



101 HOLIDAY INN DRIVE
PO BOX 29045
CAMBRIDGE, ONTARIO
N3C 0A0
866.723.9082

WHY OPSWA NO LONGER USES VULNERABLE SECTOR SCREENINGS

VULNERABLE SECTOR CHECK (VSS) WHAT WAS IT?

A Vulnerable Sector Check was the term traditionally used as the equivalent of a Sex Offender Registry Search. This search included the following three components:

- 1) **Standard Criminal Record Check:** This name-based check is a search of adult convictions held within the RCMP National Repository of Criminal Records. This is used for most employment situations and includes all offences in the Criminal Code, including those of a sexual nature and with children.
- 2) **Local Police Information:** This search includes the Standard Criminal Record Check above, as well as additional conviction and selected non-conviction information which may be relevant within both national and local police data sources. Additional information that may be discovered through this in-depth search includes:
 - Outstanding charges
 - Warrants
 - Peace bonds and restraining orders
 - Prohibitions
 - Probation orders
 - Interim release conditions
 - Recent convictions not yet listed in the National Repository.
- 3) **Pardoned Offences:** This piece queries for any *pardoned* offences of a *sexual* nature only. It won't provide pardons for theft or fraud. It's also worth noting that as of 2012, it's not possible to obtain a pardon/record suspension for sexual offences, so this list has no new members for 7 years. *More on this below.*

THE OPSWA AND THE ENHANCED CHECK

The Enhanced Check used by members of the OPSWA includes the Standard Criminal Record Check (#1) but also all the local police information contained in #2.

Many sports organizations, along with Scouts Canada, Girl Guides of Canada, Red Cross, and many others (https://pages.sterlingbackcheck.ca/landing-pages/c/cac_ace/) have made a decision that in many instances, receiving the first two pieces from us outweighs the risks and frustration of receiving all three pieces from the local police. Might seem a bit odd at first glance, but I'll walk you through their thought process and some of the challenges they faced:

- 1) When an applicant visits a police station, they are handed a piece of paper with the results of their check, and asked to supply that to the requesting organization. Unfortunately, there are many instances over the year of people offering forged police certificates.



101 HOLIDAY INN DRIVE
PO BOX 29045
CAMBRIDGE, ONTARIO
N3C 0A0
866.723.9082

- 2) Results from the police can take weeks, which often results in volunteers abandoning the process, or being placed without being screened at all. We've often heard "well, I'm sure you wouldn't have applied for the check if you had a record", but that is most certainly not true.
- 3) Vulnerable Sector Searches at the local police require male applicants to be fingerprinted approximately 30% of the time. This results in additional costs and delays of 3 months+, which turned away up to 50% of their volunteers purely due to the inconvenience and indignity of proving their innocence. From various Access to Information Requests from the RCMP, we have learned that approximately 250,000 individuals were asked to provide fingerprints to complete a Vulnerable Sector Check each year, and only 100,000 proceeded with this request. That's a lot of people who are placed without screening, or abandoned the process.

Upon weighing the pros and cons of their experience with the police, these organizations preferred the Enhanced Police Check from us which delivers forgery-proof results online – guaranteed within one business day, giving confidence to the organization that results have not been tampered with, and the ability to place people immediately. On top of that, people can share their results securely with other organizations where they work or volunteer, and we eliminate the burden of protecting personal information by providing bank-caliber secure storage and 24/7/365 access through our software.

In addition, it is important to note that organizations do not need to inconvenience every candidate with a VSS, as the Pardoned Sexual Offence Search would not be required for many individuals.

1. **Returning staff/volunteers:** As of 2012, it's not possible to obtain a pardon for a sex offence any more. So anyone with a Vulnerable Sector Search for pardons after 2012 will never need to have a search for them again, as any recent/new convictions for sexual offences would be uncovered during a standard Criminal Record Check, since no pardon can be obtained.
- 2) **Individuals Under 34:** We have obtained frequently refresh *Access to Information* Requests from the RCMP which tells us that the date of birth belonging to the youngest person with a pardoned sexual offence is February 28, 1986. Therefore, any search for pardoned sexual offences on a candidate born after February 28 1986 would be fruitless. More on this here: <http://sterlingbackcheck.ca/Resources/OurBlog/2016/May/Vulnerable-Sector-Verifications-and-Persons-Under-30.aspx#.V0WLOWiUioU.linkedin>

Again, the federal government passed legislation in 2012 preventing anyone from obtaining a record suspension (pardon) for any sexual offences going forward. This means the list of *pardoned* sexual offenders is not growing.

This means an Enhanced Police Information Check comprising sections one and two above (everything but the pardoned sexual offence search) offers the exact same level of information for any returning coaches/officials with a clear VSS, or anyone under 34 years of age.

The following is a list of some organizations working with us that do the Enhanced Police Information Check for *all* their applicants, that previously required a Vulnerable Sector Search.



101 HOLIDAY INN DRIVE
PO BOX 29045
CAMBRIDGE, ONTARIO
N3C 0A0
866.723.9082

- Skate Canada
- IIHF World Junior Hockey Championships 2015 (Toronto – Montreal),
- Girl Guides of Canada,
- Government of Saskatchewan,
- Alberta College of Paramedics,
- Alberta College of Pharmacists,
- Ontario Education Criminal Records Review: <http://backcheck.ca/oecrr/#>
- Duke of Edinburgh’s Award – Alberta
- Duke of Edinburgh’s Award – Manitoba
- Canadian Red Cross
- Hockey Alberta (Officials)
- Sports Quebec
- Ontario Lacrosse Association
- Alpine Canada
- Ontario School Bus Association
- 2017 North American Indigenous Games
- 2017 IIHF World Junior Hockey Championships
- Equestrian Canada

The Ontario Education Criminal Records Review actually has a disclosure form as part of their process: <http://backcheck.ca/oecrr/online-check.htm>

“By checking this box I hereby certify that I have never received a pardon or record suspension for a sex offence. A deceptive answer could have an impact upon your continued employment or volunteering. You will now be asked to complete an online Enhanced Police Information Check. The data bases queried and the potential results of this Enhanced Police Information Check will be identified in the application and consent forms you complete.”

In addition, here are some organizations that use our Enhanced Police Information check specifically for applicants born after February 1986 as per the Access to Information request, and/or returning staff/volunteers

Enhanced Police Information Check specifically for applicants Under-34 or Returning Members

- Canadian Camping Association
- Robertson Hall – Entire Faith Industry: <http://backcheck.net/robertsonhall/>
- SJA / Nancy Brown
- Rugby Ontario
- Hockey Canada
- Scouts Canada

If you have further questions, Please email our HR Department at idasilva@opswa.com

Enhanced Police Information Check

Where Information is Actually Found



SterlingBackcheck's Enhanced Police Information Check (E-PIC) combines a search of the National Repository of Criminal Records and a search of Local Police Information within multiple databanks. By partnering with SterlingBackcheck and making E-PIC part of your screening program you can ensure a consistent and efficient process that is compliant with national best practices.

BACKGROUND SCREENING CONSIDERATIONS SHOULD BE BASED ON THE LIKELIHOOD OF ...	E-PIC IS BUILT ON COLUMNS ONE AND TWO		
	PIECE 1 NATIONAL REPOSITORY OF CRIMINAL RECORDS (BASIC)	PIECE 2 LOCAL POLICE INFORMATION (ENHANCED)	PIECE 3 PARDONED SEX OFFENDER DATABASE <small>Persons having been approved for and maintained a record suspension</small>
Discovering sexually based offence conviction information.	✓	✓	-
Discovering sexually based offence non-conviction information.	-	✓	-
Discovering active criminal record convictions - Indictable.	✓	✓	-
Discovering active criminal record convictions - Summary.	-	✓	-
Discovering recent criminal record convictions not yet registered in the National Repository	-	✓	-
Discovering record suspensions for sex offence convictions.	-	-	✓*
Discovering select non-conviction information**	-	✓	-
Establishing a centralized capability for your organization.	✓	✓	-
Avoiding requirement to fingerprint the candidate associated to DOB and Gender matching.	✓	✓	-
Ensuring rapid Turn Around Times up to and including same day service.	✓	✓	-
Obtaining consistent, predictable costs via a single supplier utilizing national best practices.	✓	✓	-
Avoiding candidate loss because of wait times.	✓	✓	-

* Less than 0.005% of persons screened using the Vulnerable Sector Verification process are determined to be present in the Special Holding of Record Suspensions (based on volumes of 2.3 million checks per year).

** May reveal the possible existence of outstanding charges, warrants, peace bonds, restraining orders, prohibitions, probation orders, interim release conditions, and discharges. Victim, witness, complainant, or mental health information not resulting in a formal charge is not considered.