



NIAGARA REGIONAL POLICE SERVICE

ANNUAL REPORT





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MISSION STATEMENT

The Niagara Regional Police Service is dedicated to serving and protecting residents and visitors within the Regional Municipality of Niagara.

In partnership with the community, we shall provide quality policing services with integrity, diligence, and sensitivity.



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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR OF THE POLICE SERVICES BOARD



On behalf of the Regional Municipality of Niagara Police Services Board, I am pleased to present the 2020 Niagara Regional Police Service Annual Report.

It goes without saying that this past year has been unprecedented and challenging for our communities and our Service, as the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted us in ways we could not have imagined. However, the Board continued to exercise its governance responsibility, and the Board and Niagara Regional Police Service continued to ensure safety and security for Niagara Region residents. This year marked the end of the appointed term of Past Board Chair Ken Gansel, a long-standing Board Member who served for over eight years with dedication and commitment. The Board also welcomed a new Member, Jen Lawson, who has a diverse background in the public and private sectors to assist the Board in meeting its mandate.

While the landscape of policing continues to evolve, the Board recognizes the importance of collaboration and engagement. In 2020, we introduced the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Strategic Plan for the Service. This strategy sets out how, over the next three years we will promote a culture of inclusivity, be a Service that reflects the communities we serve, and strengthen the relationships with our community partners.

This Annual Report details initiatives and accomplishments that demonstrate the importance of partnerships with all levels of government, our stakeholders, and the residents of Niagara Region to ensure successful, safe, and strong communities. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who assist us in keeping our Region safe, including our fellow first responders, as well as our community partners, organizations, and local businesses. Thank you to Niagara Regional Council and our local municipal councils for your support of the work our Service members do each day. I would also like to extend my sincere thanks and gratitude to our Chief of Police, his Executive Leadership Team, and the Uniform and Civilian Service Members for their ongoing support, dedication, and commitment to the Niagara Regional Police Service. And most importantly, I would like to thank you, our citizens, for working with us to ensure Niagara remains a vibrant, desirable place in which to visit, live, and work.

William C. Steele

Board Chair



MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF OF POLICE



It is with great pleasure that I share with you the Niagara Regional Police Service's 2020 Annual Report. 2020 was indeed a trying year for the Service with the advent of the COVID-19 world-wide pandemic. COVID-19 emergency measures established in 2020 had a profound impact on our community and how the Service conducted business.

This annual report includes, among other things, our calls for service, an overview of crime in Niagara, the Service's budget, public complaints, awards and accomplishments, and recruitment in 2020.

In 2020 there was an initial drop in calls for Service due to COVID-19 emergency measures. We also saw a slight decrease in total criminal code violations, highlighted by a decrease in property crimes that included thefts, shoplifting, break & enters, etc. Conversely, there was an increase in violent crimes led by increases in domestic violence, assault with a weapon causing bodily harm, and robberies.

The Service saw an exponential increase in recruit applications in 2020 over the previous year. With the Board's approval to add 40 uniformed officers to the front line, the Recruiting Unit worked diligently to hire those 40 officers, as well as meeting hiring requirements due to attrition.

2020 also saw the development and completion of our Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan that was supported by extensive consultation and collaboration with our diverse community stakeholder groups, as well as by our own members within the organization.

I would also like to thank outgoing Police Service's Board Chair Ken Gansel for his outstanding leadership over the years and welcome Bill Steele as our new Chair of the Board. The Service has a strong Police Service's Board who have and continue to support our efforts throughout the year.

Bryan MacCulloch, BA, MA, M.O.M.

Chief of Police



CALLS FOR SERVICE

Police calls for service originate from several sources including 911 calls, calls received through the police service non-emergency number, in-person reporting or "walk-ins", as well as officer generated, or officer identified incidents. These numbers do not represent the entire police workload as they do not portray other duties such as traffic safety and enforcement, proactive policing, nor the length of time that specialty units spend on an investigation due to the seriousness and/or nature of the incident.

Calls for Service by Month

	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	Total Calls for Service
2019	9,618	9,342	9,651	9,382	10,425	11,461	11,919	11,875	11,762	10,899	10,261	9,462	126,047
2020	9,717	8,665	9,642	10,057	11,168	12,002	13,071	12,854	12,264	11,632	10,538	10,010	131,834
% Change	-1.0%	+7.8%	+0.1%	+6.7%	-6.7%	-4.5%	-8.8%	-8.4%	-4.9%	-6.3%	-2.6%	-5.5%	-4.4%



CALLS FOR SERVICE BY POLICING DISTRICT

1 District St. Catharines Thorold	2 District Niagara Falls Niagara-on-the-Lake	3 District Welland Pelham	5 District Fort Erie	6 District Port Colborne Wainfleet	8 District Grimsby Lincoln West Lincoln
50,179	37,291	19,848	7,721	5,963	9,130
37.5%	30.5%	14.6%	5.7%	4.6%	6.9%



TOP 25 CALLS FOR SERVICE IN 2020

Rank	Final Call Type	Description	2020 Total	% Change from 2019
1	UNWP2	Unwanted Person	8127	-2
2	ASSA2	Assist Ambulance	5786	4
3	WELF2	Welfare Check	5500	-37
4	INFO3	Information	5039	0
5	DISTR2	Disturbance – Fight	4550	-1
6	DRIV3	Driving Complaint	4468	-1
7	THFT3	Theft – Belated	4442	-18
8	PREMI2	Premise Check	3960	216
9	NOIS3	Noise Complaint	3765	25
10	DOMES2	Domestic Violence	3735	9
11	MVCRC3	MVC – Collision Reporting Centre	3439	-39
12	MHA2	Mental Health Act	3312	51
13	IMPD2	Impaired Driver	2929	-6
14	FOLL3	Follow Up	2642	-3
15	FRAU3	Fraud	2478	-4
16	WELF3	Welfare Check – Non-Urgent	2210	-5
17	MVCP3	MVC – Property Damage	2166	-33
18	NUIS3	Nuisance	1979	27
19	U9112	Unknown 911	1796	-4
20	KTP3	Keep The Peace	1765	5



TOP 25 CALLS FOR SERVICE IN 2020 CONTINUED

Rank	Final Call Type	Description	2020 Total	% Change from 2019
21	SUSP2	Suspicious Person	1739	4
22	WARR2	Warrant	1650	-15
23	PROF3	Property – Found	1633	-27
24	INTX2	Intoxicated Person	1581	0
25	DOMES1	Domestic Violence	1535	7
***	COVID	COVID Related	507	N/A

COVID related incidents refer to non-compliance with emergency orders such as attending large gatherings, opening restaurants for indoor service, house gatherings, etc.

The impact of COVID-19 in 2020 can be seen in the % change in certain incidents compared to 2019.

Premise Checks +216%

Mental Health Act +51%

Domestic Violence +16%

Intoxicated Person +30%

A corresponding decrease in traffic related incidents can also be seen since fewer residents were going to work or travelling in 2020.

MVC - Collision Reporting Centre - 39%

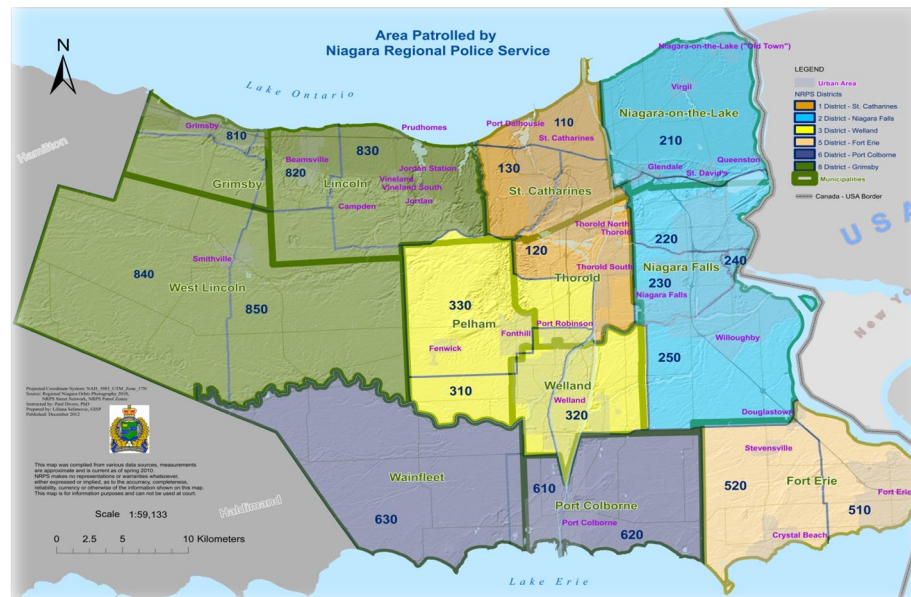
MVC – Property Damage -33%



NIAGARA REGION

Located in Southern Ontario between two of North America's Great Lakes (Ontario and Erie), the Region is well linked to the North American marketplace through all major modes of transportation, road, water, air, and rail. The Welland Canal, which is a true tourist attraction, is also one of the major factors in Niagara's focus on transportation. New York State borders on the east. With four bridges less than an hour away from major Canadian cities such as Hamilton, Oakville, Mississauga, and Toronto, Niagara has proven to be a vital link to businesses in both the United States and Canada.

Covering 1,850 square kilometers (715 square miles), Niagara is one of the largest geographical areas policed by a municipal police service. Its 12 unique municipalities include large urban centres such as St. Catharines and Niagara Falls, as well as towns with a distinctly more rural flavour such as Wainfleet and West Lincoln. Niagara also has a total of 161 kilometers of shoreline and a total of 1,500 square kilometers of international water surrounding its borders. Based on Statistics Canada data, the estimated population at the end of 2021 was 475,986.





CRIME IN NIAGARA

In 2020, overall total violations decreased due to a reduction in property crime and other criminal code incidents.

Violent crime increased considerably in 2020 compared to 2019. Increases occurred in assaults cause bodily harm, robbery, criminal harassment, uttering threats, and domestic violence.

Property crime decreased due to a reduction in break & enters, shoplifting, thefts, etc.

Other criminal code violations decreased significantly due to a decrease in fail to appear, cross border drug trafficking, living off the avails (prostitution related), etc. However, there was an alarming increase in possessing or accessing child pornography (+131.6% - 63 charged in 2020 compared to 27 in 2019).

Total, All Criminal Code Violations

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Actual Incidents	15,978	17,366	18,885	19,882	18,388
Rate per 100,000	3,479.2	3,730.5	4,000.1	4,157.7	3,817.1
Percent Change	-0.92	+7.22	+7.2	+3.9	-8.2



TOTAL VIOLENT CRIME VIOLATIONS

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Actual Incidents	2,436	2,725	3,188	3,260	3,648
Rate per 100,000	530.4	585.4	675.3	681.7	757.3
Percent Change	-5.2	+10.4	+15.4	+0.9	+11.1

TOTAL PROPERTY CRIME VIOLATIONS

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Actual Incidents	11,391	12,234	13,003	14,465	12,148
Rate per 100,000	2,480.4	2,628.1	2,754.2	2,825.6	2,521.8
Percent Change	-3.3	+5.9	+4.8	+2.6	-16.0

TOTAL OTHER CRIMINAL CODE VIOLATIONS

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Actual Incidents	2,151	2,407	2,694	3,110	2,592
Rate per 100,000	468.4	517.1	570.6	650.4	3538.1
Percent Change	+21.1	+10.4	+10.4	+13.9	-17.2

Including such crimes as weapon offences, living off the avails (prostitution-based), disturb the peace, accessing or possessing child pornography, etc.

Source: Statistics Canada. Table 35-10-0177-01 Incident-based crime statistics, by detailed violations, Canada, provinces, territories, and Census Metropolitan Areas, 2021.



CRIMES AGAINST PERSONS – SELECTED OFFENCES

Select Incidents	2019 Incidents	2020 Incidents	Cleared By Charge	Cleared Otherwise
Murder – 1 st Degree	1	3	2	--
Murder – 2 nd Degree	5	2	2	--
Manslaughter	1	--	--	--
Criminal Negligence Cause Death	--	2	2	--
Murder – Attempt	2	4	3	--
Sexual Assault – Aggravated	--	--	--	--
Sexual Assault – Weapons/ Bodily Harm	5	6	3	3
Sexual Assault	430	305	41	15
Sexual Interference	76	53	31	6
Total Sexual Violations Against Children	95	65	34	7
Invitation to Sexual Touching	26	4	3	--
Sexual Exploitation	7	2	--	--
Lure Child Via Computer	4	4	--	1
Assault - Aggravated	48	43	38	--



CRIMES AGAINST PERSONS CONTINUED

Select Incidents	2019 Incidents	2020 Incidents	Cleared By Charge	Cleared Otherwise
Assault – Weapon or Cause Bodily Harm	376	428	293	25
Assault – Minor Harm	1118	1034	622	102
Assault – Police/ Peace Officer	73	89	82	6
Criminal Negligence Cause Bodily Harm	2	1	1	--
Assault - Other	22	32	28	--
Robbery	150	193	93	3
Extortion	38	47	3	1
Criminal Harassment/ Stalking	145	255	61	42
Threats – Person Death/ Harm	562	670	228	79
Indecent/ Harassing Communication	355	361	17	59
Total Crimes Against Persons (All Incidents)	3,475	3,648	1,623	349

Percent Change – 2019 to 2020: 11.1% increase in crimes against persons.

There was a 12.4% increase in domestic violence offences in 2020 (5,527) compared to 2019 (4,918).



CRIMES AGAINST PROPERTY – SELECTED OFFENCES

Select Property Incidents	2019 Incidents	2020 Incidents	Cleared By Charge	Cleared Otherwise
Arson	56			
Break & Enter	2033	1694	271	26
Theft Over \$5000	165	169	11	3
Theft Under \$5000	6123	5074	355	295
Theft of Motor Vehicle	764	864	74	12
Theft of Motor Vehicle Over \$5000	59	38	1	--
Theft of Motor Vehicle Under \$5000	2227	2092	37	3
Shoplifting Under \$5000	1770	1030	215	187
Shoplifting Over \$5000	4	4	1	--
Possession Stolen Property	156	157	118	15
Fraud	1910	1720	233	36
Fraud – Identity Theft	32	55	6	--
Fraud – Identity Fraud	318	382	13	3
Mischief	1884	1970	248	92
Total Crimes Against Property	14,465	12,148	1,346	483

Percent Change 2019-2020: 16.0% Decrease



COMMUNITY SAFETY AND DIRECTED PATROL

1 District – St. Catharines and Thorold

Foot Patrol: In 2020, two officers were dedicated to foot patrol in the downtown core of St. Catharines with an additional two officers deployed at various times throughout the year in a temporary capacity. Foot patrol officers adjusted their regular patrol duties to include enforcement and education of COVID-19 regulations with businesses and visitors to the downtown area. Foot patrol officers also assisted with COVID-19 compliance checks throughout St. Catharines and Thorold. Officers walked a total of 391 hours of patrol, with the remainder of the time in marked vehicles assisting with calls in the downtown core, as well as the Queenston Street area. Foot patrol officers assisted or generated 380 calls for service resulting in 38 arrests, 12 Provincial Offence Notices, and performed 5 NARCAN rescues.

Foot patrol increased to include the Queenston Street area in 2020. This expansion was met favourably by the residents and businesses in the area. Officers also began regular visits to community support agencies such as the Breakfast Club, Start Me Up Niagara, and the Out of the Cold Program. These community agencies reacted favorably to officers attending and have reported a reduction in crime (i.e., drug dealing, assaults, etc.) and disturbances around the centres. Clients of these programs have also expressed their appreciation for police attendance.

Southridge Shelter Initiative: On September 21, 2020, 1 District began an Officer Liaison program at the Southridge Shelter on Glenridge Avenue in St. Catharines. A member of each of the four platoons was identified and attended the shelter on a regular basis during the six-month initiative. As of December 31, 2020, officers have made 40 documented visits to the shelter. During this time, 34 calls for service were diverted from general patrol. Officers spent a cumulative total of 28 hours at the shelter assisting residents and staff.

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 greatly reduced the unwanted behaviour with limited use of enforcement actions under the Trespass to Property Act and Criminal Code over the course of several weeks. The positive effects of this action have continued and have been met with appreciation by members of the community. 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 Compliance: This annual initiative known as “South End Student Noise Initiative” has operated yearly since 2006 and was re-branded in 2020 as “Project Compliance”. The Thorold Town & Gown Committee comprised of members of the community including Brock University and the Service was focused on COVID-19 restrictions and compliance. This initiative was planned and implemented as a cost shared project between Brock University Off-Campus Living and the Service. Post-secondary student house parties were specifically targeted to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Through university education and social media platforms, students living off campus were encouraged to refrain from holding or attending parties during Homecoming Week and into the fall. Officers and Thorold By-Law officers provided additional enforcement presence to discourage gatherings.

St. Patrick’s Day Off Campus Living Noise Patrol: This initiative was a joint project with Brock University Off-Campus Living and 1 District. Uniform officers identified St. Patricks’ Day student party houses in the south end of St. Catharines and Thorold before the event. Residents were visited and issued verbal warnings that inappropriate behaviour would not be tolerated. This year, due to the provincial wide lockdown, student numbers were noticeably down. Officers did affect two arrests during St. Patricks’ Day and several Provincial Offence Notices were issued under the Nuisance By-Law.

Project Sunset - Platoon Initiative: This initiative was focused on problems encountered by people from areas in lockdown attending the Niagara area beaches. This initiative was organized with the assistance of the Traffic Enforcement Unit and St. Catharines By-Law Enforcement and focused on noise, impaired driving, HTA offences, and COVID-19 related municipal by-laws. This project was highly effective and addressed numerous citizen complaints.



2 District - Niagara Falls and Niagara on the Lake

Operation TSR: This initiative was created in response to repeated complaints of excessive noise, speeding, and dangerous driving pertaining to car meets on Thorold Stone Road in Niagara Falls. This initiative was conducted on Wednesday nights, primarily throughout the months of July and August 2020. Checks of the area continued through the year with most activity and enforcement taking place in the summer. A total of 22 Provincial Offence Notices were issued for various infractions.

Foot Patrol Initiative: In response to incidents of unwanted persons, pan handlers and COVID-19 related calls for service involving social distancing within the Casino District area, foot patrols were initiated with the main objective of having visible officer presence within the community. A total of 556 foot-patrols were conducted within the Casino District and Clifton Hill areas. The business community and residents applauded this initiative and expressed an increased feeling of safety.

3 District - Welland and Pelham

Downtown Core Visibility: Platoons continued to set initiative goals to address drug activity, loitering, and trespassing around the area of East Main Street, which included businesses around the downtown core, including the courthouse and city hall.

Vacation Rental Property Initiative: 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. Numerous compliments were received from local businesses and residents.

ATV Patrols of St. Lawrence Seaway Property and Surrounding Areas: The targeted areas included Hunters Point, Seaway service roads and both east and west sides of the canal. Uniformed Officers utilized ATVs along Seaway property enforcing the Criminal Code of Canada, the Highway Traffic Act, and Trespass to Property Act.



5 District - Fort Erie

Cottage Checks: Officers utilized ATVs to conduct cottage checks along the Lake Erie shoreline, patrol the Friendship Trail, and local golf courses to address snow machines and off-road vehicles that may be causing damage. Officers issued Part I offence notices under the Trespass to Property Act and the Off-Road Vehicles Act. The checks consisted of ensuring doors were locked with no obvious signs of damage or break in. Cottage check placards were left behind for owners to inform them that officers conducted a premise check of their home.

Residential Break and Enters: February through June 2020, the Town of Fort Erie experienced approximately 60 break and enters in Central Avenue and Bertie Street to residences, garages, and sheds. Many of the offences were committed with the occupants inside the residences at the time. The Fort Erie Detective Office began an investigation utilizing foot patrols, bike patrols, static surveillance, and several other investigative strategies. At the conclusion of the project, Detectives were able to identify a suspect who was arrested and charged with 12 offences directly related to 7 of the break and enters. Since this arrest, the community has not had any similar patterns of break and enters in that area.

Licensed Premise Checks: Officers conducted proactive inspections and enforcement of licenced establishments throughout the year. A dedicated approach was conducted during the months of July and August centering in licenced establishments in Crystal Beach. With the addition of hundreds of seasonal residents in this area, underage drinking and property damage occurs. An increase of reports of intoxicated individuals and impaired drivers are also received. This proactive initiative was very well received by the licenced establishment owners in Crystal Beach. Additionally, the District Commander received compliments on the officers' presence, enforcement, and education.

6 District - Port Colborne and Wainfleet

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.



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 Provincial Offence Notices 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.

Lock It or Lose It: Officers participated in the "Lock It or Lose It" campaign during various times throughout 2020. Officers attended local arenas, shopping plazas, and residential apartment buildings to educate the public about the importance of removing or securing valuables within motor vehicles. Officers engaged with the community through face-to-face conversations, handing out pamphlets, and posting information on social media. Community members were appreciative of the crime prevention information provided and the extra efforts police were taking to ensure the community and their property were safe.

ATV Patrols: ATV patrols were utilized to provide officer presence and enforcement in rural areas, open areas, and those trails normally accessed by members of the public. 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 placards 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.

8 District - West Niagara (Grimsby, Lincoln, and West Lincoln)

Lock it or Lose It: In the fall of 2020, 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.



SPECIAL VICTIMS UNIT (SVU)

The Special Victims Unit is a combined investigative office focusing on providing services to victims of violent crime, and it includes the following units: Domestic Violence Unit, Child Abuse Unit, Sexual Assault Unit, Human Trafficking Unit, Offender Management Unit, Internet Child Exploitation, Cybercrime Unit, and Technological Crime Unit. The office is supported by Violent Crime Analysts responsible for daily review and tracking of relevant incidents, submissions to the Violent Crime Linkage Analysis System, and Ontario Major Case Management System data entry. The office works collaboratively with community partners, through formal protocols and procedures, to respond to incidents of violent crime, and to provide access to resources to support victims of crime.

Domestic Violence Unit (DVU)

The centralized DVU consists of 12 Domestic Violence Investigators and a supervisor and is responsible for conducting criminal investigations involving persons connected through past or present intimate partnerships.

Having a specially trained unit of Domestic Violence Investigators allows the Service to free up front-line resources for incident response, provide increased monitoring of cases with elevated risk for domestic violence, and to have consistent representation during engagement with community partners.

The DVU works collaboratively with Family and Children's Services Niagara, Victim Services Niagara, Victim Witness Assistance Program, Probation and Parole, the Crown Attorney's Office, and shelters for abused women and children, including Gillian's Place, and Women's Place of South Niagara.

Classification	2020
Domestic Violence – Investigations	1487
Domestic Violence – Criminal Charges	936



Child Abuse Unit

The Child Abuse Unit is a centralized investigative unit with a mandate to investigate all incidents of child sexual abuse, child physical abuse and neglect where serious injuries have resulted, a life has been endangered, or where there has been a failure to provide the necessities of life. Members of the Child Abuse Unit also aid during investigations involving children or requiring child interviews.

Child Abuse investigators are specially trained in sexual assault and offences against children's investigations, investigative interviewing, and Major Case Management. These investigators work closely with community partners to deliver on a shared commitment to a comprehensive and coordinated response to allegations of child abuse. This collaboration is guided by the Child Abuse Protocol for the Niagara Region, involving the Niagara Regional Police Service, Family and Children's Services Niagara, Ministry of the Attorney General – Crown Attorney, and Victim/Witness Assistance Program, and the Ontario Office of the Chief Coroner.

Joint child abuse investigations are conducted in partnership with Family and Children's Services Niagara and benefit from the strong support of the Kristen French Child Advocacy Centre Niagara (KFCACN). The Centre, formally opened on September 16, 2008, offers a safe, child friendly environment where the child and their family can be formally interviewed. Together with its community partners, the Service supported several initiatives organized by the KFCACN, including the Playhouse Build and Auction and the Amazing Race Niagara.

Child Abuse investigations also benefit from the expertise of physicians and staff at the McMaster University Children's Hospital – Child Advocacy and Assessment Program, and in addition are reviewed and tracked by the Child Abuse Review Team.

Child Abuse Unit Investigations in 2020

Classification	2020
Child Abuse/Neglect Investigations – Total	180
Cleared by Charge	36
Total Charges Laid	121



Sexual Assault Unit (SAU)

Formed in 1996, the SAU is a centralized investigative unit responsible for the coordination and response to reports of sexual assault in the Niagara Region, involving victims over the age of 16 years and reports of historical sexual abuse of child victims.

The detectives in this unit are specially trained in areas of sexual assault investigation, investigative interviewing, and Major Case Management. The Sexual Assault Unit, in collaboration with its community partners, is committed to meet the needs of sexual assault victims and appropriately respond to public safety concerns. Our dedicated team of investigators manages cases from initial reporting to the conclusion of an investigation. They provide support to victims and witnesses through the court process, and action referrals to Victim Services Niagara and the Victim Witness Assistance Program.

The Sexual Assault Unit works collaboratively with our community partners through the Sexual Assault Response Protocol. Amended over time, this protocol includes: the Sexual Assault Domestic Violence Treatment Program at the Niagara Health System, the Niagara Regional Sexual Assault Centre, the Victim Witness Assistance Program, Victim Services Niagara, and the Crown Attorney-Ministry of the Attorney General.

Sexual Assault Unit Investigations in 2020

Classification	2020
Sexual Assault Investigations – Total	311
Cleared by Charge	26
Cleared Unfounded*	10
Investigation Suspended**	251
Cleared Otherwise	6

The category of "Unfounded" describes incidents in which it has been determined through police investigation that the offence reported did not occur, nor was it attempted.

The category of "Investigation Suspended" describes incidents that may be still under investigation or there is insufficient evidence to proceed. Subject to the discovery of new evidence or the conclusion of an investigation, these incidents may be reclassified in the future.



Human Trafficking Unit

The Human Trafficking Unit was formed in 2019 and is part of the Special Victims Unit. Human Trafficking Investigators work closely with community partners, in accordance with the Niagara Region Emergency Response Protocol to Human Trafficking. Investigations are referred from calls for service, local community agencies, other police services, and the Canadian Human Trafficking Hotline. The overarching goal of human trafficking investigations is support for survivors and an end to exploitation of vulnerable victims. The Human Trafficking Unit also works closely with the community to increase public awareness of the pervasiveness and the devastating effects of human trafficking on our communities.

Electronic Crimes Unit

The Electronic Crimes or E-Crimes Unit was formed to bring together under one umbrella units that investigate crimes that occur on the World Wide Web or are aided using technology and digital devices. This investigative office is comprised of the Technological Crimes Unit, which supports criminal investigations through forensic examinations of digital devices to extract evidence of a variety of offences; the Computer Cyber Crime Unit, which supports criminal investigations by extracting evidence from online sources and providing technical support to investigators conducting online investigations; and the Internet Child Exploitation Unit, which investigates offences committed against children on the Internet or using digital devices.



Internet Child Exploitation Unit (ICE)

The ICE Unit has established a local police response to crimes against children perpetrated via the Internet. In addition to a reactive response to public complaints, investigators proactively initiate investigations of identified targets, authoring search warrants that are judicially authorized, and executed locally. This leads to the identification and arrest of offenders possessing, distributing and making child pornography, and persons who utilize the Internet to lure children into sexual activity.

The ICE Unit continues full-time membership in the Ontario Provincial Strategy to Protect Children from Sexual Abuse and Exploitation on the Internet, which the Niagara Regional Police Service joined in 2007. This initiative has led to a high level of interagency co-operation and successful joint investigations of Internet Child Exploitation throughout the province, as well as nationally and internationally.

Internet Child Exploitation Unit Investigations in 2020

Child Pornography and Internet Luring

Year	Related Incidents	Arrests	Criminal Charges
2020	202	19	95



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT WITH YOUTH

School Resource Officers (SRO)

The Niagara Regional Police Service has developed and maintained a strong relationship with the District School Board of Niagara, Niagara Catholic District School Board, Conseil Scolaire de District Catholique Centre-Sud, and Conseil Scolaire Viamonde. This relationship has seven SROs working within the school environment. The SROs work closely with staff and administrators in the development of proactive and reactive programs within the school for youth, provide a professional and positive role model, and act as a resource in conflict situations. This arrangement supports our frontline officers and district detectives with respect to school related incidents.

During the summer of 2020, the SROs were re-deployed to assist the Marine Unit to conduct general patrol duties in parts of Lake Ontario, Lake Erie, the Niagara River, and other water ways within or bordering the Niagara Region. Working with the Marine Unit, the SROs supported enforcement of the marine and navigation laws as well Criminal Code, Controlled Drug and Substances Act, and Liquor License Act offences.

The following is a summary of the (SROs) activities for the 2020 calendar year:

- Occurrences - 367
- Provincial Offence Notices - 60
- Provincial Offence Warnings - 99
- Computer Assisted Dispatch Calls - 610
- Criminal Charges - 4



Extrajudicial Measures Program (EJM)

In 2020, SROs patrolled all the high schools in the Niagara Region. The positive impact of police officers being fully involved in the local high school communities has led to a decrease in the number of criminal charges laid against young persons. SROs and school administrators are proactive in engaging students to identify and address issues before they become criminal offences. The effective and positive relationships established between the Niagara Regional Police Service, the school boards, and partner agencies continue to yield positive results.

The Niagara Regional Police Service relies upon the services of community partners such as Contact Niagara, John Howard Society, Family and Children Services, Port Cares, Pathstone, Youth Probation and Parole, and Youth Resources Niagara to provide not only extra judicial programs but also for assistance regarding all youth related concerns. Our partnerships allow for extra judicial measures that not only provide accountability for criminal acts but also provide support for the youth involved.

Summary of 2020 Extra Judicial Measures Total: 35

These continued relationships help build on community safety through information sharing. The establishment of these community partnerships has benefited the Niagara Regional Police Service's efforts to increase police visibility and crime prevention throughout the Niagara Region. The participation in monthly meetings with Youth Probation and Parole officers has proven to be profitable for information sharing.

Community Partners

The Niagara Regional Police Service endeavors to optimize relationships with community partners to improve service delivery to youth, victims, vulnerable persons, and at-risk persons. Working with our community partners and stakeholders the NRPS is better able to address the needs of youth in the Niagara Region. Our community partners include the following: Contact Niagara, Port Cares Youth Justice Committee, Family and Children Services (FACS), Pathstone Mental Health, Ministry of Children & Youth Services – Youth Justice Services, Youth Resources Niagara, TAPP – C (The Arson Prevention Program for Children), and the John Howard Society.



Initiatives

Project Impact: This program is organized by SROs where at risk youth are transported to St Catharines Collegiate from around the region to participate in learning and physical activity and team building exercises with various NRPS units and motivational speakers.

Film Festival: This program allows students to work closely with police officers in a small group setting and discuss relevant topics that challenge young people. This year, 62 students participated in the research and development of a public service announcement on the topic of COVID safety. The winning team attended the CHCH Morning Live Show where they were interviewed, and their video was played for television viewers.

Online Elementary Safety Presentation: The SRO team through 2019-2020 developed and implemented a proactive elementary presentation program. With the challenges in 2020 regarding in-person engagement, SROs adapted and began connecting virtually with classrooms, presenting online safety and anti-bullying education. This has been very well received by elementary students and staff. This effort was launched proactively, prior to a recent report by the Canadian Centre for Child Protection showing an 88% increase in youth reporting online sexual exploitation during the pandemic. Niagara SROs adapted to a new pathway of engagement by utilizing online technology to continue connecting and safeguarding Niagara's youth.

Wendy's Frosty Positive Ticket Campaign: A successful second annual positive ticketing campaign was launched through the SRO program. Compass Restaurants Group generously provided 6000 Free Wendy's Frosty coupons designed in partnership with the Service. Officers from all units within the Service supported the initiative. This created countless positive engagements amongst school age students across the Niagara Region, while rewarding the use of helmets, life jackets, seatbelts, and safety equipment. Promoting on our social media platforms throughout the initiative saw many positive comments from the community.

Safety Trivia: Considering the challenges to in person engagement through the pandemic our SROs were required to adapt. A successful Christmas safety trivia was initiated where approximately 450 students participated in a series of fun trivia questions that also included education and awareness relevant to teenagers. The winners were awarded prizes for their efforts.

SRO and Soaring Eagles Engagement: The SRO team maintains a close relationship with the Soaring Eagles Indigenous School and continue to foster opportunities for positive interactions with Niagara's First Nations, Inuit, and Métis. In the fall of 2020, the SRO team received student requested topics of interest pertaining to police. The SRO team partnered with NRPS Emergency Task Unit, Marine, and K9 to engage students through interactive presentations about search and rescue and K9 tracking. The SRO team completed the year with a fun and interactive activity to create Christmas greenery pots that students built with the SROs.



EMERGENCY TASK UNIT (ETU)

The ETU is a team of specially selected and highly trained officers who respond to major incidents to maintain officer and public safety. Members of the ETU employ a variety of specialized equipment and tactics, using the least amount of force required to resolve some of the most dangerous incidents in our communities. The ETU is an accredited Hostage Rescue Team and is prepared to respond to incidents involving hostage takings, armed persons, barricades persons, and high-risk warrants. Utilizing their specialized training, members of the ETU regularly respond to assist with persons in crisis, high risk missing persons, and search and rescue operations. As part of their duties, the ETU is also responsible for dignitary protection, witness protection, and high-risk court security details.

While deployed to major incidents, the ETU is supported by the Tactical Support Group (TSG). The TSG is a part-time, accredited containment team. It is comprised of volunteers from the Marine Unit, Canine Unit, Traffic Enforcement Unit, and past members of the ETU. The TSG enhances the ETU's ability to successfully conclude high risk operations by providing a pool of highly trained officers to conduct basic tactical operations such as containment of structures, high risk canine tracks, and specialized support during high-risk warrant operations.

The ETU is a well-regarded and respected organization in the Golden Horseshoe. Throughout 2020, the ETU assisted several other police services including Hamilton, Peel, and Toronto bringing successful conclusions to their investigations.



Explosives Disposal Unit (EDU)

The EDU is trained and equipped to render safe improvised chemical, biological, radiological, and explosives devices (CBRNE), military ordnance and provide technical support to the Emergency Task Unit. Additionally, the EDU provides investigative support to other Service units primarily in the context of post blast investigations. The EDU is active in promoting awareness and education regarding explosives and bomb threat procedures among various community partners. In 2020 the EDU responded to 27 calls for service. Currently the EDU consists of six part-time Constables and one Sergeant who hold full time positions in various other capacities. These members are certified by the Canadian Police College in various disciplines, including render safe procedures, electronics, post blast investigations, radiology and x-ray, and explosive forced entries. Members of the Unit participate in monthly training. The EDU is at the forefront of provincial explosives response.





Underwater Search and Recovery Unit (USRU)

The members of the Niagara Regional Police Service USRU extend the function of the police investigator into the aquatic environment. The members are required to act as the “eyes” for investigators at any scene which is underwater. Through the highly trained members of the USRU, NRPS investigators can recover a variety of evidence including vehicles, vessels, aircraft, weapons, and deceased persons. As police divers, the members of the USRU are required to be qualified as commercial divers under standards set by the Canadian Safety Association and the Ontario Health and Safety Act – Diving Regulations. The members of the USRU can utilize a variety of resources and equipment including SCUBA, surface supply air, remotely operated vehicles, remote video equipment, and sonar technology to perform their duties. The members undergo further training in the areas of vessel inspection, harbour clearing, explosives recognition, rappelling, live boating operations, and hazardous material response. The USRU provides continued support to the EDU with members trained as police explosives technicians. In addition to their work in water, in 2020 USRU members responded to five explosive disposal incidents. In 2020 the members of the USRU were deployed 37 times for operations in the Niagara Region along with providing support to partner agencies requiring police divers.

Underwater Search and Rescue Activities in 2020

Activity	# Of Calls for Assistance
Body Recoveries	21
Assist Partner Agencies	1
Explosive Disposal	5
Evidence Search	3
Vehicle/Vessel Investigations	7



Canine Unit

In 2020, the Canine Unit continued its commitment to support Uniform Patrol and Specialty Units with a full complement of six Constables and one Sergeant. The Unit maintained seven general purpose dogs, with five of these dogs cross-trained in narcotics detection and two cross-trained in explosives detection.

With the retirement of aging police service dogs, the Canine Unit welcomed three new canine teams within the past year. All 3 new officers, along with their police service dogs completed an extensive 15 weeks of training to prepare them for their challenging new roles.

In 2020, members of the Canine Unit responded to 1467 calls for service and used their police service dogs to assist in 588 of those calls. Unit members used their canines to track suspects on 319 occasions in addition to searching buildings, searching for evidence, narcotics, and explosives. Furthermore, Canine teams are routinely used to assist the ETU while executing high-risk warrants and arrests.





Traffic Enforcement Unit (TEU)

In 2020, the TEU conducted proactive enforcement throughout the Niagara Region while also addressing specific traffic related complaints received from members of the public through the NRPS website and the traffic hotline.

In 2020 officers from this unit were responsible for issuing 4,632 Provincial Offence Notices and Summonses, comprising of approximately 18% of the Service's total enforcement efforts. In addition, members also arrested several drivers for driving while disqualified, impaired driving (alcohol & drugs), and other criminal offences.

Throughout 2020 multiple commercial motor vehicle inspections were conducted. Enforcement, combined with education, is providing safer roadways in the Niagara Region. TEU also conducted two commercial motor vehicle enforcement exercises with the Ministry of Transportation, which specifically addressed public complaints in Lincoln and West Lincoln.

In 2020, the Traffic Enforcement Unit continued the use of Automated Licence Plate Recognition (ALPR) camera system. The use of these vehicles generated 1,007 tickets in 2020. The camera system obtains photos of licence plates which then compares the plate to a "hot list", which is composed of information that is updated by MTO and CPIC each morning. If a captured plate is recognized as being on this list, an alert is given, notifying the officer of the potential infraction. This system allows the officer to focus on driving while the cameras check the plates. Beginning March 1, 2020, the Ministry of Transportation Ontario extended expiry dates for driver's licences and licence plate stickers until June of 2021. As a result, the number of offence notices resulting from the ALPR was greatly reduced in 2020.

Officers assigned to the TEU receive additional training in breath analysis, drug recognition, level II collision investigation, as well as Radar and Lidar speed detection equipment. Throughout the year, Traffic Enforcement Officers were responsible for conducting 392 alcohol impaired tests and 117 drug impaired investigations across the region. The number of drug impaired investigations more than doubled from 2019 where 50 examinations were done.

Once again, the Niagara Regional Police Service received grant funding for 2020/2021 from the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services as part of the Reduce Impaired Driving Everywhere (R.I.D.E) program. A total of 14 scheduled R.I.D.E. spot checks were conducted throughout the year with a significant amount of the dates scheduled during the holiday season. This year, approximately 6,600 vehicles were stopped and checked, 232 roadside tests were conducted, 23 people had their licences suspended for 3 days or more, 4 people were charged criminally with impaired driving, 18 people were charged with other Criminal Code offences, and 62 Provincial Offences Act charges were issued.

In 2020 TEU hosted a Standardized Field Sobriety Test training sessions that trained 16 uniform officers. Each session is 5 days in length and provides officers with training in testing procedures that will assist them in detecting drivers that are impaired by drugs or alcohol.



The TEU continues “tweeting” from our Twitter account “NRPS Road Safety”. Officers take photos of interesting and unique traffic stops and increase public awareness by providing them with updates in legislation, safe responsible driving tips, and notification of current events and projects. As of this year, the TEU’s Twitter handle has 2,444 followers, which represents a 25% increase in followers.

On Tuesday September 8, 2020, the Niagara Regional Police Service conducted its 19th annual Back to School Traffic Safety and Awareness Day. The project coincides with the return to school for most of the Region’s school children. In addition to the usual speed and distracted driving enforcement, this year officers focused on the 10 new Community Safety Zones. A total of 41 officers including Executive Staff, detectives, and officers from several specialty units, assisted with this initiative. Officers stopped 135 vehicles for various Highway Traffic Act offences of which 122 Provincial Offence Notices and warnings were issued. One driver was charged with driving while under suspension.

The TEU will continue to focus on qualifying and certifying officers, as well as continual enforcement and education. Several projects are planned for 2021, which will continue to address the importance of road safety and safe driver behavior. TEU remains committed to keeping the roadways within the Niagara Region safe for the residents of Niagara as well as the millions of visitors that come to our area each year.





Collision Reconstruction Unit (CRU)

Section 29 of the Adequacy Standards Regulation requires that a Police Services Board have a policy on traffic management, traffic law enforcement, and road safety. In addition, section 5 (1) (d) requires that Police Services have technical collision investigation and collision reconstruction investigative supports.

Officers assigned to the CRU are technically trained and dedicated investigators, who specialize in the field of collision investigation. Members assigned to the Unit are initially required to complete a minimum of 10 weeks of extensive collision investigation training at either the Ontario Police College in Aylmer, Ontario or the Canadian Police College in Ottawa. Beyond their initial training, our collision investigators receive ongoing training to maintain and increase their skill set and expertise.

In 2020, the CRU investigated 31 incidents involving 16 fatal collisions, 8 life threatening injury collisions, and 7 investigative assistance incidents, including suicide and homicide investigations.

In 2020, the CRU updated their equipment as well as the software they utilize for completing their investigations. These updates see the Niagara Regional Police Service's CRU as a leader in technology and methods used in their area of expertise.

Fatal and Life-Threatening Collisions

Collision Type	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Fatal Collisions	17	20	18	15	17	16
Life Threatening Injuries	24	21	24	16	12	8



SPECIAL INVESTGATIVE SERVICES (SIS)

The Niagara Regional Police Service SIS Unit deploys 31 sworn officers, 1 civilian analyst, and 1 civilian clerk. This investigative unit is also assisted by an embedded officer from the Canada Border Services Agency. The Unit is responsible for high level drug and organized crime investigations along with extremism, street gangs, and cross border issues. All unit members have a high level of training and experience in criminal investigations, and many have specialized training and experience in search and seizure, technical investigations, undercover techniques, organized crime investigations and large-scale drug investigations. The SIS is dedicated to the goals of the Police Service.

SIS is comprised of the Intelligence Unit, the Mobile Surveillance Unit, the Morality Unit, the Guns Gangs and Grows Unit, and the Covert Operations Unit. Additionally, several officers are deployed to Joint Forces Operations including, Biker Enforcement (OPP), Provincial Weapons Enforcement (OPP), Provincial Anti-Terrorism Investigations (OPP, RCMP), the Provincial Asset Forfeiture Unit (OPP), and the Border Enforcement Security Task Force (Canadian and American Authorities). The Guns Gangs and Grows Unit further includes two officers seconded to the Provincial Joint Forces Cannabis Enforcement Team (OPP) and it also deploys two officers assigned to Opioid Education and Enforcement. The SIS supports all other units of the Service providing expertise, technical support, surveillance, and undercover operations to various investigations.

In 2020, investigators from throughout SIS contributed greatly to investigations into the violent criminal activities of street gang members and associates. The Intelligence Unit and the Guns Gangs and Grows Unit provided substantial resources to support 1 District Detective Offices during a large-scale investigation dubbed "Project Red Rover" to investigate a shooting on September 29, 2019, in St. Catharines during the Niagara Grape and Wine Festival. The SIS also participated substantially in an OPP-led Provincial Joint Forces Cannabis Enforcement Team investigation dubbed "Project Woolwich" to dismantle a large-scale illegal cannabis production and distribution network. Our NRPS member assigned to the Biker Enforcement Unit continued to make a significant contribution to "Project Hobart" that investigated the Hells Angels and traditional organized crime linked to a sophisticated illegal gaming operation and the ongoing violent disputes related to its illicit profits.



Intelligence Unit

The Intelligence Unit is responsible for the monitoring and investigation of organized crime groups and extremism groups for the purpose of prosecuting, dismantling, or disrupting their criminal activities. The Unit works cooperatively with law enforcement agencies across Ontario and New York State and facilitates the sharing of information on criminal matters locally, nationally, and internationally. This Unit also administers the Witness Protection Program.

The Unit's responsibilities include the monitoring of protests within the Niagara Region. The NRPS Hate Crime Coordinator is assigned to the Unit and monitors Hate Crime incidents within the Niagara Region and who is also part of the Provincial Hate Crime team.

The Intelligence Unit is also responsible for the technical aspect of Intelligence and Investigational operations including the use of interception of private communications under Part VI of the Criminal Code of Canada.

The Unit made a substantial contribution to an investigation dubbed "Project Red Rover" led by detectives from 1 District Detective Offices along with the Guns, Gangs and Grows Unit (GGG). This collaborative effort investigated a shooting incident that occurred in downtown St. Catharines that resulted in six persons being shot. The Intelligence Unit provided the Part VI affiant and coordinated the interception room.

There is a Crime Analyst assigned to the Intelligence Unit who, among other duties, is responsible for the collection, collation, and distribution of information regarding crime trends and patterns in the Niagara Region.





Guns, Gangs, and Grows Unit/Opioid Education and Enforcement Unit

In 2020, the Guns, Gangs and Grows Unit (GGG) consisted of eight detectives. Two of those officers were seconded to the OPP-led Provincial Joint Forces Cannabis Enforcement Team (PJFCET) and two of the officers were assigned to Opioid Education and Enforcement. Although the unit was founded to investigate the illegal production and trafficking of marijuana, the increasing prevalence of opioids on the streets of Niagara has compelled the continued efforts to combat the distribution of Fentanyl and other narcotics mixed with Fentanyl.

The Unit assisted with major investigations conducted by other investigative units including the divisional Street Crime Units, 1 District Detective Office (for Project Red Rover) and the OPP-led PJFCET (for Project Woolwich). Fulfilling its responsibility to disrupt gun and gang violence, the GGG Unit's contribution to Project Red Rover highlighted the ongoing trend of violent street gangs migrating out of the Greater Toronto Area and into the surrounding regions such as Niagara.

Project Red Rover was an excellent collaboration between detectives from GGG working with 1 District Detective Offices and the Intelligence Unit to investigate the shooting incident that occurred in downtown St. Catharines on September 29, 2019, resulting in six persons being shot. The project was a 6-month investigation that culminated in a total of 9 arrests and 97 Criminal Code charges being laid against members or associates of violent street gangs based in the Greater Toronto Area.

Consistent with their mandate, the GGG made a total of 45 arrests with 93 charges and executed a total of 56 search warrants that resulted in the seizure of 17,310 marijuana plants worth \$35,110,000 and \$628,850 worth of other drugs. The Unit also seized 23 firearms or replicas and \$175,537 in proceeds of crime. On the next page is an example of an investigation conducted by this Unit in 2020.



St. Catharines (Inc. #20-59117)

GGG investigated a marijuana grow operation at 1293 Third Street Louth in St. Catharines in May of 2020. As a result of the investigation, Police learned that there were no authorizations issued by Health Canada for marijuana to be produced at this location that consisted of numerous large greenhouses formerly used to grow flowers.

On Tuesday, June 30, 2020, the Unit executed warrants to enter and search 1277 and 1293 Third Street Louth St. Catharines. Eleven individuals were located inside and working on a very large marijuana grow operation inside the greenhouses at 1293 Third Street Louth.

Seizure included:

- 17,200 cannabis plants (the largest to date in the Niagara Region) with an estimated street value of \$34,000,000.

Charges included:

- Cultivate Cannabis not in a Dwelling House contrary to the Cannabis Act; and
- Possession of Cannabis for the Purpose of Distributing contrary to the Cannabis Act.



PJFCET Project Woolwich



Beginning in 2019 and continuing throughout 2020, the 2 NRPS members assigned to the OPP – led Provincial Joint Forces Cannabis Enforcement Team (PJFCET) were responsible for developing the critical intelligence and information that led to Project Woolwich. This project was a 12-month-long investigation of a criminal enterprise and their illegal network that had been exploiting the Health Canada medical, personal, and designate cannabis production regime by diverting cannabis authorized to be grown for medical purposes to the illegal market. The enterprise had been involved in the large-scale production, wholesale distribution, and sale of illegal cannabis. There was an international component to this investigation as investigators seized shipments of illegal cannabis destined for the United States (US) as well as two large shipments of US currency destined for Canada. The accused in this investigation were also responsible for large-volume shipments of illegal cannabis from British Columbia to Ontario.

On August 13, 2020, PJFCET and its partner agencies executed 26 warrants in numerous locations including Niagara Falls, St. Catharines, Jordan, Simcoe, Markham, Canfield, Welland, Leamington, Scarborough, Richmond Hill, and British Columbia.

As a result of this investigation, 15 people from the Niagara Region, Greater Toronto Area, and British Columbia have been charged with 135 offences under the Cannabis Act, Controlled Drugs and Substances Act and Criminal Code of Canada.

Furthermore, the results of this investigation include the seizure of:

- 101,049 illegal cannabis plants
- 1,921 pounds of illegal cannabis bud
- 21 pounds of illegal cannabis shatter
- 2 ounces of cocaine
- 3 pounds of illegal cannabis hash
- 22 pounds of illegal cannabis oil
- hundreds of illegal cannabis vape pens
- 6 firearms including two .22 pistols, one 9mm Glock, one AR 15 assault rifle and two shotguns
- grow equipment worth more than \$1 million
- numerous high-end jewelry items
- 4 vehicles
- more than \$2.5 million in Canadian currency
- \$580,828 in US currency, and
- \$379,383 in Chinese and South Korean currency



Additionally, the total duty loss for the illegal cannabis seized is estimated at more than \$42 million.





Opioid Education and Enforcement Unit (OEEU)

The OEEU was established with the mandate to enforce the laws surrounding the use, possession, and trafficking of Opioids in the Niagara Region. The Unit (working within the GGG Unit) is also responsible for partnering with the Niagara Health System and various community stakeholders to deal with drug addiction and assist those looking to escape the grip of opioid addiction. OEEU provides critical education to first responders regarding the recognition, safe handling, and enforcement relating to opioids.

In 2020, the OEEU contributions produced the following results:

- investigations – 28
- persons charged – 66
- drug charges – 85
- Criminal Code charges – 164
- fentanyl seizures – 1,988 grams
- crystal methamphetamine seizures – 828 grams
- cocaine seizures – 3,504.5 grams
- marijuana seizures – 3,600 grams
- firearm seizures – 18
- 8 community outreach seminars delivered

Covert Operations Unit

The Covert Operations was staffed with a Detective Sergeant and two Detective Constables that are the Service's Technical Support Officers. The Unit's responsibilities include overseeing the recruitment and coordination of confidential informants, maintaining confidential informant files, and supervising undercover operations. The Unit also employs emerging technologies Service-wide to support numerous investigations and projects with the surreptitious installation of cameras, audio devices, and tracking devices.

In 2020, the Unit made significant contributions to Project Red Rover and Project Woolwich while continuing to support the numerous investigations conducted service wide.



Mobile Surveillance Unit

The Niagara Regional Police Service's Mobile Surveillance Unit is a six-officer team that provides valuable support for all investigations conducted within Special Investigation Services. The Unit is also frequently called upon to assist investigations conducted by the other units within Detective Support and Divisional Detective Offices. The Unit is responsible for supporting major projects from Homicide investigations to organized crime probes.

Members of this unit are also responsible for the instruction of surveillance techniques to officers in Niagara and are part of the surveillance training team at the Ontario Police College.

In 2020, the Mobile Surveillance Unit was involved in high profile surveillance of suspects relating to Homicide investigations, Sexual Assault investigations, Human Trafficking investigations in addition to their contributions to Project Red Rover and Project Woolwich.

Morality Unit

The Morality Unit is responsible for mid to high level drug investigations within the Niagara Region and elsewhere in Ontario. Each officer is highly skilled in narcotics investigations and specifically highly trained in search and seizure law, the drafting of judicial authorizations, technical investigations, and undercover work.

2020 was a busy and successful year for the Morality Unit. Throughout the year, the Unit was called upon to assist a variety of other units including the Homicide Unit, the Sexual Assault Unit, 1 District Detective Offices, and the Intelligence Unit. Members of the Morality Unit made substantial contributions to Project Red Rover and Project Woolwich while the Unit maintained meaningful investigations of their own.

Members of the Morality Unit authored and executed 32 search warrants, arrested 21 individuals, and laid 125 criminal charges. The Unit was responsible for the seizure of over \$700,000 worth of illicit drugs, over \$250,000 in offence related property, and over \$100,000 in currency as the proceeds of crime.



Joint Forces Operations

Biker Enforcement Unit (BEU)

The BEU is an OPP - led Joint Forces Operation comprised of 12 law enforcement agencies including the Niagara Regional Police Service.

The BEU is committed to investigating and disrupting the organized criminal activities of outlaw motorcycle gangs through shared policing expertise throughout the Province of Ontario. The main objective of this unit is to monitor the activities and movements of outlaw motorcycle gang members within the Niagara Region and to enforce applicable laws, when necessary, regarding any illegal activity of gang members and associates. Part of their mandate is to develop expert officers for use at trials and civil proceedings.

Project Hobart

In 2020, the NRPS member assigned to the BEU continued to make a significant contribution to Project Hobart, which was a sophisticated illegal gaming operation linked to the Hells Angels and Traditional Organized Crime. In addition to illegal gaming, the project also identified an ongoing violent dispute between current members of the Niagara Hells Angels and former members. Several violent acts occurred in and out of the Region including murders, attempted murders, shootings, and arsons - including at an outbuilding at the Niagara Hells Angels clubhouse.

The initial wave of takedowns occurred in December of 2019; however, violence continued into 2020 including an attempted shooting of a Niagara Hells Angels member and 3 additional arsons. On July 29, 2020, a second wave of takedowns occurred, and 4 more persons were arrested and charged. The NRPS member assigned to the unit took a leadership role conducting the analysis of over 400 electronic devices seized from 22 accused persons and preparing the required prosecution briefs, documents, and Criminal Organization Substantive Event Summaries. The case is currently before the courts.





Provincial Anti-Terrorism Section (PATS)

PATS is an OPP-led Joint Forces Operation that has active participation from all the major police services in Ontario including the Niagara Regional Police Service. The Unit works very closely with members of the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS), the RCMP Integrated National Security Enforcement Team (INSET), and the U.S. Intelligence community in addressing threats of terrorism.

The section was established in the aftermath of September 11, 2001, in the recognition of the fact that additional resources were needed to combat the threat of terrorism in Ontario. Investigators within PATS investigate criminal extremism throughout the province.

As a border community, Niagara is a strategic site for human smuggling and transport of terrorist-related contraband to and from the United States. The primary objective of this Unit is to conduct investigations on individuals and organized crime groups involved in terrorism-related activities.

The Niagara officer seconded to PATS is one of the longest serving and most experienced members of PATS and this member conducts several local programs during the year with various Niagara cultural groups and officials responsible for local infrastructure. This member also actively monitors the activities of persons of interest in the Niagara Region, as well as the Greater Toronto Area. The Niagara member has been involved in several investigations, including the investigation of persons who either are intending to travel overseas to join a terrorist group or returning to Canada after potentially participating in terrorist activities.



Provincial Weapons Enforcement Unit (PWEU)

PWEU is an OPP-led Joint Forces Operation made up of 11 law enforcement agencies including the Niagara Regional Police Service. The mandate of the Unit is to identify persons involved in the illegal movement of firearms and to take enforcement action. This includes the offences of smuggling, trafficking and possession of “crime guns”. Many “crime guns” found or used in the commission of offences have their origins in the United States and PWEU has established a strong working relationship with their American counterparts.

The contributions of the Niagara member of the PWEU produced the following results in 2020:

- 30 Niagara-based investigations (this includes assisting other units in non-firearm related incidents)
- 12 investigations in other jurisdictions
- 20 individuals arrested
- 32 search warrants executed (this includes assisting other units in non-firearm related incidents)
- 28 handguns seized
- 11 rifles
- 1 prohibited rifle (AR-15)
- 10 shotguns
- 2500 rounds of ammunition seized
- 37 other weapons seized and
- 26 prohibited devices seized



Border Enforcement Security Task Force (BEST)

The NRPS has one member attached to the BEST. The team is led by United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) based in Buffalo, New York. The BEST unit is a co-located Operational/Investigative Law Enforcement Unit with the mandate to identify attack and dismantle criminal organizations on both sides of the Canadian/U.S. Border.

The Niagara Regional Police Service has committed to providing one Detective Sergeant to the BEST program. The member has also received his Title 19 training, which authorizes the enforcing of U.S. law on border issues.

In 2020, the BEST Unit was involved in numerous cross-border investigations resulting in the seizure of illegal firearms, illegal drugs, contraband tobacco, and currency, which enhanced the sharing of information process and created great working relationships and agency partnerships. The Niagara member also made considerable contributions in support of the large-scale PJFCET-led project (Woolwich) involving illegal cannabis exportation.

Provincial Asset Forfeiture Unit (PAFU)

The NRPS has one member attached to the PAFU led by the OPP. PAFU is an investigative unit focused on the prosecution of complex proceeds of crime investigations and it specializes in the identification and seizure of offence related property. Their mandate includes assisting crown attorneys and front line investigators in the preparation of applicable court documents and subsequent forfeiture of seized proceeds, assets, and offence related property.

The member assists with the submissions of forfeited proceeds and assets to the Ministry of Public Works and Government Services, Seized Property Management Directorate. The value and amount of these submissions are reported to the Board in the appropriate Annual Report on Proceeds of Crime.

In 2020, the PAFU was involved in numerous investigations resulting in the seizure of cash and other proceeds of crime or offence-related property. The Niagara member was also directly involved in supporting the large-scale PJFCET-led project (Woolwich).



PUBLIC COMPLAINTS

Complaint Type	2019	2020
Conduct Complaints	98	115
Service Complaints	6	4
Total Public Complaints	104	119
Complaint Conclusions		
Other – No Investigation conducted as per the decision of the OIPRD – Not in the public interest, complaint more than 6 months old, frivolous/vexatious, no PSA breach, insufficient information provided – use other forum (i.e., Court)	47	51
Withdrawn	16	19
Early Resolution (Before Investigation)	1	3
Informal Resolution (During Investigation)	5	10
Unsubstantiated Complaints (Following Investigation)	25	29
Substantiated Complaints (Following Investigation)	10	7
Pending / Open Investigations	0	0
Substantiated Complaint Resolutions		
No Further Action	0	0



PUBLIC COMPLAINTS CONTINUED

Substantiated Complaint Resolutions	2019	2020
Action Taken	1	0
Informal Resolution	2	2
Disposition Without a Hearing	1	2
Awaiting Disposition	5	3
Disciplinary Hearing	1	0
Total Substantiated Complaint Resolutions	10	7



HUMAN RESOURCES

Through its continued involvement in the development and execution of the Service's Strategic Plan, the Human Resources Unit supports the Service in providing quality policing to the residents and visitors of the Niagara Region.

During 2020, the Human Resources Unit played a significant role in the Service's response to the COVID-19 global pandemic. With member and public safety at the forefront of each decision, the Human Resources Unit has supported the continued delivery of our essential service. Through the Unit's early involvement on the Pandemic Business Continuity Committee (PBCC) to the development of a multi-faceted COVID-19 response plan including oversight and tracking of all COVID-19 related absences, contact tracing, member and public screening, risk assessment of the physical workspace and shared spaces in all Service facilities, and the implementation of appropriate Personal Protective Equipment, the Unit has and continues to support all members through these unprecedented times.

Despite the ongoing COVID-19 issues, the Human Resources Unit was involved in the refresh and update of the Civilian Job Classification System, the upgrade to several systems and programs including the Time and Attendance System, Employee Information Portal, and the implementation and roll out of a new Exit Interview Program.

2020 Hires

Uniform	59
Civilian	21
Total Hires	80



2020 Retirements and Resignations

Chief	0	SOA Civilian	2
Deputy Chief	0	Civilian	11
Superintendent	1		
Inspector	1		
Staff Sergeant	3		
Sergeant	9		
Constable	12		
Total	26	Total	13

Total 26 includes 2 deaths and 10 resignations



Police Services Board Approved Sworn and Civilian Staffing Complements

Chief of Police	1	Director	1
Deputy Chief of Police	2	Manager	11
Superintendent	5	Civilian Personnel	306
Inspector	14		
Staff Sergeant	29		
Sergeant	112		
Constable	592		
Total	754	Total	318



AWARDS, COMMENDATIONS, AND MILESTONES

Annually, the Service pays tribute to the men and women, both sworn and civilian, for their exemplary work, dedication, and successes. In addition, the Service recognizes members of our community for their selfless acts of courage. Highlighted here are the recipients of our awards and recognized achievements.

Police Services Board Award of Excellence

Recipient

Detective Sergeant: Michael Tripp

Chief of Police Award

The Chief of Police Award is presented by the Chief of Police to current or retired members and others who have shown special achievement or community involvement, which falls outside the criteria of other Service Awards.

Recipients

Staff Sergeant: Sandy Staniforth

Constable: Michael Warnock

Civilian: Jennifer Short



Chief of Police Commendations

A Commendation may be granted to members of the Service who have demonstrated an act of self-sacrifice, bravery, and/or outstanding performance over and above the highest expectations of the Service.

Commendations may also be granted to citizens by the Police Services Board or the Chief of Police for acts of self-sacrifice, bravery, or actions that assist the police service, which far exceed those expected of a citizen.

Recipients

Sergeant: Todd Anderson, Bruce Mair

Constable: Tim Eaton, Brent Burnside, Patrick Zadlo, Tara Manherz, Mat Pouli, Rami Abdalla, Ryan Benner, Dusty Bianchin, Joe Bonazza, Kristopher van Riel, Richard Feor, Michael Matwijow

Civilian: Kathy Nixon, Leila Smith, Ted Heinbecker, Aletta Brown, Krista Degazio, Kristin Hansen, Cassie Foreman, Andrea Wells and Chris Williams



30 Year Bar

A Police Officer who is a recipient of the Police Exemplary Service Medal is eligible to be awarded a bar for each ten-year period of full service with a recognized Canadian Police Service, provided the Exemplary Service standard is maintained for each 10-year period. The Chancellery of Canadian Orders and Decorations maintains an official register containing the names of each officer who has been awarded both the 30-year and 40-year service periods.

Recipients

Deputy Chief: Brett Flynn

Inspector: Stephen Tchang

Staff Sergeant: Paul Webb, Kim McAllister

Sergeant: James Malloy, William Stockhill,

Constable: Scott Kelland, David Marynuik, James Taylor, Nancy Charrois-Waugh, Robert McClelland



20 Year Medal

The Police Exemplary Service Medal is awarded to Police Officers who have completed a minimum of twenty years of full-time service with one or more recognized Canadian Police Services, provided his or her service records meets an exemplary standard to qualify for receipt of the award.

All medal recipients are awarded a personalized engraved medal, together with an official certificate, recognizing their exemplary service. The Chancellery of Canadian Orders and Decorations maintains a register containing the name of each officer who has been awarded this prestigious designation.

Recipients

Staff Sergeant: Paul Koscinski, Todd Lantz

Sergeant: Todd Claydon, Jason Irving, Chris Stewart, Matthew Whiteley

Constable: George Arsenault, Dino Cirillo, Klara Dowd, Shannon Gibson Jason Kish, Darryl Landry, Lawrence Maney, Tracy Rinaldo, Paolo Rinaldo, Amanda Sanders, Ronald Traub, Jeffrey Vanderspek

Peace Officer 20 Year Medal

Recipients

Special Constables: Paul Cieri, Steve Collins

40 Year Civilian Service Recognition



Recipients

Michael D'Amico, Stephanie Russell

30 Year Civilian Service Recognition

Recipients

Kim Charette, Robin Johnstone, Wendy Rung, Kelli Ryan, Brenda Sauchuk

20 Year Civilian Service Recognition

Recipients

Ingrid Barker, Nancy Carter, Maureen Collee, Steve Collins, Joanne Cudney, Paul Divers, Shannon Everest, Erica Golding, Mark Harris, Clay Loach, Donna Marlow, Dwayne Moormann, Lisa Pajtasz, Sarah Parrent, Tara Pelland, Cheryl Stevens



District Officer of the Year Award

Recipients

Executive Services – Constable Michael Warnock

Auxiliary Unit – Auxiliary Staff Sergeant Michael Fastje

Investigative Services – Constable James Peazel

Emergency Services – Constable Dennis Andree

Court Services – Special Constable Rick Marshall

1 District, St. Catharines – Constable Michael Brouwer

2 District, Niagara Falls – Constable Neil White

3 District, Welland – Constable Brian James

5 District, Fort Erie – Constable Philip Screen

6 District, Port Colborne – Constable Paolo Rinaldo

8 District, Grimsby – Constable Chris Ross

Casino Patrol Unit – Constable Bruno Tanasi

Chief James A. Gayder Memorial Award

Senior Officers' Association Award is presented to a civilian member of the Police Service who has made a significant contribution to the community and/or the Police Service.

Recipient

Sarah Whitehead



Civilian Member of the Year Award

The Civilian Member of the Year Award is presented to two civilian members who have consistently demonstrated reliability, professionalism, competence, and a commitment to the goals of the Service and served as positive role models to their supervisors, co-workers, and community.

Recipients

Kim Kinnaird, Kathy Nixon

Traffic Safety Leadership Award

The Traffic Safety Leadership Award is presented to a sworn member of the Service, or a team comprised of sworn or civilian Service members whose actions have exemplified the traffic related goals and objectives of the Service's Strategic Plan and the Traffic Management Plan.

Recipient

Constable Matthew Findlay

Tele-Communicator of the Year Award

The Tele-Communicator of the Year Award is presented to a Communications Unit member who has through personal action and initiative made significant contributions to public safety and to furthering the mission, values, and beliefs of the Niagara Regional Police Service.

Recipient

Tracey McNulty



Sergeant Major Brian Davidson Memorial Award

This award is presented to a sworn, civilian, or retired member of the Service who best exemplifies the goals of the Chief's Ceremonial Guard and the Niagara Regional Police Service. This member of the Chief's Ceremonial Guard exemplifies drill and decorum for the Service and serves as a positive role model for the Service and the community.

Recipient

Sergeant Craig Labaune

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Award

The Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Award is presented to a sworn member of the Service, or a team comprised of sworn and civilian members that have: established and maintained meaningful working relationships with a diverse community, contributed and exhibited efforts towards furthering diversity related initiatives, displayed leadership, professionalism, and inclusivity, or implemented an initiative that goes well beyond in a particular community and is highly impactful on policing in Niagara.

Recipient

Constable Osayemwenre Agbonwaneten

Community Policing Officer of the Year Award

The Community Policing Officer of the Year Award is presented to a sworn member of the Service who has best demonstrated and exemplified a commitment to Community Policing.



Recipient

Constable Mike Malachowsky

Media Award

The Media Award is presented to a local media personality who delivers to the community, newsworthy material received from and relating to the Niagara Regional Police Service in a manner that satisfies the public's right to know, while at the same time respecting the obligations of the Service.

Recipient

Dave Johnson

Retirees

Police Officer

Superintendent: Cindy White

Inspector: Michael Woods

Staff Sergeant: David Shennan, David Weeks

Sergeant: Sean Polly, Pamela Carter, Thomas Thibert, Todd Anderson, Jacqueline Moore, Michael Barkaway, Neal Orlando

Constable: Michael Wagner, Georgina Allan, Todd Millin, Thomas Plato, James Tallevi, Glen Hamilton

Civilian: Maureen Phelan, John Arp, Mary Palumbo, Marion Bye, Monica Chitty, Lori Macpherson



MEMBER SUPPORT UNIT

2020 brought a year of flexibility and adaptability through COVID-19. Our members adjusted well; all things considered. Member Support communicated many strategies and platforms for members to gain assistance throughout the pandemic. In January of 2020 a Member Support Survey was conducted with the results supporting the developing Mental Health Strategy. In February a full-time reintegration officer was added to the unit. The officer works predominantly out of the Training Unit and assists members in reintegration post shooting or any other long-term absences. Eight members completed the program in 2020 and returned to work.

The New Officer Wellness Evaluations program was implemented in 2020. The intent of the program is to support new officers through the transition to the profession and to learn additional resiliency coping mechanisms. New recruits meet with the Service Psychologist twice during their first year of employment. The program promotes and normalizes the benefits of seeing a mental health professional.

Although the Safeguarding program had a temporary suspension due to COVID restrictions, 56 members completed their assessment.

A program review was initiated, and the Service will switch to an internal program in 2021. Seventy-six peer support contacts were submitted by members of the Peer Support team in 2020. The Service Psychologist conducted more than 70 counselling sessions. In February of 2020 4 NRPS members shared their own traumatic events and paths to recovery in our inaugural Speakers Series.

The Chaplains program was prohibited from riding with officers through COVID but remained focused on staying connected with our members. They maintained their availability for counselling and support, while also developing “Blue Rhythms” a video series that send messages of encouragement and support to all NRPS members. Finally, a special thank you to Chaplain Gary Page who retired after 10 years of service in 2020.



Member Support Continued

Supportive Resources	Programs	Information & Training
Peer Support Team	Safeguarding	Videos: Realities of the Job
24 Hour Peer Support	Safeguarding	Videos: You're Not Alone
Beyond the Blue (Family Support)	Reintegration	Videos: Chaplains Blue Rhythms
Mental Health: Providers and Resources	Reintegration	Speaker Series: Personal Traumatic Experiences
Chaplains	Resilience	Library and Education
Critical Incident Stress	Resilience	Library and Education



BUDGET OVERVIEW

Budget vs. Actual Expenditure

Expenditure	Budgeted	Actual
Personnel Costs	157,060,043	154,297,907
Administrative Expenses	4,220,076	3,540,769
Operational & Supply	2,276,880	2,622,415
Occupancy & Infrastructure	360,720	266,688
Equipment, Vehicles, Technology	6,991,220	6,646,388
Financial Expenditures & Regional Chargebacks	(1,359,916)	(1,401,689)
Net Transfers to Reserves	2,900,000	2,828,666
Total Gross Expenditure	172,449,002	168,801,144



BUDGET OVERVIEW CONTINUED

Budget vs. Actual Recoveries and Revenue

Revenue Description	Budgeted	Actual
Fees & Service Charges	6,068,250	2,176,514
Ontario/Canada Grants	9,736,790	9,641,503
Other Revenue	2,185,763	2,241,415
Total Revenues	17,990,803	14,059,432
Budgeted vs. Actual Costs	154,458,220	154,741,712

**Personnel related costs accounted for approximately 91% of the Service's gross expenditure in 2020.



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