



## Resolution 2010-06

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### Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

Approved at the 59<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting June 2010

**WHEREAS** the Ontario Workplace Safety and Insurance Act allows employees in Ontario to acquire benefits for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder ("PTSD"), and

**WHEREAS** the Ontario Workplace Safety & Insurance Board Operational Policy 15-03-02, entitled Traumatic Mental Stress outlines the guidelines to acquiring such benefits under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, and

**WHEREAS** in order to gain benefits under the Act, the Operational Policy outlines that an employee must have experienced a sudden and unexpected event to occur, and

**WHEREAS** a sudden and unexpected traumatic event is outlined in Operational Policy 15-03-02 includes the following:

- witnessing a fatality or a horrific accident
- witnessing or being the object of an armed robbery
- witnessing or being the object of a hostage-taking
- being the object of physical violence
- being the object of death threats
- being the object of threats of physical violence where the worker believes the threats are serious and harmful to self or others (e.g., bomb threats or confronted with a weapon)
- being the object of harassment that includes physical violence or threats of physical violence (e.g., the escalation of verbal abuse into traumatic physical abuse)
- being the object of harassment that includes being placed in a life-threatening or potentially life-threatening situation (e.g., tampering with safety equipment; causing the worker to do something dangerous), and

**WHEREAS** it is, in fact, expected that police personnel will witness traumatic events in the course of their duties, and

**WHEREAS** there is an increase of claims for PTSD involving police personnel and this is creating an economic hardship and staffing problems for police employers, and

**WHEREAS** it is expected that some officers and police personnel may encounter PTSD, and

**WHEREAS** the Workplace Safety & Insurance Act and Operational Policy 15-03-02 was never intended to be interpreted in such a manner that police officers and police personnel were not expected to be faced with traumatic events, and

**WHEREAS** police officers and police personnel receive training with regard to traumatic events prior to graduating from the Ontario Police College and during their on the job training, and

**WHEREAS** serving police officers and police personnel have the benefit of employee assistance programs (EAP) within their existing workplace, and

**WHEREAS** the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police continues to work with the Government of Ontario within the parameters of the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, to develop strategies to reduce the overall number of PTSD claims, and secondly, for those suffering from PTSD, to develop procedures and practices which allow members to receive their ongoing and appropriate treatment within the workplace, and

**WHEREAS** the Police Association of Ontario is calling upon the Government of Ontario to allow for presumptive legislation with respect to PTSD claims.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police calls on the Government of Ontario to strike a formal working group of the key stakeholders, including the Ontario Association of Police Services Boards, Police Association of Ontario, Ontario Provincial Police Association, Toronto Police Association, Ontario Senior Officers Association, and the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police to:

- 1) explore the issues around any such proposed amendments to the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act and Operational Policy 15-03-02, and
- 2) work with government officials and the medical community to develop an appropriate diagnostic tool with respect to Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, specifically for police officers and police personnel, and
- 3) develop an awareness campaign with respect to Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and its effects in policing.