



NIAGARA REGIONAL POLICE SERVICE Police Services Board Report

PUBLIC AGENDA

Subject: Annual Report – Problem Oriented Policing and Community Patrol
January 1 to December 31, 2021

Report To: Chair and Members, Niagara Police Services Board

Report Date: 2022-04-26

Recommendation(s)

That the Niagara Police Services Board receives these reports for information.

Key Facts

- The purpose of this report is to advise the Board that the Service is in compliance with By-Law 191-2000 – Problem Oriented Policing and 193-2000 - Community Patrol.
- The Chief of Police is required to make a written annual report to the Board with respect to Problem Oriented Policing and Community Patrol.
- This report provides a summary of requirements to ensure the Service is compliant in following these By-Laws.

Financial Considerations

Unless otherwise indicated, the projects referenced in this report were conducted by On-Duty Personnel, during the regular course of their duties and did not incur additional costs to the Service. There were seven additional projects completed with no additional costs incurred. A total of one initiative incurred additional personnel costs of \$14,481.00. Costs are broken down in the analysis portion of this report.

Analysis

Problem Oriented Policing

By-Law 191-2000, A By-Law respecting Problem Oriented Policing, was enacted as a result of Provincial Adequacy Standards Regulation CP-002 which requires the Chief to make an annual written report to the Board outlining:

- a) a summary of the written procedures regarding problem oriented policing is found in General Order 149.04 – Community Patrol and Problem Oriented Policing;
- b) the status of Service compliance with the said procedures; and

- c) the steps taken by the Service to promote, implement and evaluate problem oriented policing initiatives.

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

- a) ..." a summary of the written procedures regarding problem oriented policing...";

General Order 149 provides direction regarding methods to actively solve problems in the community rather than merely responding to incidents. This approach views incidents as symptoms of larger complex problems. Police officers act as community team leaders in identifying problems that negatively affect quality of life, and work with the community as a whole to find and apply appropriate solutions.

- b) ..." the status of Service compliance with the said procedures";

It is the policy of the Niagara Regional Police Service (the Service) to provide effective Policing Services to all members of the public and to ensure that these services are consistent with the Ontario Mobilization and Engagement Model of Community Policing. This report contains an extensive selection of initiatives implemented across districts, detailing a wide variety of community problems.

- c) ..." the steps taken by the Service to promote, implement and evaluate problem oriented policing initiatives";

Problem oriented policing includes such initiatives as drug investigations, foot patrol, and directed patrol aimed at liquor establishments, illegal taxi operations, and By-Law enforcement regarding noise and nuisance complaints. Other projects are undertaken within our communities to address specific local issues as required. Such programs can involve community partners including representatives of Municipal Governments, as well as other enforcement agencies such as the Alcohol and Gaming Commission, Municipal By-Law Enforcement, and Fire Prevention authorities.

Community Patrol

By-Law 193-2000, A By-Law respecting Community Patrol, was enacted as a result of Provincial Adequacy Standards Regulation, Law Enforcement - 001 Community Patrol. This By-Law details specific requirements that are reported as follows:

- a) Confirmation of Service compliance with directed patrol procedure.
- b) The high and low numbers of members assigned to the Patrol Unit, with particulars and reasons for any period that the Patrol Unit numbers were less than those required under Section 3.3.1.
- c) Costs of directed patrols.
- d) The status of the outcome of the directed patrol initiative including the effect of directed patrol on crime, calls for service, public disorder analysis and road safety.

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

a) "...Confirmation of Service compliance with Directed Patrol procedure..."

General Order 149.04 deals specifically with community patrol and problem oriented policing. Within this General Order, Section 2.3 defines directed patrol as:

The deployment of members assigned to frontline patrol duties to address specific public safety concerns, high crime or high occurrence areas, public disorder, and road safety through a variety of methods that may include targeted enforcement. Intelligence gathering must be utilized to determine location, deployment times, and required resources. Crime analysis, incident reports, community input, and informants are examples of potential intelligence sources.

The order articulates member's duties to ensure that the Service provides community patrol consisting of general patrol and directed patrol. Platoon Supervisors, Detective Offices and the District Crime Analysts utilize the case management database to identify and monitor crime, calls for service, public disorder analysis, criminal intelligence, and road safety.

The Service's Records Management System (RMS) software stores information and allows for tracking of individual crimes and mining of information to analyze trends. This assists in preparing action plans to address identified problems within the community along with other forms of Intelligence gathering.

b) "the status of Service compliance with the said procedures":

Directed patrol, as part of addressing concerns raised within the community, forms the core patrol responsibilities of every uniform member of the Service. When staffing levels permit, frontline supervisors are able to deploy members in problem oriented policing initiatives, including traffic enforcement. Supervisors maintain the responsibility for effective utilization of members hired on overtime to deal with directed patrols targeting concerns raised within the community.

The costs associated with any directed patrols are approved through the chain of command within the Service. A District Commander may also work with command staff in Emergency Services to direct the utilization of the Traffic Enforcement Unit (TEU) to conduct targeted enforcement.

c) "...costs of directed patrols..."

The Order addresses the costs associated with the deployment of members on community policing initiatives (i.e., approved overtime, meeting expenses). Although there are incidents where it is necessary to hire officers on overtime, in order to complete the directed patrol, most initiatives are conducted during regular working hours and no extra costs are incurred or they are shared with other stakeholders.

In situations where an initiative is expected to cause additional costs, approval to proceed must be obtained from the District Commander. Irrespective of this section, the Duty

Officer or District Commander is not limited in the ability to allocate the resources necessary to respond immediately to any emergent situation.

- d) "The status of the outcome of the directed patrol initiative including the effect of directed patrol on crime, calls for service, public disorder analysis, and road safety..."

Written procedures regarding the status/outcome of directed patrol initiatives are found in the General Order on Community Patrol and Problem Oriented Policing, which provides details required to ensure members are aware of their responsibility to deliver professional policing services consistent with the Community policing model.

Supervisors are responsible for monitoring and evaluating problem oriented policing initiatives. The evaluation includes an assessment of the level of success achieved and a consideration of the potential for the initiative to be continued, expanded, or ended. This evaluation is documented by way of a memorandum directed to the District Commander.

Community patrol and problem oriented policing initiatives broadly support the Service's strategic plan, specifically to improve public safety through the implementation of crime reduction strategies, enhancing road safety, and fostering community collaboration and safety.

Problem Oriented Policing and Community Patrol Initiatives

1 District – St. Catharines and Thorold

Foot Patrol: Two officers were dedicated to foot patrol in the downtown core of St. Catharines. Foot patrol officers continued to include enforcement and education of COVID-19 regulations with businesses and those in attendance in the downtown area. Foot patrol officers assisted or generated 1066 calls for service resulting in 56 arrests. The foot patrol officers frequently assist the City of St. Catharines with controlling or eliminating homeless encampments. They work closely with Housing Help to find more suitable living arrangements for the homeless.

Foot patrols in the Queenston Street area continued in 2021. Officers continue to regularly visit community support agencies such as the Breakfast Club, Start Me Up Niagara, and the Out of the Cold Program. These community agencies now rely on Officer presence to reduce disturbances around the centers. The Police presence helps the most vulnerable members of society to have a trusted Police member to assist them with various issues such as; human trafficking, assaults, sexual assaults, robbery, thefts, frauds, and drugs etc.

Queenston Street Trespassing/Vandalism/Drug Use: Places of Worship in the Queenston Street area reported to Police an overwhelming problem with trespassing, encampments, vandalism, and drug use on their properties. Police engagement with the individuals involved greatly reducing the unwanted behaviour with limited use of enforcement actions under the Trespass to Property Act and Criminal Code over the course of several weeks. As part of this initiative Police worked with Niagara Assertive Street Outreach to offer

those experiencing homelessness opportunities to move to transitional and permanent housing.

Project Sunset – A Platoon Initiative: This initiative focused on the ongoing problems with out-of-town people from areas in lockdown attending the Niagara area beaches. This initiative focused on disturbances, noise complaints, impaired driving, HTA offences, and COVID-19 related municipal By-Laws. Police did not observe any offences during the targeted patrol, and it was not necessary to generate additional calls for service.

Project Safe Haven: This initiative focused on increasing a visible Police presence, liaising, and improving relations with Bethlehem Housing staff and residents. All while decreasing calls for service through proactive patrols of the inner and outside of the property. The result was a drastic reduction in calls for service, for example, in October there were 37 calls, which was reduced to 12 in November. The project was extended into 2022.

Project Roehampton Park: This initiative was created as a result of 64 calls for service involving this area. The calls for service included assaults, disturbances, and drug offences. As a result of this initiative, Police were able to utilize a proactive approach to lessen ongoing issues at this location. Officers also provided security enhancement tips such as lighting to the area. This suggestion currently sits with the Director of Municipal Works, there are plans for the permanent lighting to be installed.

Project Safer Schools Traffic Initiative: This initiative was created in response to ongoing public complaints around poor driving habits in school zones. The overall purpose was to increase public awareness and alert motorists to safe driving around school zones. Cruisers were placed in a visible location, with Officers actively engaging with motorists in the area.

Project Quiet Times: This initiative was created in response to ongoing noise, mischief, and Emergency Order violation complaints. The targeted area of Juneberry Road and Winterberry Blvd, Thorold quickly became known as the party hub for Brock students, specifically on Friday and Saturday nights with over hundreds of partygoers observed. This created a large increase of calls by residents and local politicians to the NRPS. A committee of community stakeholders that included the NRPS, the Thorold Mayor, City of Thorold By-Law, Brock student Union, and Brock Police was created in response to this issue. A total of 2 arrests, 70 noise complaints, and 82 Provincial Offence Notices (PON) were issued. The final cost to the NRPS for this initiative was \$14,481.00.

Project “Safes” (Stop Always for Everyone’s Safety): This initiative was created as a targeted enforcement for various stop sign controlled intersections. A total of 18 PON’s were issued during this initiative.

2 District – Niagara Falls and Niagara-on-the-Lake

Lock it or Lose It: This initiative was carried out throughout the fall in response to a request from the Niagara Outlet Collection in Niagara on the Lake (NOTL) for increased Police presence. Officers conducted foot patrols throughout the open-air mall making

themselves visible to all patrons. Furthermore, while onsite, officers also walked through the parking lot checking for unlocked cars, placing a pamphlet on the windshield of parked vehicles indicating whether compliant or not. This initiative incorporated Police visibility along with awareness for motorists of securing items in their vehicles out of plain view.

Niagara Falls Traffic Safety Day: This initiative was initiated by a Niagara Falls Uniformed Officer bringing together three officers for a day (April 29, 2021) of directed traffic enforcement. Authorization was provided by Supervisors to be dedicated traffic officers for the day. In total approximately 700 cars were observed. The initiative resulted in 19 PON's and four warnings being issued for various infractions.

Operation Royal: This initiative was created in response to complaints of vehicles being broken into within the neighbourhood of Royal Manor Park in Niagara Falls. This initiative was conducted throughout the fall. Checks of the area continued daily with police directed patrols occurring 37 times.

NOTL Speed Enforcement Blitz: During the week of June 19 to June 26, speeding enforcement was conducted throughout NOTL as a result of residential complaints along with speed data provided to Police. As a result of this project, 77 PON's were issued. This project also coincided with the provincial launch of the Moving Ontarians More Safely Act. Details of this Act were broadcasted via NRPS social media in conjunction with the media release for this project.

Foot Patrol Community Policing Initiative: In response to incidents of unwanted persons, panhandlers, COVID related calls along with the NRPS focusing more on community policing, foot patrols were initiated throughout 2 District. A total of 407 foot patrols were conducted within the Casino District, Queen Street in Niagara Falls, and NOTL downtown areas.

Operation Thorold Stone: The objective of this operational plan was to provide high visibility in and around the Thorold Stone Plaza located at 6161 Thorold Stone Road in Niagara Falls in order to educate and enforce road safety. This was in response to the area being a popular location for car meets subsequently generating numerous complaints of aggressive driving and excessive noise.

Community Support Officer Program: This program is in its fourth year and continues to flourish with the necessity of the program increasing each year. A dedicated community officer is in daily communication with the homeless community, responding to calls specific to the homeless while also placing them in contact with an outreach worker when required. Having an officer that is consistent each and every day relating to the homeless provides a reciprocal relationship ultimately reducing calls for service. This program was expanded in 2021 where dedicated officers were assigned to this role as a community support officer on weekends or when the dedicated officer in charge is absent.

Covid/Quarantine Enforcement: This initiative was based upon community safety working in conjunction with Public Health of Canada and CBSA. Beginning May 30 officers were either called to attend or deployed to the international border crossings by way of a special duty to enforce the Quarantine Act. In summary, the Service responded to 314 calls for

service and issued 314 Quarantine Act charges. This initiative was above and beyond the provincial health measures that were also being enforced.

3 District – Welland

Vacation Rental Property Crackdown: Numerous complaints were received with respect to a vacation rental property causing issues with local neighbours. This joint project with the city resulted in the suspension of a property used as a vacation rental.

Foot Patrol Initiatives: Throughout the year officers spent time in visible areas in the downtown area of Welland and Pelham Town Square.

Homeless in Tents: Officers monitored areas where the homeless were known to camp and worked with community resources to provide support to people who had to be moved from locations where they were not allowed to stay.

Road Safety Initiative: Officers conducted a campaign to address speeding and impaired driving. As a direct result 1,073 PONS and 161 Warnings were issued for speeding, and a total of 64 drivers were arrested for impaired operation.

COVID-19 Education, Engagement and Enforcement: Officers engaged the community to educate them on restrictions due to COVID-19. This included compliance checks.

5 District – Fort Erie, Stevensville, Ridgeway, Crystal Beach

Community Engagement Officer: Officers directly involved with community engagement and were responsible for several initiatives related to community issues, established open lines of communication with several community stakeholders, and has become a consistent resource for all the communities within 5 District.

Beach Patrol: In a continued effort between Town of Fort Erie and uniform officers, an on-going beach initiative was conducted. Uniform officers utilized this initiative to educate beachgoers with local by-laws. Officers assisted Municipal Officers along with staff members on site to enforce Liquor Licence Act and Trespass to Property Act. Officers also conducted foot patrol and ATV patrol at Waverly Beach due to high complaints of persons on private property. In August, the Town of Fort Erie installed private property, no motorized vehicles, and no dogs sign at the public and private beach property line.

ATV Patrol Initiative: Officers and Fort Erie worked jointly with ATV patrols at various locations which included Waverly Beach, Crescent Beach, Bernard Avenue Beach, Bay Beach, Crystal Beach Waterfront Park, and the Friendship Trail. This initiative ran from February to November. The cost of this initiative was split between the Service and town in the amount of \$17,978.30 each, totaling \$35,956.60.

Friendship Trail Patrol: The Friendship Recreation Trail extends 16 kms to the Port Colborne border. Police received high volume of complaints from the public regarding off-road vehicles such as ATV's and snowmobiles on the Friendship Trail which are prohibited in accordance with the TOFE By-Law. The Service worked in partnership with

the town and utilized uniform members in marked police ATVs to enforce and educate violators.

School Bus and Crossing Guard Complaints: Officers worked with school bus drivers and crossing guards in response to complaints of motorists not yielding to them while on duty. Officers set up enforcement zones on foot and in fully marked police vehicles to provide enforcement and education.

Cottage Checks: As part of NRPS' commitment to crime prevention and patrols of summer vacation properties, officers utilized foot patrol, ATV patrol, and fully marked police cruisers to conduct checks along the Lake Erie Shoreline. The cottage checks consisted of ensuring doors/windows were locked and secured with no obvious signs of damage or forced entry. Cottage check signs were left at the property for owners to inform them that NRPS officers were active in the area patrolling and conducting these checks.

Splash Pads, Parks & Playground Initiative: As emergency measure restrictions were lessened during the summer months and citizens began to attend these various locations, uniform officers began an initiative to offer a visible presence. Police attended various splash pads, parks, and playgrounds throughout 5 District to engage with our community members and to offer directed patrol, enforcing various criminal, provincial and municipal legislation.

Traffic Complaint Initiative: Throughout the year, uniform officers along with the TEU as well as the community engagement officer conducted radar enforcement at various locations related to speeding complaints. In addition, officers enforced Highway Traffic Act (HTA) offences related to motorists disobeying stop sign and failing to stop at various locations.

Special Projects/Crime Patrol Initiatives: Crystal Beach Co-op contacted the Service regarding drug related issues, suspicious persons, and trespassing concerns. The Service worked with the property manager. Recommendations were made to the Co-op applying the crime prevention through environmental design principles to install/update cameras and lighting on the property. Plain clothes officers conducted various crime patrol initiatives throughout the year which led to arrests of individuals wanted on warrants and breaching their conditions.

6 District - Port Colborne & Wainfleet

Foot Patrol: This was a community engagement initiative with its primary goal to strengthen community and police relations. Enforcement resulted in the issuance of several PON's and the arrest of wanted individuals in addition to intelligence gathering. Social media was used to highlight these foot patrols to bring additional community awareness to police efforts.

Traffic Enforcement Rural Roads: Targeted traffic enforcement was conducted in the rural areas prone to a high incidence of vehicles travelling at excessive speeds as identified through citizen complaints and municipal offices. A total of 257 PONs and 19 Part III Summons were issued during this initiative.

Project Safe Streets: Officers participated in this project from January through March, conducting compliance checks on persons that were bound by terms of release orders/probation orders and apprehending wanted persons within the community. This also increased police presence in identified areas of concern relating to potential criminal activity. As a result of this project, 23 arrests were made in relation to wanted persons or people failing to comply with conditions of their release orders. Numerous address verifications were also conducted to ensure compliance with specific conditions.

Beach Patrols: As a result of the COVID-19 lockdown, the beaches of 6 District, both in Wainfleet and Port Colborne, became popular destinations and quickly overwhelmed local infrastructure that was put in place. On weekends all beaches were at or over capacity and parked vehicles were in excess of the available parking. Officers worked with local By-Law to help address the influx of people. Officers utilized social media to inform residents their concerns were being addressed. From the start of August until Labour Day weekend additional officers were hired to deal with the influx of people and related call volume associated to the beaches at a cost of approximately \$5,000.

ATV Patrols: ATV officers conducted cottage checks along the Lake Erie shoreline, patrols along the Friendship Trail, St. Lawrence Seaway properties, and areas of concern reported by the community. Officers would enforce offences under the Trespass to Property Act and the Off-Road Vehicles Act. The cottage checks consisted of ensuring doors were locked with no obvious signs of damage or break ins. Cottage check signs were left for owners to inform them that officers had conducted a premise check of the dwelling and served notice that officers were active in the area conducting these patrols. Social media was used to inform the public of this initiative which received positive feedback.

No. 8 District – Grimsby, Lincoln and West Lincoln

Overweight Trucks: Officers along with members from the TEU responded to complaints regarding overweight trucks on west Niagara roadways. Education was pushed out over the district Twitter account. This led to a heightened awareness of the approved truck routes within west Niagara. Numerous charges were laid under the HTA, and a significant reduction in the number of commercial motor vehicles traveling on restricted roadways.

Truck Safety Blitz: Niagara Police and Ministry of Transportation officers conducted three safety blitzes targeting unsafe large commercial vehicles using the roads in west Niagara. In total, 36 PON's were issued. This initiative was conducted by hiring two constables on overtime for an approximate cost of \$1,900.00.

Lock it or Lose It: In the fall, officers attended various neighborhoods conducting foot, bicycle, and vehicle patrol to deter thefts from unlocked vehicles. Officers distributed Lock it or Lose It cards and identified various insecure vehicles and residences.

Operation Safe Play: this initiative involved officers conducting park and premise checks throughout the course of their nightshifts, in an effort to discourage disruptive loitering and vandalism in parks.

Project Avoidance: in June officers took part in this joint forces initiative in an effort to prevent large commercial motor vehicles that were attempting to avoid the MTO scales and, from utilizing roads within the Town of Lincoln that were not designed to accommodate such large vehicles.

Alternatives Reviewed

Not applicable

Relationship to Police Service/Board Strategic Priorities

To comply with the provisions of the Niagara Regional Police Services Board By-Laws and to maintain compliance with the Provincial Adequacy Standards.

Relevant Policy Considerations

By-Law 191-2000, Problem Oriented Policing and By-Law 193-2000, Community Patrol. General Order 149.04 – Community Patrol and Problem Oriented Policing.

Other Pertinent Reports

Annual Report – 174-2019 Problem Oriented Policing
Annual Report – 173-2019 Community Patrol

Material for this report was prepared by Sergeant Damian McMenamin, 1 District Administration, and Constable Michael Malachowsky, 2 District Administration, in consultation with Inspectors Shawn Dowd, 1 District Commander, and James McCaffery, 2 District Commander. Reviewed by Superintendent, Marco Giannico, District Operations, and recommended by Brett Flynn, Deputy Chief, Operational Support.



Submitted by:

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

Appendices

Not Applicable