



NIAGARA REGIONAL POLICE SERVICE

Police Services Board Report

PUBLIC AGENDA

Subject: Annual Report – Canine Unit – January 1 to December 31, 2022
Report To: Chair and Members, Niagara Police Services Board
Report Date: 2023-04-27

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 316-2012 – Canine Units.
- The Chief is required to make an annual written report to the Board with respect to the Canine Unit.
- This report will set out a summary of the procedures required by this By-Law and the status of Service compliance with the said procedures.

Financial Considerations

There are no financial implications relating to the recommendation in this report.

Analysis

In accordance with By-Law 316-2012, the Chief shall make a written report to the Board each year with respect to Canine Units, and must include the following:

- a) A summary of the procedures as required by this By-Law;
- b) The status of Service compliance with said procedures;
- c) Confirmation of the development and maintenance of a manual on Canine Unit services;
- d) A summary of the circumstances in which the Canine Unit has been deployed;
- e) Confirmation that Members have been trained in accordance with Section 5.3.

The following is a detailed response to the above-noted requirements:

- a) *“...a summary of the procedures as required by this By-Law...”*

The Niagara Regional Police Service is required to have available to them, the services of a canine tracking unit 24 hours a day. The Canine Unit is governed by the written

procedures as set out in Canine Unit General Order 077.12 and the Canine Unit Manual. These written procedures include the circumstances, in which a canine team will be deployed, the process for obtaining services, reporting relationships, equipment, training, and the selection process for canine handlers.

b) "...the status of Service compliance with the said procedures..."

The Niagara Regional Police Service is in compliance with this By-Law. The Canine Unit has an authorized strength of one sergeant and six constables. Qualified unit members conduct initial certification courses, annual recertification courses, and maintenance training for all handlers and canine teams pursuant to the Policing Standards Manual. The six constables have general-purpose police service dogs, meaning they are all trained for tracking, conducting searches and suspect apprehension. Four of the dogs are cross-trained for narcotics detection and two are cross-trained for explosives detection. The sergeant's police service dog is trained in tracking missing persons and the detection of human remains.

c) "...confirmation of the development and maintenance of a manual on canine unit services..."

A Canine Unit Manual is reviewed on an annual basis. The manual was reviewed and revised in 2022 and is available to all canine handlers on the Service's computer network.

d) "...a summary of the circumstances in which the Canine Unit has been deployed..."

In 2022, the services of Canine Unit members were requested at 1,445 Calls for Service. Members of the Unit also responded to an additional 265 Calls for Service supporting front line officers, where police service dogs were not required. The number of police service dog deployments is down from previous years. Officers have been encouraged to use a higher level of scrutiny when deciding to use a police service dog for subject apprehensions. Based on the totality of the circumstances, there must be an immediate need to apprehend a subject for public and officer safety to utilize a police service dog for that purpose. Incidents of police service dogs conducting drug searches are also down. The toxicity levels of numerous recreational drugs are extremely dangerous and therefore searches are being conducted only when absolutely necessary and when safe to do so.

2020-2022 Comparison Chart	2022	2021	2020
Circumstances			
Request for Canine Unit Services	1,445	1,754	1,417
Police Service Dog Deployments	402	546	588
Tracking Subjects	268	329	319
Controlled Substances (Drug) Searches	3	15	14

2020-2022 Comparison Chart	2022	2021	2020
Explosives Searches	6	3	6

- e) *“...Confirmation that Members have been trained in accordance with Section 5.3...”*

As indicated in section (b) above, all members performing the functions of a canine team and/or unit have the requisite knowledge, skills and abilities and receive training on an ongoing basis pursuant to the Policing Standards Manual.

Alternatives Reviewed

Not applicable.

Relationship to Police Service/Board Strategic Priorities

This report is for information purposes and has no immediate strategic priorities.

Relevant Policy Considerations

Board By-Law 316-2012 – Canine Units

General Order 077.12 – Canine Unit

Provincial Adequacy Standards Regulation, ER010 – Canine Unit

Other Pertinent Reports

8.5.2022.11.18 – Annual Report – Canine Unit – January 1 to December 31, 2021

This report was prepared by Jamie Munro, Staff Sergeant, Emergency Services Unit, in consultation with Darrin Forbes, Acting Superintendent, Emergency and Investigative Services. Recommended by Brian Ash, Acting Deputy Chief, Operational Services.



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Chief of Police

Appendices

Not applicable.