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REPORT
Police Services Board

For Information

File Class: 1-01-02-03

Cross-Reference File Class: _____

DATE: September 14, 2015

SUBJECT: **DOMESTIC VIOLENCE REPORT**

FROM: Brian Adams, Deputy Chief, Operations Support Services

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that this report be received by the Peel Regional Police Services Board as an information item as part of the annual reporting requirements.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- A modest increase in intimate partner verbal and non-intimate partner family violence calls.
- A slight decrease in the number of Intimate Partner criminal charges laid.
- Decommission of DVERS Alarm program.

DISCUSSION

1. Introduction

The 2014 Domestic Violence Report has been compiled to inform the Police Services Board about the functions, mandate and overview of the duties of the Family Violence Unit in adherence to Ontario Police Standards LE-024 as well as PRP Directive 1-B-713 and related directives dealing with Family Violence issues.

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

- Domestic Violence 1-B-713(F) - (Main Directive)**
- Criminal Harassment 1-A-602(F)**
- Elder Abuse 1-B-701(F)**
- Victims and Witness Assistance 1-B-710(F)**
- Domestic Violence Emergency Response System (DVERS) 1-B-718(F)**

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2. Background

The Peel Regional Police Family Violence Unit continues to play an important role in ensuring compliance with both internal and external legislation governing this Service's response to matters involving Domestic/Family violence legislation. The Family Violence Unit ensures members are routinely trained and updated in this area to maintain compliance with standards and best practices. The Family Violence Unit is not an investigative unit, and most domestic violence calls are investigated by front line uniform personnel. While many of these calls may be minor and non-criminal (verbal) in nature, others are more complicated and life threatening. In the more complex cases, Divisional Criminal Investigators may be called upon to take carriage of the investigation.

Commencing in January 2001, all police services in Ontario were required by Adequacy Standard LE-024 to train Domestic Violence Investigators 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 Domestic Violence Investigators
2. establishing a specialized unit of Domestic Violence Investigators responsible for undertaking, managing, or reviewing all domestic violence investigations
3. designating a domestic violence occurrence as a threshold occurrence, thereby requiring that the investigation be undertaken or managed by a criminal investigator
4. Designating patrol supervisors as Domestic Violence Investigators, who will be responsible for undertaking, managing, or reviewing all domestic violence investigations.

Most police services, including Peel Regional Police, 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 the Peel Regional Police by having patrol supervisors undertake, manage, or review domestic violence investigations. A decision was made in 2013 to move the Domestic Violence Investigators Course from a classroom at 180 Derry Road to the auditorium, which allowed a larger number of officers to receive this extensive four day training. The switch to a larger classroom has resulted in more officers taking the DVI course and obtaining the Domestic Violence Investigator (DVI) designation. Currently we have 733 officers with the designation of DVI.

In the absence of this expertise by the attending officer(s), 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, where 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 (1-B-713) reinforces this investigative aid by having supervisors, with Domestic Violence

Investigator (DVI) designation, involved in any decision to charge both parties, before charges are laid. This pamphlet continues to be distributed to officers as part of their ongoing training.

All domestic dispute calls received by the Peel Regional Police are considered the highest priority (Priority E), and are responded to by a minimum of two 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. Peel Regional Police continues to meet the Adequacy Standards. Amendments have also been made to directive 1-B-713 to encourage video recording of accused statements, which also has an impact on the time required for a thorough Domestic Violence investigation.

3. Public Awareness and Safety Issues

The requirement to give victims of domestic violence an opportunity to create a safety plan is addressed in the Adequacy Standards LE-024 and the Victims Bill of Rights (2015). Access to safety planning tips and suggestions are provided via the Peel Regional Police - Domestic Violence web page. In addition, the '*Intimate Relationship Domestic Violence/ Abuse*' pamphlet promotes victim awareness, and provides a list of safety tips. This pamphlet has been updated to reflect additional resources for victims such as agency web site contact information. This pamphlet is available in English, French, Punjabi and Polish. In 2013, this pamphlet was also printed in the Urdu language. Victims are routinely referred to Victim Services of Peel, where detailed and individualized safety planning is conducted with the victim.

This Service takes a precautionary approach by reporting matters to the Peel Children's Aid Society where a child is, or is likely to be, exposed to Domestic Violence. In making these referrals with regards to children deemed "*at risk*", this Service exceeds the requirements of the *Child and Family Services Act*.

Historically, a victim of Domestic Violence would have been eligible to receive a Domestic Violence Emergency Response System (DVERS) alarm 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 involves 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, there are no longer DVERS alarms in the field. VSOP are considering replacing it with the "Safe Tracks GPS Canada" system which is funded through the Ministry of Attorney General. As of December 2014, there were two (2) SupportLink phones issued, (however those phones were cancelled when the program ended in early 2015).

VSOP, with members of Peel Regional Police (Family Violence Unit / Communications Services / IT Services) in an advisory capacity, continue to assess alternative options. The options being assessed will have GPS technology, which will enhance victim safety,

in that the alarm is no longer restricted to a client's residence. Funding has been secured to purchase a number of alarm units, while VSOP continues to explore funding sources for the ongoing monitoring costs. To address this gap in service, until such time as a replacement program is operational, an interim practice has been 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, which captures similar information as was 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.

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. (Victim Services of Peel 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 counselling services
- free language interpreter services for Domestic Violence investigations

High priorities for the Family Violence Unit are 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". Both the Peel Police Domestic Violence webpage and the *'Intimate Relationship Domestic Violence/Abuse'* pamphlet provide the public with information regarding domestic violence and 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 departmental page. This information not only assists officers in providing resources to victims, but also alerts Peel Regional Police personnel of services that may be of benefit to a member or his/her family.

A significant development in addressing the ongoing safety needs of victims of domestic violence has been the introduction of a Domestic Violence High Risk Committee. In Peel this Committee is known as REVAMP (Risk Evaluation and Management in Peel). This review committee is co-chaired by Peel Regional Police and is comprised of justice partners, including Police, Crown Attorney's Office, Probation and Parole, Victim Witness Assistance Program, and Peel Children's Aid (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) cases were reviewed by REVAMP in 2014.

4. Training Issues (See Appendix I)

The Family Violence Unit continues to provide ongoing classroom training to police personnel as well as delivering presentations to various service providers and community organizations. **485** police personnel received training in Domestic Violence and/or Victims' Issues in 2014. Approximately **1441** members of the public and service providers received presentations from the Family Violence Unit in 2014.

Outreach and training to various community organizations/agencies in 2014, included: Victim Services of Peel training to team leaders, counsellors, volunteers and relief staff, introduction on DVRM to VWAP (Victim Witness Assistance Program), the Community Inclusion Meeting in partnership with Peel Regional Police Diversity Unit, the International Women's Day event, Peel Mediation and the Ontario Police College. Public outreach also included the Peel Regional Police partnering with the Social Services Network (SSN) conference entitled, "Impact of Family Violence: A South Asian Perspective", in May 2014 at the UOIT (University of Ontario Institute of Technology/ Durham).

The Family Violence Unit delivers classroom training on Domestic Violence and Victim's Issues on the following courses:

- Domestic Violence Investigators (4 day course)
- Advanced Patrol Training
- Ontario Police College Supervisor's Course
- Auxiliary Police Officer Training
- Communications Personnel
- Post OPC Recruit classes

In January 2007, full time Divisional Domestic Violence Coordinators were assigned to 11, 12, 21 and 22. The coordinators in this position continue to augment the training needs of front line officers through platoon/parade training. This serves not only as a refresher, but also addresses arising policy changes or other concerns identified by the Family Violence Unit. By identifying incidents of non-compliance with departmental policy, the Divisional Family Violence Coordinators are in a position to offer one-on-one direction and training to front line staff to improve this service delivery. A tenet of this position continues to be the focus on the needs/safety concerns of the victim, which may include liaison with REVAMP. The officers filling these positions frequently take advantage of additional training, both internally and through the Ontario Police College, as well as yearly conferences, as such training becomes available.

The number of Divisional officers who currently have the Domestic Violence Investigator (DVI) accreditation is as follows:

11 Division	=	114 officers
12 Division	=	94 officers
21 Division	=	104 officers
22 Division	=	103 officers
Airport Division	=	46 officers

Note: 733 officers currently have the DVI designation service wide, including officers in specialty bureaus.

5. Community Partnerships / Committees (see Appendix II)

The Peel Regional Police continues to maintain long standing working relationships with several community/social services, focused primarily on the needs of victims, and the families of victims impacted by Domestic Violence. (The Family Violence Unit continues to be an active participant on various committees, either on a permanent or ad-hoc basis). Two opportunities to become involved in ad-hoc committees included the Domestic Violence Risk Management (DVRM) committee, tasked with improving and replacing the Domestic Violence Supplementary Report Form (DVSRF), and the steering committee for a series of annual conferences, titled "Impact of Family Violence: A South Asian Perspective". On May 14th and 15th, 2014, Peel Regional Police, in partnership with the University of Ontario Institute of Technology (Durham), hosted the 4th annual conference. This event was well attended by various stakeholders in Peel's South Asian Community, as well as Toronto and York Region.

The Domestic Violence Coordinator participated as a guest panelist at the Peel Family Mediation Services conference on November 21st, 2014, entitled "Intersection between Criminal and Family Court". On July 22, 2014 the Regional Family Violence Coordinator was invited to emcee a community fundraiser walk called "Steps to End Violence" at Saddington Park, Mississauga for approximately 225 participants and dignitaries, in support of Interim Place.

These 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.

6. Statistical Information (see Appendix III)

As listed in the appendix, Domestic Violence statistics have shown a slight decrease in the number of Intimate Partner criminal charges laid when compared to 2013, but an increase in the number of Intimate Partner Verbal and Non-Intimate Partner calls. This fluctuation would be considered within a normal range of variance. A contributing factor in this relative stability is the "zero tolerance / mandatory charge" approach towards Domestic Violence, legislated by the Province, and complied with by Peel Regional Police. Further, the Ministry of the Attorney General has created a Partner Assault Response Service (PARS) program which provides compulsory counselling 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.

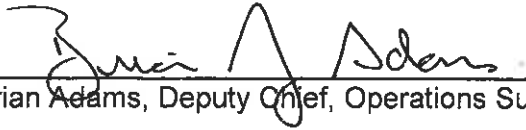
CONCLUSION

The response of Peel Regional Police to matters of Domestic Violence continues to be consistent with, and in some cases, exceeding the minimum requirements of various Adequacy Standards. An example of exceeding Provincial standards is the reporting of all domestic disputes to Peel CAS when a child has been exposed to domestic violence.

The Region of Peel's growing diverse population continues to be a significant challenge to the Peel Regional Police from a family violence perspective. With over 100 languages

being spoken in the Region, front line police personnel face unique difficulties in assessing the needs of victims and their families. This service continues to partner with Multilingual Community Interpreter Services (M.C.I.S.) to provide free interpreter services for Domestic Violence investigations.

Approved for Submission:



Brian Adams, Deputy Chief, Operations Support Services

For further information regarding this report, please contact Inspector Mike Barnhart at extension 3400 or via e-mail at Michael.Barnhart@peelpolice.ca

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APPENDIX I

Presentations by the Family Violence Regional Coordinator in 2014.

APPENDIX II

List of the Family Violence Unit community partnerships and committee memberships.

APPENDIX III

Family Violence statistics for 2011 to 2014.

APPENDIX I

Presentations to Police Personnel (Jan 1-Dec 31, 2014)

▪ 4 x Advanced Patrol Training Courses	122	students
▪ 2 x Domestic Violence Investigators Course	131	students
▪ 1 x Auxiliary Officers Course	23	students
▪ 2 x Post OPC Recruits	56	students
▪ 1 x New Call Takers (Communications)	7	students
▪ 1 x Y.I.P.I. DV Presentation	16	students

Presentations to Public (Jan 1-Dec 31 2014)

▪ Glen Forest Cubs	12	attendees
▪ VSOP Team Leaders	16	attendees
▪ VSOP Counsellors	16	attendees
▪ Community Inclusion Meeting	22	attendees
▪ International Women's Day event	120	attendees
▪ VSOP Volunteers	18	attendees
▪ Impact of Family Violence: A South Asian Perspective Conference	285	attendees
▪ Ontario Police College	75	attendees
▪ VSOP Relief Staff	10	attendees
▪ Steps to End Violence Walk	225	attendees
▪ Round Table with MPP Brad Butt	20	attendees
▪ Punjabi Business Professional Association	150	attendees
▪ Family Crime Awareness Day	300	attendees
▪ VWAP Training Day	12	attendees
▪ Peel Mediation	140	attendees
▪ 17 th Guelph Scouts	20	attendees

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 victims' 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 (2014)

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

- Armagh House
- Catholic Cross- Cultural Services of Peel
- Catholic Family Services of Peel/Dufferin
- Domestic Violence Court Advisory Committee
- Family Services of Peel
- Family Justice / Child Advocacy Centre (Safe Center of Peel)
- India Rainbow Community Centre
- Interim Place I / II
- Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services – Advisory Committee
- Multilingual Community Interpreter Services (M.C.I.S.)
- Our Place Peel
- Peel Children's Aid Society
- Peel Committee Against Women Abuse (P.C.A.W.A.) (*Co-Chair*)
- Peel Committee on Sexual Assault (P.S.C.A)
- Peel Crown Attorneys Office
- Mississauga/Brampton Probation and Parole
- Region of Peel - Health
- Region of Peel – Housing
- REVAMP (Risk Evaluation and Management in Peel) (*Co-chair*)
- Salvation Army Shelter
- Social Services Network (SSN) Conference Planning Committee
- Ontario Domestic Violence Coordinators Network (*Chair*)
- Trillium Health Centre (Chantel's Place)
- Victim Services of Peel
- Victim Witness Assistance Program

APPENDIX III

The information in this appendix relates to Family Violence statistics for the current year (2014) and the three previous years (2011 to 2013).

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 only the number of persons charged. (Occurrence classification code 8999.0502).

2011 - 2042	2012 - 2007	2013 - 2065	2014 - 2048
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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).

2011 - 6554	2012- 6492	2013- 6067	2014 - 6232
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(C) Family Dispute Occurrences (Non-Intimate Partner)

These statistics relate to disputes between any family members (excluding disputes between intimate partners as above). (Occurrence classification code 8999.0506).

2011 - 5920	2012 - 5617	2013 – 5270	2014 - 5398
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The total number of domestics calls for the years 2011 to 2014 are:

2011 – 14,516	2012 – 14,116	2013 – 13,402	2014 – 13,678
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APPENDIX III continued

Variation in statistical numbers:

The 2014 Domestic Violence statistics have shown slight variance, with a small decrease in Intimate Partner charges laid, but with an upward trend in Intimate Partner Verbal and Non-Intimate Partner calls for service.

Intimate Partner charge occurrences decreased by 1.0% from 2013. Verbal Domestic calls increased by 2.72% from 2013. Non-Intimate Partner (Family Violence) calls increased 2.43% from 2013. The fluctuation in the statistics is within the expected norms.

<u>(A) Intimate Relationship</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>2014</u>
(Criminal)	2042	2007	2065	2048
<u>(B) Domestic Occurrences</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>2014</u>
(Verbal)	6554	6492	6067	6232
<u>(C) Family Dispute Occurrences</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>2014</u>
	5920	5617	5270	5398

Total number of Domestic Occurrences and Family Dispute Occurrences

<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>2014</u>
14,516	14,116	13,402	13,678