



NIAGARA REGIONAL POLICE SERVICE

Police Services Board Report

PUBLIC AGENDA

Subject: Annual Report – Sudden Death and Found Human Remains
January 1 to December 31, 2023

Report To: Chair and Members, Niagara Police Services Board

Report Date: 2024-02-27

Recommendation(s)

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

Key Facts

- The purpose of this report is to advise the Board that the Niagara Regional Police Service (NRPS) is in compliance with By-Law 229-2000 – Sudden Death and Found Human Remains.
- The Chief is required to make an annual written report to the Board concerning sudden death and found human remains investigations.
- This report is submitted to provide the Board with the required information relating to the Service's written procedures and response to Sudden Death and Found Human Remains.

Financial Considerations

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

Analysis

In accordance with By-Law 229-2000, the Chief shall make a written report to the Board on or before August 30 of each year in respect of sudden death and found human remains investigations. The report shall include:

- a) A summary of the written procedures concerning sudden death and found human remains investigations;
- b) The status of Service compliance with the said procedures;
- c) A summary of the memoranda of the Chief Coroner relating to sudden death; and
- d) The status of Service compliance with the said memoranda.

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

- a) *“...a summary of the written procedures concerning sudden death and found human remains investigations...”*

Two General Orders (GOs) were prepared and approved to address the legislative requirements of the regulation relating to sudden death and found human remains:

- General Order (GO) 028.12 - Sudden Death and Homicide Investigations standardizes procedures for all sudden death investigations; and
- GO 024.05 – Unidentified Human Remains details the procedures to be followed when unidentified human remains, or suspected human remains are found. The purpose of this procedure is to conduct investigations to identify as yet unidentified human remains and/or to determine if the remains are non-human, with the objective of establishing the identity of the individual, determining the cause and manner of death, and notifying next of kin.

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

The Service complies with these procedures by conducting scheduled reviews of the listed GOs. Further compliance is realized through the training process and through procedures set in place to ensure an efficient and timely response to investigations involving sudden deaths and found human remains. The GOs and procedures were found to be in compliance with the standards.

The Service has undergone a review of Adequacy Standards by the Ministry of Public Safety and Security and was found to be in compliance with the standards.

- c) *“...a summary of the memoranda of the Chief Coroner relating to sudden death...”*

Memorandum 12-11 that was submitted by the Office of the Chief Coroner titled "Investigation Questionnaire for Sudden Unexpected Deaths in Infants (Less Than One Year of Age)" form was revised on December 14, 2012, and issued to all the Coroners, Chiefs of Police, and the Commissioner of the Ontario Provincial Police. The form is to be utilized during investigations involving unexpected deaths in infants who are less than 1 year of age.

- d) *“...the status of Service compliance with the said memoranda...”*

Memorandum 12-11 was disseminated to Service personnel to ensure compliance with the directions of the Chief Coroner, existing GOs, and investigative practices. Any additional requirements from the Chief Coroner's office will be reported annually during the regularly scheduled By-Law compliance process. To date, there have been no additional memoranda issued.

GO 028.12 - Sudden Death and Homicide Investigations is in compliance with the said memorandum.

The Missing Person / Unidentified Human Remains Coordinator was a position created within the Service in 2021, as the centralized resource to ensure a consistent investigative response for all occurrences of persons reported missing in the Niagara Region. This includes both new and historic cases. The coordinator is currently in the process of updating GO 024.05 to include the role and responsibilities of this position and the position of the Cold Case Investigator assigned to the Homicide Unit.

The Service remains in compliance with By-Law 229-2000, as it relates to Sudden Death and Found Human Remains.

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

By-Law 229-2000 – Sudden Death and Found Human Remains
GO 024.05 – Unidentified Human Remains
GO 028.12– Sudden Death and Homicide Investigations

Other Pertinent Reports

8.13.2023.03.23 – Annual Report – Sudden Death and Found Human Remains – January 1 to December 31, 2022.

This report was prepared by Andrew Knevel, Staff Sergeant, Major Crime Unit, in consultation with and reviewed by Mike Casella, Acting Inspector, Investigative Support Services and Steve Magistrale, Acting Superintendent, Emergency and Investigative Services. Recommended by Todd Waselovich, Deputy Chief, Operational Services.



Submitted by:

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Chief of Police

Appendices

Not applicable.