



NIAGARA REGIONAL POLICE SERVICE

Police Service Board Report

PUBLIC AGENDA

Subject: Annual Report – Hostage Rescue, Preliminary Perimeter Control and Containment, and Tactical Units
January 1 to December 31, 2024

Report To: Chair and Members, Niagara Police Service Board

Report Date: 2025-04-25

Recommendation(s)

That the Niagara Police Service 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 (Service) is in compliance with Board By-Laws 480-2024 - Hostage Rescue, 492-2024 – Preliminary Perimeter Control and Containment, and 503-2024 – Tactical Units.
- The Chief is required to make an annual written report to the Board with respect to Hostage Rescue, Preliminary Perimeter Control and Containment, and the Tactical Unit.
- All three functions remain the responsibility of the Emergency Task Unit (ETU).

Financial Considerations

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

Analysis

In accordance with By-Laws 480-2024, 492-2024, and 503-2024, the Chief shall make a written report to the Board on or before August 30 of each year in respect of Hostage Rescue, Preliminary Perimeter Control and Containment, and Tactical Units. The report shall include:

- 1) Hostage Rescue (By-Law 480-2024):
 - a) a summary of the procedures as required by this By-Law;
 - b) the status of Service compliance with the said procedures;
 - c) confirmation that the existing protocol with another service, if any, complies with legislative requirements; and

- d) a summary of the circumstances in which Hostage Rescue services have been utilized.

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

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

Hostage Rescue remains the responsibility of ETU and the written procedures are set out in General Order (GO) 089.08 Emergency Task Unit. As required, the written procedures include:

- i. The circumstances in which a Tactical Unit/hostage rescue will be deployed, including the process for obtaining the services of the Tactical Unit, and reporting relationships;
- ii. Ensure that the Service's Major Incident Commanders and Crisis Negotiators train with the Service's Hostage Rescue Team (HRT);
- iii. The Tactical Unit can undertake containment, the apprehension of an armed barricaded person, an explosive force entry if it uses the services of a police explosive entry technician; and
- iv. The deployment of other emergency response services, including receiving assistance from other agencies.

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

The Service is in compliance with Board By-Law 480-2024, the Community Safety and Policing Act (CSPA), 2019, including Schedule 1 of O. Reg. 392/23 and O. Reg 87/24.

- c) *“...confirmation that the existing protocol with another service, if any, complies with legislative requirements.”*

The Service is in compliance with the protocol (Section 4.2.1) of this By-Law in that the services of the HRT are available 24 hours a day, that the services of an HRT are available within a reasonable response time and the HRT exceeds the minimum of 12 full-time tactical officers, including a supervisor, who are dedicated to the team. The Service's HRT consists of 15 full-time constables and 2 full-time supervisors.

- d) *“...a summary of the circumstances in which Hostage Rescue services have been utilized...”*

Hostage rescue procedures are typically initiated when a subject or subjects that are being sought by the police are in a place, where there are others present who may be harmed by the subject(s). When these circumstances exist, HRT tactics may be deployed to ensure the safety of innocent persons present at the scene.

These procedures and tactics were required for the safety of the public and/or a suspect(s) on 83 occasions in 2024. Below is a summary of the types of situations where hostage rescue procedures and tactics were executed in 2024, along with statistics from the previous 2 years:

Hostage Rescue Procedures	2024	2023	2022
Hostage Rescue	1	0	2
Armed / Barricaded Persons	33	37	42
High-Risk Warrants	26	27	23
High-Risk Arrests	23	17	14
Total	83	81	81

2) Preliminary Perimeter Control and Containment (By-Law 492-2024):

- a) summary of the procedures relating to preliminary perimeter control and containment as required by this By-Law;
- b) the status of Service compliance with the said procedures;
- c) confirmation of the development and maintenance of the Manual addressing perimeter control and containment provided by the Emergency Task Unit and Members of the Tactical Support Group; and
- d) confirmation that Members have been trained in accordance with Section 5.4.

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

- a) *“...summary of the procedures relating to preliminary perimeter control and containment as required by this By-Law...”*

Preliminary perimeter control and containment roles remain the responsibility of ETU and the written procedures are set out in GO 089.08. As required, the written procedures include:

- i. The circumstances in which preliminary control and containment will be established;
- ii. Operational responsibility for an incident where preliminary perimeter control and containment is being established; and
- iii. The duties of an officer involved in the establishment of preliminary perimeter control and containment, including compliance with the requirement of Section 10 (1) of O. Reg. 392/23 CSPA, pending the deployment of a Tactical Unit.

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

The Service is in compliance with Board By-Law 492-2024, the CSPA, 2019, including Schedule 1 of O. Reg 392/23 and O. Reg. 87/24.

- c) *“...confirmation of the development and maintenance of the Manual addressing perimeter control and containment provided by the Emergency Task Unit and Members of the Tactical Support Group...”*

GO 089.08, along with written standard operating procedures and the Tactical Response Team's (TRT's) course training standards, fulfill the obligation of a written manual that includes hostage rescue tactics and perimeter containment and control and is available to each team member. Written copies of the procedures are presented to team members as they receive training. A central copy of updated procedures is available to all members. The TRT's course training standards are reviewed on an ongoing basis.

- d) *“...confirmation that Members have been trained in accordance with Section 5.4...”*

The Service is in compliance with Board By-Law 492-2024, the CSPA, 2019, including Schedule 1 of O. Reg. 392/23 and O. Reg. 87/24.

3) Tactical Units (By-Law 503-2024):

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

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

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

The Tactical Unit role remains the responsibility of the ETU, and the written procedures are set out in GO 089.08. As required, the written procedures include:

- i. The circumstances in which a Tactical Unit will be deployed, including the process for obtaining the services of the Tactical Unit, and reporting relationships; and
- ii. The Tactical Unit can undertake containment, the apprehension of an armed barricaded person, an explosive force entry if it uses the services of a police explosive entry technician.

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

The Service is compliant with this By-Law. The existing processes as set out in GO 089.08 ensure that ETU members can be contacted expeditiously and deployed accordingly.

- c) *“...confirmation of the development and maintenance of the Manual on Tactical Unit services...”*

GO 089.08 along with written standard operating procedures and the TRT’s course training standards, fulfill the obligation of a written manual that is available to each team member. Written copies of the procedures are presented to team members as they receive training. A central copy of updated procedures is available to all members. The TRT’s course training standards are reviewed on an ongoing basis.

- d) *“...a summary of the circumstances in which the Tactical Unit has been deployed...”*

The services of the ETU were utilized on 182 occasions in 2024, representing a slight increase from the previous year.

Tactical Unit Calls:

Year	2024	2023	2022
Number of Calls	182	174	161

This total also includes non-tactical operations for which the ETU is responsible including VIP security, community demonstrations, search and rescue operations involving vulnerable persons, and calls relating to persons in crisis. In addition, ETU members responded to tactical calls that did not require the entire Tactical Unit and were handled by an Immediate Response Team (typically made up of four on-duty members of the ETU).

Summary of major circumstances in which the Tactical Unit was deployed in 2024:

- 23 high-risk arrests
- 26 high-risk warrants
- 19 ground searches – missing persons and evidence
- 19 high-risk canine tracks
- 12 VIP details
- 33 armed and/or barricaded persons

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

All members of the ETU are trained within the guidelines of Provincial Adequate and Effective Policing regulations relevant to Emergency Response (O. Reg. 392/23 and O. Reg. 87/24).

Alternatives Reviewed

Not applicable.

Relationship to Police Service/Board Strategic Priorities

To comply with the provisions of the Board By-Laws and to maintain compliance with the Adequate and Effective Policing requirements.

Relevant Policy Considerations

Board By-Law 480-2024 – Hostage Rescue
Board By-Law 492-2024 – Preliminary Perimeter Control and Containment
Board By-Law 503-2024 – Tactical Units
GO 089.08 – Emergency Task Unit
CSPA Adequate and Effective Policing (General) O. Reg. 392/23
CSPA Adequate and Effective Policing (General) O. Reg. 87/24

Other Pertinent Reports

8.6 – 2024.06.27 – Annual Report – Hostage Rescue, Preliminary Perimeter Control and Containment, and Tactical Units – January 1 to December 31, 2023.

This report was prepared by Matt Hodges, Inspector, Emergency Operations; and reviewed/recommended by Darrin Forbes, Acting Deputy Chief, Operational Services.



Submitted by:

Bill Fordy, O.O.M. #9615
Chief of Police

Appendices

Not applicable.