



# **TRUST MATTERS**

**A Summary Report  
On the Proceedings and Outcomes of the 10<sup>th</sup> Cohort**

**CACP Global Studies 2017  
July 2017**

## 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 2017 represented the 10<sup>th</sup> cohort to complete the program since 2003. To drive our transformative learning experience, the 2017 cohort was challenged to examine public trust, leading us to conduct field studies in 15 countries, ranging from environments where trust in the police was rated very low, to those with enviable trust indicators on recognized scales of public opinion. Our team also examined and considered information from the United States and Canada, and our 20 members engaged in extensive discussions and debates on the elements of public trust, based on our own experiences in 13 different Canadian agencies.

One thing we discovered very clearly is that there are no universally accepted methodologies to measure or respond to trust, nor even any that we would deem to be best practices. It seems societies everywhere are still grappling with this question ... at least those that care, and some ... well, they just don't.

We learned that while not everyone trusts the police, and in some countries virtually no one does, there was always one key group who consistently reported a perception of high public trust ... that group was the police agencies themselves. Generally speaking, police have an overly positive perception of how the public trusts them. Our cohort noted that police everywhere and at all levels need to listen more closely to each and every community they serve.

Finally, we also learned that Canadian policing is very well respected and often envied around the world and, in this regard, we are doing many things right. Yet to ensure public trust continues, there is an urgent need for a re-orientation of our thinking on matters of public trust, for the application of new approaches taken together with our diverse communities, and for continuous performance measurement, informed by multiple perspectives, in each and every policing jurisdiction in Canada.

## EVOLUTION OF THE GLOBAL STUDIES 2017 RESEARCH MODEL

The CACP Board of Directors assigned the CACP Executive Global Studies Program (CACP Global 2017) the task of conducting an evidence-based analysis of public trust and confidence in policing in Canada. Specifically, the program participants were charged with the mission of addressing the following theme:

### ***Measuring and Responding to New Dimensions of Public Trust & Confidence:***

*CACP Global 2017 will be challenged, through domestic and international studies, to isolate a new set of dimensions that will best define and/or influence public trust and confidence today and into the future, to produce new methods for more accurately measuring against those dimensions in Canadian communities, and where indicated, to propose new strategies for aligning our police policies and practices to meet evolving public expectations.*

The program started in January 2017 with 20 succession-ready police executives from federal, provincial and municipal police agencies across Canada coming together online to commence the team building needed to set the conditions for success for this year’s research theme. Over the next six months, using a combination of intense residential sessions, online collaboration, expert inputs, and field studies in 15 countries around the world, the team worked diligently to find resolution to the given theme. Concluding our work in June, this document represents a compilation of the key findings and recommendations designed to put forth to Canadian police leadership the effects this research should have on Canadian policing into the future.

The prior CACP Global Studies 2016 cohort had studied globalization, and they identified public trust and confidence as a cornerstone of policing in a changing Canada. They asserted that, given dramatic and continuing changes in Canadian society, driven in many ways by global events and currents, public trust may represent a primary risk facing Canadian policing agencies (CACP Global 2016). It is presumed that that finding, as well as recent events experienced and reported in the media from both within Canada as well as across the USA, prompted the CACP Board of Directors to see the importance of further exploring public trust in policing. Thus, the 2017 Team’s goal was to further develop our understanding of trust, to isolate the factors that contribute to trust, and to identify new methods to accurately measure this concept in order to inform Canadian police leadership.

Our research commenced immediately upon the formation of the team. Over the course of many discussions regarding the activities across our own multi-jurisdictional agencies, we set out to glean a better understanding of the theme of public trust and confidence. Drawing upon our experiences from across the country we began the first phase of our exploration – domestic research.

The cohort quickly came to realize that our collective understanding of policing in the United States as it pertains to public trust, and our access to rich sources of information through the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) and other US collaborations, was with us from the onset. Through our many professional development opportunities and cross-border relations, our team was well positioned to include within the research an overarching appreciation of the dynamics of public trust ... and public mistrust ... in the police from a US perspective.

First and foremost our cohort had to settle on a common understanding of the theme, which proved to be more challenging than expected. After careful consideration, and based on inputs from academic and practical expert sources, we determined that the statement “*public trust and confidence in the police*” needed some refinement. Our cohort concluded that the term *confidence* was either a synonym or an antecedent of trust, and therefore was not required within the research statement. Following a detailed analysis of the subject matter, a concise research statement was fashioned to provide consistency to the field research to be conducted by our five sub-teams:

**Our Research Statement:**

Policing with consent requires mutual trust with the diverse communities we serve.  
CACP Global Studies 2017 will pursue an international comparative study to examine the

relational and internal dimensions that influence public trust. Our goal is to identify measures and responses that will inform Canadian public policy and policing practices.

With the research statement firmly defined, it also became apparent that the team would have to embark upon the field phase of the study with common, guiding dimensions to assist in the framing of the studies and to shape the later synthesis of observations and data from across the five teams:

**Our Research Dimensions:**

- Sociopolitical: social, economic and political context that defines, shapes, and influences the demands made upon police
- Policing Framework: structure underlying the delivery of policing services and programs
- Information Management: discipline that directs, supports and effectively and efficiently shares and manages data and metrics
- Engagement/Communication: clear, consistent messaging of pertinent information via a variety of methods. The interactions, behaviours and relationships that encourage participation/collaboration
- Professionalism & Competence: organizational values, specialized knowledge, attitudes, skills and abilities associated with policing
- Accountability: responsibility for actions, outcomes, decisions and policies

With these dimensions established the team first met to apply the model with members from diverse community groups in Canada, and to learn further from their insights into trust. From these highly interactive discussions, we further developed our dimensions of trust and designed specific field questions to capture these attributes of trust in different global environments, through the conduct of interviews with a wide range of sources, including police, government, NGO's, local media and community activists in almost every country we studied.

**DELIVERING THE RESEARCH OUTCOMES FROM CACP GLOBAL STUDIES 2017**

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

**Our Suite of Deliverables:**

1. CACP Global 2017 Interim Presentation to a select panel of Canadian Police leaders (completed June 2, 2017);
2. CACP Global 2017 Executive Summary Report to the CACP Board of Directors (this document);
3. An interactive presentation on the Global 2017 research findings to be delivered to the full delegation at the 2017 CACP 112th Annual Conference at Montreal, July 18 2017. This will consist of a 30 minute presentation designed to highlight key

- findings, introduce the 7 Principles of Trust and the 7 Trust Building Practices, collectively the call-to-action that Global Studies 2017 has identified for Canadian policing;
4. Committee Briefings: Before and during the AGM proceedings, members of Global Studies 2017 will meet with several of the CACP Standing Committees, and the CACP Research Foundation, in order to brief them on the findings, and to explore possible roles and opportunities for each committee/body in support of the findings of the cohort (July 13-16, 2017);
  5. A stand-alone CACP Take 5 video is being produced that will highlight both the Genetic Code of Public Trust and the Trust Building Practices that our research has identified. The video will be used to introduce the July presentation and it will remain available via the CACP website as a continuing educational resource for all CACP members and the larger policing community;
  6. Info-graphic Resource: The cohort will produce a “postcard” style leaflet, which will provide a straightforward reference guide for the Genetic Code of Public Trust and the Trust Building Practices (to be distributed throughout the Montreal AGM);
  7. Members of the 2017 Cohort have been invited to participate in an Executive Think Tank with Canadian police leaders to further develop the findings of this research study and other related deliberations (October 2017);
  8. The team is pursuing the development of scholarly paper, which may be published in the December issue of the Journal of Community Safety and Well-being;
  9. The team will write and publish a magazine-style article for inclusion in the Fall issue of Canadian Police Chief; and,
  10. Information gleaned over the course of the research study will be provided to Dr. Stephen McGuire and Dr. Lorraine Dyke of Carleton University, to be used in consultation with the 2017 cohort to further develop clearly defined and behaviourally-based indicators for public trust in the police.

## **SUMMARIZING OUR RESEARCH FINDINGS AND OUR CALL-TO-ACTION**

The 2017 cohort was asked to define new measures of trust. Over the entire course of our research study, no definitive methods were uncovered other than the traditional public survey. Moreover, such surveys in wide use around the world vary mostly between ‘*public satisfaction*’ with the services delivered by police, and in rare cases, the perceived ‘*legitimacy*’ of the police. Very few actually target the issue of *trust-in-the-police* directly, and those that do are almost exclusive to Western Europe and Scandinavia.

Thus, our cohort cannot provide to the CACP a clear performance measurement methodology to demonstrate public trust in the police. And as such, neither our cohort nor anyone else can commit to the CACP that public trust in the police within Canada is empirically either up or down. What we can confirm, based on a wide range of indicators, comparative global insights, and domestic observations, is that the Canadian policing community may indeed be at a crossroads as it pertains to public trust ... and we must take action. We are first presenting to the Canadian policing community what we have characterized as the “*Genetic Code of Public Trust*” – expressed as seven principles of trusting and trusted relationships in general, that are directly and most certainly applicable among police and the communities they serve.

We would assert that the following seven principles of trust presented below reflect that genetic code of public trust, and should shape the overarching values that Canadian policing must adopt.

**The Genetic Code of Public Trust in Policing:**

1. **Trust is Fragile:** Trust must be nurtured and can never be taken for granted. It requires a long-term investment, and it can erode quickly and suddenly.
2. **Trust is Reciprocal:** Trust goes both ways. Trust is always a two-way relationship, and the public's trust in the police will be affected by the degree to which police actively and visibly demonstrate trust (or mistrust) in each and every community they serve.
3. **Trust Cannot be Aggregated:** Each individual in every community matters. Public trust cannot be understood or measured as a collective score. Trust in the police must be understood as distinct from all other institutions and sectors.
4. **Trust Derives from Peel's Mission:** Policing by consent is a Canadian foundation. We must recognize and exhibit that our role is to serve the Charter, with the Criminal Code as just one of many tools available to us. Trust occurs when our policing behaviours validate a community's hope that our interests and our mission will remain aligned with their goals and aspirations.
5. **Trust Demands Validation:** Trust cannot be measured in subjective isolation; evidence of trust (or mistrust) must be understood from multiple perspectives.
6. **Trust Demands Transparency:** Information must be open by default, and restricted only when there is a valid and openly-explained reason.
7. **Trust Demands Accountability:** Policing must be seen to celebrate, invite and welcome public accountability in all its forms.

Embedding these principles into the codes of ethics for every police organization, and into the early training of every police officer and civilian member, is the first step to ensuring we are truly fostering a culture that will build and sustain public trust.

While certainly not easy, building trusted relationships with Canadians might be a lot less complicated than we think. Each of us has the ability to give effect to the above principles, and in fact, all of us have the necessary experience. As these principles came into focus from our research, our cohort discovered that we all apply these methods in our daily lives and in our most important personal relationships.

As we outline below in our seven calls-to-action, we believe we can also apply them in practical ways within a policing environment to elicit and sustain the trust of our public. Founded in the above noted principles, the following practices depict the trust-building steps that we believe police at all levels, from the individual to the local to the national, must embrace and put into action.

### **Trust Building Practices...Our Calls to Action for Canadian Policing:**

*Note: Table 1 further below converts each of these 'calls-to-action' into greater detail, and shows examples of how each can be applied at the level of the individual police member (sworn or civilian); at the local or provincial police service; and at a national level of police leadership.*

1. **Engage Each and Every Community:** Community engagement is everyone's responsibility. It is not a program or simply an expressed philosophy, but it must be evident as our way of doing business. It is a core responsibility of all police officers and civilian staff members to ensure inclusion and engagement of all members of society, in each diversely self-identified 'community' we serve. Every interaction must be recognized as an opportunity to build trust.
2. **Relate Independently:** Police must be seen as independent from government, other sectors, and politics. Police must remain impartial and focused on our core policing mandates.
3. **Embrace Accountability:** Policing agencies must ensure 'visible' accountability in all aspects of service delivery and member conduct, via both internal and external processes. As the police, we are accountable to all Canadians in everything we do.
4. **Professionalize Relentlessly:** This calls for shared standards, as much as attainable across all policing jurisdictions in Canada, and must include both our social skills and our technical competencies, in both our theoretical knowledge and in our practical application. The foundation of trust is established by the pursuit and daily evidence of a national level of professionalism, reflective of pan-Canadian community values and expectations.
5. **Liberate Information:** Accessibility and timeliness of information has become an expectation of the public. Withholding information will undermine trust. We must continue to learn what information is meaningful and most important to our communities. Our default position must be to liberate that information except where prohibited, and any such restrictions must be clearly and openly conveyed.
6. **Employ a Mutual Trust Dashboard:** All police services should strive to consistently develop and apply mixed method approaches to gain an accurate and continuing measure of trust. Services must work with their community to establish meaningful methods and measures, and proactively share outcomes on a frequent basis.
7. **Celebrate Canadian Policing:** All agencies and members must promote a positive Canadian policing identity that reflects the values of our communities, reinforces who we are and what we stand for, and conveys what the public should expect from their police. Public trust will only be achieved and sustained when every Canadian can recognize and believe us in this simple expression: "**Canada ... We Are YOUR police.**"

## CONCLUSION

From our 15-country global field study, combined with our domestic and US research, our CACP Global 2017 cohort has learned that Canadian policing is very well respected and often envied around the world and, in this regard, we are doing many things right. Comparatively to many nations, including some closest to us, the Canadian policing community may be in good shape with respect to the trust we enjoy from our public, in general terms. However, given the rapid changes and socio-economic and political influences upon our diverse society, we may now be facing a crossroads. If we rest on our past laurels, we will almost certainly see a continuous decline in the trust that Canadians place in their police.

Our cohort has identified seven principles that in our view, capture the genetic code of trusted relationships. The integration of these principles into Canadian policing culture will set the foundation to instill public trust in the police. Further, the broad and consistent execution of our seven calls-to-action, at all levels within the policing community, will entrench a visible commitment to trust-building and continuous self-improvement within Canadian policing, now and into the future.

---

*“To say we trust you means we believe you have the right intentions toward us and that you are competent to do what we trust you to do.”*

*Hardin, 2006*

---

**APPENDIX – TABLE 1**

**Putting the Calls-to-Action Into Effect: Multi-level Practices for Building Public Trust in Policing**

*The following table portrays specific actions that can be taken at the individual police officer or civilian member level; by each jurisdictional police service; and by Canadian police leaders acting nationally.*

| <i>The Practice:</i>                   | <i>Every Member:<br/>(sworn or civilian)</i>  | <i>Every Police Service:</i>  | <i>Canada’s Police Leaders:</i>   |
|--|---|---|---|
| <b>Engage Each and Every Community</b> | <p>Engage with people who reflect all of your communities.</p> <p>Attend and interact at diverse community events.</p> <p>Volunteer your time to diverse community events.</p> <p>Learn the hopes and aspirations of the people in all of your communities.</p> | <p>Integrate community engagement functions within patrol teams and throughout the organization.</p> <p>Develop a problem-based learning model to enhance community engagement skills and cultural awareness.</p> <p>Develop a community engagement strategy.</p> <p>Recognize and reward all functions associated with community engagement.</p> <p>Incorporate a broad-based diverse-community volunteer program.</p> | <p>Develop a national engagement strategy promoting “Canada - We Are <b>Your</b> Police.” (see below)</p> <p>Develop a national award to recognize exemplary community engagement policing practices.</p>   |
| <b>Relate Independently</b>            | <p>Remain impartial in all your interactions with the public.</p> <p>Reflect the ethics and values of Canadian policing in all of your actions.</p>   | <p>Prepare and apply evidence-based, police-focused impact papers, versus taking or advocating the positions of other institutions, sectors or political bodies.</p> <p>Police agencies must align their organizational code of ethics with a national code of ethics.</p>  | <p>Prepare evidence-based, police-focused impact papers, versus taking or advocating the positions of other institutions, sectors or political bodies.</p> <p>Amplify our national code of ethics to speak clearly to independence from other institutional/political influences.</p> |

| <i>The Practice:</i>                | <i>Every Member:<br/>(sworn or civilian)</i>   | <i>Every Police Service:</i>  | <i>Canada’s Police Leaders:</i>  |
|-------------------------------------|--|---|--|
| <b>Embrace Accountability</b>       | <p>Welcome and vocally support the mechanisms that hold you and others accountable.</p> <p>Hold yourself and others accountable to the highest standards of your profession.</p>   | <p>Corrective measures, including the application of discipline, must be timely, measured, consistent with others, and transparent.</p>   | <p>Independent oversight should be standardized across the country.</p> <p>To build towards consistency, create a national legal repository for sharing, among police services, decisions specific to claims of misconduct.</p>  |
| <b>Professionalize Relentlessly</b> | <p>Seek out opportunities to continuously enhance your knowledge and skills in both the technical and social aspects of policing.</p> <p>Demonstrate pride in your profession at all times, and encourage others to do the same.</p> | <p>Apply available standards and evidence-based practices to recruitment, continuous training and re-certification, in both technical and social science aspects of policing.</p> <p>Establish levels of competencies reflective of position and roles, consistent with others across Canada.</p> | <p>Pursue national standards that include academic rigor and practical legitimacy.</p> <p>Identify &amp; promote national competencies that are reflective of Canadian policing ethics and values.</p> <p>Establish a citizen-engaged national advisory body to assist in the continuous pursuit of professionalism in policing.</p> |
| <b>Liberate Information</b>         | <p>Actively manage the message – Do not be afraid to communicate.</p> <p>Be proactive in the release of appropriate information.</p> <p>Don’t hide from the truth.</p> <p>Know how the FOI process applies to your duties.</p>       | <p>Actively manage the message.</p> <p>The delivery of information must be accurate and timely.</p> <p>Be proactive in the release of information and accommodate data requests whenever possible.</p> <p>If not able to release information, provide the reasons why.</p>                        | <p>Actively manage the message.</p> <p>Promote the concept of open by default. Lead our sector to become more proactive in the release of information and data.</p> <p>The delivery of information must be accurate and timely.</p> <p>Accommodate data requests related to policing in Canada.</p>                                  |

| <i>The Practice:</i>   | <i>Every Member:<br/>(sworn or civilian)</i>   | <i>Every Police Service:</i>   | <i>Canada’s Police Leaders:</i>  |
|--|--|--|--|
| <b>Employ a Mutual Trust Dashboard</b>   | <p>Know, understand and be positioned to respond to the community.</p> <p>Identify contributors to trust and proactively share outcomes.</p> <p>Seek out, talk about and value multiple trust indicators from your communities.</p>                  | <p>Employ community voices and independent subject matter experts to develop and administer mixed method approaches to measuring and reporting on levels of trust.</p> <p>Design a communications strategy to ensure all members of the community are aware of the methods and the results of your dashboard.</p> <p>Develop a dashboard that contributes to a National framework.</p> | <p>Develop a national framework that captures multiple community-based indicators of trust in police, inclusive of measures of behaviours, attitudes, perceptions, allowing for qualitative as well as quantitative analysis.</p> <p>Employ independent subject matter experts to administer mixed method approaches.</p> <p>Design a national communications strategy to ensure that all are aware of the methods being employed across Canada and the results.</p> |
| <b>Celebrate Canadian Policing</b>   | <p>Be proud of what you do.</p> <p>Make sure people know you, know the service you represent and know what policing stands for in Canada.</p> <p>Consider and pursue opportunities to celebrate community and internal positive success stories.</p> | <p>Use social media collaboration tools to create a meaningful and genuine community presence.</p>   | <p>Develop and employ a national communications and engagement strategy to shape a powerful and genuine brand: <b>“Canada - We are <u>YOUR</u> Police.”</b></p>  |
| <p>Participate and contribute locally to a national campaign that promotes the brand: <b>“Canada - We are <u>YOUR</u> Police.”</b></p> |  | <p>As noted in the recommendations of the <i>CACP Professionalism in Policing</i> research project, encourage the consolidation and adoption of consistent core Canadian policing values.</p>  |  |