

Report to Council



Date: February 27, 2023
To: City Council
From: City Manager
Subject: RCMP 2022 Year in Review Report
Department: RCMP Superintendent

Recommendation:

THAT Council receive the RCMP 2022 Year in Review Report from the Superintendent, Kelowna RCMP Detachment, dated February 27, 2023.

Purpose:

To present Council with an update based on 2022 public safety and crime data.

Background:

As Council works to develop their priorities, the RCMP are fully prepared to advance any new priorities, goals and/or objectives while remaining aligned with the 2021-2024 Kelowna RCMP Strategic Plan. This Plan sets out to achieve measurable outcomes related to public safety initiatives and is comprised of four pillars:

- 1) Increase the sense of safety in our public spaces;
- 2) Decrease the risk of property crime;
- 3) Earn the trust of more citizens that have experienced persons crimes; and
- 4) Show up at our best for every citizen.

In support of this Strategic Plan, a comprehensive performance measurement and reporting framework was adopted in spring 2021, with minor amendments made in April 2022. With a view to further analyzing crime data and trends, first-quarter reporting each year now encompasses the previous year in review. This report provides a general overview of 2022, with a view to comparing data from 2021. When reviewing the data provided, it must be acknowledged that the pandemic significantly impacted crime in our community. As discussed in the November 2022 Q2/Q3 Report to Council, general crime data trends saw a return to pre-pandemic levels in 2022.

Like other public and private sectors, police agencies are experiencing challenges in recruiting, training, and retaining police officers. Kelowna RCMP Detachment has not been immune from these challenges and was identified as a Provincial Staffing Priority last summer in response to depleted resource levels. Given the summer 2022 staffing concerns, the Kelowna RCMP redirected resources to the frontline to ensure service

levels were maintained throughout the summer. The RCMP secured additional support from B.C. RCMP Detachments during long weekends to ensure adequate resourcing aligned with increased population. With these additional resources in place, the RCMP saw a reduction in calls for service, likely due to increased visibility in high-crime areas.

In Fall 2022, Kelowna RCMP secured significant staffing transfers into the Detachment which re-stabilized our strength in officers on the road. The RCMP continue to monitor the volume of calls for service that, while dropping slightly in 2022, as compared to the previous year, remain well above the number of calls for similar-size communities within the province. The Detachment remains focused on ensuring occupancy rates are aligned with service level agreements for appropriate staffing and will be prepared for the increased number of calls for service expected in the upcoming summer months.

Trends & Themes

Although overall calls for service in 2022 were down 6%, Kelowna RCMP saw an uptick in calls for service in the downtown area (+12.6%). Notwithstanding this increase, Kelowna RCMP were generally able to maintain response times for Priority 1 & 2 calls. Priority 3 & 4 calls were offset considerably by civilianized Watch Support Officers introduced in 2021 who do exceptional work handling many of these less serious incidents. It should also be noted that the RCMP prioritized callbacks in 2022 to enhance the service and trust of those impacted by crime in our community.

Most notably among the 2022 trends, Robberies and Business Break & Enters (B&E) increased from a 2021 baseline. Kelowna RCMP is committed to address these concerning community safety issues which are outlined here.

Robberies

Of concern to our community and the Kelowna RCMP was the 43.3% increase in robbery (violence and threats of violence with property crime) in 2022; an increase of 33 cases compared to 2021. This trend of Robbery occurrences was observed across the province. In addition, as noted in the November Q2/Q3 Report to Council, Kelowna RCMP refined reporting criteria with administrative improvements in 2022, so they align with provincial and federal best practices. This was done to ensure robbery is categorized appropriately going forward. However, it may have contributed to some underreporting in the past. This data set shows a noted jump that we expect to normalize with consistent file categorization.

Kelowna RCMP also responded to violent thefts with proactive measures, including a media strategy to help prevent this type of violent crime. Further, Criminal Intelligence Analysts conducted detailed analysis of robbery files to enable a targeted enforcement approach with repeat offenders and repeat victim locations. It is noteworthy that while there were 22 commercial robberies in Q4 2021, there were 14 in Q4 of 2022. This reduction followed a Detachment-wide proactive response leading into the holiday season when robberies tend to spike.

Break & Enter (Business).

In 2022, Kelowna experienced a 26% increase in reported B&E (Business) crimes committed. In mid-August, in response to these elevated numbers, Kelowna RCMP again began targeted enforcement of priority repeat offenders resulting in a significant reduction in these types of B&Es from August through to the end of the year. Late Q4 analysis highlighted that targeting repeat offenders and the ability to resume proactive enforcement, helped to reduce crime in this area.

To expand slightly on these noted pre-emptive measures, proactive patrols in identified higher crime (“hotspot”) locations were derived from intelligence-driven analytics. Geographical analysis cross-referenced with available crime data aided in the identification of such hotspots. As just one example, specific areas and times within the downtown core were assigned as hotspots with additional patrols strategically deployed to these areas. This led to several high-profile arrests and a significant reduction in Business B&Es in this area. These are encouraging results and this specific initiative will continue in 2023. Notwithstanding, B&E (Business) remains unacceptably high and continues to impact Kelowna; a continued response from police, partners and community will remain a priority.

Traffic

The significant noted reduction in traffic violations can be attributed to the temporary transfer of Traffic Unit members to the frontline during summer 2022, as well as vacant and part-time positions. Additionally, the Unit had several complex and serious traffic investigations in 2022. As of Q4 2022, the Traffic Unit has been re-aggregated and additional officers have been assigned to ensure enhanced enforcement. In 2023, traffic objectives include monitoring a number of key intersections identified as high-collision locations, as well as working with the Province to identify opportunities for roadway and intersection improvements. Further, distracted driving initiatives will be pursued based on strong evidence linking this to vehicle collisions.

YTD 2022 Metricsⁱ

The following includes standardized indicators from the Canadian Police Performance Metrics Framework and measures of the 2021-24 Strategic Plan. All indicators relate to the city of Kelowna:

Police Capacity & Response	2021	2022	% Change
Total Calls for Service	63888	60030	-6%
Total Calls for Service from Downtown area	7394	8327	12.6%
Total Calls for Service from Rutland area ⁱⁱ	Not avail	1481	Not avail
Calls for Service, Priority 1 & 2 ⁱⁱⁱ	22415	20750	-7.4%
Response Time for Priority 1 Calls (in minutes)	8.3	8.3	0%
Response Time for Priority 2 Calls (in minutes)	10.3	10.3	0%
% of Calls for Service receiving Callback ^{iv}	Not avail	38.4%	--
Officer Hours assigned to public spaces: Downtown, Rutland & parks	Not avail	16576	--
Caseload ^v	112.1	100.8	-10.1%
Total Property Offences	11396	11341	-0.5%
Auto Theft	521	564	8.3%
Theft from Motor Vehicle	2474	2126	-14.1%
Break & Enter – Business	679	857	26.2%
Shoplifting	1412	1653	17.1%
Break & Enter – Residential	296	245	-17.2%
Bike Theft	520	612	17.7%
Fraud	1251	1354	8.2%
Mischief	2254	1848	-18.0%
Arson	115	146	27%
% of Thefts which reported Forced Entry ^{vi}	Not avail	37.2%	--
Persons recommended for Charges ^{vii}	--	287	--
Offences by 28 Prolific Offenders on Release ^{viii}	--	483	--

Total Persons Offences	3272	3200	-2.2%
Assault (Common)	1271	1207	-5%
Domestic Violence	944	713	-24.5%
Sex Offences ^{ix}	177	187	5.6%
Theft with Violence (includes Robbery)	76	109	43.4%
Assault Cause Bodily Harm/ Assault with Weapon	410	439	7.1%
Illegal Drugs			
Illegal Drug Trafficking	76	78	2.6%
Traffic Safety			
Traffic Violation Tickets	3248	1730	-46.7%
Collisions – Combined	2042	2001	-2%
Relevant Social Indicators (reflecting policing complexity in Kelowna)			
Calls for Service with Mental Health Component	3104	2897	-6.7%
Calls for service, MHA Apprehensions	599	613	2.3%
Calls for service, Overdose ^x	31	34	9.7%

Conclusion:

The metrics and related data provided within this report are continuously monitored and used by the RCMP to inform, through evidence-based analysis, our decisions and responses to crime and public safety in Kelowna; including that of advocacy for system changes at the Provincial and National policy levels. The Kelowna RCMP Officer in Charge continues to drive transformative change with a focus on sustainable workloads, appropriate staffing levels, and wellness of all members of Kelowna Detachment. By taking care of our people, and increasingly using intelligence and data led targeted enforcement to deploy finite resources, the Kelowna RCMP is positioned to “show up at our best for every citizen”, reduce crime and improve public sense of safety in our community.

Internal Circulation:

Community Safety Department
Communications Department

Submitted by: K. Triance, Superintendent, Kelowna RCMP Detachment

Approved for inclusion:



S. Leatherdale, Divisional Director, Corporate & Protective Services

cc:

D. Caul, Community Safety Director
T. White, Police Services Branch Manager
C. Cornock, Community Safety Services
Manager

ⁱ The following annual metrics are used to monitor delivery of our 2022-2024 Strategic Plan:

-
- Objective 1, Increase the sense of safety in our public spaces: Citizen perceived level of safety in areas including Downtown & Rutland per City of Kelowna bi-annual Public Safety & Crime Survey
 - Objective 2, Decrease the risk of property crime: Percent of property offence charges that resulted in a conviction
 - Objective 3, Earn the trust of more citizens that have experienced persons crimes: Detachment participation in trauma-informed practice training, Detachment referrals to community supports
 - Objective 4, Show up at our best for every citizen: Seats at senior decision-making table held underrepresented groups; Detachment participation in unconscious bias training & Indigenous Cultural Safety; Detachment participation in mental wellness training and crisis debrief supports; Citizen satisfaction with police services as per City of Kelowna Citizen Survey

ⁱⁱ The Rutland atom was created and applied beginning in April 2022. This number does not reflect the entire year for 2022.

ⁱⁱⁱ Priority 1 calls are the most serious emergency calls and require immediate police response. They involve a risk of loss of life or grievous bodily harm. Examples include in-progress abductions, assaults, domestic disputes, home invasions, robberies, sexual assaults, screams for help, shootings, stabbings, and suicidal persons. Priority 2 calls are urgent calls that require immediate police attention such as a residential break and enter in progress.

^{iv} False alarms, abandoned calls for service, traffic and online reports, assistance outside of public safety and failure to appear are not indicated for follow up calls. New metric, changes to system was required to capture the data. Changes implemented in March 2022.

^v Case loads are defined as the number of Criminal Code offences (excluding drugs and traffic offences) per authorized strength. They represent the workload per officer, and as a result, are often a better indicator of the demand for police services than either a jurisdiction's population or its crime rate. The case load is calculated by dividing the total number of Criminal Code offences by the authorized strength for the reporting period. The case load was calculated using the year previous to the end date of the quarter being reported on (i.e. 2021-07-01 through 2022-06-30). *For reference, in 2020, annual caseload for Coquitlam was 40 (pop 152,800) and for Township of Langley (pop 133,951) was 54.*

^{vi} Excludes shoplifting as forced entry is not relevant. New metric, changes to system was required to capture the data. Changes implemented in March 2022.

^{vii} Consistent with national reporting, the "persons charged" category will include the number of people recommended for property crime offence charges by police (not the number of charges laid or recommended).

^{viii} In Kelowna, prolific offenders are designated as repeat property crime offenders with more than 10 negative contacts with police in the previous year. Not all individuals who meet these criteria are designated as prolific offenders due to the volume of individuals who do meet these criteria. The list of Prolific Offenders is reviewed biannually, at which time persons may be added or removed from the list.

^{ix} Sexual offences include sexual assault level 3 (aggravated), sexual assault level 2 (weapon or causing bodily harm), sexual assault level 1 (common sexual assault), and sexual violations against children.

^x Overdose counts do not reflect all overdose incidents occurring within police service boundaries as response is frequently by paramedics. Where police do not attend, the occurrence will not appear in police records.