

Decision Regarding Findings Report INV-24-14 Concerning Policing Provided by the Waterloo Regional Police Service

Decision By:

Ryan Teschner, Inspector General of Policing

I INTRODUCTION

- [1] This decision addresses a complaint received by the Inspector General of Policing against the Waterloo Regional Police Service (“WRPS”), alleging that the WRPS failed to adequately take enforcement action against illegal cannabis dispensaries. An inspector with Ontario’s Inspectorate of Policing (“IoP”) investigated the complaint to determine whether the WRPS failed to comply with the *Community Safety and Policing Act, 2019*, SO 2019, c 1, Sch 1 (the “Act”) or its regulations. Following a review of the inspector’s Findings Report ¹ (which is attached to this Decision as Appendix A), and for the reasons that follow, I conclude that the WRPS has complied with the Act and the regulations.
- [2] I will also go further. Beyond compliance, the WRPS’s actions in this matter are an excellent example for the delivery of good policing, solid coordination with other law enforcement partners, and good ‘customer service’ to those that come forward with public safety concerns.

II BACKGROUND

- [3] The inspector’s investigation revealed that the complainant contacted the WRPS on April 15, 2024, with information about potential criminal activity. Specifically, the complainant reported that two illegal cannabis dispensaries were operating in the Cambridge area. The WRPS promptly acknowledged the complainant’s report and assured him that appropriate actions would be taken.
- [4] WRPS records demonstrate that the information provided by the complainant was evaluated and escalated within the police service. The WRPS also engaged the Ontario Provincial Police (“OPP”) Joint Forces Cannabis Enforcement Team to form an investigative strategy and sought legal advice from the Public Prosecution Service of Canada (who has carriage of criminal matters that are ultimately prosecuted under the *Cannabis Act*, SC 2018, c 16) because the stores asserted indigeneity.
- [5] A phased investigative approach began in June 2024, when the owners and landlords of the cannabis dispensaries were cautioned by the WRPS for noncompliance with the *Cannabis Act*, SC 2018, c 16. Police officers also attended both locations to directly caution employees.

¹ Section 123 of the Act requires an IoP inspector who completes an investigation of a complaint to report their findings to the Inspector General. This report is redacted to comply with the *Publication of Findings Reports and Directions under Sections 123 and 125 of the Act Regulation*, O Reg 317/24.

[6] In July 2024, police officers conducted surveillance at both locations and formed grounds to believe that the dispensaries continued to sell cannabis in contravention of the *Cannabis Act*. WRPS officers again attended the locations to attempt to educate the employees, and sent a letter to each store requesting the dispensaries cease their operations.

[7] On August 9, 2024, the WRPS obtained judicial authorization for a search warrant under section 87 of the *Cannabis Act*. The search warrant was executed on August 14, 2024, leading to the arrest of employees, and the seizure of unregulated cannabis products and Canadian currency.

[8] In October 2024, the WRPS received information indicating that one of the cannabis dispensaries had resumed operations. As a result, on November 6, 2024, the WRPS obtained judicial authorization for an additional search warrant. However, before the search warrant was executed, the target dispensary closed its operations – the building’s owner had evicted the dispensary after being engaged by the WRPS’s Asset Forfeiture Unit.

[9] The WRPS investigation resulted in charges and the matter was referred to the Crown for prosecution.

[10] Based on the information assessed by the inspector, throughout the WRPS investigation, the police service maintained ongoing communication with the complainant.

III ISSUE

[11] The results of this investigation raise two issues that I must address:

1. Did the WRPS comply with the *Investigations Regulation*, O Reg 395/23 (the “Investigations Regulation”), and
2. Did the WRPS provide adequate and effective policing?

IV ANALYSIS

1. The WRPS complied with the Investigations Regulation

[12] A review of the Findings Report demonstrates that the WRPS complied with the provincial Investigations Regulation.

a. The Investigations Regulation imposed two requirements in this case

[13] Section 6 of the Investigations Regulation states:

6(1) If a member of a police service, in the course of their duties, becomes aware of a matter mentioned in subsection (2) and believes that a supervisor has not yet been notified of the matter, the member shall as soon as possible notify a supervisor of the matter in accordance with the investigation procedures.

(2) The matters referred to in subsection (1) are the following:

....

- 2 A matter in relation to which there is a reasonable suspicion that an offence under the *Criminal Code* (Canada), the *Controlled Drugs and Substances Act* (Canada) or the *Cannabis Act* (Canada) has been or will be committed.

[14] This section imposes a requirement on police officers to notify a supervisor when there is a reasonable suspicion that an offence, including one under the *Cannabis Act*, has been committed. I can reasonably infer that this was done in this case because supervisory staff were engaged in this matter and other areas of WRPS were alerted (e.g. WRPS Asset Forfeiture Unit).

[15] Section 7 of the Investigations Regulation further requires:

7(1) On being notified of a matter under section 6, the supervisor shall determine whether the matter should be investigated.

(2) If the supervisor determines the matter should be investigated, the supervisor shall, based on the following factors, assign either an investigator or a senior investigator to undertake the investigation:

1. All information available at the time regarding the matter to be investigated.
2. The complexity of the investigation.
3. Public safety concerns and the impact on the community resulting from the matter to be investigated.
4. The resources required for the investigation and the anticipated length of the investigation.
5. Any applicable investigation procedures

b. The Investigations Regulation's requirements were complied with

[16] These provisions require a supervisor to assess whether the matter should be investigated and assign an investigator or senior investigator, as appropriate. This obligation was clearly complied with because an extensive criminal investigation (including the use of surveillance), ultimately resulting in the execution of multiple search warrants and charges being laid, was completed. In addition to WRPS's own investigative planning and the execution of this plan, the WRPS also liaised with the OPP to ensure visibility, coordination and the flow of other relevant information that may bear on the investigation.

2. The WRPS provided adequate and effective policing

[17] In addition to specific requirements set out in the Investigations Regulation, the WRPS was required to, more generally, deliver policing in a manner that was "adequate and effective" as defined by the Act. The WRPS not only met the standards of adequate and effective policing, but exceeded them in these circumstances.

a. The requirement of a police service to deliver "adequate and effective" policing

[18] In Ontario, police service boards that govern each of the 43 Ontario municipal police services, and the OPP Commissioner (in the case of the OPP) are required to ensure adequate and effective policing is provided locally. This statutory duty is contained in section 10(1) of the Act, which states that:

10(1) The police service boards and the Commissioner shall ensure adequate and effective policing is provided in the area for which they have policing responsibility in accordance with the needs of the population in the area and having regard for the diversity of the population in the area.

[19] Section 11(1) of the Act defines “adequate and effective policing” by specifying the core policing functions that every Ontario police service must be able to deliver, and that they must be delivered in compliance with the Act and all regulations made under the Act, as well as federal and provincial constitutional and human rights obligations:

11(1) Adequate and effective policing means all of the following functions provided in accordance with the standards set out in the regulations, including the standards with respect to the avoidance of conflicts of interest, and with the requirements of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* and the *Human Rights Code*:

1. Crime prevention.
2. Law enforcement.
3. Maintaining the public peace.
4. Emergency response.
5. Assistance to victims of crime.
6. Any other prescribed policing functions.

b. Adequate and effective policing is measured against the new ‘reasonableness’ standard

[20] In Ontario, there is also a stand-alone regulation that further details some of the broad and more specific adequate and effective policing requirements. Section 2 of the *Adequate and Effective Policing (General) Regulation*, O Reg 392/23 (the “Adequate and Effective Policing Regulation”) further requires that:

2(1) A policing function shall be provided to an extent and in a manner that is reasonable, having regard to the following factors:

1. The policing needs of the community.
2. The geographic and socio-demographic characteristics of the police service’s area of policing responsibility.
3. The extent to and manner in which the policing function is effectively provided in similar communities in Ontario.
4. The extent to which past provision of the policing function by the police service has been effective in addressing the policing needs of the community.
5. Best practices respecting the policing function.

[emphasis added]

[21] Beyond specific statutory and regulatory requirements that an Ontario police service must comply with, “reasonableness” is an overarching standard required to be met for the delivery of policing functions. Given that this standard is a new element of the Ontario policing framework under the Act, it bears unpacking this concept.

[22] Reasonableness does not require perfection, but rather the delivery of a policing function that falls within a range of what may be considered appropriate. The reasonableness standard also may not result in just one appropriate outcome for what constitutes adequate and effective police service delivery.

[23] In determining what is ‘reasonable,’ the Inspector General must engage in a contextual assessment of the five factors listed in section 2 of the Adequate and Effective Policing Regulation. This assessment involves applying the relevant facts to each factor. Again, there will be circumstances where the application of facts to the five factors results in a range of ‘reasonable’ outcomes that may be adequate and effective, rather than just a single outcome.

[24] The manner and extent that the five factors listed in section 2 of the Adequate and Effective Policing Regulation may be assessed will vary depending on the circumstances and the available evidence. In some instances, the Inspector General may have already established a standard for the delivery of a policing function in a prior decision, or as part of his or her statutory duties to advise police services regarding compliance with the Act. In those instances, an assessment of the five factors listed in section 2 of the Adequate and Effective Policing Regulation may assist in determining if and how that standard is applied to a police service considering the local needs and realities of the community in which it operates. In other instances, such as the present case where the Inspector General has not already established a standard for the delivery of a specific function, an assessment of the five factors can assist in establishing the boundaries of what is considered reasonable. In both instances, section 2(2) of the Adequate and Effective Policing Regulation requires the Inspector General to consider any quantitative and qualitative information, to the extent that such information is available, in applying the five factors.

[25] Of course, the factual record will vary from case to case. In some cases, the available facts that are relevant to the reasonableness analysis will be plentiful, and in others, less so. Regardless, the Inspector General is required to apply the available facts to the five factors in determining what a reasonable standard of police service delivery requires in the case.

[26] In this case, there is minimal information available about the five factors that informs the reasonableness standard, other than the complainant's statement, which is an indication — at least to some extent — of the needs of the community for law enforcement. The complainant came forward with an issue of unregulated cannabis sales that could present harm to those that purchase and consume the product. This policing need was clear and present, and required some form of WRPS intervention to address the potential harm associated with an unregulated and unmonitored drug supply making its way into the community.

c. The WRPS met the reasonableness standard

[27] Based on the available evidence and applicable 'reasonableness' factors, the law enforcement actions WRPS took in response to the complainant's allegations certainly met the reasonableness standard in this case, having regard to the investigative steps taken, engagement of appropriate expertise and supports, and effective coordination within and outside the WRPS. Indeed, I find that not only was the WRPS's delivery of its law enforcement function reasonable, but that it reflects a much higher standard for how law enforcement should be delivered in these circumstances. Upon receipt of the initial report, the WRPS evaluated the complainant's information, engaged appropriate internal personnel, developed an investigative plan and then implemented the plan. The WRPS's decision to take a phased approach to enforcement was commendable. This approach began with an attempt to educate the dispensary and its employees, then moved to a formal warning to the dispensaries. Afterward, information was collected through surveillance to establish that the dispensaries remained in operation and to form the grounds required to request judicial authorization for a search warrant, which ultimately resulted in the seizure of evidence and the laying of charges.

[28] The WRPS is also commended for engaging appropriate external parties by liaising with the OPP's Joint Forces Cannabis Enforcement Team as part of its investigative process, which ensured coordination and information-sharing with the Ontario policing sector, and for consulting with the Public Prosecution Service of Canada on legal issues to ensure the lawfulness of their enforcement actions.

[29] Lastly, it should be acknowledged that the WRPS was responsive and maintained ongoing communication with the complainant, demonstrating an appropriate level of follow-up with residents that bring forward public safety concerns. Here, the concern was the illegal operation of the dispensaries, and the sale of cannabis product that was unregulated, unmonitored and could be detrimental to public health and safety.

[30] While it is unfortunate that at least one of the unlicensed cannabis dispensaries resumed operations, this, in my view on the record before me, does not indicate the WRPS's delivery of its law enforcement function was unreasonable. The WRPS appropriately investigated the matter and, in fact, laid charges in relation to the dispensaries' operations. Once the police conduct an investigation and decide to lay charges, the responsibility in our justice system shifts to the Crown to prosecute the matter, and the courts to make the ultimate decision on whether the charges have been proven beyond a reasonable doubt.

V CONCLUSION

[31] The WRPS's criminal investigation of the complainant's report of illegal cannabis dispensaries operating in Cambridge and their enforcement of the *Cannabis Act* certainly complied with the Act and its regulations and was reasonable. In fact, this is a commendable example of police investigative work, operations and community engagement.

Date: December 17, 2025

Original Signed By

Ryan Teschner
Inspector General of Policing

FINDINGS REPORT

Waterloo Regional Police Service

**Section 107(1)(a) Policing
Complaint Investigation**
(INV-24-14)

Submitted to:
Ryan Teschner
Inspector General of Policing of
Ontario

August 19, 2025

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ABOUT THE INSPECTOR GENERAL OF POLICING AND THE INSPECTORATE OF POLICING

The Inspector General of Policing drives improved performance and accountability in policing and police governance by overseeing the delivery of adequate and effective policing across Ontario. The Inspector General ensures compliance with the province's policing legislation and standards, and has the authority to issue progressive, risk-based and binding directions and measures to protect public safety. Ontario's Community Safety and Policing Act embeds protections to ensure the Inspector General's statutory duty is delivered independently from government.

The Inspector General of Policing leads the Inspectorate of Policing (IoP). The IoP provides operational support to inspect, investigate, monitor, and advise Ontario's police services, boards and special constable employers. By leveraging independent research and data intelligence, the IoP promotes leading practices and identifies areas for improvement, ensuring that high-quality policing and police governance is delivered to make everyone in Ontario safer.

In March 2023, Ryan Teschner was appointed as Ontario's first Inspector General of Policing with duties and authorities under the Community Safety and Policing Act. Mr. Teschner is a recognized expert in public administration, policing and police governance.

For more information about the Inspector General of Policing or the IoP, please visit www.iopontario.ca.

INTRODUCTION

This is a report to the Inspector General of Policing by an inspector appointed by the Inspector General, who has completed an inspection under Part VII of the [Community Safety and Policing Act, 2019](#) (CSPA).

OVERVIEW OF INVESTIGATION

The Complaint

A written complaint was forwarded by the Law Enforcement Complaints Agency (LECA) to the Inspector General of Policing on under the provisions of section 108 of the CSPA. The complaint alleged that the Waterloo Regional Police Service (WRPS) had failed to investigate and enforce illegal cannabis dispensaries within the Region of Waterloo.

The complaint was in relation to allegations that the WRPS had received information indicating illicit cannabis dispensaries were operating within the jurisdiction of the service and no enforcement action was taken between March 1, 2024 and June 3, 2024. The complainant had submitted information to the WRPS about two illegal cannabis dispensaries operation in the Cambridge area.

The Subject Police Service

Name of Police Service: Waterloo Regional Police Service

Service Headquarters: 200 Maple Grove Road, Cambridge, Ontario, N3H 5M1

Chief of Police: Mark Crowell

Chief of Police since November 24, 2022

Service Total Strength: (Actual - Authorized not available)

- Sworn – 834
- Civilian – 448

Geographic Service Area:

- 1370square kilometers
Approximately 678, 170 residents

Applicable Legislative and Regulatory Provisions

[Section 11\(1\)](#) of the CSPA provides that Adequate and effective policing means all of the following functions provided in accordance with the standards set out in the regulations, including the standards with respect to the avoidance of conflicts of interest, and with the

requirements of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* and the *Human Rights Code*:

1. Crime prevention.
2. Law enforcement.
3. Maintaining the public peace.
4. Emergency response.
5. Assistance to victims of crime.
6. Any other prescribed policing functions.

The following regulations were reviewed having regard to the allegations made in the complaint:

[Ontario Regulation 392/23: Adequate and Effective Policing \(General\)](#)

[Ontario Regulation 395/23: Investigations](#)

SUMMARY OF THE INVESTIGATION CONDUCTED

As part of the investigation process, an interview was conducted with the complainant. Additionally, relevant open-source material and information provided by the service were gathered, reviewed, and analysed.

Investigative Exhibits: Collection and Review

News Articles

Multiple online news media sources were reviewed to examine the issue of illegal cannabis dispensaries, which form the foundation of the complaint. A common theme among these articles is the concern over unlicensed cannabis stores flourishing within the community. These stores do not adhere to the same regulations as licensed dispensaries, incur lower costs, and consequently, can undercut the prices of legal stores.

Additional concerns include these unlicensed stores offering cheaper, unregulated products with higher THC content. The articles also highlight confusion regarding the enforcement of illegal dispensaries. The Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario (AGCO) regulates Ontario's cannabis stores but does not have a compliance role for those operating without a license. Such cases fall under the jurisdiction of local police. However, some articles suggest that this issue is a low priority for municipal forces, allowing these unlicensed stores to thrive in the communities.

Another component of the concerns is that some unlicensed stores claim to operate under an Indigenous banner, creating ambiguity regarding enforcement. Some articles allege that this problem stems from the federal and provincial governments ignoring

First Nations' intentions to legitimately participate in the industry but lacking the resources to do so.

Source: CTV News. (n.d.). *Who's responsible for regulating cannabis stores operating under the sovereignty banner?* CTV News. <https://www.ctvnews.ca/kitchener/who-s-responsible-for-regulating-cannabis-stores-operating-under-the-sovereignty-banner-1.6879295>

Source: McGinty, J. (2024, July 11). *'How can we compete?': Local cannabis stores upset as police do nothing to stop unregulated pot shops.* CambridgeToday. <https://www.cambridgetoday.ca/local-news/how-can-we-compete-local-cannabis-stores-upset-as-police-do-nothing-to-stop-unregulated-pot-shops-9207374>

Source: McGinty, J. (2023, June 26). *Ontario Cannabis Retail Council sides with Cambridge shops over 'patterns of discrimination'.* CambridgeToday. <https://www.cambridgetoday.ca/local-news/ontario-cannabis-retail-council-sides-with-cambridge-shops-over-patterns-of-discrimination-7195752>

Complainant Interview

An interview was conducted with the complainant [redacted – s 1(1)2 – O Reg 317/24]. He [redacted – s 1(1)2 – O Reg 317/24] expressed deep frustration over the lack of enforcement against illegal cannabis dispensaries, particularly in Cambridge and Stratford.

He began reporting illegal stores in March 2024, making approximately 75 inquiries to various agencies, including municipal bylaw offices, the AGCO, WRPS, and Stratford Police Service (SPS). Despite repeated efforts, he was consistently redirected, with each agency deferring responsibility. He noted that while WRPS cited other priorities like the fentanyl crisis, SPS acknowledged legal complexities involving dispensaries claiming Indigenous status and stated enforcement would only follow federal direction.

[redacted – s 1(1)2 – O Reg 317/24]

He reported that two illegal stores in Cambridge, were raided in July 2024 but quickly reopened. One continues to operate discreetly [redacted – s 1(1)2 – O Reg 317/24]. He also described a threatening encounter with bikers linked to the black market [redacted – s 1(1)2 – O Reg 317/24].

Additional Material Collected and Reviewed

Police Service Data Collection and Analysis

The WRPS was requested to provide the following information and documentation as part of the investigation: all police records relating to calls for service between the Service and the complainant in relation to unlicensed cannabis dispensaries; policies and procedures relating to criminal and drug investigations; policies and procedures for dealing with unlicensed cannabis dispensaries; any WRPS internal communication regarding unlicensed cannabis dispensaries and any training documents prepared for members of the service in relation to licensed and unlicensed cannabis dispensaries.

Police Records for Calls for Service from the Complainant in relation to unlicensed cannabis dispensaries

The Service conducted a query of its internal records management system and initially found no documented calls for service from the complainant regarding unlicensed cannabis dispensaries. Subsequent review, however, confirmed that the complainant's call had been referred directly to the Drug Enforcement Unit, where the information was appropriately documented outside the standard call log.

Additionally, the Service provided a complete set of email correspondence received from the complainant. This was cross-referenced with the documentation submitted by the complainant, and all communications were found to be consistent and fully accounted for.

WRPS Procedures

The Service's procedures related to drug investigations and criminal investigation management were reviewed with the standards set out in Ontario Regulation 395/23 under the *Community Safety and Policing Act, 2019* (CSPA).

This regulation mandates that police services establish and maintain specific standards for conducting investigations. These include, but are not limited to:

- A clear process for supervisory review upon notification of a potential matter, including a determination of whether an investigation is warranted;
- Assignment of investigations to a qualified senior investigator;
- Immediate notification of supervisors and, where applicable, major case managers;
- Evaluation by the investigating officer to ensure the immediate safety of all persons involved;
- Procedures for conducting interviews with victims, suspects, witnesses, and persons of interest, in accordance with the officer's training;
- Protocols for scene searches, evidence collection, and records management;
- Utilization of specialized investigative teams and services;
- Consultation with the Crown Attorney where appropriate.

WRPS Crown Brief Synopses

Between June 2024 and November 2024, the Service provided multiple Crown brief synopses outlining several criminal investigations that resulted in charges related to the operation of unlicensed cannabis dispensaries within the City of Cambridge and the Region of Waterloo. These investigations were initiated following information provided by the complainant specifically identifying the illegal dispensaries in question.

The synopses indicate that the Service initially engaged with the unlicensed dispensaries by providing education regarding their non-compliance with the federal Cannabis Act. Despite formal warnings, the businesses continued to operate unlawfully, leading to the establishment of grounds for arrests under the Cannabis Act. Subsequent enforcement actions resulted in the seizure of significant quantities of cannabis, cannabis-related products, and Canadian currency.

Further synopses detail similar enforcement actions taken against additional unlicensed dispensaries operating within the same jurisdiction. Notably, between September and October 2024, the Service utilized proactive investigative techniques on one such location. The intelligence gathered during this period supported the issuance and execution of a search warrant, culminating in multiple arrests and the seizure of illicit cannabis products in November 2024.

Internal communication

Upon request, the Service provided all internal communications related to the operation of illegal cannabis dispensaries within its jurisdiction. The documentation begins with email correspondence from the complainant, in which he outlines his concerns regarding unlicensed cannabis operations. The Service responded promptly, acknowledging his concerns and assuring him that appropriate action would be taken.

Included in the disclosure were all relevant email communications involving senior personnel, these communications trace the progression from the initial sharing of the complainant's information to internal discussions on initiating an investigation. They detail the development of investigative strategies, the levels of authorization required, and the step-by-step execution of the investigative plan. This includes coordination with specialized units and consultation with the federal prosecutor, ultimately leading to search warrants, seizures, and arrests.

Throughout the correspondence, the complainant's concerns were consistently shared among key personnel, with clear directives issued to address them. The Service demonstrated a commitment to transparency and responsiveness by maintaining ongoing communication with the complainant and connecting him with supervisory staff overseeing the investigations.

INVESTIGATION FINDINGS

I make the following findings, relying on the material and information collected during the investigation, now contained within this report:

1. Upon receiving information about illegal cannabis dispensaries operating within the Waterloo region, the service actively investigated criminal offences.

- a. On April 15, 2024, the complainant sent an email to the Service reporting two illegal cannabis dispensaries operating in the Cambridge area.
- b. Between April 15, 2024 and June 18, 2024, the Service records indicate that the Service initiated open-source searches related to the illegal dispensaries, connected with the OPP Provincial Joint Forces Cannabis Enforcement Team, and began formulating an investigative strategy.
- c. A phased investigative approach was launched in June 2024. During the initial phase, owners and landlords of unlicensed cannabis dispensaries were informed of their noncompliance with the *Cannabis Act* and provided with educational guidance. If operations continue despite these warnings, the final phase could include the execution of federal *Cannabis Act* search warrants.
- d. Police attended both of the locations reported by the complainant on June 27, 2024, in attempts to provide education to the employees that the store was operating in contravention of the Cannabis Act. Employees were verbally warned that they would be charged under this Act if they continued to work at the store.
- e. On July 17 and 18th 2024, surveillance was conducted at these locations and observations provided police with enough evidence to believe these stores continued to sell illicit cannabis.
- f. On July 26, 2024, police again attended each of these locations in attempts to further educate employees and a formal letter was delivered to the store from the WRPS requesting that the business cease to operate.

2. The service utilized the information gathered during investigations to lay criminal charges and execute search warrants.

- a. On August 9, 2024, an authorization for a section 87 Cannabis Act search warrant to search both locations reported by the complainant was granted.
- b. On August 14, 2024, the aforementioned search warrant was executed at both locations and employees were arrested, quantities of illicit

cannabis and Canadian currency were located and seized as a result.

- c. On November 4, 2024, a section 87 Cannabis Act search warrant was submitted and approved on November 6, 2024.
- d. After submitting the warrant information was received that the dispensary had closed after a member of the WRPS Asset Forfeiture Unit had been in touch with the owner. As a result of the communication the building owner evicted the tenant, and the building has been vacated as of November 4, 2024. This was confirmed in person by a member of the Service on the afternoon of November 4, 2024.

3. The service took proactive measures to prevent and respond to unlawful activities.

- a. On July 17 and 18th 2024, surveillance was conducted at these locations and observations provided police with enough evidence to believe these stores continued to sell illicit cannabis.
- b. On July 26, 2024, police again attended each of these locations in attempts to further educate employees and a formal letter was delivered to the store from the WRPS requesting that the business cease to operate.
- c. In October 2024, information was received indicating that one of the illegal cannabis dispensaries had likely resumed operations. As a result, investigative measures, including the execution of search warrants, were undertaken, leading to the initiation of charges.

4. The service collaborated with other agencies and community partners to address illegal dispensaries within their jurisdiction.

- a. Between April 15, 2024 to June 18, 2024, the Service records indicate that the Service initiated open-source searches related to the illegal dispensaries, connected with the OPP Provincial Joint Forces Cannabis Enforcement Team, and began formulating an investigative strategy.
- b. As both locations were operating under a questionable indigenous banner, the Service sought the direction of the Public Prosecution Service of Canada (PPSC) and had confirmed that they would prosecute any charges as a result of enforcement on these illegal dispensaries like any other drug file brought before them. It was further noted that the issues of indigenous status should not drive the decision to enforce the law as these are charter issues that have a legal process and the PPSC will litigate them as such should they be brought forward at trial.

777 Bay Street, 7th Floor
Toronto, ON M5G 2C8
Tel: +1-416-873-5930 or 1-888-333-5078
www.iopontario.ca

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