



NIAGARA REGIONAL POLICE SERVICE

Police Service Board Report

PUBLIC AGENDA

Subject: Annual Report – Skills Development and Learning Plan
January 1 to December 31, 2024

Report To: Chair and Members, Niagara Police Service Board

Report Date: 2025-06-26

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-Law 423-2024 - A By-Law Respecting the Skills Development and Learning Plan (AI-002).
- The Chief of Police is required to ensure that the Skills Development and Learning Plan ensures the development and maintenance of knowledge, skills, and abilities of members consistent with the Skills Development and Learning Adequacy Standard prescribed by the Policing Standards Manual (2000) – continued during transition to the Community Safety and Policing Act, 2019 (CSPA) under Ontario Regulation 392/23: Adequate and Effective Policing (General) and Ontario Regulation 87/24: Training – and is reviewed on an annual basis and amended as required.
- This report sets out a summary of the plan as called for in the reporting requirements of the By-Law.

Financial Considerations

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

Analysis

The By-Law details specific requirements that are to be reported on by the Chief as follows:

- a. a summary of the Skills Development and Learning Plan; and
- b. the status of Service compliance with the said Plan.

The following is a detailed response to the above requirements:

a. a summary of the Skills Development and Learning Plan

The objective of the Skills Development and Learning Plan is to ensure the highest quality service to the residents and visitors of the Niagara Region by identifying, developing, and effectively utilizing the knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSA) of the members of the Service. The plan focuses on staff development in a planned, coordinated, and continuous manner to optimize efficiency and promote safety, professional confidence, and effective operations. Through the plan, the Service acknowledges the responsibilities it shares with members, supervisors, and senior leaders for the development and maintenance of KSA's to ensure the provision of adequate and effective policing.

Public Order Unit

The Service maintains a Public Order Unit (POU), compliant with By-Law 495-2024. Effective July 2024, General Order 259.01 – Public Order Unit was created. Under the direction of the POU Commander, members assigned responsibilities that fall within the mandate of the POU receive initial training commensurate with the level of their responsibility, including Public Order Operator, Public Order Section Lead, and Public Order Commander. Members of the POU are required to complete re-certification training within 12 months of the initial training for the duration of their assignment to the POU.

The Service's Criminal Investigation

Through the Career Development Officer, in consultation with District and Unit Commanders, each criminal investigative position within the Service has KSA's identified. Officers are required to present an acceptable level of KSA's in order to apply for a criminal investigative position. Those selected and assigned to criminal investigative positions, will continue to enhance their professional development. In consultation with the District and Unit Commanders, the Superintendent of Executive Services and the Training Unit will determine the assignment of the skill development courses for criminal investigators that are held at both the Ontario Police College (OPC) and the Canadian Police College.

The Service's Criminal Investigative Units:

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| • District Detective Offices | • Homicide Unit |
| • Sexual Assault Unit | • Child Abuse Unit |
| • Domestic Violence Unit | • Special Investigative Services |
| • Internet Child Exploitation Unit | • Centralized Fraud |
| • Technological Crimes Unit | • Offender Management Unit |
| • Cyber Crime Unit | • Forensic Services Unit |

The Service provided several opportunities for members of investigative units to attend the OPC and/or the Canadian Police College to become qualified, re-qualified and to further develop their skills through various courses. Below are examples of courses routinely attended by members of the Service:

• Sexual Assault Investigation	• Digital Technologies for Investigators (DTIC)
• Search Warrant	• Death Investigation
• Investigating Offences Against Children	• Homicide Investigations
• IACP: Leadership in Police Organizations	• Human Trafficking Investigation
• Investigative Interviewing Techniques	• Drug Investigation
• Criminal Investigator Training	• Ontario Major Case Management
• Coaching Police Professionals	• Managing Investigations Using Powercase

The Training Unit provides the main source of all skills and knowledge development, through competent instructors who are certified by the OPC. In 2024, the Training Unit offered several courses pertaining to a variety of subjects. Most of these courses were directed towards the members of the Service, but on occasion where space permitted, classes were supplemented by members from outside police agencies.

The following are courses either instructed or facilitated by the Training Unit:

• Crown Brief Training	• C8 Qualification & Requalification
• Coach Officer Course	• Service Supervisor Course
• Special Constable Use of Force In-Service Training	• Police Bicycle Qualification
• Shotgun Qualification & Requalification	• PEACE Model Interviewing
• Search Warrant Course	• Working Mind for First Responders
• Criminal Investigators Training	• Use of Force & Firearms
• Domestic Violence Investigators Course	• CEW Qualification & Requalification
• Use of Force Trainer	• CEW Master Trainer Facilitating and Assessing Police Learning

Investigative Support Functions

Those areas designated by adequacy as providing an investigative support function include scenes of crime analysis, forensic identification, canine tracking, technical collision investigation and reconstruction, breath analysis, physical surveillance, electronic interception, video and photographic surveillance, polygraph, and behavioral science.

Members who are assigned to investigative support functions must possess the required knowledge, skills, and abilities in order to enter into any of these specialty positions. Once assigned, these investigators continue to develop their skills through successful completion of accredited training. In many cases, designations, basic qualifications, and regular requalification are required and provided. Depending on the field of specialty, such training may be provided in-house through the Training Unit, the individual support unit, the Criminal Intelligence Service Ontario, the OPC and/or the Canadian Police College.

• Applied Forensic Videography	• Forensic Shooting Scene Examination
• Advanced Friction Ridge Analysis	• Using the Internet as an Intelligence Tool (INTINT)
• Basic Bloodstain Pattern Recognition	• Standardized Field Sobriety Testing (SFST)
• Forensic Identification Officer	• Technical Collision Investigation Level III
• Forensic Collection and Recovery of Human Remains	• Scenes of Crime Officer (SOCO)

Emergency Response

Regulation 392/23: Adequate and Effective Policing (General), defines those units that may provide an emergency response function as a Tactical Unit, a Hostage Rescue Team, an Incident Commander, Crisis Negotiators, and Explosives Disposal. Emergency Services provides emergency response daily for the Service. Members that are assigned to Emergency Services must possess the knowledge, skills and abilities as prescribed by the adequacy standards. They are also provided with a high level of training both internally and externally to meet with current requirements according to international, national and provincial standards. Ministry accredited training is conducted in-house to develop new members of the Emergency Task Unit to the accepted standards for Hostage Rescue. General Order 089.08 – Emergency Task Unit, details the procedures and training for the Service in incidents involving emergency situations.

Training required for Incident Command and Negotiators is facilitated through the OPC, and Explosives Disposal training is provided through the Canadian Police College. Officers who are engaged in such activities are required to maintain their qualifications through continuous training both internal and external and through practical work in the field. In keeping with the new training standards in Ontario for Incident Command, the Service has multiple members with responsibility for tactical and strategic command of major incidents on Incident Command 200 and Incident Command 300 courses, facilitated through the OPC.

Service Incident Command and Negotiators

- Critical Incident Commanders
- Critical Incident Scribe
- Crisis Negotiators
- Crisis Negotiators - Refresher

The Service also provides an opportunity for members to develop professionally through the achievement of higher level of formal education, in accordance with General Order – 011.12: Tuition Assistance Program. Throughout 2024, courses were taken by 8 sworn members and 12 civilian members. These courses were for the completion of university degrees and college diplomas in a variety of police and business-related topics.

The Service is committed to the continuous development of our sworn and civilian members. As such the Career Development Officer and Training Unit continue to refine and update the Skills Development and Learning Plan to provide a framework for short-

and long-term career planning for members to ensure proper development and training at each stage of their career.

The CSPA

On April 1, 2024, the CSPA came into force, bringing about significant changes to mandated training, inclusive of, but not limited to, Immediate Rapid Deployment, C8 Patrol Carbine, Mental Health Crisis Response, Incident Command and Incident Management System, Special Constable, and other less impactful changes to existing training by prescribing new standards of compliance. These changes required the Service to deliver initial training within a prescribed timeline from the transition date (April 1, 2024), and to develop a sustainable training model for the foreseeable future that includes annual refresher training and initial development training for sworn members.

Pursuant to Ontario Regulation 87/24: Training, the above mandatory training requirements for all police officers who perform community patrol functions are outlined with timelines for qualifications and subsequent refresher training.

The CSPA also prescribed the mandatory OPC training requirements for members in the Training Unit to be able to facilitate said training to the members of the Service, inclusive of, but not limited to, Use of Force, Immediate Rapid Deployment, Patrol Carbine, and Mental Health Crisis Response. This has increased personnel, scheduling and budget pressures on the Training Unit.

b. the status of Service compliance with the said Plan

The Service is in compliance with Board By-Law 423-2024 - A By-Law Respecting the Skills Development and Learning Plan (AI-002), as well as Ontario Regulation 392/23: Adequate and Effective Policing (General) and Ontario Regulation 87/24: Training.

Alternatives Reviewed

Not applicable.

Relationship to Police Service/Board Strategic Priorities

The Skills Development and Learning Plan directly supports objective 3.4 from the 2022 - 2025 Board's Strategic Plan related to enhance employee training and development.

Relevant Policy Considerations

- Board By-Law No. 423-2024 – Skills Development and Learning Plan (AI-002)
- Ontario Regulation 392/23: Adequate and Effective Policing (General)
- Ontario Regulation 87/23: Training
- General Order 053 – Use of Force
- General Order 030 – Training and Career Development
- General Order 089 – Emergency Task Unit
- General Order 011 – Tuition Assistance Program

- General Order 259.01 – Public Order Unit

Other Pertinent Reports

8.15 - 2024.07.25 – Annual Report – Skills Development and Learning – January 1 to December 31, 2023

This report was prepared by Steve Magistrale, Inspector, Professional Development, and recommended by Paul Koscinski, Acting Deputy Chief, Support Services.



Submitted by:

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

Appendices

Not applicable.