was to examine the effectiveness and efficiency of the implementation of the PBAU, to support the delivery of the Protective Policing program.

The evaluation focused on a three calendar year period from 2020 to 2023, and was national in scope.

#### **Evaluation Questions**

The evaluation focused on four questions:

- 1. What is the ongoing need for the PBAU?
- 2. How effective is the design and implementation of the PBAU?
- 3. To what extent is the PBAU effectively supporting protective policing?
- 4. Is the current structure/design of the PBAU sustainable?





#### **Key Takeaways**

In the global and national threat environment, the volume and complexity of threats / persons / SOIs targeting VIPs and protected persons is increasing at a significant rate, and law enforcement organizations need to ensure the safety of these officials.

Overall, the evaluation found the PBAU evolved to address this need through a stringent, rigorous and evidence-based approach to support protective policing and front-line operations.

However, this unit has faced numerous challenges, and program implementation remains incomplete and inefficient.

Expectations to complete required training within two years, while handling a full PBAU work load, is proving unrealistic and places a heavy burden on staff who are struggling to maintain a work/life balance. Additionally, the workload of the PBAU has not been managed for efficient service delivery, with the number and types of demands for service taking resources away from the primary activity of conducting threat assessments.

Although the PBAU has been able to support protective policing operations by developing strong threat assessments, success is limited by inconsistent actioning of management response strategies.

In its current form, the program is not sustainable. Staffing requirements, level of effort to complete the required TEAM training/certification while delivering day-to-day support and services, and workload could serve as significant barriers to recruitment and retention.

Various recommendations are being put forward to ensure the sustainability of the program. In particular, it is recommended that the Protective Policing program identify a program lead to move the program forward and develop implementation and change management plans with key milestones and timeframes to track progress.

It is also recommended that the Protective Policing program review and strengthen the PBAU governance structure, and develop and implement a human resources and training strategy.

# Approach



# **Evaluation Objective and Scope**



- The objective of the evaluation was to examine the effectiveness and efficiency of the implementation of the PBAU to support the delivery of the Protective Policing program.
- This evaluation focused on a three calendar year period from 2020 to 2023, and was national in scope.

## The evaluation focused on four questions:

- 1. What is the ongoing need for the PBAU?
- 2. How effective is the design and implementation of the PBAU?
- 3. To what extent is the PBAU effectively supporting protective policing?
- 4. Is the current structure/design of the PBAU sustainable?

# Data sources

Interviews: 21	Bottleneck Analysis	Literature Review: 29	Document Review: 64
A total of 21 one-on-one and group interviews were conducted either in person or by MS Teams video with:  Current and past program staff Senior program managers Stakeholders	Questionnaire All PBAU staff were asked to complete a short questionnaire regarding processes and procedures to identify any areas of waste.  Process Mapping Process maps for PBAU tasks and activities were developed to identify waste and constraints in the workflow to highlight inefficiencies in PBAU's processes. (process maps developed = 5).	Literature gathered through open source research (Canadian Police College library), and-stakeholder reading was reviewed. Copilot (Bing Chat), a generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) tool was used moderately to assist identification of relevant documents. Reviewed literature/documentation included:  Policy papers; Studies; Law enforcement periodicals; and Academic journal articles.	Internal documentation was reviewed, such as:  Mission, vision, mandate;  Policy and guidance documents (previous, current);  Reviews and assessments;  Meeting agendas and records of decision;  Internal reports, presentations and briefings;  Memoranda;  Correspondence; and  Media articles.
Data Analysis	Case Studies: 9	Comparative Analysis: 6	Observations: 3
Available RCMP administrative and financial data was collected and analyzed including:  Employee leave; Financial data and costing estimates; PBAU tasking information from the Police Reporting and Occurrence System (PROS); and Internal tracking.  Travel requests (2) Full threat assessments (3) Re-risking Protective Policing Persons of Interest (PPPOI) (4) For the travel requests and full threat assessments, case studies included interviews and file reviews. For the re-risking of PPPOIs, only file reviews were conducted.		Interviews were conducted with internal and external teams using behavioural science methodologies including:  The Fixated Threat Assessment Centre;  Ontario Provincial Police Protective Intelligence Unit;  K Division Behavioural Sciences Group (K DIV BSG);  E Division Behavioural Analysis Unit (E DIV BAU);  Calgary Police Service Behavioural Analysis Team; and  RCMP National Security Intervention Team.	PBAU staff were observed in their on-site work location. Observations focused on areas including:  Work environment;  Task processes; and Systems used.

# Limitations

Limitation	Mitigation	
Limite	ed data	
<ul> <li>There was limited data available related to program outcomes and no financial data to support costs at the unit level.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Multiple data sources were used to validate findings. Estimates of costs for training and development were identified where possible.</li> </ul>	
Stage of Program	n Implementation	
<ul> <li>Implementation has not been completed. As a result, much of the documentation was still in draft format and the program continued to evolve during the evaluation period.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>The evaluation focused primarily on process/implementation rather than outcomes. Data collection included consideration of any changes to program implementation during the course of the evaluation.</li> </ul>	
Representativeness of Files		
<ul> <li>All PBAU files are unique and it was difficult to generalize processes and timelines. Evaluation timelines did not allow a full examination into case files.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Criteria for the case studies were identified to help guide the selection of files to reflect the different type of work the PBAU engages in and work styles of PBAU TAs.</li> </ul>	

# Context



# Program overview

#### **Protective Policing**



- The mandate of the Protective Policing program is to ensure the safety of major events and protected persons, such as state officials, dignitaries and foreign missions, including:
  - the Prime Minister (PM), the Governor General,
     Justices of the Supreme Court of Canada, Ministers of the Crown;
  - Internationally Protected Persons (e.g., visiting foreign heads of state, heads of government, foreign government ambassadors and/or embassy staff).
- The Protective Policing program at National Headquarters consists of two units that manage and deliver protective operations.<sup>1</sup>
  - The Operations Coordination Unit assesses, manages and delivers appropriate security measures/levels for protected persons, as well as security for all major events.
  - The Oversight and Compliance Unit guides, supports, reviews and assists Protective Policing activities overseeing Divisional VIP units, the Prime Minister Protection Detail the Governor General Protection Detail and the Canadian Air Carrier Protective Program.

## **Protective Policing Intelligence**



- Within the Operations Coordination Unit, the Protective Intelligence and Investigation Directorate (PIID) gathers information from domestic and international partners, assesses risks and threats, and develops intelligence to support the RCMP's protective responses.
- The PIID is comprised of: Major Events Intelligence Unit, Protective Initial Assessment Team, Protective Intelligence Analysis International, Protective Intelligence Analysis Domestic, Protective Investigations and PBAU.
- Operational units request intelligence assessments and reports from the PIID units through taskings from the Protective Operations Coordination Centre (POCC) via PROS.
- The PBAU can be sent specific taskings from POCC.
   However, PBAU services/support activities and products are typically requested by its PIID counterparts to support development of their intelligence risk assessments.



#### **PBAU**



- The *mission* of the PBAU is to provide operational support to protective services by applying experience, research and training based on behavioral science methodologies to mitigate risk and to prevent violence.
- Its mandate is to complete behavioral analysis and recommend management strategies for individuals who are at risk for violence or who are pathologically fixated towards protected persons, in support of our policing partners.
- The **vision** is to:
  - Provide quality service through current and researchbased education and training.
  - Cultivate and maintain positive partnerships with relevant stakeholders, including law enforcement agencies and mental health providers.
  - Recommend preventative measures to address risks, while considering the needs of the individuals and the community.
  - Foster an environment of teamwork, consultation, open communication and mutual respect.
  - Continually promote the mission and mandate of the PBAU to our partners.

10

# Program overview

### Staff

At the time of the evaluation the PBAU included:

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



#### Work

PBAU staff perform a variety of key activities:

- Full threat assessments
- Re-assessments of PPPOIs
- Travel requests / SOIs
- Consultation support service
- Review of tasks sent to the PBAU as for-your-information



## **Training**

Regular members are required to complete Threat Evaluation and Management Program (TEAM) training and testing to become certified threat specialists.

The TEAM training is designed and delivered by RCMP threat specialists and criminal profilers within the Behavioural Sciences Investigative Services.

It is a rigorous certification that is expected to be completed within two years.



#### **Governance**

PBAU operates under Protective Policing – Federal Policing.

The governance/reporting structure of the unit evolved during the course of the evaluation with Federal Policing transformation activities.

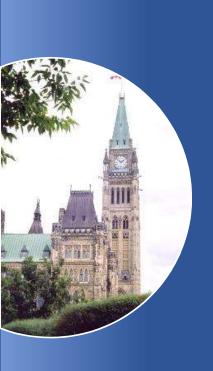
For the majority of the past three and a half years there has been minimal governance for the unit.



# Key Findings



Need KEY FINDINGS



#### FINDING #1

There is an ongoing need to assess and manage the increasing number of threats / persons / SOIs targeting public figures / VIPs by using a proactive, science-based assessment process. If these threats are not addressed, real physical or psychological harm could come to Canada's protected persons and/or their families.

# There is a need to provide protective services to VIPs and protected persons.

- Protected persons, including the PM, Cabinet Ministers, other Members of Parliament (MPs), and other dignitaries, are the foundation of Canada's democratic system. Ensuring their safety as they serve in their roles as elected officials is crucial to upholding peace and order in Canadian society.
- As the authority for ensuring the safety of protected persons, and considering the impact violence against these persons could mean for Canada, the RCMP needs to proactively and systematically assess, identify and monitor threats and risks and provide management strategies.
- In recognition of this need, the RCMP has progressed its response over the years:
  - In 2011, the PPPOI unit was formed to review and assess threats to the PM detected by the National Security Threat Assessment Section and share information with the Protective Policing program's protection details.
  - In 2020, the PBAU was formed to assess threats more effectively and efficiently.

Internationally, there are recent examples of violence targeting VIPs and protected persons.

- Former President Donald Trump was shot while campaigning (2024).
- Slovak PM Robert Fico was injured after being shot while leaving government meetings (2024).
- Former Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe was fatally shot while delivering a campaign speech (2022).
- An armed Canadian military member drove a truck through the gates of Rideau Hall, where PM Justin Trudeau resided with his family (2020).
- British MP Jo Cox was fatally attacked while travelling to a meeting with constituents at a local clinic (2016).

Risk/threat literature clearly shows there is a need for behavioural analysis units in protective policing to respond to increasing targeted violence against the general public, and public figures.

- Risk researchers indicate that the demographic including politicians, leaders, and Members of Parliament have increasingly become the target of stalking and harassment generally due to "their public profiles or political stance.<sup>2</sup>
- Annually, law enforcement officials intercept thousands of individuals who demonstrate inappropriate or unusual interest in public officials or figures.
   These behaviours evidence the need for systems/services to assess and manage risks associated with these behaviours.<sup>3</sup>

13

Need KEY FINDINGS

#### FINDING #1 (continued)

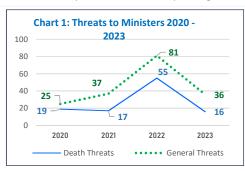
Over the last few years, the number and complexity of threats and violence targeting protected persons in Canada has continually increased.

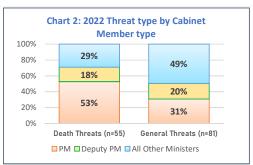
**The PBAU receives 45-67 taskings per month** associated with threats / persons / SOIs targeting VIPs / protected persons.

The harassment members of Parliament experience from the public has jumped almost 800 percent in the last five years.

Patrick McDonell, Sergeant-at-Arms of the House of Commons.4

- Interviewees reported the number of taskings have fluctuated in response to major political events such as firearm legislation, international conflicts, and statements made by public figures reported in the media.
- Moving forward, interviewees expect that upcoming elections in late 2024 in the United States and 2025 in Canada will yield additional increases in threats.
- Privy Council Office (PCO) data shows the number of threats over three years of the COVID pandemic increased by more than 200% - peaking in 2022.<sup>5</sup>





Federal Protective Policing estimates indicate threats against public officials increased from approximately 1,300 (2022) to 2,600 (2023) and are projected to reach more than 3,500 in 2024.<sup>6</sup>

The emerging ability of large groups to assemble quickly through social media also presents significant challenges to protective policing.

- Many interviewees and media accounts have noted that "flash protests" present
  a significant challenge to law enforcement's ability to provide sufficient
  protection for VIPs and/or protective policing.
- A recent event for PM Justin Trudeau and Italian PM Giorgia Meloni was cancelled abruptly after several hundred pro-Palestinian demonstrators blocked entrances to the Art Gallery of Ontario.<sup>7,8</sup>

Threats are targeting protected persons, as well as their families, on-line or inperson at public venues and personal residences.

- Interviews, available program data, and media reviews indicate that threats targeting protected persons' families are becoming increasingly prevalent.
- Recently, Charlie Angus (MP Timmins-James Bay) reported being approached and threatened at a beach in his riding by a man who stated "there's only the two of us, no cameras or witnesses anywhere." 9

Safety in our politics has reached a tipping point. Too many who hold office are now focused on the safety of our families and staff because of the threats we receive.

**Lisa McLeod**, Former MP Nepean – Carleton<sup>10</sup> If these incidents are likely to discourage many from wanting to run for public office in future, especially those from groups that are targeted more frequently and with more vitriol, such as women, Indigenous people, 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals and people of colour.

Heidi Tworek.

Director UBC Centre for the Study of Democratic
Institutions<sup>11</sup>

**KEY FINDINGS** Need

#### FINDING #1 (continued)

The current environment increasingly requires an evidence-based approach to proactively assess and prioritize threats to protected persons and their families.

...the number of MPs asking for protection has almost doubled since 2018. That spike has been something we've never seen before. Requests for protection have increased exponentially. !!

Assistant Commissioner, RCMP Protective Policing<sup>12</sup>



#### Reactive Approach

- Early trends in protective policing suggested the adoption of a reactive response to addressing threats/violence - managing crises in or after an occurrence, responding quickly and with force, containing threats, and communicating danger to personnel as quickly as possible.13
- However, this approach proved to be neither sufficient nor efficient to address the escalation of targeted violence. Threat volume, as well as changes in laws and restraining orders, require a new approach and tools with a focus on prevention to identify and address threats and behaviours before an incident can occur.14

#### **Proactive Approach**

- A new approach, focusing on threat assessments and comprised of intelligence products that analyze individual/group capabilities, intentions, vulnerabilities, and limitations to identify and minimize risk, has become the new standard in law enforcement.
- Assessments are meant to be conducted rapidly, in an actively evolving, operational environment with long-term and future-oriented outcomes/goals.15

#### **Standardized Assessment Process**

- Threat assessments should also be conducted in a standardized manner using rigorous approaches. Outcomes of threat assessments need to be easily defendable and criteria for potential management strategies established. 16
- Researchers also indicate that identification of SOIs, treatment, care, and mitigation of threat behaviours will benefit from partnerships with mental health professionals. Threats that escalate to attack are typically associated with a history of stalking behaviour or mental illness. 17, 18

Early RCMP proactive assessment activities were limited and relied heavily on individual RMs' law enforcement experience and simple database queries.

- The PPPOI unit initiated risk assessment activities specific to VIPs and protected persons in 2011.
- Early PPPOI work included risk level ratings, SOI information, and monitoring plans for front-line protection, and police of jurisdiction (PoJ).
- However, there was no standard behavioural analysis training nor clear criteria for how an individual became a PPPOI. In addition, the majority of SOIs were rated as low-risk and review, re-assessment was irregular.
- A 2019 internal review of PPPOI showed its approach did not have the rigour to identify signs that threats targeting protected persons may escalate to violence or criminality.

#### The PBAU provides a more in-depth approach that addresses the limitations of earlier assessment activities.

- The PBAU uses certified threat specialists, a science-based methodology, risk mitigation and management strategies to deliver products that can be entered and defended in court.
- Most interviewees report that PBAU services meet the evolving threat assessment needs of protective policing.

## Why it matters



Canadian and global trends related to threats to public figures pose challenges to effective government operations and overall democratic processes. Without a timely and rigorous process in place to assess, monitor and manage these threats, there is risk of increasing harm coming to protected persons in Canada or a reduced number of Canadians willing to become public officials.



#### FINDING #2

The design and implementation of the PBAU have not been effective. The unit was initiated based on a concept rather than a clear design or implementation plan and, as a result, governance and oversight have been limited.

There was no evidence of a clearly documented vision, implementation plan or identification of key milestones to track status of PBAU implementation.

The PBAU was based on a concept to address gaps in PPPOI and to examine the possible benefits that threat assessment could contribute to support front-line protective policing operations.

- Key characteristics of the PBAU included:
  - Use of a rigorous, and justifiable risk assessment methodology;
  - Requiring all RMs to complete TEAM training to become certified threat specialists;
  - Developing products that are defendable in court; and,
  - Continually reviewing SOI files to ensure information and risk ratings are up to date.
- This concept was implemented by:
  - establishing a relationship with BSIS for TEAM training;
  - securing resources and hiring three full-time threat specialists: and.
  - commencing staff training, service provision, and policy development.
- A decision was made to leverage existing RCMP units, processes, and knowledge to avoid barriers and facilitate senior management approval and implementation.

In the absence of an implementation or change management plan, it is not clear how or when the program will address key gaps, including:

- determining key resource needs, both for the short and long-term, recruitment protocols and streamlined staffing processes;
- o clarifying needs and expectations of key stakeholders;
- defining PBAU roles and responsibilities in protective policing intelligence and investigations to align with Federal Policing transformation; and,
- defining roles and responsibilities of PBAU TAs once they become certified (e.g., mentoring expectations within the threat specialist community).

While efforts have been made to staff the unit to align with the concept, key positions remain unfilled.

The PBAU current workspace is not conducive to collaboration and does not provide the system access needed for the threat assessment process.

- The current PBAU workspace is a secure setting that is not conducive to the collaboration required for the threat assessment process.
- The BSIS environment, and other comparative threat assessment groups, tend to have more open workplaces with dedicated collaboration space.
- Not all PBAU staff have access to secure systems for their threat assessment research.

## **Effectiveness of Implementation**

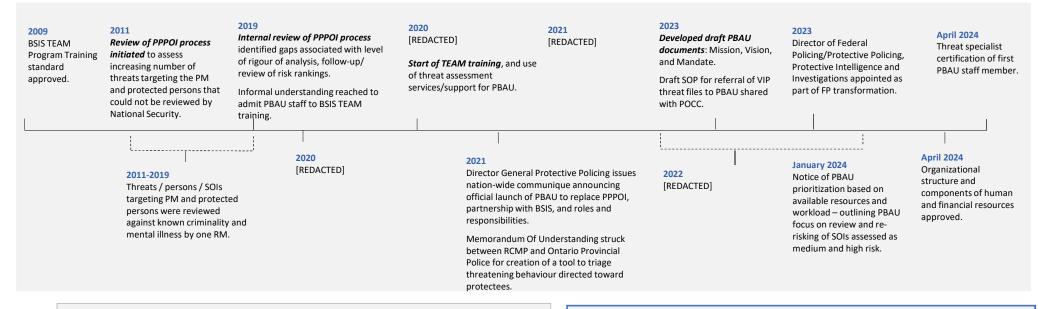
## **Program Overview**

#### FINDING #2 (continued)

Implementation of the PBAU is not yet complete, and it is unclear when this will be achieved. After more than three and a half years, PBAU implementation is estimated to be only half way complete.

As the timeline shows, the PBAU has completed an array of activities to support the implementation and development of the program including:

- Some RM staffing has been secured;
- BSIS engagement is working well TEAM training is proceeding; and,
- PBAU information/products are supporting stakeholders.



#### Despite progress made, key gaps in implementation remain, including:

- Lack of analyst support for threat specialists;
- Standard operating Procedures (SOPs) not finalized;
- · Roles and responsibilities unclear; and
- TEAM training taking longer than projected two years.

### Why it matters 🚇

The PBAU has faced many obstacles in its implementation. Although it has made progress, if these are not addressed, the program will continue to experience implementation delays that may impact the unit's overall effectiveness and sustainability.



#### **FINDING #3**

PBAU services are effectively supporting protective policing. However, the level/quality of police of jurisdiction response to information requests and actioning of management response strategies limits the effectiveness of the threat assessment process and management of SOIs.

Overall, clients and stakeholders are satisfied with the services and support provided by the PBAU. Products are considered timely and of high quality.

- Interview data indicates that stakeholders are very satisfied with the services and support provided by the PBAU.
- Most direct users of PBAU products reported that PBAU services and support are fully meeting their needs, and the unit typically completes taskings before due dates.

Stakeholders had two suggestions for improving PBAU services and support:

1. Complete the review, update, and re-risking of older SOI files as soon as possible.

Risk ratings of SOI files completed before 2020 differ from current risk ratings. Translating old risk ratings for intelligence reports takes considerable time.

2. Provide quick-hit information/intelligence.

A few stakeholders reported that operational groups need a more rapid response from protective policing intelligence groups, sometimes within hours of the request. PBAU products are supporting protective policing intelligence work and the monitoring of SOIs, court/parole decisions, and contributing to intervention responses in other countries.

- Interviewees noted that the information in PBAU threat assessments is clear and concise and is presented in a manner that is informative and easy to use.
- Review and revision of the original SOI form was one of the initial
  tasks completed by PBAU staff. New data fields in the SOI form align
  with threat assessment standards and provide more granular
  information on SOIs, including the type and delivery method of
  threat(s), known weapons, social media accounts, military/self
  defence training, threats to police, change of appearance, and travel
  patterns, as well as risk mitigation strategies.
- Most stakeholders viewed these changes positively, noting that the new SOI form is well-organized, makes sense and is easy to understand.
- Case studies indicate that recommendations in PBAU threat
  assessments are supporting management of SOIs by stakeholders in
  the legal system (e.g., parole officers, PoJ). For example, PBAU
  recommendations and observations in several files outlined indicators
  of changes in SOI behaviour and level of risk that were observed and
  led to action by stakeholders.

## **Effectiveness of Client Support**

#### FINDING #3 (continued)

Timely access to information on persons / threats / SOIs is key to the rigour of the PBAU threat assessment process. A lack of, or delayed, response from police of jurisdiction to PBAU requests for information is a significant challenge.

- Case studies, interviews, and observation show that timely access to information on threats / persons /SOIs targeting protected persons is a key factor in providing timely and effective threat assessment.
  - o Provision of up-to-date information on SOIs, such as interactions with the legal and mental health systems, and travel, are key to the assessment process.
- Lack of response to requests for information from PoJ investigators (RCMP as well as other law enforcement agencies) impedes the development of threat assessments.
- Similarly, the quality or lack of information provided by end-clients (e.g., VIP offices / protective policing units) on travel and logistics can impact the timely delivery of information for travel requests.





Management considerations and recommendations for mitigating risks outlined in PBAU threat assessments are clear. However, inconsistent implementation and tracking by PoJ investigators can lead to inaction and potential RCMP liability concerns.

- Interviews indicate that response to PBAU requests for follow-up actions may be limited by several factors including:
  - o Lack of agreement on who is responsible for implementing management strategies;
  - o Limited understanding of the PBAU mandate and significance of information in threat assessments, and/or;
  - Competing local priorities and resource capacity.
- Response from PoJs may also be impacted by turnover of contacts or investigators. When this occurs, relationships with the PBAU may have to be re-initiated with new PoJ contacts.
- PBAU staff reported that development and maintenance of relationships with PoJ investigators is crucial to supporting timely information sharing, response to recommendations, monitoring of SOIs, and update of threat assessments. However, the PBAU workload has at times limited these activities.

# Why it matters



Inconsistency in the actioning of recommended management strategies may result in threats not being appropriately mitigated, particularly in cases where the RCMP is not the PoJ. This could lead to potential liability concerns for the RCMP should an act of violence towards a protected person occur where there was documented RCMP awareness of the potential threat but no action taken.



#### **FINDING #4**

The implementation of the PBAU has not been efficient. Limited staff and the number and type of demands placed on the unit take resources away from the primary activity of conducting threat assessments.

An organizational chart, approved by senior managers in 2024, outlines intended staffing moving forward. However, it is unclear when the PBAU will receive additional support, or whether it will be the right type of support to enhance efficiency.

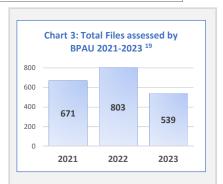
[REDACTED]

- Although the organizational chart outlines desired unit staffing levels, the current strength has not changed significantly since inception and many vacancies remain, including in key analyst positions.
- A risk analyst (PSE) was brought into the PBAU on an assignment to address all incoming travel requests and some administrative activities. This resource enhanced PBAU efficiencies in the shortterm by allowing TAs to focus on threat assessments and the review and update of past PPPOI/SOI files.
- Interviews with PBAU staff and other threat assessment units indicate that the work of intelligence analysts allows TAs to focus on threat assessment.

Since its inception, the PBAU has become responsible for a large variety of tasks beyond their primary goal of conducting threat assessments.



- Completing full threat assessments and travel requests are the most important activities from a client perspective.
- In order to become certified threat specialists, PBAU staff must complete the TEAM understudy program and provide consultation support on BSIS files. These activities take up a large portion of PBAU employee time and effort.
- Re-assessment of PPPOI files is a temporary activity to ensure transfer of all files to the new behavioural science based methodology being used by the PBAU.



Program data shows that **39%** of PBAU tasks received are "For Your Information". However, each "For Your Information" requires review by a PBAU threat assessor and some require further action.

20

Efficiency KEY FINDINGS

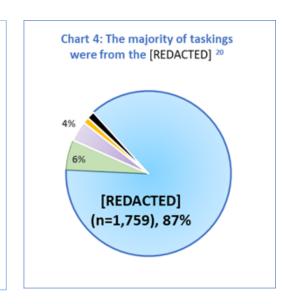
### FINDING #4 (continued)

Since 2021, triage and assignment of incoming tasks has been the responsibility of TAs.

This has taken up significant time that could otherwise be spent on threat assessment activities.

Figure 2: Where PBAU Taskings come from:

[REDACTED]



- The volume of tasks coming into the PBAU and the lack of efficient triaging is causing a bottleneck.
- This bottleneck is a key constraint on the PBAU's capacity to meet the unit's primary responsibility of threat assessment.

Bottleneck Intake - Triaging

Lack of an efficient triaging process results in backlogs and heavy workloads.

Based on total number of hours employees are available to work and the number of files the PBAU is tasked with, staff have an average of **8 hours** to complete a task. Threat assessments often require much longer.

PROS, the primary tasking system for the PBAU, does not support file management and monitoring.

This requires work-arounds that can contribute to inconsistent internal coding.

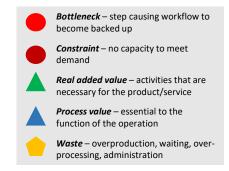
- Many PBAU staff, management and stakeholders interviewed for the evaluation indicated that PROS can be problematic for protective policing. Tasking, record management, monitoring and reporting functions are not flexible enough to meet current needs.
- Although there is work underway on a new system to better support protective policing,
   PBAU staff are using internal coding to manage files.

Efficiency KEY FINDINGS

#### FINDING #4 (continued)

The bottleneck analysis shows there are areas within PBAU processes that negatively impact time and level of effort.

[REDACTED]



- Due to the bottleneck at intake, there are constraints in the PBAU's capacity to meet all demands, which inhibits the real added value.
- In the research/analysis phases of PBAU activities, there are *areas of waste* where staff are waiting for information to facilitate threat assessments, re-assessments or travel requests.
- The need to pull information from multiple RCMP systems to support threat assessments, re-assessments, and travel requests also creates inefficiencies.
- Although key to threat assessment, consultations with other TAs and behavioural science professionals, and approvals from senior managers, take time.
- The review of threat assessment activities indicates there is an opportunity to get PSEs more involved in the process and to potentially become participants in the TEAM training. Interviewees also expressed interest in this concept moving forward.

## Why it matters 🕮

The lack of resources, volume of taskings, limited triage protocols, and deficient file management system serve as barriers to the PBAU fully meeting their core mandate of conducting threat assessments. Without sufficient dedication to conducting fulsome threat assessments, there is a risk of threats being undetected or improperly assessed/monitored.



#### **FINDING #5**

Workload demands, along with training requirements, exceed the capacity of the unit, which threatens staff well-being and work-life balance.

The high volume of taskings, combined with process inefficiencies, has led to exceedingly high workload demands on PBAU staff.

- There are no indications that the increasing volume of persons / threats / SOIs targeting protected persons is, or will be, leveling off or subsiding.
- Internal and external stakeholders reported that service requests for certified threat assessments are overloading teams across the country.
- Moving forward, many stakeholders suggest the PBAU needs more staff not only to address incoming tasks, but also to improve the timeliness of the ongoing review and update of SOI files to keep operations apprised of changes in known risks.
- Senior managers confirmed that the current priorities are to increase unit resources and implement effective task triaging to address workloads of current staff.

The secondment of a PBAU understudy threat assessor to BSIS for TEAM training is recognized by staff as a best practice. However, this approach removes a PBAU resource from the unit and increases the workload burden for the remaining PBAU staff.

Completion of the TEAM training and threat specialist certification is taking longer than the proposed two-year timeframe.

Figure 4: Progression of PBAU staff in mandatory TEAM training



Expectations for PBAU staff to complete TEAM-related reading, assessment assignments, consultations and internships while conducting their regular work is unrealistic.

- Some interviewees suggested that not embedding understudies in BSIS at the start of TEAM training may have impeded learning and prolonged the training period.
- Other threat assessment groups typically have understudy TAs focus primarily on their studies during the first year in their units.

Employee Wellness KEY FINDINGS

#### FINDING #5 (continued)







Balancing workload demands along with TEAM training requirements does not support the well-being of the unit.

- PBAU staff have described work/life balance as a key challenge. Completing TEAM training while maintaining a full work load is unrealistic.
- Some interviewees reported that every minute on duty can be filled with work or follow-up/discussions, so understudy tasks have often spilled over into offhours/personal time.
- Staff indicated that they have persevered by working together and building solid relationships. The inability to add staff to the unit has required a strong commitment from everyone to meet the demand for service and to meet professional standards.
- While this may be manageable in the short-term, interviewees reported that these extensive demands are not sustainable going forward.

The success of the unit to date has been largely due to its knowledgeable and dedicated staff, but these employees are at risk of burnout.

- Senior managers reported that PBAU staff have done well without much supervision – managing themselves and developing policies, SOPs and guidelines while providing services and completing understudy work.
- [REDACTED] there has been no one to balance workload volume with the available resources, or consult with POCC to refine triaging of PBAU taskings.
- Many stakeholders and past managers reported that, even when workloads were at the highest, the staff has persevered. Although the delivery and quality of PBAU products did not suffer, this may have taken a toll on staff members.





### Why it matters 🕮

For some time, the work environment and limited resources have posed significant health and wellness risks to PBAU employees. The requirement to balance high workloads with completion of an intensive understudy program is threatening to burn out PBAU staff. Loss of any staff will impact the ability of the PBAU to achieve its mandate.



#### **FINDING #6**

The PBAU model is not sustainable in its current form. Without formalization of a concise mandate and a clear design, and implementation plan in the immediate term, the PBAU may not reach its desired future state.

The PBAU's core mandate - behavioral threat assessment - is compromised by an increasing scope of tasks and responsibilities.

As the program matures, staff and management will need to address a range of issues to facilitate the efficient management and delivery of PBAU services, including:

Finalizing and implementing core program documents and processes:

- Although draft policy and SOPs have been developed by PBAU staff, these foundational pieces still need to be finalized, reviewed and updated as needed.
- As current PBAU staff complete TEAM training to become certified threat specialists, their roles and responsibilities as mentors in the BSIS and threat assessment community will require clarification.

Ongoing engagement with internal and external stakeholders regarding PBAU services:

- Moving forward, it is imperative that the PBAU continues to engage internal and external stakeholders to support follow-up on strategies to monitor and manage SOIs and collect information for the review and updating of risk ratings.
- As interactions with stakeholders evolve, the PBAU will need to educate stakeholders on the types of services the program can provide.

Reviewing the high volume of tasks-sent to the PBAU that mostly fall outside the unit's core mandate.

- There is a need to review the scope of PBAU activities and assignment of resources to ensure core tasks can be adequately actioned.
- PBAU triaging processes will be extremely important to ensuring the volume of incoming requests aligns with the unit's limited resources.

Addressing the potential expansion of PBAU roles and responsibilities to support protective policing for major events.

 As the value of the PBAU's expertise becomes more widely known, the unit may be called on to expand levels of service and support.
 For example, moving forward, the PBAU will be called upon to provide support to front-line operations for major events (e.g., G7, VIP visits).

PBAU resources do not align with the current workload and increasing demand for PBAU services.

Although the level of requests for PBAU services has increased year-over-year, the complement of full-time PBAU staff has not increased accordingly.

## Sustainability

#### FINDING #6 (continued)

The proposed organizational structure of the PBAU has not been realized, nor does it reflect unit needs and staffing challenges. Analyst support for the unit needs to be prioritized.

- Program documentation shows the organizational structure was clearly outlined in November 2023, and again in [REDACTED] April 2024.
- Although the organizational structure has been approved and staffing processes are underway [REDACTED] it is not clear when these positions will be filled in the short or long-term.

It is not clear that the designated positions in the organizational chart align well with the unit's current and future needs.

- Comparative analysis of similar threat assessment groups shows there is a clear need for psychological and analytical support. Most units include resources for inhouse or tangential support.
- Interviews and bottleneck analysis show a significant proportion of PBAU activities are associated with administrative or analytical activities that could be performed by analysts rather than RM TAs.
- [REDACTED] the PBAU is not leveraging the full value for money on the investment for TEAM training and certification.
- The comparative analysis also shows that not all certified TAs in other units are police officers; there are also civilian TAs.

The loss of even one PBAU threat specialist due to short or long-term leave or transfer/promotion will have significant consequences for program viability.

 Interviews and program data clearly indicate that the absence of any member of the PBAU team significantly impacts the productivity of the unit.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

The current PBAU environment and requirements could be a significant barrier to recruitment and retention of PBAU staff moving forward.

#### Recruitment & Challenges:

- Like other business lines, the high demand for RMs and associated releasability issues is a challenge for staffing PBAU TAs.
- The time and level of effort required to complete TEAM training for threat specialist certification may not be attractive to applicants, especially those with commitments outside of work.
- Career path progression within the unit is limited.
- To date, the time required to complete TEAM training for certification has been lengthy, aligning with the timing when RMs become eligible to leave for lateral transfer and promotion.
- Current conditions could foster an institutional bias against people who have responsibilities / commitments outside of their work.
- The addition of trained and certified civilians in PBAU threat assessor positions may help address the lack of available RMs and ensure the sustainability of the unit.

### Why it matters 🖳

While implementation of the PBAU is not yet complete, the program is in a fragile state that is highly susceptible to threats to its sustainability in the short and long-term.

## Conclusions







- With increasing threats and acts of aggression towards VIPs and protected persons within Canada and globally, it is critical for organizations responsible for the safety of these individuals to be able to systematically identify, assess and monitor these risks.
- The PBAU has evolved to address this requirement and has developed a rigorous and evidence-based approach to threat assessments that is meeting stakeholder needs. However, there have been numerous challenges to implementation, and program development remains incomplete and inefficient.
- The expectation for TAs to complete the TEAM training within two years, while handling a full PBAU
  workload, is proving unrealistic and is placing a heavy burden on staff. Additionally, the workload of the
  PBAU has not been managed for efficient service delivery, with the number and types of demands for
  service taking resources away from the primary activity of conducting threat assessments.
- Although the PBAU has been able to support protective policing operations by developing strong threat assessments, success is limited by inconsistent actioning of management response strategies.
- In its current form, the PBAU is not sustainable. For the PBAU to survive and thrive, significant challenges related to mandate, structure and workload must be addressed in both the immediate and longer term.

## Recommendations







- 1. Review and strengthen the PBAU governance structure and clarify roles and responsibilities. This includes finalizing program policy, process documents and stakeholder agreements, as well as developing a performance measurement strategy.
- 2. Identify a program lead to move the program forward and develop implementation and change management plans with key milestones and timeframes to track progress.
- 3. Develop and implement a human resources and training strategy to support recruitment, retention and sustainability. The strategy should consider progressive career paths for RMs and PSEs, work-life balance, requirements for TEAM training, alternative staffing models, and mental well-being. It should also include short-term, stop-gap measures for the unit.
- 4. Enhance internal and external stakeholder engagement to ensure PBAU information requirements are supported and met, and management response strategies are actioned.

# Appendices

	Slide #
A. Management Response and Action Plan	30-31
B. Scale of interview responses	32
C. Endnotes	33



## **Appendix A: Management Response and Action**

Protective Policing (PP) is grateful for the Evaluation of the Protective Behavioral Assessment Unit (PBAU) and accepts the findings and recommendations contained therein. The Evaluation has identified key areas requiring improvement, which will enable the program to make targeted enhancements to streamline operations and enhance overall efficiency, ultimately fostering a more effective and optimized threat assessment function within Protective Policing.

We are fortunate in that additional resources have already been made available, and so attaining key objectives should be reasonable upon the implementation of these new resources. [REDACTED]

The development of PBAU is an integral part of the establishment of the newly created PIID. Therefore, the implementation of some of the recommendations is intrinsically linked to the development of the same requirements for PIID. In that sense, the timeline for the development and publication of policy, the creation of business continuity plans and to some extent the onboarding package will be dependent on the progress made at the PIID-level, and to some extent at the Protective Policing-level.

	Recommendation	Lead / Area of Responsibility	Planned Action(s)	Diary Date
1	. Review and strengthen the PBAU governance structure and clarify roles and responsibilities. This includes finalizing program policy, process documents and stakeholder agreements, as well as developing a performance measurement strategy.	PBAU Management (OIC and Sgt)	PBAU will review and strengthen the PBAU governance structure by completing the following actions:  • [REDACTED]  • PBAU will finalize its SOPs (March 2026) and policy that is currently in draft form. (December 2026)  • PBAU will create a business continuity plan. (December 2026)  • PBAU will complete an Onboarding Package for RMs and PSEs. (December 2026)  • PBAU will continue to work, in collaboration with PIIID units (mainly the Initial Assessment Team) to have a performance tracker established. (March 2025)  • Respective MOUs with Behavioral Sciences Section and Ontario Provincial Police will be renewed. (December 2025)  • PBAU will work with Protective Policing Oversight and Compliance and PPR (planning and performance) in the development of a performance measurement strategy. (March 2025)	December 2026
2	Identify a PBAU program lead to move the program forward and develop implementation and change management plans with key milestones and timeframes to track progress.	Director, PIID	PBAU implementation Plan  Director, PIID will be the PBAU program lead.	March 2025

	Recommendation	Lead / Area of Responsibility	Planned Action(s)	Diary Date
3	c. Develop and implement a human resources and training strategy to support recruitment, retention and sustainability. The strategy should consider progressive career paths for RMs and PSEs, work-life balance, requirements for TEAM training, alternative staffing models and mental well-being. It should also include short-term, stop-gap measures for the unit.	Director, PIID	<ul> <li>Development of PBAU Human Resource and training strategy</li> <li>Federal Policing has secured the funding of an additional [REDACTED] positions to the PBAU org chart. [REDACTED] (Complete)</li> <li>Except for the psychologist position, all these positions have been classified and at various stages of staffing. (Complete)</li> <li>PBAU will continue working with stakeholders (Org and Class, Behavioral Science Branch) in having 5th position (forensic psychologist) classified and staffed. (March 2026)</li> <li>PBAU will engage Behavioral Science Branch on potential of dual staffing model for threat assessors (currently exclusively RMs. (March 2027)</li> <li>PIID/PBAU will consult with experts, law enforcement partners (national and international) and other RCMP units to develop a training program and possible retention strategies for or RMs and civilians in PBAU (March 2027)</li> </ul>	March 2027
4	s. Enhance internal and external stakeholder engagement to ensure PBAU information requirements are supported and met, and management response strategies are actioned.	PBAU Management (OIC and Sgt)	<ul> <li>Development of PBAU engagement strategy</li> <li>PIID and PBAU to identify opportunities for technical briefings, presentations and/or case studies provided to both internal (i.e., Protective Policing units, RCMP units) and externally partners (international and Canadian law enforcement partners). This will be included in the aforementioned performance strategy). (now and ongoing)</li> <li>PIID and PBAU will identify and support opportunities to promote PBAU work and expertise in protective policing services (ongoing)</li> <li>Development of SOPs to ensure a pathway exists to action management plans when POJ decline to execute. (March 2027)</li> </ul>	March 2027

# Appendix B: Scale of interview responses

DESCRIPTOR	MEANING
All	Findings reflect the views and opinions of 100% of interviewees
Most	Findings reflect the views and opinions of at least 75% but less than 100% of interviewees
Many	Findings reflect the views and opinions of at least 51% but less than 75% of interviewees
Half	Findings reflect the views and opinions of 50% of interviewees
Some	Findings reflect the views and opinions of at least 25% but less than 50% of interviewees
A few	Findings reflect the views and opinions of at least two respondents but less than 25% of interviewees

# **Appendix C: Endnotes**

- 1. RCMP, Infoweb ( http://infoweb.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/fp-pf/protect/index-eng.htm ), last modified 2019-09-04, accessed January 2024.
- 2. Meloy, J. Reid (2021), Behavioral Sciences & the Law, International Handbook of Threat Assessment. Behavioral Sciences & the Law. June 2015, Vol. 33 Issue 2/3, pp. 213-237.
- 3. James, D.V., Farnham, F.R., Sukhwal, S., Jones, K., Carlisle, J. Henley, S. Aggressive/intrusive behaviours, harassment and stalking of members of the United Kingdom parliament: a prevalence study and cross-national comparison. THE JOURNAL OF FORENSIC PSYCHIATRY & PSYCHOLOGY, 2016. [http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14789949.2015.1124908].
- 4. Zimonjic, Peter (2024), Harassment of MPs spiked almost 800% in 5 years, says House sergeant-at-arms, CBC News, Politics, [ https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/threats-harassment-mps-spike-1.7217040 ], 2024-05-28.
- 5. Stephen, Jeffery (2024), Number of threats, death threats against cabinet ministers increased as pandemic continued, Privy Council Office data shows, Hill Times, [Number of threats, death threats against cabinet ministers increased as pandemic continued, Privy Council Office data shows The Hill Times ], 2024-02-26.
- 6. Source: RCMP Federal Protective Policing, Protective Operations Support, POAT June 2024.
- 7. Li, Justin, Christian Paas-Lang, Trudeau's Toronto event with Italy PM Meloni cancelled due to pro-Palestinian protest, CBC News [ https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/trudeau-meloni-pro-palestinian-protesters-toronto-1.7132378 ], 2024-03-02.
- 8. Rendell, Mark (2024), Toronto Police review pro-Palestinian protest that led to the cancellation of Trudeau's reception for Italian PM, Globe and Mail, [ <a href="https://www.theglobeandmail.com/canada/article-trudeau-meloni-palestinian-protest/">https://www.theglobeandmail.com/canada/article-trudeau-meloni-palestinian-protest/</a>], 2024-03-03.
- 9. Nash, Chelsea (2024), Canadian politics is 'not safe' right now, and MPs 'are in harm's way': former public safety minister, The Hill Times, [ <a href="https://www.hilltimes.com/story/2024/07/22/canadian-politics-is-not-safe-right-now-and-parliamentarians-are-in-harms-way-former-public-safety-minister/428891/">https://www.hilltimes.com/story/2024/07/22/canadian-politics-is-not-safe-right-now-and-parliamentarians-are-in-harms-way-former-public-safety-minister/428891/</a>], 2024-07-22.
- 10. MacLeod, Lisa, (2024), Politicians of all stripes need to come together to condemn harassment and threats, iPolitics Opinion, [ <a href="https://www.ipolitics.ca/opinions/politicians-off-all-stripes-need-to-come-together-to-condemn-harassment-and-threats">https://www.ipolitics.ca/opinions/politicians-off-all-stripes-need-to-come-together-to-condemn-harassment-and-threats</a> ], 2024-02-23.
- 11. Wright, Teresa, (2024), Sounding the alarm: Canadian politicians face rise in death threats, harassment, iPolitics, [ <a href="https://www.ipolitics.ca/news/sounding-the-alarm-canadian-politicians-face-rise-in-death-threats-harassment">https://www.ipolitics.ca/news/sounding-the-alarm-canadian-politicians-face-rise-in-death-threats-harassment</a>], 2024-03-08.
- 12. Major, Darren (2024), Wave of threats against MPs has RCMP protective unit stretched thin, assistant commissioner says, CBC News Politics, [ <a href="https://www.theglobeandmail.com/canada/article-rcmp-has-struggled-to-staff-unit-dedicated-to-protection-of/">https://www.theglobeandmail.com/canada/article-rcmp-has-struggled-to-staff-unit-dedicated-to-protection-of/</a>], 2024-07-16.
- 13. Doherty, Matthew, (2016), From protective intelligence to threat assessment: Strategies critical to preventing targeted violence and the active shooter. Journal of Business Continuity & Emergency Planning Vol. 10, No. 1, pp. 9–17 Henry Stewart Publications, 1749–9216.
- 14. Fein, Robert, Randy Borum, Bryan Vossekuil, John Berglund (1999). Threat assessment: defining an approach for evaluating risk of targeted violence. Behavioral Sciences & the Law. Jul-Sep 1999, Vol. 17 Issue 3, pp. 323-337.
- 15. Criminal Intelligence Service Canada, (2007), Integrated Threat Assessment Methodology: Version 1.0. Ottawa Cdn: Criminal Intelligence Service Canada, 2007.
- 16. Commission of Inquiry Respecting the Death of Donald Dunphy, Promoting Public Trust: Police Investigating Police-Involved Shootings (2017), The Honourable Leo Barry, Commissioner, Submitted to: The Honourable Andrew Parsons, Minister of Justice and Public Safety for the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador, June 27, 2017, [https://ciddd.ca/].
- 17. Gelles, Michael G., Kim Sasaki-Swindle & Russell E. Palarea. (2002), Threat Assessment: A Partnership Between Law Enforcement and Mental Health. Journal of Threat Assessment, Vol. 2(1).
- 18. Martynook, Rick, (1981), An approach to threat assessment by Police. Ministry of the Solicitor General. Cdn: 1981.
- 19. Source: RCMP, Protective Policing, PBAU program information, February 2024.
- 20. Source: RCMP, Protective Policing, PBAU program information, February 2024.
- 21. Source: RCMP, Protective Policing, PBAU program information, February 2024.