



# **NIAGARA REGIONAL POLICE SERVICE**

## **Police Services Board Report**

### **PUBLIC AGENDA**

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**Subject:** Annual Report – Acoustic Hailing Devices – January 1 to December 31, 2021

**Report To:** Chair and Members, Niagara Police Services Board

**Report Date:** 2022-04-13

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### **Recommendation(s)**

**That the Niagara Police Services Board receives this report for information.**

### **Key Facts**

- The purpose of this report is to advise the Board that the Service is in compliance with Board By-Law 335-2013 – Acoustic Hailing Devices.
- The Chief is required to make an annual written report to the Board concerning use of Acoustic Hailing Devices.
- In 2021, the Service's Emergency Task Unit (ETU) used an acoustic hailing device during high-risk incidents.

### **Financial Considerations**

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

### **Analysis**

As per its mandate, the ETU provides a response to a variety of high-risk incidents, including but not limited to; hostage takings, barricaded persons, execution of high-risk search warrants, high risk escorts, building and area searches, high risk canine tracks, missing or lost vulnerable persons, high risk vehicle stops and incidents involving emotionally disturbed persons.

During incidents of this nature, communication with the subject (from a safe distance) is of critical importance in the effort to bring the matter to a successful resolution. Current equipment available to enhance safety during police communication with a subject includes the LRAD-100x. LRAD stands for Long Range Acoustic Device. Introduced to the ETU inventory in 2012 for appropriate use in operational settings, this equipment provided an effective alternative to the traditional commercial loud hailer that was prone to poor performance. Since being acquired, this device has become an invaluable tool for tactical operations throughout the Niagara Region.

The device is a self-contained, portable loud hailer that can penetrate small structures and be heard over the background noise of vehicles, vessels, sirens, and boisterous crowds, ensuring that messages and commands are heard and clearly understood. It has a focused directional sound pattern that operates at 137db at one-meter maximum continuous output and can transmit highly intelligible speech transmissions over 600 meters. The device comes standard with MP3 capabilities which allows a pre-recorded message to be played, a useful option for trained Crisis Negotiators under the direction of Incident Command.

In accordance with By-Law 335-2013, the Chief of Police shall make a written report to the Board on or before August 30 of each year with respect to acoustic hailing devices.

This report shall contain:

- a) a summary of the written procedures relating to acoustic hailing devices;
- b) the status of Service compliance with the said procedures;
- c) confirmation that Members have been trained in accordance with section 4.2;
- d) a summary of the circumstances in which acoustic hailing devices have been deployed, and;
- e) the results of the testing and recommendations relied on by the Service in relation to sections 16(1) (b) and (c) of the Equipment and Use of Force Regulation.

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

- a) *a summary of the written procedures relating to acoustic hailing devices:*

This acoustic hailing device remains in the inventory of the ETU. Use of this device is subject to the conditions of established written procedures contained within General Order 227.02. As required, those procedures include:

- i. Provisions that govern the use and function of acoustic hailing devices, and
- ii. Direction that ensures that recorded voice announcements are recorded using good engineering practices and that existing and future recordings are reviewed to ensure messages are clear and do not result in higher than anticipated sound pressure levels.

Further, the Standard Operating Procedures Manual of the ETU has been updated to address the maintenance, training, and deployment of acoustic hailing devices.

- b) *the status of Service compliance with the said procedures:*

The Niagara Regional Police Service is in compliance with the provisions of this By-Law and the procedures as described within General Order 227.02 entitled "Acoustic Hailing Devices".

c) *confirmation that Members have been trained in accordance with section 4.2:*

Members of the ETU who may be required to operate the acoustical hailing device have received the appropriate level of training during their spring and fall training in 2021. This training has addressed Service procedures, proper use of the device and training regarding product information, warnings, and practical applications.

Training for Incident Commanders was also conducted in the Spring and Fall of 2021. Service Policy dictates that the LRAD-100x may only be authorized for use by a qualified Incident Commander who has also received training on the equipment.

d) *a summary of the circumstances in which acoustic hailing devices have been deployed:*

Operationally, this acoustic hailing was used 12 times during the resolution of critical incidents in 2021, 10 times in 2020 and 10 times in 2019. In some cases, the use of the device resulted in subjects exiting premises and surrendering to police. In other cases, the device was utilized during major incidents with the subjects surrendering or being arrested due to other police tactics.

e) *the results of the testing and recommendations relied on by the Service in relation to Section 16(1)(b) and (c) of the Equipment and Use of Force Regulation:*

By way of an All Chiefs Memorandum (13-011), the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services provided police services with a report that satisfies the requirement listed above. The report, entitled “Acoustic Testing and Assessment of the Long Range Acoustic Device”, was prepared for the Ministry by HGC Engineering (Howe Gastmeier Chapnik Limited) of Mississauga, Ontario.

### **Alternatives Reviewed**

Not applicable.

### **Relationship to Police Service/Board Strategic Priorities**

This report is for information purposes and has no immediate strategic priorities.

### **Relevant Policy Considerations**

Board By-Law 335.2013 – Acoustic Hailing Devices

### **Other Pertinent Reports**

7.3.2021.03.25 Annual Report – Acoustic Hailing Devices – January 1 to December 31, 2020.

*This report was prepared by Sergeant Chris Wegelin, Emergency Task Unit and reviewed by Inspector Joe Garvey, Emergency Services Unit and Superintendent Brian Ash, Emergency & Investigative Services, and recommended by Brett Flynn, Deputy Chief, Operational Services.*



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**Submitted by:**

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Chief of Police

**Appendices**

Not applicable.