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REPORT

Police Services Board

For Information

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DATE: August 21, 2017

SUBJECT: **2016 FAMILY/DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ANNUAL REPORT**

FROM: Brian Adams, Deputy Chief, Operations Support Services

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the 2016 Family/Domestic Violence Report be received as an information item by the Police Services Board, as part of the annual reporting requirements.

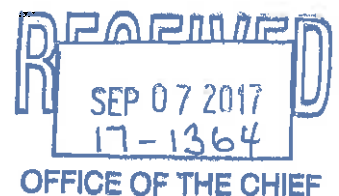
REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- Peel Regional Police exceed the recommended standards set out in the National Framework for Collaborative Police Action on Intimate Partner Violence Framework in a number of areas
- Project GUARDIAN will be replacing the Domestic Violence Emergency Response System (DVERS) and SupportLink programs and will be ready for implementation in November 2017

DISCUSSION

1. Introduction

Peel Regional Police (PRP) Family Violence Unit continues to play a key role in ensuring compliance with both internal and external legislation governing this service's response to matters involving family violence. The Family Violence Unit is not an investigative unit. Its primary function is to ensure that officers are routinely trained and updated on current legislation and to maintain PRP's compliance with adequacy standards and best practices.



This report was created to inform the Police Services Board of the function and mandate of the Family Violence Unit. It contains an overview of the responsibilities of the Family Violence Unit and its adherence to Ontario Police Standards LE-024, as well as, PRP Directive I-B-713 and additional directives, relating to family violence issues.

2. Background

The Family Violence Unit is the policy centre for the following directives:

Domestic Violence	I-B-713(f) – (main directive)
Elder Abuse	I-B-701(f)
Criminal Harassment	I-A-602(f)
Victims Assistance	I-B-710(f)

Domestic Violence Emergency Response System (DVERS) I-B-718(f) (to be replaced by Project GUARDIAN)

The majority of domestic violence calls received by our service are investigated by front line uniform personnel. While many of these calls may be minor and non-criminal in nature, others may be more complex and life threatening. In the more complex cases, Divisional Criminal Investigation Bureaux may be called upon to take carriage of the investigation.

a) Adequacy Standard LE-024 – Training Models

Commencing January 2001, all police services in Ontario were required, by Adequacy Standard LE-024, to train Domestic Violence Investigators (DVI's) and to select a police response model for the investigation of domestic cases. The four models of service delivery offered were:

1. Ensuring that an adequate number of patrol officers are designated as DVI's, or;
2. Establishing a specialized unit of DVI's responsible for undertaking, managing, or reviewing all domestic violence investigations, or;
3. Designating a domestic violence occurrence as a threshold occurrence, thereby requiring that the investigation be undertaken or managed by a criminal investigator, or;
4. Designate patrol supervisors as DVI's, who will be responsible for undertaking, managing, or reviewing all domestic violence investigations.

Some police services, including PRP, chose Model #4 to meet organizational needs.

This model allowed for a limited number of officers (patrol supervisors) to receive the Ministry of Solicitor General accredited training. The requirements of LE-024 continue to be met by PRP by having patrol supervisors review domestic violence investigations.

In 2013, a decision was made to move the DVI course from a classroom to the auditorium, at 180 Derry Road. This change in venue allowed for a greater number of officers to receive extensive four (4) day training and obtain the DVI designation. PRP currently has 782 officers with the designation of DVI.

Domestic Violence training is crucial. With the absence of this training, some of the more subtle nuances and details of domestic violence can be overlooked. This is particularly significant when dealing with potential dual charge situations, making the right decision in terms of "dominant aggressor" is critical. If charges are arbitrarily laid against both individuals, this can have a devastating impact by re-victimizing a person who is truly a victim of domestic violence. The Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services recognizes the negative impact of dual charging and has created an investigative aid to guide officers in these situations. The Domestic Violence Directive (I-B-713) reinforces this investigative aid by having supervisors, with DVI designation, involved in any decision to charge both parties before charges are laid. This guide continues to be distributed to officers as part of their ongoing training.

All domestic dispute calls received by PRP are considered the highest priority (Priority E), and are responded to by a minimum of two (2) officers when in progress. The mandatory charging guidelines, as directed by the Province, are strictly adhered to. Where reasonable grounds exist to believe that an offence has occurred, within an *intimate partner relationship*, officers shall lay charges.

This service's adherence to Provincial Adequacy Standards has resulted in an increase in the time required to thoroughly investigate domestic dispute matters. An example of this is the expectation by the courts that victim statements should be videotaped whenever possible. PRP continue to meet the Adequacy Standards. Amendments have also been made to directive I-B-713 to encourage video recording of accused statements, which also has an impact on the time required for a thorough domestic violence investigation.

b) Divisional Domestic Violence Coordinators

In January 2007, full time Divisional Domestic Violence Coordinators were assigned to 11, 12, 21 and 22 Divisions; an additional coordinator has also been assigned to the Airport Division. The coordinators augment the training needs of front line officers through platoon/parade training. This serves not only as a refresher, but also addresses policy changes or other concerns identified by the Family Violence Unit. By identifying incidents of non-compliance with departmental policy, the Divisional Domestic Violence Coordinators are in a position to offer one-on-one direction and training to front line staff

to improve this service delivery. They also ensure that the safety of the victims is addressed appropriately.

For the past two years, the Regional Domestic Violence Coordinator has hosted monthly meetings with the Divisional Domestic Violence Coordinators. These meetings provide an opportunity for ongoing support for the officers, answers inquiries from investigators, provides mentoring and identifies quality control and NICHE tasking deficiencies. Additionally, by meeting monthly, concerning trends are identified and brought to the attention of managers. Coordinators continue to focus on the needs/safety concerns of the victim, which may include liaison with Risk Evaluation and Management in Peel (ReVAMP) committee.

Divisional Coordinators are also encouraged to take part in additional training, both internally and through the Ontario Police College (OPC), including an annual OPC conference, when such training is available.

3. National Framework for Collaborative Police Action on Intimate Partner Violence

In March of 2016, the National Framework for Collaborative Police Action on Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) was released by the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police and the University of New Brunswick.

The report was created to share best practices and to develop and implement a comprehensive and a collaborative response to the issue of Intimate Partner Violence on a national level. The report covered topics such as investigative guidelines for Canadian Police Services, management of victims and perpetrators of IPV, as well as, outreach and education.

Peel Police exceed the recommended standards set out in the Framework in a number of areas, including; investigations and risk assessment, officer training, stakeholder engagement and risk/safety planning. The recommended practices, contained in the Framework, as it relates to criminal investigations, training, victim services and offender management are included in PRP's directives.

4. Domestic Violence Investigations

PRP is in compliance with the charging guidelines of the Province of Ontario. The mandatory charging guidelines, as directed by the Province, are strictly adhered to. Where reasonable grounds exist to believe that an offence has occurred, within an *intimate partner relationship*, officers shall lay charges. The service has comprehensive directives that speak to criminal and domestic violence investigations. The directives include detailed steps on

how domestic related investigations are documented. This is to ensure that officers are conducting a comprehensive investigation.

A Domestic Violence Risk Management form is mandated to be completed and must be reviewed and signed by a trained Domestic Violence Investigator who is a Sergeant/Detective or higher. Officers will discuss safety planning with the victim and refer the victim to Victim Services of Peel. In the case of an extreme risk or threat, the PRP Threat Assessor, who works out of the Offender Management Unit, is consulted. The Threat Assessor is well versed in IPV risk assessment tools, and generally would use the Spousal Assault Risk Assessment guide for domestic violence (DV) cases, dependent on the complexity of the offender. Training is conducted on a number of courses. Officers can identify high risk DV cases and refer them to the Threat Assessor for the purposes of categorizing the level of risk and strategizing case management suggestions.

Directives require officers to videotape interviews and when not readily available, take a written statement that is to be followed up by a video statement. A KGB statement is to be taken when criminal charges are anticipated.

The Offender Management Unit is the policy centre for the Federal and Provincial Sex Offender Registry and high risk individuals. The local courts utilize the Partner Assault Response Program (PARS). There are two agencies, John Howard Society and Bridge that assist in offender treatment

5. Safety Issues and Public Awareness

a) Peel Children's Aid

PRP take a precautionary approach in dealing with matters where a child is likely to be exposed to domestic violence. These incidents are reported directly to the Peel Children's Aid Society (CAS). Peel CAS has two (2) Domestic Violence Teams, solely dedicated to providing support for children who have been exposed to intimate partner violence. This practice exceeds the requirements of the Child and Family Services Act.

b) Project GUARDIAN – SupportLink

In the past, victims of Domestic Violence would have been eligible to receive a Domestic Violence Emergency Response System (DVERS) alarm. Candidates were selected if, in the opinion of the police or Victims Services of Peel (VSOP), the victim was at significant risk and they met the eligibility criteria. These alarms were provided free of charge by ADT Alarms with the program being administered by VSOP. The SupportLink initiative involved the issuance of pre-programmed "9-1-1" cellular phones to clients to allow them added safety when away from the home (out

of range of DVERS). As of November 2014, The DVERS alarm program was suspended and in early 2015, SupportLink phones were phased out. To address this gap in services until such time as a replacement program is operational, an interim practice was developed to allow for more reliance on “premise warnings”. A premise warning can be initiated by police or requested by VSOP using similar criteria as was used by previous DVERS clients. This captures similar information previously recorded on a DVERS alarm for the benefit of officers responding to a residence. This interim practice was communicated to all members through a Corporate Communication.

VSOP, along with members of the PRP Family Violence Unit, conducted research for a GPS technology which will enhance victim safety, in that the alarm is no longer restricted to a client’s residence. VSOP selected the GPS technology model “Safe Tracks GPS Canada” system. VSOP successfully applied for a grant to the Region of Peel in order to fund the purchase of a number of alarm units. In our Region, the pilot has been named, “Project GUARDIAN”. A procedure manual has been drafted by VSOP, as they are the program administrators, coordinators, and operators. PRP’s obligation would be a support role in terms of Premise Warnings and response in emergent situations or criminal investigations. VSOP is prepared to launch Project GUARDIAN in November 2017.

c) Risk Evaluation and Management in Peel (ReVAMP)

PRP has been involved in developing and implementing a comprehensive and collaborative response strategy for dealing with intimate partner violence (IPV). The Risk Evaluation and Management Committee was developed to address the ongoing safety needs of victims of domestic violence.

This review committee is co-chaired by PRP and is comprised of justice partners including Police, Peel Crown Attorney’s Office, Brampton Probation and Parole, Mississauga Probation and Parole, Victim Witness Assistance Program, and Peel CAS (when children are involved). A representative from the PRP Offender Management Unit has also been added to the committee. Non-justice partners (shelters, VSOP etc.) can make referrals to the ReVAMP committee. Twenty-eight (28) new cases were reviewed by ReVAMP in 2016. Any identified safety concerns are addressed by the partners represented on the committee.

d) Public Education and Awareness

The Family Violence Unit’s highest priority is public education, promoting awareness, and facilitating access to appropriate resources, both within the service and the community in general. Presentations by PRP in public forums often focus on “Understanding the Police Response to Domestic Violence”.

The requirement to give victims of IPV an opportunity to create a safety plan is addressed by the Adequacy Standards LE-024 and the Victims Bill of Rights (2015). Access to safety planning tips and suggestions are available to the public. Both the PRP Domestic Violence webpage and the *'Intimate Relationship Domestic Violence/Abuse'* pamphlet provide the public with information regarding domestic violence and also identifies community agencies that provide assistance and support to victims and their families. A listing of support agencies in the community continues to be updated on the internal Family Violence Unit departmental page. This information not only assists officers in providing resources to victims, but also alerts PRP personnel of services that may be of benefit to a member or his/her family. This pamphlet is available in English, French, Punjabi, Chinese, Polish, and Urdu. Victims are routinely referred to Victim Services of Peel, where detailed and individualized safety planning is conducted with the victim.

Additional services available to victims of Domestic Violence include, but are not limited to:

- Referral to Victim Witness Assistance Program (VWAP), which assists the victim through **all** stages of the court process, once the matter has proceeded beyond the Bail Hearing stage. (VSOP deals with victims through the Bail Hearing phase)
- Affordable alternative housing support
- Community-based support systems for victims and children exposed to Domestic Violence (also available to offenders)
- Counseling services for victims and families (also available to offenders)
- First and second stage shelters
- Language/culturally specific counseling services
- Free language interpreter services for Domestic Violence investigations through Multilingual Community Interpreter Services (MCIS)

6. Training Issues (Appendix I)

PRP holds an extensive four (4) day DVI training twice a year for police and our partners. Incorporated into the training are presentations from our multiagency partners who work with victims of IPV on a daily basis.

The Family Violence Unit also continues to provide ongoing classroom training to police personnel. In 2016, 218 personnel received training in Domestic Violence and/or Victims' Issues. Training was provided in the following courses:

- Domestic Violence Investigators (4 day course)
- Advanced Patrol Training
- Auxiliary Police Officer Training

- Communications Personnel-new call takers
- Post OPC Recruit classes
- Victim Services of Peel-counselors, new volunteers, and relief staff
- Ontario Police College-Domestic Violence Coordinators conference

The number of divisional officers who currently have the Domestic Violence Investigation accreditation is as follows:

11 Division – 101
 12 Division – 88
 21 Division – 109
 22 Division – 88
 Airport Division – 46

Note: **782 officers** currently have the DVI designation service wide, including officers in specialty bureaux.

Outreach and training to various community organizations/agencies in 2016 included 30 Victim Services of Peel volunteers.

7. Community Partnerships / Committees (see Appendix II)

The Family Violence Unit is an active participant on various committees. Our service continues to maintain long standing working relationships with several community/social services agencies. These agencies focus primarily on the needs of victims and the families of victims impacted by domestic violence.

Partnerships and participation on numerous committees/conferences has a positive impact on the quality of service provided to victims of Domestic Violence within the Region of Peel.

In terms of IPV training or education modules for multiagency partners, PRP **exceeds** the level set out in the Framework report. The partners that PRP collaborates with are well versed in IPV, as the majority of their work involves IPV.

6. Statistical Information (see Appendix III)

As listed in the appendix, Domestic Violence statistics have shown an increase in the number of Intimate Partner criminal charges laid when compared to 2015. There was also an increase in the number of Intimate Partner Verbal and Non-Intimate Partner calls. A contributing factor in this relative stability is the “zero tolerance/ mandatory charge” approach towards domestic violence, legislated by the Province, and complied by PRP.

Public awareness and education may also be a factor. As previously stated, there are more tools available to members of the public through the PRP webpage and additional resources, such as the *Intimate Relationship Domestic Violence/Abuse* pamphlet.

Further, the Ministry of the Attorney General has created a Partner Assault Response Service (PARS) program which provides compulsory counseling for persons convicted of first time and lower-level domestic related offences. Both of these approaches are designed to break the cycle of violence and decrease recidivism.

CONCLUSION

The response of PRP to matters of Domestic Violence, or Intimate Partner Violence, continues to be consistent with, and in some cases, exceeding the minimum requirements of various Adequacy Standards. PRP also exceeds the levels set out in the 2016 National Framework for Collaborative Police Action on Intimate Partner Violence.

Peel Regional Police Family Violence unit continues to work collaboratively with operational Divisions to ensure that training needs are met and that best practices are adhered to. This adheres to the 2017-2019 Strategic Plan objectives to provide assistance to victims of crime and address crime proactively through effective call response, investigations, enforcement, and police visibility.

Approved for Submission:



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APPENDIX I**Presentations to Police Personnel (Jan 1-Dec 31, 2016)**

▪ 2 x Advanced Patrol Training Courses	59	students
▪ 1 x Domestic Violence Investigators Course	63	students
▪ 1 x Auxiliary Officers Course	24	students
▪ 1 x Post OPC Recruits	36	students
▪ 1 x New Call Takers (Communications)	6	students
▪ 3 x Victim Services/Peel Volunteers	30	students

Topics Covered include:

- Domestic related offences
- Mandatory policies - charging and reporting
- Cycle of Abuse
- Effects of abuse on Victim/Children
- May/Illes and Hadley inquest implications
- Aim of police investigation
- Enhanced investigations
- Post arrest support for victim/witness
- Victim's safety and other victim issues
- Criminal Harassment related domestics
- Firearms and Weapons in domestics
- Identifying the Primary Aggressor
- Risk Factors
- Police Perpetrated Domestic Violence
- Strangulation Investigations
- Cultural Issues
- Interpreter Services
- Court Orders and Child Custody
- Community based support
- Mental Health and Domestic Violence
- Review applicable legislation e.g. Family Law Act

APPENDIX II**Community Partnerships / Committees (2016)**

The Family Violence Unit has a community partnership and/or committee membership with the following agencies:

- Armagh House
- Brampton Probation and Parole
- Catholic Cross- Cultural Services of Peel
- Catholic Family Services of Peel/Dufferin
- Domestic Violence Court Advisory Committee (DVCAC)
- Family Justice / Child Advocacy Centre (Safe Center of Peel) (SCoP)
- Family Services of Peel
- India Rainbow Community Centre
- Interim Place I / II
- Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services
- Multilingual Community Interpreter Services (M.C.I.S.)
- Peel Children's Aid Society (CAS)
- Peel Committee Against Women Abuse (P.C.A.W.A.)
- Peel Crown Attorney's Office
- Mississauga Probation and Parole
- ReVAMP (Risk Evaluation and Management in Peel) (*Co-chair*)
- Family Life Resource Centre (FLRC) (Salvation Army Shelter)
- Ontario Domestic Violence Coordinators Network (ODVCN)
- Trillium Health Centre (Chantel's Place)
- Victim Services of Peel (VSOP)
- Victim Witness Assistance Program (VWAP)

APPENDIX III

The information in this appendix relates to Family Violence statistics for the current year (2016) and the four previous years (2012 to 2015).

The Family Violence occurrence categories are defined as follows:

(A) Intimate Relationship Occurrences (Charges)

Statistics for this category relate to occurrences involving persons who are married, living common-law, same-sex couples and dating relationships, whether past or current. These figures identify the number of persons charged and the number of calls non-criminal. (Occurrence classification code 8999.0502).

2012 - 2083	2013 - 2121	2014 - 2105	2015 - 2143	2016 - 2364
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(B) Domestic Occurrences (Intimate Partner – verbal)

These statistics involve intimate relationship disputes where no criminal offences have been committed. (Occurrence classification code 8999.0502).

2012 - 6251	2013 - 5754	2014 - 5754	2015 - 6131	2016 - 6279
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(C) Family Dispute Occurrences Non-Intimate Partner (Charges)

These statistics involve non-intimate partner, including child, parent, siblings, cousins etc. Charges were laid. (Occurrence classification code 8999.0506)

2012 - 750	2013 - 815	2014 - 769	2015 - 800	2016 - 867
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(D) Family Dispute Occurrences Non-Intimate Partner (Non-Intimate - verbal)

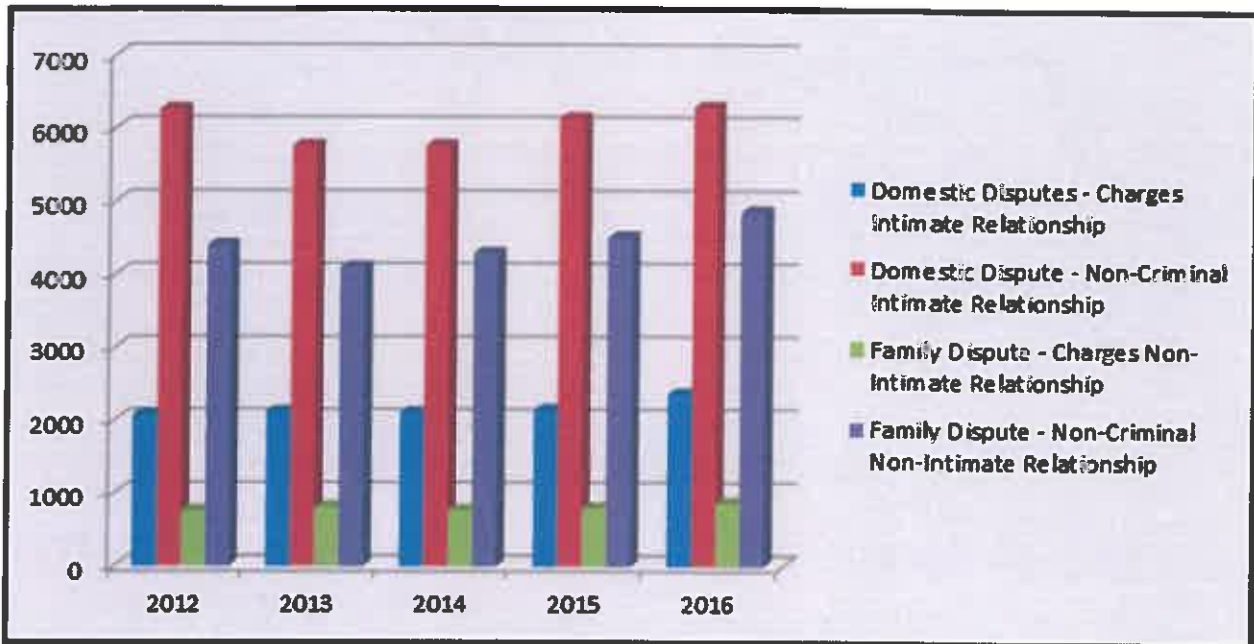
These statistics relate to verbal domestic disputes between non-intimate partners where no criminal offences have been committed. (Occurrence classification code 8999.0506).

2012 - 4403	2013 - 4100	2014 - 4290	2015 - 4511	2016 - 4862
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The total number of domestic calls for the years 2012 to 2016 are:

2012 - 14,116	2013 - 13,402	2014 - 13,505	2015 - 14,194	2016 - 15,013
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Please see the accompanying graph which illustrates the numbers provided above.



Variation in statistical data:

The 2016 Domestic Violence statistics have shown slight variance, with an increase in intimate partner charges laid and an upward trend in intimate Partner Verbal and Non-Intimate Partner charges and non-criminal calls. The fluctuation in the statistics below is within the expected norms.

Intimate Partner Charge occurrences have increased by **10.3%** from 2015
 Intimate Partner Verbal Domestic calls have increased by **2.41%** from 2015
 Non-Intimate Partner charges (Family Violence) calls increased by **5.3%** from 2015
 Non-Intimate Partner non-criminal calls increased by **7.78%** from 2015