



# NIAGARA REGIONAL POLICE SERVICE

## Police Services Board Report

PUBLIC AGENDA

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**Subject:** Annual Report – Marine Unit – January 1 to December 31, 2022  
**Report To:** Chair and Members, Niagara Police Services Board  
**Report Date:** 2023-02-16

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### Recommendation(s)

**That the Niagara Police Services Board receive this report for information.**

### Key Facts

- The purpose of this report is to advise the Board that the Service is in compliance with By-Law 227-2000 as it relates to the Marine Unit.
- The Chief is required to make a written annual report to the Board with respect to the Marine Unit.
- This report will set out the particulars with respect to the procedures required, and compliance with the procedures.
- This report will identify areas the Marine Unit has been utilized by other services including the extent of such utilization.

### Financial Considerations

There are no financial implications relating to the recommendations contained within this report.

### Analysis

In accordance with By-Law 227-2000, the Chief shall make a written report to the Board on or before August 30 of each year in respect to the Marine Unit. The report shall include:

- a) a summary of the procedures for the Marine Unit;
- b) the status of Service compliance with the said procedures; and
- c) whether or not the Marine Unit has been utilized by other services and the extent of such utilization.

This Board Report will outline each of the above and confirm our compliance with the By-Law.

a) *“...a summary of the procedures for the Marine Unit...”*

Under section 10(6) of the Comprehensive Ontario Police Services Act, the Niagara Regional Police Service shall provide policing in respect of all navigable bodies and courses of water within the Region of Niagara. General Order 144.07 sets out the procedures and policies of the Marine Unit. The Niagara Regional Police Service Marine Unit, unless otherwise provided by law, shall be responsible for effective waterways enforcement, general patrol and emergency response throughout the waters within the Region of Niagara.

b) *“...the status of Service compliance with the said procedures...”*

The Niagara Regional Police Service Marine Unit is fully compliant with the policies and regulations as prescribed by the General Order, Criminal Code, and the Canada Shipping Act, 2001. The 2022 Marine Unit is staffed with one sergeant and six constables. A current list of Marine Unit personnel is maintained by the Inspector of Emergency Services.

With two members accredited by Transport Canada as course providers (Small Domestic Vessel Basic Safety and Small Vessel Operator Proficiency), all members meet monthly emergency drills and annual skills evaluations.

During the winter months (November to April) the members of the Marine Unit provide support to frontline patrol services. In addition to this support, the members conduct mandatory training in Surface Ice Rescue, Sub Ice Diving, and Swift Water Rescue to address the search, rescue and recovery of persons and vessels on the waterways within the jurisdiction of the municipality – Comprehensive Ontario Police Services Act Sec. 1(i).

c) *“...whether or not the Marine Unit has been utilized by other services and the extent of such utilization...”*

Members of the Marine Unit provided support to Niagara Parks Police and Niagara Falls Fire Department through the use of equipment and personnel for Swiftwater Rescues and Recoveries in the Niagara Gorge.

Marine training was conducted by members of the Marine Unit for the Hamilton Police Service, Niagara Parks Police, and Fort Erie Fire Services. This training provided the agencies with Transport Canada certifications in Marine Emergency Duties A3, Small Vessel Operator Proficiency, and Radio Operators Certificate – Marine.

The Niagara Regional Police Service Marine Unit provides support to the Joint Rescue Co-ordination Center (JRCC) and the Canadian Coast Guard (CCG) with search and rescue incidents on Lake Ontario, Lake Erie, Niagara River, and Welland River. During

the 2022 season, the Marine Unit responded to 105 dispatched, JRCC and CCG requests including the search for missing persons, as well as stranded, disabled, abandoned and overdue vessels.

The members of the Marine Unit are also part of the Services Hostage Rescue Team complement and are referred to as the Tactical Support Group (TSG). In 2022, the members of the Marine Unit responded to 25 Emergency Task Unit operational requests that consisted primarily of ground searches, armed persons, and high-risk warrant support.

The following operational chart has been included in order to show the activities of the Marine Unit over the past three years. Water-Related calls for service include search and rescue operations and missing persons investigations in proximity to water. Frontline calls for service include police response to incidents while Marine Unit officers are redeployed to general patrol.

The reduction of Calls for Service – Water Related, Provincial Offence Notices – Water Related, and Search & Rescue Calls, can be attributed to a reduction in patrols. The reduction in patrol time was due to the re-organization of the School Resource Officers into the Community Oriented Response and Engagement Unit. This resulted in a reduction of personnel assigned to marine patrol from 13 to 6 for the marine patrol season. Effectively, reducing the patrol time by 50%.

	2022	2021	2020
Calls for Service – Water-Related	105	133	132
Calls for Service – Front Line	352	431	691
Provincial Offence Notices – Water Related	185	215	332
Arrests	4	8	3
Community Public Safety Events	6	7	3
Search & Rescue Calls	47	62	50
TSG Calls for Service	25	38	70
Explosives Disposal Calls	1	6	5

### **Alternatives Reviewed**

Not applicable.

### **Relationship to Police Service/Board Strategic Priorities**

To comply with the provisions of Police Services Board By-Laws and to maintain compliance with the Provincial Adequacy Standards Regulations.

## **Relevant Policy Considerations**

Police Services Board By-Law 227-2000 - Marine Unit  
General Order 144.07 – Marine Unit

## **Other Pertinent Reports**

8.7.2022.04.21 – Annual Report – Marine Unit – January 1 to December 31, 2021.

*This report was prepared by Sergeant Jon Pilkington, Marine Unit, reviewed by Inspector Darrin Forbes, Emergency Services Unit and Todd Waselovich, Superintendent, Emergency and Investigative Services, and recommended by Brian Ash, Acting Deputy Chief, Operational Services.*



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### **Submitted by:**

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Chief of Police

## **Appendices**

Not applicable.