



NIAGARA REGIONAL POLICE SERVICE

Police Service Board Report

PUBLIC AGENDA

Subject: Annual Report – Criminal Harassment
January 1, 2024 to December 31, 2024

Report To: Chair and Members, Niagara Police Service Board

Report Date: 2025-06-24

Recommendation(s)

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

Key Facts

- The purpose of this report is to provide the Board with the required necessary information, pursuant to By-Law 440-2024, relating to investigations into criminal harassment,
- The Niagara Regional Police Service (Service) maintains written procedures concerning criminal harassment investigations,
- The Service is in compliance with the written procedures concerning criminal harassment investigations.

Financial Considerations

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

Analysis

By-Law 440-2024, a By-Law respecting investigations into criminal harassment, was enacted as a result of the Adequacy and Effective Policing, LE-028 Criminal Harassment. This By-Law details specific requirements that are reported as follows:

The Chief shall make a written report to the Board on or before August 30 of each year in respect of investigations into criminal harassment. The report shall include:

- a) a summary of written procedures concerning investigations into criminal harassment, and,
- b) confirmation of Service compliance with the said procedures.

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

- a) *"... a summary of the written procedures concerning investigations into criminal harassment..."*

General Order 021.07 – Criminal Harassment, was prepared and approved to comply with By-Law 440-2024 with respect to procedures governing criminal harassment investigations.

The General Order includes the following information:

1. Definitions of terms contained within the General Order;
2. General information as to the definition of criminal harassment, as well as police response to such complaints;
3. Responsibilities of the Communications Unit, and in particular, the complaint taker and dispatcher;
4. Responsibilities of the investigating officer; and
5. Responsibilities of the officer in charge.

- b) *"... confirmation of Service compliance with the said procedures..."*

The following procedures validate the Service's response to criminal harassment complaints:

1. Criminal harassment incidents are monitored by Communications Unit personnel, who ensure an appropriate police response to all reported incidents. Patrol supervisors are also tasked to ensure investigations are conducted in accordance with applicable General Orders.
2. While investigating any complaint of criminal harassment, which stems from a domestic violence incident, officers shall also comply with the procedures established in General Order 114.13 – Domestic/Family Violence.
3. Initial occurrence reports are submitted by the reporting officer to the Quality Assurance Unit for review. In cases where charges are laid by the original uniform officer, a supervisory review of the completed crown brief is also conducted.
4. Following the review by the Quality Assurance Unit, the report is either routed back to the initial investigating officer for completion of the investigation or to the District Detective Services Unit Staff Sergeant, or Detective Sergeant, for review and/or further investigation.

5. In cases where there is a previous or existing relationship of an intimate nature, the report is forwarded to the Domestic Violence Unit for review and/or further investigation.
6. Crime Analysts within the Special Victims Unit monitor incoming reports and ensure compliance regarding the completion of a Violent Crime Linkage Analysis System (ViCLAS) submission report.
7. Completed investigations are again subject to supervisory review before a matter is closed, either by charge or otherwise in accordance with Canadian Centre for Justice and Community Safety Statistics (CCJS) requirements.
8. As part of the mandated Adequacy and Effective Policing, criminal harassment training is a component of the Domestic Violence Investigators course.

The present Computer Aided Dispatch and Versadex Records Management Systems provides an accurate reference as to how many calls the Service receives on a yearly basis, including calls regarding allegations of Criminal Harassment.

The following chart helps illustrate our compliance with the written procedures by detailing the number of criminal harassment investigations conducted by the Service over the last five years, and the way they were cleared:

Year	Reports	Cleared by Charge	Unfounded	Cleared Otherwise	Not Cleared
2020	305	56	42	44	163
2021	381	89	68	34	190
2022	317	67	53	17	180
2023	452	83	53	65	247
2024	501	80	51	26	344

Of note, in 2020, Uniform Crime Report Clerks implemented audit and coding for the CCJS resulting in an increase in “Not Cleared” calls. From 2020, onward, the “Not Cleared” category includes calls where investigations were suspended, with and without an identified suspect.

Alternatives Reviewed

Not applicable.

Relationship to Police Service/Board Strategic Priorities

To comply with the provisions of the Niagara Regional Police Service Board By-Laws and to maintain compliance with the Adequacy and Effective Policing requirements.

Relevant Policy Considerations

Board By-Law 440-2024 – Criminal Harassment
GO 021.07 – Criminal Harassment

Other Pertinent Reports

8.5 – 2024.06.27 – Annual Report – Criminal Harassment January 1, 2023, to December 31, 2023.

This report was prepared by Jeffrey Bootsma, Acting Inspector, 2 District, and reviewed by Shaun Parrent, Superintendent, Community Services. Recommended by Mario Lagrotteria, Deputy Chief, Community Services.



Submitted by:

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Chief of Police

Appendices

Not Applicable.