



## **CACP Strategic Foresight**

**Developing Policing Sector Capacities for  
Navigating Seismic Shifts in Society and Related Public Policy**

**A Summary Report**

**Proceedings, Outcomes and Action Proposals from Cohort # 12**

**CACP Global Studies**

**July 2019**

## **INTRODUCTION**

CACP Global Studies is a unique professional development program for executives in policing and related public safety and criminal justice agencies. The program spans over six months of intense study and collaboration, and it applies a research-driven and problem-based learning model. CACP Global 2019 represents the 12<sup>th</sup> cohort to complete the program since 2003. To drive our transformative learning experience, the 2019 cohort was challenged to examine the board-assigned theme of *Navigating Seismic Shifts in Public Policy*. Additionally, in support of the CACP Special Purpose Committee on the Decriminalization of Illicit Drugs (SPC-DID) the 2019 cohort also conducted original research to examine decriminalization models internationally and their impact on public safety and public health, including unintentional consequences. The parallel study was recognized by the cohort as an opportunity to trace a significant and current trend line as just one vivid example of a potentially seismic shift in Canadian public policy, among many others past, present and future.

This combined assignment led us to conduct field studies in 13 countries, ranging from environments with similar geography, public processes, structures, government and policing models, to those whose environments contrast notably with our own. Our team also examined and considered information from across Canada. Our 18 members engaged in extensive discussions on both of these tasks, informed by qualified outside resources, and also informed by our members' own career experiences in 12 different Canadian agencies.

Our program started in January 2019 with 18 succession-ready police executives from federal, provincial and municipal police agencies across Canada coming together online to commence the team building and domestic research needed to set the conditions for success for this year's research global theme. Over the ensuing six months, using a combination of intense residential sessions, online collaboration, expert inputs, and field studies conducted in nation-states around the world, the team worked diligently to find meaningful insights that could inform both the major theme and the parallel work on decriminalization models. We concluded and tested our preliminary research work in June, with both the SPC-DID (May 30) and with an invited panel of representative police leaders (May 31).

This document represents a summary compilation of the key findings and proposed actions that our writing and production team determined as most salient to the CACP Board. Ultimately, we offer in this summary an exciting legacy proposal for current Canadian police leadership: a new way forward to fully and continuously realize on the effects our research can have on Canadian policing as a sector, on the development path of some of our most diverse and diversely-talented members, and on the safety and well-being of our communities well into the future.

### **EVOLUTION OF THE GLOBAL STUDIES 2019 RESEARCH MODEL**

Our research commenced immediately upon the formation of the team. Over the course of many discussions regarding the more routine activities across our own multi-jurisdictional agencies, we set out to glean a better understanding of this somewhat unfamiliar theme of navigating seismic shifts in public policy. Drawing upon our experiences from across the country we began the first phase of our exploration – domestic research. It soon became evident to us that for our sector to have meaningful impact upon public policy, we must first consider the degree to which we have early insight to the seismic shifts in the society that any such policy is designed to serve.

It was evident to all of us that there was a notable, but as yet unrecognized need to move our sector beyond its almost exclusive focus on current and very near-term issues and challenges. By necessity, it is these issues that consume the attentions of our agencies, the CACP and provincial/territorial associations and standing committees. We observe that most police planning, committee work, and research agendas, including our widely-used models for *strategic planning*, tend to draw heavily upon historically derived data, present circumstance, deep traditional experience, and typically seek evidence, solutions and plans of action with hindsight, or at best, a 2-3 year forward horizon. Our long-range goals and adaptive actions are predicated upon current issues and trends that have already begun to affect our communities and/or our members to a considerable degree, thereby becoming urgent priorities. The day-to-day, responsive nature of our policing sector lends itself to remaining focused on the current state, creating capacity challenges for police leaders inclined to look farther into the future. We came to believe that policing as a sector has a vital role to play in navigating seismic shifts, but to do so effectively, we must move at least in part from a reactive posture to a truly proactive one. It falls upon our sector perhaps more than any other to ensure that from wherever it originates, by whomever it is crafted, and to whatever socio-economic trends it is intended to respond, all public policy must remain fully informed by the implications it may bring for the safety and well-being of Canadians and the communities in which they live.

**Strategic Foresight** is best described as a research-driven practice of exploring expected and alternative futures, and then guiding policy and informing nearer-term strategies towards a designed future.

Foresight includes *understanding* the relevant recent past; *scanning* to collect insight about present; *futureing* to describe the understood future including trend research; *contextualizing* to explore possible trend breaks and other divergences that may lead to alternative futures; *visioning* to define preferred future states; *designing* strategies and policy directions to craft this future; *adapting* present and near-term conditions; and *mobilizing* others to pursue desired future outcomes together.

The Dutch Future Society notes that Strategic Foresight differs from traditional planning approaches, which generally build on models. Strategic foresight is used in particular in situations that are characterized as *Volatile, Uncertain, Complex and Ambiguous*. Together these characteristics make the world largely unpredictable, and the future fairly unknown. In a *VUCA* world, traditional planning approaches no longer provide reliable outcomes.

(Van Duijne & Bishop 2018).

Our domestic research led our cohort to identify that the emerging science of **strategic foresight** requires some sustained capacity within our sector if we are to keep pace among the many challenging and increasingly seismic societal shifts that are here already and that will continue to affect life in Canada, whether originating from home or abroad.

We carried these initial impressions with us into our global field studies, where global evidence served to reinforce the urgency of this need, and also introduced us to new possibilities to consider for solutions. The core elements of our global research model are showcased below. Our findings and our call-to-action proposal comprise the subsequent sections of this summary report.

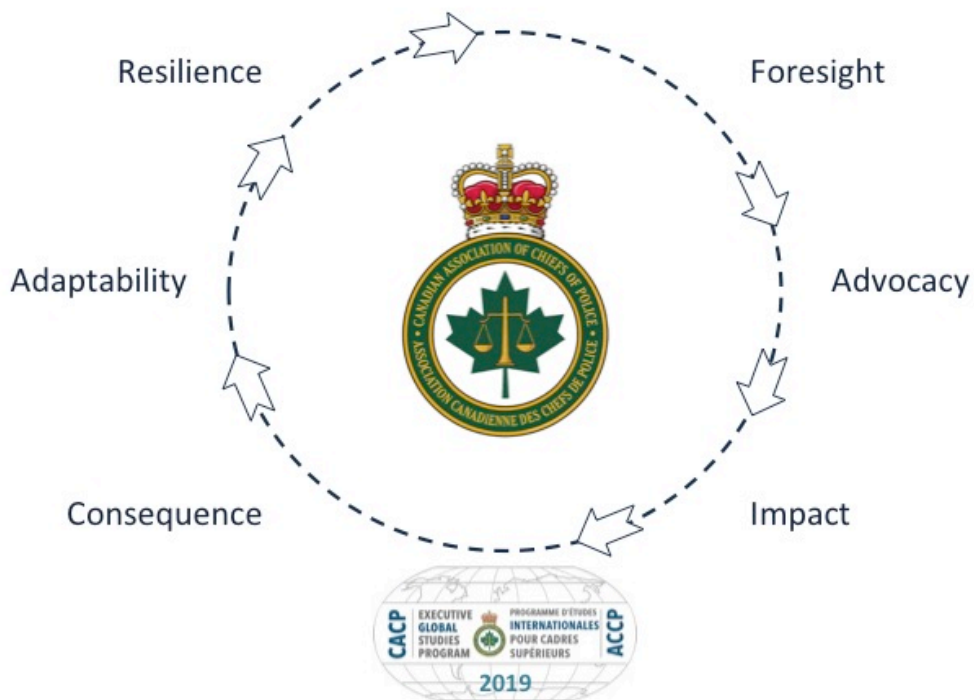
**Our Research Assumption**

Policy shifts are often occurring in Canada without input from key stakeholders. Police have a role to play in charting the course to community safety and well-being.

**Our Research Statement**

Global Studies 2019 will examine significant policy and social changes to identify lessons learned to inform and guide police leaders in navigating seismic societal shifts within a Canadian context.

**Navigating Seismic Shifts in Public Policy**



**Some Key Considerations in Our Research Approach**

Qualitative vs. Quantitative: Quantitative research is typically driven by a hypothesis, and uses controlled forms of investigation supported by statistical and mathematical analysis in order to produce validated results that may be generalized beyond the study with a high degree of confidence. The qualitative approach is guided from a more abstract mental model, and through structured forms of inquiry seeks to understand underlying reasons, authentic insights and new ways of knowing as interpreted from the thoughts,

feelings and experiences of others. In accordance with its learning design and time limitations, CACP Global Studies applies qualitative study methods.

**Reflexivity/Subjectivity:** A research approach in which one acknowledges biases, and thus where the researcher must periodically step back from the topic to recognize that the researcher can shape the research findings based upon their own background and experience. CACP Global Studies applies bracketing and other methods in order to acknowledge and condition for the policing profile of its members.

**Phenomenology:** Phenomenological research is not an empirical study, but is intentionally subjective by design. This research style aims to study the experience of the persons involved in a situation based upon open-ended questions, designed to elicit and make sense from the fulsome lived experience of a person or social group.

**Lived experience** Lived experience is a phenomenological approach in which individuals tell their stories to make meaning of their own truths, realities and experiences. It allows researchers to interpret the meaning of the experience through hearing and observing the words and descriptions of participants. The importance of lived experience can be seen in the 1997 SCC decision *R. v. Delgamuukw* that affirmed the legal validity of oral histories.

#### **Our Dimensions of inquiry** (phrased as adopted prior to field studies)

**Predictability and Foresight:** We will conduct studies around the globe examining whether people or organizations practice foresight and how that impacts their operating posture (reactive posture versus proactive leadership). Are seismic shifts identified early? What scanning methods are used? How is foresight advanced?

**Adaptability and Preparedness:** We will consider how organizations or individuals within groups were able to adapt and prepare for seismic shifts. If they were able to adapt and prepare, how did they achieve that posture? Is that posture replicable or sustainable?

**Owners and Influencers:** Our research will examine which stakeholders own the change, who has an opportunity to influence that change, and who can shape the response to a seismic societal shift.

**Trajectory of Change:** We will consider the questions: What was the impetus for the change? What impacts affected its direction, for example, social impacts of unanticipated events vs. politically motivated changes?

**Impacts:** We will consider the intended and unintended consequences, both positive and negative, which will allow for a fulsome assessment of the change and provide a window into the role that effective foresight might have or might not have played.

**Communications:** We will consider how research, decisions and applications were communicated. Which mediums were most effective? On whom and where in society and/or government were these communications focused?

**Open Engagement:** We will seek to achieve unbiased engagement with a variety of traditional and non-traditional community and policing sector members at all levels,

including citizens, advocates, critics, directors, managers and the rank and file. Our cohort will seek out honest responses, and will give consideration to both best practices and lessons learned.

With these dimensions established the team designed specific and consistent field questions to capture the elements of navigating seismic shifts in public policy in different global environments (see Sidebar for a list of the four sub-team destination countries). Collectively, we conducted over 100 formal and informal interviews with a wide range of sources, including a mix of police, government, NGO's, local media, community members and persons with lived experiences in almost every country we studied.

### **SUMMARIZING OUR RESEARCH FINDINGS**

#### **International:**

In most of the countries we visited, police struggle with the same rear view mirror concept as we see operating in Canada. They all remain locked within the current frame, looking back in the rear view mirror to respond and react to issues already upon them, and only sometimes seeing what is immediately taking shape and coming rapidly into view through the front windshield.

Although we encountered only two police sector agencies that were actively involved in strategic forecasting, all groups recognized an increasingly urgent necessity to engage in strategic forecasting and many saw a potential leadership role for the policing sector in that arena. To date, only Australia and the Netherlands have committed resources and implemented specific processes to advance a strategic foresight lens on community safety and well-being.

The single, unified Dutch police service in the Netherlands is involved in multi faceted forecasting through programs such as "Young Blue", where input is actively sought out from junior, up-and-coming employees to inform a way forward. They have yet to experience an opioid crisis there, but they have already leveraged this group in anticipation. In Australia, the New South Wales Police have a single, executive level futurist/strategic forecaster whose responsibility is to engage with a myriad of partners and look to the horizon for plausible futures. This single resource looks into a very broad range of issues that might impact community safety and well-being including aging populations, climate change, social cohesion, household economic stress, technology and society, to name just a few.

<b>CACP Global Studies 2019</b>
<b>Sub-Teams &amp; Field Study Destinations</b>
Australia
New Zealand
Netherlands
Czech Republic
Croatia
England
Portugal
Spain
Ireland
Northern Ireland
Scotland
Sweden
Denmark

In the majority of the countries we visited, we took away lessons around inclusivity, collaboration and wrap-around processes to ensure community safety and well-being. Relationships and collaboration were tantamount to success. In New Zealand, the power of fulsome relationships, inclusive of the business community and entrenched in culture were evident as they successfully advanced their community safety and well-being priorities.

Our research identified consistent themes related to strategic foresight in the majority of the countries we visited.

1. The policing sector must find ways toward taking a leadership role in strategic forecasting for the benefit of community safety and well-being.
2. There is a recognized need to commit sustainable resources to strategic foresight.
3. Inclusive engagement and the leveraging of knowledge and experience of a broad scope of community partners will be essential to implementing any community safety and well-being strategic foresight model.
4. Newer employees have a keen interest and have potentially key roles and unique talents to bring to a future focused strategic foresight framework.
5. Sensitivity to cultural considerations and community-specific needs remain paramount.

In discussions with NGO's, government, academia, community leaders and the media, one message was consistently clear: the policing sector has a significant role to play in strategic foresight in order to influence and inform public policy from a community safety and well-being lens. This messaging was evident in both the broader conversation around navigating seismic shifts in public policy, in general, and also within the specifics of the drug decriminalization context.

***Note: In order to remain focused on our own proposals for action, the body of this report continues along the general theme of seismic shifts in society and resulting public policy considerations. Our team has, however, remained in close cooperation with the SPC-DID, and we defer to that group to deliver its resulting proposals to the CACP Board. Those SPC-DID findings have been informed by CACP Global Studies 2019, as summarized by our special section on our global drug decriminalization research, provided as Appendix A.***

### **Updating Our Findings with Current Domestic Realities**

We listened closely to the feedback from our invited panel of executive police leaders with whom we discussed our preliminary findings and our still-forming thoughts on a forward path, delivered at the Briars on our last day as a full cohort on May 31, 2019.

We heard clearly that the importance and need for strategic foresight was readily recognized and embraced. However, this panel also challenged our cohort by drawing upon our own earlier observations: current capacities at the agency, association and committee levels are almost fully



consumed by current realities, and conventional resourcing options are scarce. The panel also reflected back to us that as succession-ready leaders, we are essentially representative of the CACP of the future. In effect, they invited us to find a way, and even to consider leading the way.

We acknowledge and appreciate the forward leaning posture of our current CACP leadership. As we continued our work into June, led by the efforts of our writing and production sub-team, we first considered if and how a strategic foresight framework might align with the current mission, vision, strategic pillars and priorities of the CACP. *(Note: Some of these familiar elements are reproduced in Appendix B to this report for quick reference.)*

We note that our proposed course of action, as outlined further below, incorporates key features of each and every CACP Strategic Pillar: *people, partnerships, advocacy, and a commitment to evidence-based and evidence-informed policy and practice*. As well, our proposal has the potential to touch upon and contribute to every one of the first eight CACP Strategic Policing Priorities. And, we believe our proposal offers the potential to form a clear and decisive CACP action on *Priority #9: Innovation and Futurist Policing*.

Having confirmed this alignment, we set our creative sights on determining an innovative model that might enable the CACP to provide sustained leadership and build lasting sector-wide capacity for strategic foresight, while also advancing its already stated priorities. Notably, we also saw additional value in the degree to which our proposal might build further on the ambitions set out in the *Authentic Inclusion* work of the prior CACP Global Studies 2018 cohort, the *Public Trust* roadmap set out by Global Studies 2017, and the *What Happens There Matters Here* awareness called for by Global Studies 2016.

## **OUR PROPOSAL FOR BOARD CONSIDERATION**

### ***CACP Strategic Foresight:***

#### ***Developing Our Future Leaders Through Innovative Thought, Collaboration and Stewardship***

As detailed further in the attached Info-graphic Resource Card, CACP Global Studies 2019 is proposing, subject to CACP Board approval, the introduction (as early as this fall) of a unique new program of study targeted to members of Canadian police and related agencies, and specifically, to members that fall outside of current CACP membership profiles. We believe the ideal candidates for this program will be those most widely diverse and diversely talented employees currently serving at varied non-commissioned sworn ranks and similar civilian unit levels. Further, they will ideally be among those who have joined policing in the past two decades (or less) and who will be assuming and advancing through mid-level and senior leadership roles well into the next two decades (or more).

Since 2003, through CACP Global Studies, over 200 succession-ready executives have completed a uniquely transformative learning experience, and informed a wide range of urgent policy

directions for Canadian policing. We believe the need for this original CACP program will continue, as will the importance of its global reach and its ability to respond to current priority topics. What is noteworthy here is that this experience has been made available through a tuition-driven model, resulting in no net cost to the CACP, and representing just one among many training and education investment options for each candidate's sponsoring agency.

Global Studies 2019 members propose that a similar funding and delivery model will make it possible for the Canadian policing sector to immediately make a robust and continuing entry into the science of strategic foresight, while also delivering a uniquely challenging and transformative learning experience to members who are the future of policing across Canada.

Moreover, in response to the challenge set out by our invited panel on May 31, the members of the CACP Global Studies 2019 cohort are prepared and committed to providing active leadership to the design and execution of this program, and to serving as mentors to the candidates. Subject to the availability of each member, in consultation with her or his host agency, we believe we are sufficient in number to give adequate support and guidance to a continuing program, with additional capacity to be built as success with the program and its growing enrolment develops over time.

We have also received early indications of support for continuing executive oversight and program guidance, on a no-cost basis. With board approval, our cohort will work with these executive volunteer advisors to source and assemble the necessary expert resources and to complete a program design reflective of some of the best features of our own program, and built upon the best emerging methods in strategic foresight and innovation.

To highlight some additional rationale from our global and domestic studies, our examination of the Canadian context and those abroad clearly identified the constant pressures involved in the current frame. The policing sector deals almost exclusively in the current frame. The necessity to be responsive to annual budgets, the instant 24/7 news cycle, election cycles, leadership contract terms, association executive terms, and myriad reporting pressures are but a few of the issues that force a maintained focus in the here and now. Strategic plans seldom extend past 3 years, and most are updated annually to reflect emerging conditions and variations. The recent changes in cannabis legislation is representative of challenges we face daily. For example, the policing sector continues to struggle to identify and deploy acceptable roadside screening devices, or to develop consistent fitness-for-duty policies in the wake of legalization. What if we had the foresight some 10 years ago to see this societal shift coming?

As we scanned the Canadian context we learned of *Canada Beyond 150*, a federal government program focused on strategic foresight. What was striking to us is that among this select cadre was a marked absence of policing sector representation. The private sector has also embraced strategic foresight and it is noted often as an emerging cornerstone by many industry leaders.

We identified challenges (finances at the forefront) across the policing sector to identifying sustainable resources to commit to strategic foresight. At the same time, we share among our own experience as executives that a real or perceived lack of leadership development opportunities for newer employees is a continuing challenge among most policing organizations.

We also recognize that it is our newest employees who come to policing with a broader range of experience, who most represent diversity of thought, gender, culture and life experiences, who are well suited to scanning ahead with a wide lens, and who have a direct stake in the future with long careers and leadership opportunities still ahead of them.

As previously mentioned, we also considered the research and reports of our most recent predecessor Global Studies cohorts. The opportunity to program for authentic inclusion, to leverage diversity, to advance the immeasurable value of public trust, to build wide-spread global awareness, and to further multi-sector collaboration have also informed our call to action proposal.

### **DELIVERING THE RESEARCH OUTCOMES FROM CACP GLOBAL STUDIES 2019**

As the picture of our results has come into focus, and following discussion among our group, it was determined that there were many methods required for the cohort to effectively introduce and deliver the findings of this research study, and to effectively introduce our proposal for action to the Canadian policing community. Our cohort has selected the following means:

#### **Our Suite of Deliverables:**

1. CACP Global 2019 Interim Presentation to a select panel of Canadian Police leaders (completed May 31, 2019);
2. CACP Global 2019 Executive Summary Report to the CACP Board of Directors (this document, supported by a pending discussion with the Board on Saturday, August 10);
3. An interactive presentation on the Global 2019 research findings to be delivered to the full delegation at the 2019 CACP 114th Annual Conference at Calgary, August 13th, 2019. This will consist of a 30 minute presentation designed to highlight key findings, and introduce a future focused solution to navigate seismic shifts in public policy in the Canadian context;
4. Committee Briefings: Before and during the AGM proceedings, members of Global Studies 2019 will meet with several of the CACP Standing Committees, August 10-11.
5. Info-graphic Resource Card: The cohort has produced a placemat handout, which will illustrate our solution to the board, and subject to approval, will immediately begin promotion of the program to potential candidates and their agencies.

**IN CLOSING: A LEGACY OPPORTUNITY**

What if we could instill in our own people the skills and science of strategic foresight?

Our call to action advances a future focused, sustainable system-wide capacity building model. It provides a uniquely challenging developmental opportunity for many of our future policing leaders now. And, it enables the policing sector to scan forward 5 to 12 to 20 years ahead, identifying plausible futures built upon known and emerging trends and indicators, forecasting their incumbent issues, opportunities, challenges and solutions, and positioning us to mobilize in the common cause of community safety and well-being.

Our CACP Foresight proposal would be unique among the global policing community.

Our proposed model harnesses existing capacities and the most concentrated diversity of talent in our policing sector, more inclusive and more representative of the broader communities we serve. It provides a sustainable, strategic investment in our future, by and for the policing sector. The future-oriented issues and solutions advanced by our newer employees, for consideration among current and future leadership, will be evidence-informed and early enough to mobilize action, to update our research agendas, and to initiate early collaboration with others. CACP Foresight will position the policing sector to move from a reactive posture towards more truly proactive leadership voice for community safety and well-being.

Our proposed learning model operationalizes and strengthens the CACP mission, vision and strategic pillars. As innovative policing leaders today, your legacy (and ours) will be extended to a future leadership cadre equipped with new abilities, and to a sector with growing experience in strategic foresight, bringing with it the ability to anticipate and better navigate the seismic policy shifts that will continue to shape the course of Canadian society.

The members of CACP Global Studies 2019 are grateful to the Board and to our sponsoring agencies for this truly unique learning experience, and for the opportunity to contribute to the future of policing in Canada.

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