

## Executive Summary

On April 6, 2017, Black Lives Matter Edmonton filed a Freedom of Information Request in order to access all street check (carding) data held by the Edmonton Police Service. Street checks are the practice of arbitrarily stopping and collection information from individuals who are *not suspected* of committing a crime.

After two months, we received data that included: race based statistics, breakdown by gender, and breakdown by police district. In a coordinated effort Black Lives Matter Edmonton worked with community members including lawyers and academics. Our collaborative work revealed a disturbing trend that shows Black, Indigenous, and Middle Eastern Edmontonians are disproportionately street checked. Some notable and disturbing findings were that in 2016:

- Black Edmontonians are 3.6 times more likely to be street checked than white people
- Indigenous Edmontonians are 4 times likely to be street checked than white people
- Indigenous women face the highest rates of carding at 6.5 times the rate that of white women

This information clearly shows that street checks are a form of systemic discrimination which unfairly targets ordinary citizens.

Our research also revealed that street check information is collected in a way that further criminalizes the affected citizens by feeding their personal information into law enforcement databases. As demonstrated across Canada, this information is shared with agencies such as Canadian Border Services, CSIS, RCMP, and other bodies.

The discriminatory nature of this practice is unacceptable. The provision of personal, identifying information about innocent citizens, collected under duress, to law enforcement databases is unacceptable. Black Lives Matter Edmonton, The Institute for the Advancement of Aboriginal Women, and a broad coalition of community organizations demand that the practice of street checks or carding be banned by January 1st, 2018, and that all the illegitimately-collected personal information be purged from law enforcement databases.

Doing so will be a welcomed first step at combatting this discriminatory practice. Stopping street checks will not inhibit the police, as demonstrated by recent reports in Hamilton. And as the recently released Doob-Gartner shows it is quite easy for police service to exaggerate the usefulness of street checks and that finding data to support the usefulness of continuing to carry them out is extremely hard to come by.

Contained in this report is an legal analysis of ‘street checks’ in addition to a statistical analysis of the data. We thank those community members who sacrificed their time.

In Solidarity,

*Black Lives Matter Edmonton & Institute For The Advancement of Aboriginal Women.*

## Legal and Policy Analysis

### What are street checks?

Street checks, also known as “carding”, occur when the police stop an individual to gather information from them without having the legal grounds to arrest or detain them. The Edmonton Police Service (“EPS”) defines them as follows:

**Street check** – A subject stop when there is no grounds for arrest, but rather the result of proactive policing and/or contact and engagement with a person or a group of people. The purpose of a Street Check is to gather street level intelligence that may assist members in increasing public safety through preventing, intervening and suppressing crime, and to further investigations.<sup>1</sup>

Many interactions between police and the public qualify as “street checks.” In theory, street checks are completely voluntary on the part of the public. Because the police have no grounds for arrest or detention, a person subjected to a street check should be free to walk away at any time without providing any information whatsoever. The Supreme Court of Canada has reaffirmed in multiple judgments that “an individual confronted by state authority ordinarily has the option to choose simply to walk away.”<sup>2</sup>

Street checks are therefore “voluntary” interactions between the public and the police used by police to gather intelligence. The EPS typically records street checks in Street Check Reports (“SCRs”), which aim “to obtain the ‘who, what, where, when, and why’ of an interaction or observation.”<sup>3</sup> Many concerns about street checks are more specifically concerns about the collection and retention of information in SCRs: innocent individuals find their personal information gathered by police when they have done nothing to warrant it.

A voluntary street check can become a detention in some cases. An interaction with police can begin voluntarily but, as it progresses, a person might feel like they are no longer free to leave. The Supreme Court has described this as “psychological detention.”<sup>4</sup> It occurs when police conduct could cause a reasonable person to believe that they are not free to go and had to comply with police direction or demand. The Supreme Court looks at a number of factors to determine if a person has become psychologically detained, including (but not limited to):

- Circumstances of the encounter: whether the police were providing general assistance or maintain general order; making general inquiries regarding a particular occurrence; or singling out an individual for focused investigation.
- Nature of police conduct: the language used; the use of physical contact; the place where the

<sup>1</sup> Edmonton Police Service, “Street Checks and Street Check Reporting Procedure”, Procedure Number OP10-9PR, “Definitions” [*EPS Street Checks Procedure*].

<sup>2</sup> *R v Grant*, 2009 SCC 32 at para. 21 [*Grant*]. See also *Dedman v The Queen*, [1985] 2 SCR 2 at p. 10.

<sup>3</sup> *EPS Street Checks Procedure*, “Definitions”.

<sup>4</sup> *Grant* at para 31.

interaction occurred; the presence of others; and the duration of the encounter.

- Particular characteristics or circumstances of the person: age; physical stature; minority status; level of sophistication.<sup>5</sup>

**How are street checks different from other methods of detention?** [Note: Legally speaking, street checks aren't "detention"]

Street checks differ from other methods of detention primarily because, during a street check, a member of the public is legally free to leave at any time. During detention or arrest, a member of the public is not free to walk away from police. In addition, a police officer may conduct a street check for virtually any reason.<sup>6</sup> Just as any member of the public may approach another member of the public and ask them a question, so too can police.

In contrast, police must meet certain standards before they can detain or arrest a member of the public (e.g. police must have a reasonable suspicion that a person has committed a crime to detain for investigation purposes). When the police detain or arrest a person, that person has certain rights under the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* and other laws. This includes the right to remain silent, the right to contact a lawyer, and the right to be informed why they are being detained or arrested. Those rights, and the obligation of police to inform a person of them, are not triggered in a street check, as the person is not detained or arrested.

**Who has access to this information? Why can information sharing cause concerns?**

The law that controls how public bodies collect, use, and share Albertans' personal information is called the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* ("FOIPPA").<sup>7</sup> FOIPPA applies to police services.<sup>8</sup> FOIPPA requires that police only use information that they gather for the purpose for which it was collected or a use "consistent with that purpose".<sup>9</sup> However, the broad nature of police work means that personal information can arguably be shared widely. It is unclear what agencies or people receive street check information from EPS. However, the sharing of information could be problematic in many situations, particularly as the information is gathered from legally innocent people under no obligation to speak with police. Concerns include the following:

- Information shared with a foreign government, particularly the United States, could impact a person's ability to travel abroad.
- Information shared with intelligence services such as CSIS and CSE could be incomplete and

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<sup>5</sup> Grant at para 44.

<sup>6</sup> Arguably, race or membership in another protected group must not form part of the police decision to conduct a street check.

<sup>7</sup> RSA 2000, c F-25.

<sup>8</sup> A "police service" is included in the definition of a "local government body" (s. 1(i)(x)(B) FOIPPA). A "local government body" is considered a "local public body" (s. 1(j)(iii) FOIPPA). A "local public body" is considered a "public body" (s. 1(p)(vii) FOIPPA). The rules set out in FOIPPA apply to "all records in the custody or under the control of a public body" (s. 4(1) FOIPPA).

<sup>9</sup> FOIPPA, s. 39(1).

lead to incorrect conclusions.<sup>10</sup>

- Information shared with Canada Border Services Agency could put people with precarious immigration status at risk of deportation.
- Information stored by the EPS could be accessed by police in the future and improperly cast suspicion on the person.

### **What rights does a person have when they are street checked?**

A person who experiences a “street check” retains all rights they generally have when in public. Most importantly, a person retains the right, at least in theory, to walk away at any time and to decline to answer any questions asked by the police.

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<sup>10</sup> Perhaps the best-known example of this is the rendition and torture of Maher Arar. Mr. Arar, a Syrian-Canadian citizen, was detained for two weeks in the United States while travelling home to Canada on his Canadian passport. American officials were provided with inaccurate information about Mr. Arar and, acting on it, deported him to Syria. Mr. Arar experienced a year of torture by the Syrian regime. A Commission of Inquiry later cleared his name and recommended Canada stop sharing intelligence information with foreign governments without clear conditions attached to it.

## **Statistical Analysis**

### **Analysis of Edmonton Street Check Data, 2012-2016**

As per a FOIPP request submitted on April 6, 2017, Black Lives Matter Edmonton received street check (or carding) data from the Edmonton Police Service (EPS) for 2012-2016. The following report provides an analysis and discussion of these data with specific regard to differences related to race, ethnicity, and Aboriginal identity.

According to EPS, a street check is defined as follows: "A subject stop when there is no grounds for arrest, but rather the result of proactive policing and/or contact and engagement with a person or group of people. The purpose of a Street Check is to gather street level intelligence that may assist members in increasing public safety through preventing, intervening and suppressing crime, and to further investigations."

As shown in Table 1, 20,689 individuals or 2.13 percent of the total population within the City of Edmonton experienced a street check in 2016. The total number and rate of street checks performed by EPS has been steadily decreasing since 2012, but the overall occurrence of street checks still remains high. With 22,969 street checks in 2016, EPS conducted an average of 63 street checks per day.

**Table 1. Street Checks by Edmonton Police Service, 2012-2016**

Year	Number of Street Checks	Number of Individuals	Edmonton Population	Percent of Population
2012	27,322	26,226	867,343	3.02
2013	25,897	24,989	896,883	2.79
2014	27,172	26,736	927,100	2.88
2015	27,155	25,061	947,574	2.64
2016	22,969	20,689	969,068	2.13

SOURCES: Edmonton Police Service, Statistics Canada, Table 051-0062

### **Assessing Street Checks by Gender**

Table 2 disaggregates street checks by the gender of the individual. Because gender was unknown or blank in approximately 20% of entries for each year, we focus on the cases where gender was known for our assessment. Among street checks where the gender of the individual was known, the vast majority of individuals (in approximately 73-74% of cases) were male. This percentage has remained fairly stable across years.

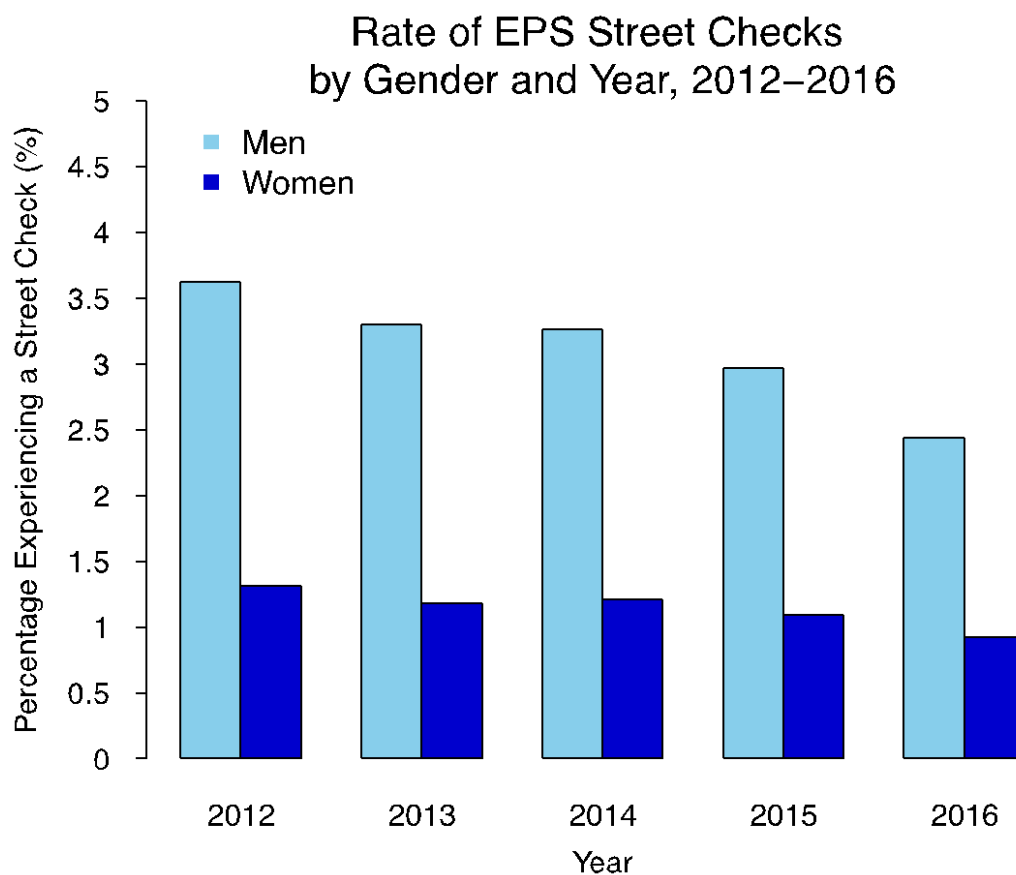
**Table 2. Number and Percentage of Distinct Individuals Experiencing EPS Street Checks in Edmonton by Gender, 2012-2016**

Gender	2012		2013		2014		2015		2016	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Known										
Female	5,612	26.18	5,210	25.83	5,531	26.54	5,103	26.36	4,391	26.87
Male	15,822	73.82	14,962	74.17	15,312	73.46	14,254	73.64	11,952	73.13
Total	21,434	100	20,172	100	20,843	100	19,357	100	16,343	100
Unknown	4,792		4,817		5,893		5,704		4,346	

SOURCE: Edmonton Police Service

To further expand on these reports, Figure 1 presents estimates for the rate of street checks by gender (when gender is known) for 2012-2016 based on EPS and Statistics Canada Edmonton population data. As shown in this figure, the rate for men is almost three times the rate for women across years. However, for both men and women these rates have declined over time. In 2016, police stopped 2.44% of men in Edmonton for a street check and just under 1% of women.

**Figure 1. Rate of EPS Street Checks by Gender and Year, 2012-2016**



SOURCE: Edmonton Police Service; Statistics Canada, Table 051-0062

NOTES: Estimates presented for street check cases where gender is known.

### Assessing Street Checks by Race, Ethnicity, and Aboriginal Identity

In addition to recording gender within the street check data, EPS also records data related to race, ethnicity, and Aboriginal identity. Table 3 presents the EPS data divided by single and multiple racial identities, Table 4 presents the data for only persons who reported a single identity, and Table 5 reports the same data with visible minorities and multiple racial identities combined into a single category.

**Table 3. Number and Percentage of Distinct Individuals Experiencing Street Checks in Edmonton by Racial Identity, 2012-2016**

Race	2012		2013		2014		2015		2016	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Single Identity	10,739	40.95	10,192	40.79	10,850	40.58	10,210	40.74	8,497	41.07
Multiple Identities	10,146	38.69	9,416	37.68	9,413	35.21	8,551	34.12	7,416	35.85
Unknown	5,341	20.37	5,381	21.53	6,473	24.21	6,300	25.14	4,776	23.08
Total	26,226	100	24,989	100	26,736	100	25,061	100	20,689	100

SOURCE: Edmonton Police Service

NOTES: The category of "Multiple Racial Identities" includes persons with two or more distinct races. It also includes persons with incomplete data for at least one of their racial identities.

Across years, approximately 40% of cases reported a single racial identity, and 35-39% reported multiple racial identities. Race was unknown in 30-25% of cases of street checks.

**Table 4. Number and Percentage of Distinct Individuals with a Single Racial Identity Experiencing Street Checks in Edmonton by Race, Ethnicity, and Aboriginal Identity, 2012-2016**

Race	2012		2013		2014		2015		2016	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
White	6,590	61.37	6,206	60.89	6,672	61.49	6,150	60.24	4,805	56.55
Aboriginal or Métis	2,245	20.91	2,119	20.79	2,159	19.90	2,092	20.49	1,939	22.82
Visible Minority	1,904	17.73	1,867	18.32	2,019	18.61	1,968	19.28	1,753	20.63
Black	879	8.19	983	9.64	984	9.07	1,021	10.00	947	11.15
Hispanic	118	1.10	94	0.92	116	1.07	94	0.92	85	1.00
Middle Eastern	260	2.42	230	2.26	256	2.36	262	2.57	207	2.44
Asian/ E	538	5.01	439	4.31	545	5.02	479	4.69	421	4.95
Indian	109	1.01	121	1.19	118	1.09	112	1.10	93	1.09
Total	10,739	100	10,192	100	10,850	100	10,210	100	8,497	100

SOURCE: Edmonton Police Service

NOTES: Estimates presented for individuals with a single racial identity.



Further disaggregating racial categories for individuals with a single racial identity in Table 4 shows that the majority of cases in all years were white, but this percentage has decreased over time. Aboriginal or Métis persons accounted for 20-22% of street checks, and persons classified as visible minorities accounted for 18-20%. However, these results are somewhat misleading because more than a third of individuals each year were recorded as having multiple racial identities.

**Table 5. Number and Percentage of Distinct Individuals with a Single or Multiple Racial Identity Experiencing Street Checks in Edmonton by Visible Minority Status and Aboriginal Identity, 2012-2016**

Race	2012		2013		2014		2015		2016	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
White (Single Identity)	6,590	31.55	6,206	31.65	6,672	32.93	6,150	32.78	4,805	30.20
Aboriginal or Métis (Single or Multiple)	9,948	47.63	8,943	45.61	9,206	45.43	8,482	45.21	7,782	48.90
Single	2,245	10.75	2,119	10.81	2,159	10.65	2,092	11.15	1,939	12.19
Three	164	0.79	129	0.66	143	0.71	136	0.72	130	0.82
Other Combination	7,539	36.10	6,695	34.14	6,904	34.07	6,254	33.33	5,713	35.90
Visible Minority (Single or Multiple)	4,347	20.81	4,459	22.74	4,385	21.64	4,129	22.01	3,326	20.90
Single	1,904	9.12	1,867	9.52	2,019	9.96	1,968	10.49	1,753	11.02
Three	52	0.25	49	0.25	48	0.24	46	0.25	35	0.22
Other Combination	2,391	11.45	2,543	12.97	2,318	11.44	2,115	11.27	1,538	9.67
Total	20,885	100	19,608	100	20,263	100	18,761	100	15,913	100

SOURCE: Edmonton Police Service

NOTES: For these values we assume that persons with "Multiple Racial Identities" would likely be identified as either Aboriginal or Visible/Racial Minorities and not as white because for all of the individuals listed with "three distinct races," the first racial category is never white. We first combined these values for "single racial identity" with those with available data for "three racial categories. We then used the proportions available from the "three distinct races" category to estimate how many of the individuals with multiple racial identities and missing data would be classified as Aboriginal Persons or Visible Minorities. For instance, because 78.79% of individuals in the Three Distinct Races category in 2016 were first classified as Aboriginal, we assumed that 78.79% of those with multiple races and missing data would also be classified as Aboriginal.

Incorporating single and multiple identities into the data in Tables 5 and 6 drastically changes these numbers. For the values in Table 5, we used specific race data for situations where EPS identified "three distinct races" for individuals to assess the proportion of cases that were categorized as white, Aboriginal or Métis, and visible minority (black, Hispanic, Middle Eastern, Asian, East Indian, or "Other non-white")

based on the primary (first listed) racial identity. In all years, no individuals with three distinct race categories were listed as white, approximately 75% were listed as Aboriginal or Métis, and the remaining 25% were listed as one of the primary visible minority categories. We then used the proportions available from the "three distinct races" category to estimate how many of the individuals with multiple racial identities and missing data would be classified as Aboriginal persons or visible minorities and combined these values with the "single race" categories.

If we are to assume that persons with "Multiple Racial Identities" would likely be identified as "Aboriginal or Métis" or as "Visible or Racial Minorities" and not be identified as white, the percentage of street checks attributable to these groups increases by a large percentage. As shown in Table 5, Aboriginal persons then account for approximately 45-48% of street checks, and visible minorities account for 21-23% of street checks.

**Table 6. Number and Percentage of Distinct Individuals with a Single or Multiple Racial Identity Experiencing Street Checks in Edmonton by Visible Minority Status and Aboriginal Identity, 2012-2016**

Race	2012		2013		2014		2015		2016	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
White (Single Identity)	6,590	31.55	6,206	31.65	6,672	32.93	6,150	32.78	4,805	30.20
Aboriginal or Métis (Single or Multiple)	7,374	35.31	6,867	35.02	6,913	34.12	6,413	34.18	5,695	35.79
Single	2,245	10.75	2,119	10.81	2,159	10.65	2,092	11.15	1,939	12.19
Three	164	0.79	129	0.66	143	0.71	136	0.72	130	0.82
Other Combination	4,965	23.77	4,619	23.56	4,611	22.76	4,185	22.30	3,626	22.78
Visible Minority (Single or Multiple)	6,921	33.14	6,535	33.33	6,678	32.96	6,199	33.04	5,414	34.02
Single	1,904	9.12	1,867	9.52	2,019	9.96	1,968	10.49	1,753	11.02
Three	52	0.25	49	0.25	48	0.24	46	0.25	35	0.22
Other Combination	4,965	23.77	4,619	23.56	4,611	22.76	4,185	22.30	3,626	22.78
Total	20,885	100	19,608	100	20,263	100	18,761	100	15,913	100

SOURCE: Edmonton Police Service

NOTES: For these values we assume that persons with "Multiple Racial Identities" would likely be identified as either Aboriginal or Visible/Racial Minorities and not as white because for all of the individuals listed with "three distinct races," the first racial category is never white. We first combined these values for "single racial identity" with those with available data for "three racial categories. We then created proportions based on the assumption that half of all persons with "Multiple Racial Identities" would likely be identified as "Visible or Racial Minorities," half would be identified as Aboriginal, and none would be identified as white for the cases where there were multiple racial identities and missing data for at least one identity.

Alternatively, if we were to assume that half of all persons with "Multiple Racial Identities" would likely be identified as "Visible or Racial Minorities," half would be identified as Aboriginal, and none would be identified as white, the percentage of street checks attributable to visible minorities increases and those attributable to Aboriginal persons decreases. As shown in Table 6, Aboriginal persons then account for approximately 35% of street checks, and visible minorities account for 33% of street checks.

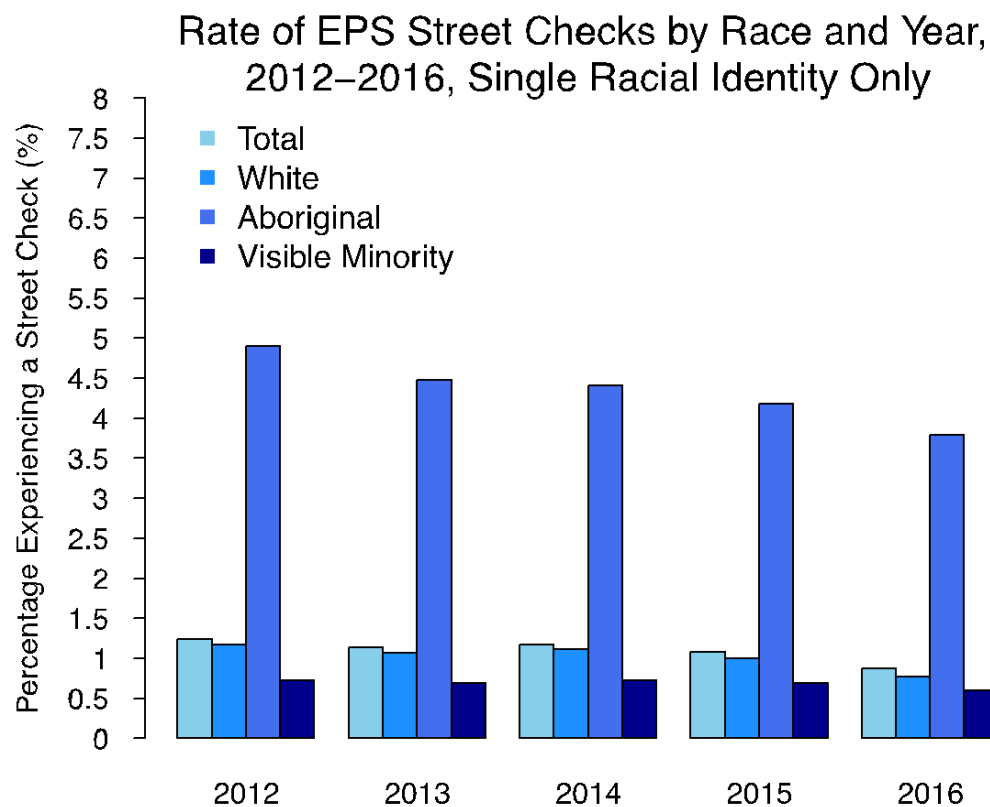
### ***Estimates by Visible Minority Status and Aboriginal Identity***

Although discussing the percentage of street checks associated with different minority groups is important, it does not provide a full picture of racial disparities in policing. To truly understand these disparities, we must also assess rates of exposure relative to the population for each group. We relied on 2006 Canadian Census data, the 2011 National Household Survey (NHS), and Statistics Canada's population projections for the City of Edmonton and the Edmonton Census Metropolitan Area (CMA) to obtain estimates for the population of persons in Edmonton by race and ethnicity from 2012-2016. Due to data availability issues at different levels, we had to make certain assumptions for the racial and ethnic make-up of the City of Edmonton, which we discuss below. In order to address data limitations, we include several sets of estimates.

Because EPS racial categories are not consistent with Statistics Canada racial categories we present broader results for estimates based on differentiation by visible minority status. We also present rates for single racial identity only and for single and multiple identities with the specifications present in Table 6. The results of the analyses appear in Figures 2 and 3

Figure 2 includes rates for only those individuals reporting a single racial category. This figure combines the values present in Table 4 with city-level race data. Figure 3 then includes multiple categories as part of the Aboriginal and visible minority groups with half of cases with multiple racial identities (where the data were not made available) categorized as Aboriginal, half as visible minorities, and none as white. This figure combines the values present in Table 6 with city-level race data.

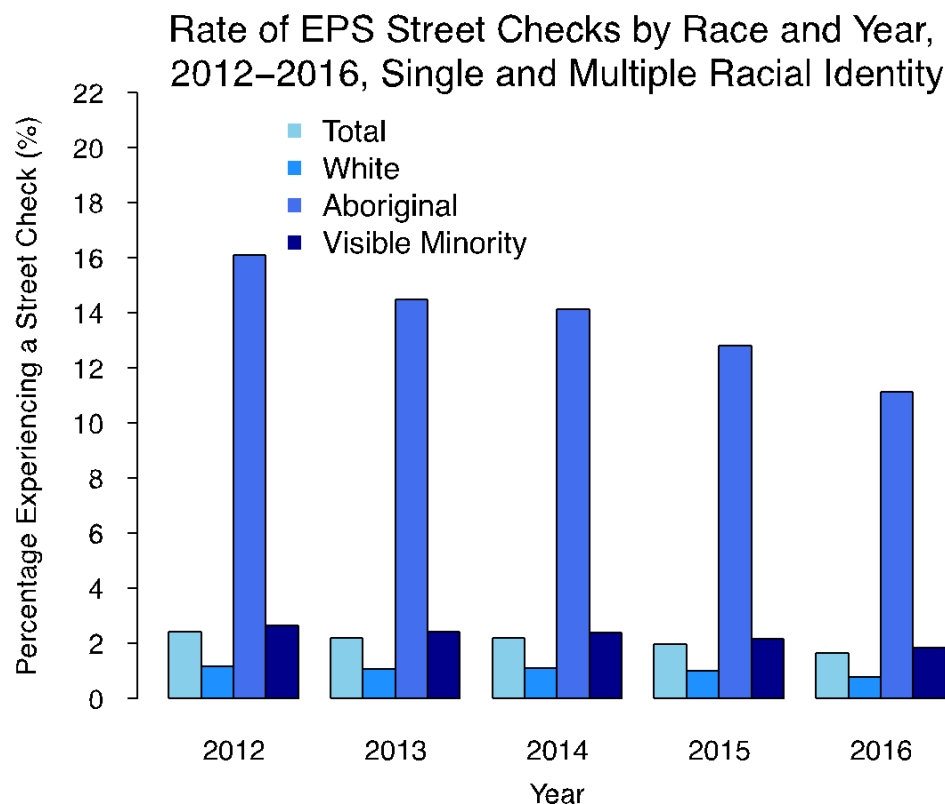
### **Figure 2. Rate of EPS Street Checks by Race and Year, 2012-2016, Single Racial Identity Only**



SOURCE: Edmonton Police Service; Statistics Canada, 2011 National Household Survey

NOTES: Figure shows percentage of persons within the specified racial category who experienced a street check during that year. Estimates presented for street check cases where race is known and a single racial identity is given. Values should be interpreted with caution because only 41% of street checks with race data reported a single racial identity.

**Figure 3. Rate of EPS Street Checks by Race and Year, 2012-2016, Single and Multiple Racial Identities**



SOURCE: Edmonton Police Service; Statistics Canada, 2011 National Household Survey

NOTES: Figure shows percentage of persons within the specified racial category who experienced a street check during that year. Estimates presented for street check cases where race is known and single or multiple racial identities are given. Estimates assume that persons with "Multiple Racial Identities" would likely be identified as either Aboriginal or Visible/Racial Minorities and not as white because for all of the individuals listed with "three distinct races," the first racial category is never white. We first combined these values for "single racial identity" with those with available data for "three racial categories. We then created proportions based on the assumption that half of all persons with "Multiple Racial Identities" would likely be identified as "Visible or Racial Minorities," half would be identified as Aboriginal, and none would be identified as white. Values should be taken with caution due to the missing data associated with persons with multiple racial identities.

Because they account for the representation of different minority groups in the population as a whole, these figures essentially present a rate of exposure to street checks for Aboriginal, visible minority, and white individuals. Notably in these figures, Aboriginal persons have a much higher rate of exposure to street checks than any other group. Aboriginal persons are largely overrepresented in street checks with rates that range from 4-5 times the rate for white persons when only considering a single racial identity to 12-15 times the rate when including individuals with multiple racial identities in the analysis. However, visibly minority persons are only overrepresented when we incorporate multiple racial identities with this group in Figure 3. In this figure, visible minorities were 2 to 2.4 times more likely to experience a street

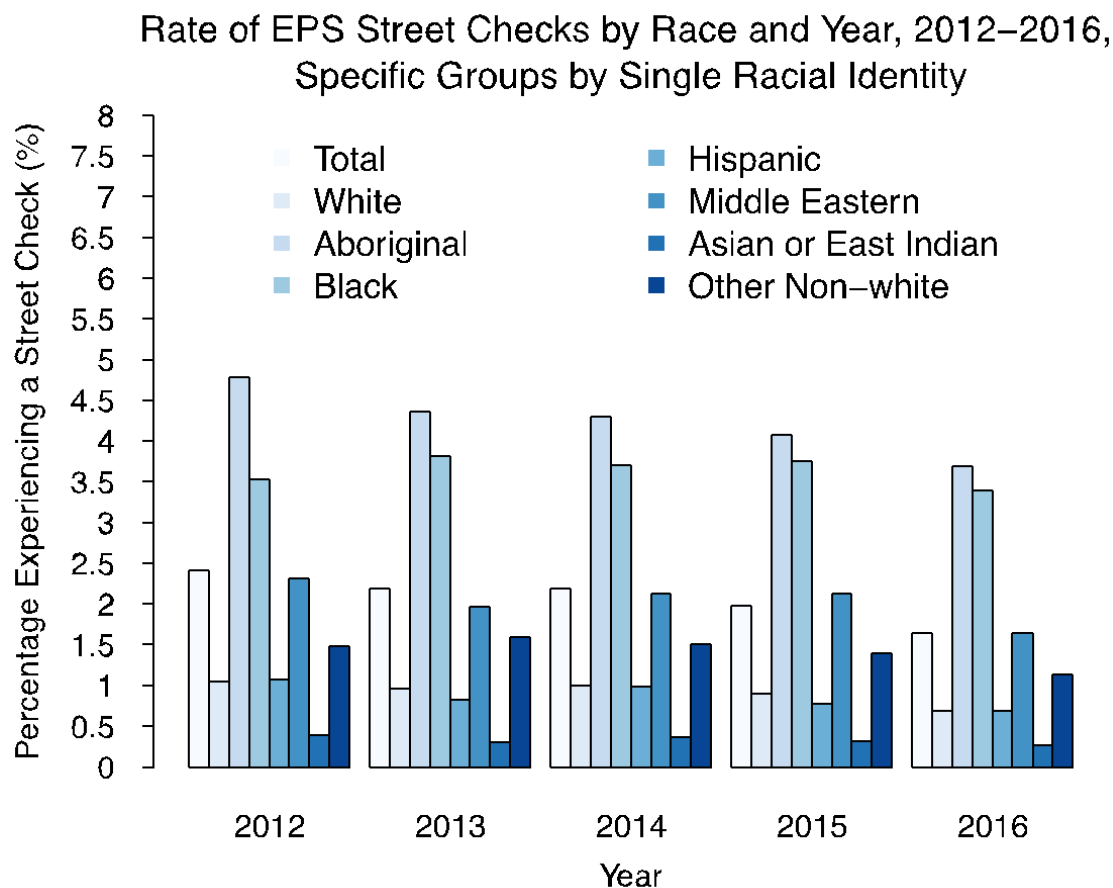
check than whites.

### *Estimates by Specific Racial Category*

Although we were able to use city-level data for the percentage of persons identifying as Aboriginal or visible minorities for Edmonton in 2011, Statistics Canada has not made city-level data for more specific racial groups publicly available for Edmonton. Therefore, in order to assess disparities across specific racial group categories, we use data for the Edmonton CMA, which also includes areas around Edmonton.

<sup>11</sup> We suggest interpreting these estimates with caution because representations between the city and the CMA might differ. Figure 4 presents results estimating the rate of exposure to street checks based on an individual's specific racial identity, but for only those who reported a single racial identity.

**Figure 4. Rate of EPS Street Checks by Detailed Race and Year, 2012-2016, Single Racial Identity Only**



SOURCE: Edmonton Police Service; Statistics Canada, 2011 National Household Survey

NOTES: Figure shows percentage of persons within the specified racial category who experienced a street check during that year. Estimates presented for street check cases where race is known and a single racial identity is given. Values should be interpreted with caution because only 41% of street checks with race data reported a single racial identity.

<sup>11</sup> The Edmonton CMA comprises 35 census subdivisions that include cities and municipalities such as St. Albert, Spruce Grove, Fort Saskatchewan, Morinville, Stony Plain, Leduc, Devon, and Beaumont.

As demonstrated by Figure 4, rates of exposure to street checks vary across different visible minority groups. Among visible minorities, black individuals had the highest rate of exposure. Three to four percent of black Edmontonians experienced a street check across years, compared to about one percent of white Edmontonians when basic estimates on representations across the Edmonton CMA. This means that they were 3-5 times as likely as whites to experience a street check. Compared to whites, rates were lower for Hispanic, Asian, and East Indian persons living in Edmonton. However, Middle Eastern and "other non-white" Edmontonians experienced street checks at a higher rate than white Edmontonians.

### **Discussion of Data and Results**

These results show that Aboriginal and Métis persons experience the greatest exposure to street checks in Edmonton. Even the most conservative estimates show that members of this group are 4 times more likely to experience a street check than white persons. Visible minorities also had a greater exposure to street checks, but their interactions varied by their specific racial group membership and whether estimates considered multiple racial identities. Within racial minority groups, black, Middle Eastern, and "other non-white" persons had higher than average rates of exposure to street checks with blacks experiencing street checks almost as often as Aboriginal persons.

### ***Limitations***

It is important to note that we had to incorporate certain assumptions into our analyses due to limitations related to the availability of data for race, ethnicity, Aboriginal identity, and gender at the city level and for years beyond 2011. Data availability limited our analyses in several ways. First, missing data on ethnicity and race in the EPS street check reports meant that we were unable to assess disparities for approximately 20-25% of cases each year. It also limited our ability to analyze outcomes for persons with multiple racial identities and required certain assumptions for our analyses.

Second, because race data have not yet been published for the 2016 Census, we primarily relied on data from the 2011 National Household Survey. This meant extrapolating proportions of racial minorities forward through 2016 based on their representation in 2011. Because these population race data beyond 2011 are not available from Statistics Canada right now, we had to make certain assumptions regarding the proportion of the population that identifies as Aboriginal or as a racial minority. Although it is likely that the percentage of the population who identifies as a racial minority has increased since 2011, we chose to take a more conservative approach in these estimates and assume that the population proportions have remained the same. Actual rates may vary slightly when they are re-estimated with more recent race data.

Third, our analyses were further limited by the publically available Statistics Canada data. Although Statistics Canada commonly publishes data at the country, province, and CMA level, data at the city level (or Census subdivision level) are harder to obtain. Although we had estimates for the percent of persons identifying as Aboriginal and as visible minorities at the city-level, we had to rely on CMA data for estimates of more specific racial identities.

### ***Policy Implications***

In regard to racial bias in street checks, the Edmonton Police Service has taken steps to try and limit individual bias in determining who to stop and question. EPS notes that "members must exercise bias

awareness to ensure their actions are not motivated by personal bias, stereotyping or prejudice, and must be aware of the perception of bias that their actions may create. Street Checks must not be instigated on the basis of a member's personal bias."

Despite such measures, rates of exposure to street checks remain higher among Aboriginal persons and visible minorities in Edmonton.

Although these measures help to address individual biases, which can be both implicit and explicit, they do not necessarily address potential flaws in the policy itself.



# Thank You

- **Dr. Michelle Maroto**
- **Sydney McNeill**
- **Linda Bolton-Holder**
- **Miranda Watters**
- **Dave Powell**