



NIAGARA REGIONAL POLICE SERVICE

Police Services Board Report

PUBLIC AGENDA

Subject: Annual Report – Homicide and Attempted Homicide Investigations
January 1 to December 31, 2020

Report To: Chair and Members, Niagara Police Services Board

Report Date: 2021-07-07

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 231-2000 – Investigation into Homicides.
- The Chief is required to make a written annual report to the Board with respect to Homicide Investigations.
- This report is submitted to the Board for review and consideration of information relating to the Service's response to Homicide Investigations.

Financial Considerations

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

Analysis

In accordance with By-Law 231-2000, the Chief shall make a written report to the Board on or before August 30 of each year in respect of homicide and attempted homicide investigations. The report shall include:

- a) A summary of the written procedures concerning homicide and attempted homicide investigations;
- b) Confirmation that the procedures are in compliance with the Ministry's designated Ontario Major Case Management Manual;
- c) The status of Service compliance with the procedures; and
- d) A summary of training given to Members regarding homicide and attempted homicide investigations.

This Board report will outline each of the above and confirm our compliance with the By-Law:

- a) *“.... a summary of the written procedures concerning homicide and attempted homicide investigations....”*

General Order – 026. 09 – Homicide Unit, was prepared and approved to comply with both the Provincial Adequacy Standards Regulation, Law Enforcement 039 – Homicide Investigations, and the Ontario Major Case Management (OMCM) Manual. This Order directs that the Homicide Unit must undertake investigative responsibility for all homicides and states, in part: “all homicides within the Region of Niagara; the direction, management, and administration and investigation of all assaults where death is imminent; sudden deaths of persons in police custody; missing persons (suspicious circumstances); or any criminal offence designated by the Chief of Police or designee.”

Responsibility for attempted murder investigations are detailed in General Order – 095.10 – Major Incidents and Routine Criminal Investigations. This Order directs that: “personnel of the District Detective Office shall be responsible for conducting investigations including attempted murders.”

- b) *“.... confirmation that the procedures are in compliance with the Ministry’s designated Ontario Major Case Management Manual....”*

Ontario Regulation 354/04 pursuant to the Police Services Act makes it mandatory for officers to manage and investigate designated major cases in accordance with the OMCM Manual. Homicides and attempted homicides are designated major cases.

General Order 202.06 – Major Case Management (MCM) directs members to adhere to MCM Standards. MCM Standards along with the PowerCase software were developed to ensure effective management of defined major cases.

Training to ensure compliance with the manual is also extensive and mandatory for homicide investigators and other investigators likely to be involved in homicide cases or incidents that require investigation using the MCM System.

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

Policies and procedures continue to comply with the standards set out by the OMCM Manual. On December 1, 2017, a revised version of the OMCM Manual was issued and a review of the General Orders confirmed compliance with the changes to the manual.

- d) *“.... a summary of training given to Members regarding homicide and attempted homicide investigations....”*

An extensive range of specialized training is required and has been provided to investigators engaged in homicide investigations. Investigators assigned to the Homicide Unit are given priority consideration for the OMCM training. This two-week course provides specialized training to ensure compliance with the OMCM manual and to standardize investigative procedures across the province. Components of this course include: fundamentals of MCM, crime scene management, search and seizure, judicial authorization to intercept private communications, strategic approach to investigative interviewing, statement admissibility, behavioural sciences, dangerous offenders, incident command, role of the coroner, media/public appeals, and victim issues.

The Service ensures that all members in primary investigator roles receive the Ontario Police College (OPC) accredited MCM course. Positions for members are allotted in each class to provide training each year. As part of the continued professional development of members of the Homicide Unit, designated investigators have been delegated responsibility to assist in the facilitation of the MCM course and deliver key lectures to students during Service-delivered classes. This practice has also allowed other members to benefit from the knowledge and expertise of members of the Homicide Unit.

General investigative training has also been provided to members engaged in conducting criminal investigations. This training is delivered through the OPC accredited Criminal Investigators Training (CIT) course. Course curriculum includes components in homicide and sudden death investigation. Positions for Service members are allotted in CIT classes offered at the OPC, and at satellite locations when the training is facilitated by other police services. When the CIT course is facilitated by the Service, investigators from the Homicide Unit play a significant role during the preparation and delivery of the course presentations.

Specific specialized training in homicide and major crime investigations is also provided to members fulfilling investigative roles. These courses include the Homicide Investigators course, the Major Investigation courses, and Investigative and Forensic Interviewing courses. These courses are held at the Canadian Police College and the OPC. Service members assigned to investigative roles have also attended Homicide Investigators conferences in Ontario and elsewhere in North America during this reporting period.

In addition, two members of the Homicide Unit usually attend the International Homicide Investigators Association training in the United States each year. This training ensures that investigators continue to receive the training that will enable them to continue to perform at the level expected of an investigator in a homicide environment.

Due to the ongoing restrictions of COVID 19, members of the Homicide Unit did not attend any training courses in 2020.

For the reasons stated above, the Service remains in compliance with By-Law 231-2000 as it relates to Homicide Investigations.

Status of Homicide Investigations

Year	Homicides	Concluded	Before the Courts	Unsolved
2018	2	0	2	0
2019	7	0	7	0
2020	5	2	8	1
Total	14	2	17	1

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 231-2000 – Investigation into Homicides

General Order 026.09 – Homicide Unit

General Order 095.10 – Major Incidents and Routine Criminal Investigations

General Order 202.06 – Major Case Management

Other Pertinent Reports

126.2020 - Annual Report – Homicide and Attempted Homicide Investigations – January 1 to December 31, 2019

This report was prepared by Steve Magistrale, Staff Sergeant, Major Crime Unit, in consultation with James Leigh, Inspector, Investigative Support Services, and reviewed by Brian Ash, Superintendent, Emergency and Investigative Services and recommended by Brett Flynn, Deputy Chief of Police, Operational Services.



Submitted by:

Bryan MacCulloch, M.O.M. #5835
Chief of Police

Appendices

Not applicable.