



## REPORT TO THE POLICE SERVICE BOARD

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### RECOMMENDATION

*That the Board receives the Strategic Plan Updates report for information.*

### INTRODUCTION

Consistent monitoring and analysis of accountability measures are necessary for the Durham Regional Police Service (DRPS) to meet its Strategic Plan goals. These measures serve as key mechanisms for transparency, helping to build and maintain trust with the community. The indicators accompanying each of the Strategic Plan's objectives function as essential accountability tools, enabling DRPS to track its performance, assess progress, and identify areas requiring additional focus.

This report provides an in-depth analysis of DRPS' performance by examining selected indicators that reflect various aspects of policing, including public trust, crime trends, officer well-being, and community engagement. Wherever possible, context is provided to explain observed changes in the data, offering insights into emerging trends, operational challenges, and strategic responses.

Appendix A contains a comprehensive scorecard presenting all available indicators from 2019 to 2024, including year-over-year percentage changes from 2023 to 2024. By making this information accessible, DRPS reaffirms its commitment to transparency and evidence-based decision-making, ensuring that the Board and the public remain informed of key developments in community safety and organizational performance.

### BACKGROUND

The Durham Regional Police Service Board approved the DRPS 2024 Strategic Plan in December 2023. This plan prioritizes three goals:

1. Be a Leader in Innovative and Modernized Policing
2. Have Strong Strategic Partnerships that Enhance Community Safety
3. Earn the Trust and Confidence of Members and Local Communities

These goals are supported by measurable objectives designed to guide the delivery of policing services in Durham Region.

### DISCUSSION

The following report provides an update on our performance with respect to the goals and objectives identified in the Strategic Plan. The report offers an analysis of DRPS' current state (as of the end of

2024) and trends over time by incorporating historical data when available. The report highlights some indicators of interest and provides additional context and analysis to offer perspective on some important issues and trends. The attached appendix contains a table with data from 2019 to 2024 and the percentage change year-over-year for 2023 to 2024 for all the indicators where possible.

**Objective - Align core organizational structure and activities with principles of evidence-based, ethical decision-making**

*Substantiated Public Complaints and Chief's Investigations*

The number of substantiated public complaints (Indicator #1) decreased in 2024 relative to 2023 (-100%). In 2023, there were 4 such complaints and none in 2024.

The number of substantiated Chief's Investigations (Indicator #2) has increased significantly from 13 in 2023 to 30 in 2024 (+130.8% from 2023 to 2024). This increase can be attributed to a shift in expectations and increased internal accountability that accompanied the leadership change at DRPS. DRPS continues to be committed to holding its officers to a high standard to maintain public trust.

**Objective - Adapt and respond to changing community needs and emerging crime trends by modernizing key processes and adopting innovative technologies**

*Crime Rates*

In 2022, DRPS saw the violent crime rate (Indicator #12) return to pre-COVID-19 levels and, in 2023, surpass it. From 2022 to 2023, there was a 5.4% increase in the violent crime rate. The rise in the violent crime rate is attributed, in part, to an increase in threatening, assault level 1, and sexual assault. The increase in violent crime, however, is not unique to Durham Region; Statistics Canada (2024a) reports a 5.4% increase in the violent crime rate across Ontario.

There was a sharp increase (+16.8%) in the property crime rate (Indicator #13) from 2022 to 2023. This change appears driven primarily by a marked increase between 2022 and 2023 in fraud and identity theft, shoplifting, and theft of a motor vehicle. Similar to the violent crime rate, the property crime rate in Ontario also increased, but to a lesser extent than what occurred in Durham Region. Statistics Canada (2024a) reports an 8% increase from 2022 to 2023.

Given the steady incline in the property and violent crime rates, DRPS continues to monitor and identify trends in particular offence categories. DRPS is committed to directing resources to address emerging crime trends. This is evident in Project Attire, for example, which has made great strides in combatting auto thefts, in particular; from 2023 to 2024 auto theft (Indicator # 18) declined 14.5%. Planned strategic investments will also see increases to DRPS' frontline and investigative units in the future.

*Violent Crime Weighted Clearance Rate*

The violent crime weighted clearance rate (Indicator #21) saw a sharp decline (-15.5% in 2023). Relative to our eight comparators<sup>1</sup>, DRPS experienced the largest percentage decrease (the next closest decrease was Toronto Police Service, which saw a 7.03% decrease in their violent crime weighted clearance rate). This indicates challenges in solving violent crimes, which could signal investigative resource constraints or increasing crime complexity. The 2025 budget allocates additional resources to investigative services to help mitigate this decline.

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<sup>1</sup> Peel Regional Police, Halton Regional Police, Hamilton Police, Niagara Regional Police, Ottawa Police, Waterloo Regional Police, Toronto Police, and York Regional Police.

### *Criminal Incidents with an Older Adult Victim*

The increase in the number of criminal incidents with an older adult victim (Indicator #19) from 1,643 in 2023 to 1,805 in 2024 (+9.9%) highlights growing concerns about crimes targeting vulnerable populations. Financial crime is the most common form of victimization older adults experience. The Older Adult Support and Investigative Services unit continues to address these types of crimes and proactively offers workshops and other services to provide older adults with crime prevention tips. Reporting may also be up because of DRPS' engagement efforts.

### *Youth Crime Rate*

The youth crime rate per 100,000 population aged 12-17 years (Indicator #23) increased substantially from 2022 to 2023 (+27.2%). Despite this increase, Durham Region's youth crime rate is still lower than the 2019 pre-COVID-19 rate. Additionally, longer historical trends across Canada provide additional context and show that the youth crime rate has decreased by 63%, from 6,957 per 100,000 youth in 1998 to 2,576 in 2022 (Statistics Canada, 2022). This recent increase, however, does raise concerns about youth involvement in crime and the effectiveness of prevention programs.

### *Gun Crime-Incidents<sup>2</sup> Cleared by Charge*

At the end of 2024, 40.9% of gun-crime incidents were cleared by charge (Indicator #24). This is down 26.4% from 2023. In 2024, there was an increase in gun-crime incidents related to the tow industry. The volume of gun-crime incidents, in general, increased from 71 in 2023 to 110 in 2024 (+54.9%). Over the last 6 years, 2024 had the highest number of gun-crime incidents. It is important to note, however, that this indicator is dynamic. An incident in 2024 may not have been cleared at the time the data was pulled, but could be cleared in the future. Indeed, 15 of the incidents in 2024 occurred in December and five, thus far, have been cleared by charge. As such, the 2024 percentage of gun-crime incidents cleared by charge may increase with time. The higher percentage for 2023 and previous years may, therefore, be an artifact (at least in part) of greater time having passed, which has meant those investigations had more time for completion than incidents that occurred in 2024.

### *Mental Health Apprehensions*

The number of mental health apprehensions DRPS performed saw a notable increase (+14.7%) in 2024 (Indicator #17). The rise in apprehensions suggests mounting pressures on officers dealing with mental health crises, which may also point to gaps in social support systems. This is further evident by the percentage of apprehensions on previously apprehended individuals; half of the apprehensions (51%) in 2024 were conducted on individuals who have been previously apprehended (Indicator # 41).

### *Human Trafficking Victims Identified and Assisted and Investigations*

In 2024, there was a decrease in the number of victims human trafficking investigators identified and assisted (Indicator #25) relative to 2023 (-10.2%) as well as the number of investigations the human trafficking unit launched (Indicator # 26; -13.8%). These decreases suggest a need to investigate whether fewer victims are being identified due to declining cases or challenges in investigations. This points to the continued importance of building and maintaining awareness (such as the awareness event DRPS held at the Oshawa Centre February 20, 2025) and relationships with vulnerable women (such as the Monday Night Project).

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<sup>2</sup> This indicator includes the following firearm offences: discharge firearm with intent, using firearm/imitation of firearm in commission of offence, firearms and other offensive weapons (Part III CC), and pointing a firearm.

## **Objective - Continue to develop a representative, empowered, adaptable, and highly-skilled workforce**

### *Formal Community Recruiting Outreach Engagements*

In 2024, DRPS participated in 33 formal community recruiting outreach engagements (Indicator #29). This represents an 83% increase over 2023. According to the Vice President of the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police, police services across Ontario have seen a 39% decrease in applications since 2020 (Lea, 2024). This decline highlights the importance of these types of recruitment initiatives and DRPS is making a concerted effort through these events to increase the number of applicants.

### *Underrepresented Groups in Leadership Positions*

If available, the percentage of underrepresented groups in leadership positions (Indicator # 32) would be an important measure of internal diversity and leadership representation. DRPS is working towards the development of a system for tracking this information. Generally, diverse groups are underrepresented in leadership positions in policing. Across Canada, 8% of all police officers<sup>3</sup> identified as part of a racialized group in 2023 (as context, 26.5% of Canada's population identified as part of a racialized group) (Statistics Canada, 2024b). Almost 18% of commissioned officers (i.e., those who have senior officer status) were women in 2023 (Statistics Canada, 2024b).

## **Objective - Track partnership activities to recognize impact and prevalence**

### *Crisis Call Diversion Program*

The Crisis Call Diversion (CCD) program utilizes Lakeridge Health clinicians to provide an alternate crisis response for non-emergent calls where a mental health professional may be of assistance. The percentage of eligible crisis calls diverted from a police response by the CCD program (Indicator #42) declined in 2024 from 2023 by 9%. The number of eligible calls also decreased substantially from 946 in 2023 to 434 in 2024 (-54%). Limited staffing throughout 2024 is a contributing factor to the decline in eligible calls as a call is only deemed eligible for CCD if a clinician is available to receive the call. This decline suggests increased police involvement in crisis calls, which could indicate resource gaps in mental health and social support services. DRPS continues to work with our partners in health care to identify meaningful and appropriate ways to support individuals experiencing crisis.

## **Objective - Actively work with communities to co-develop solutions to local concerns**

### *Community Perceptions*

The significance of police-community relationships cannot be overstated. Police require public support and cooperation to be effective (Demir et al., 2018). Measuring public perceptions of police can help us understand the current state of the relationship between police and communities. Some of our indicators provide an avenue for assessing public perceptions. The percentage of respondents who think the overall job of the police in their community is excellent or good [Indicator #51) and the percentage who feel safe when walking alone after dark (Indicator #53) saw slight increases (+2.7%) in 2024 compared to 2023. These are positive indicators of public confidence and perceptions of safety in Durham Region.

Although the percentage of racialized and Indigenous respondents think the overall job of the police in their community is excellent or good decreased by 7% from 2023 to 2024, 62.4% still feel this way, which is slightly higher than the entire sample surveyed (61.1%). The decline, however, highlights the importance of continued engagement and trust-building efforts.

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<sup>3</sup> Statistics Canada did not report the percentage of commissioned officers by racialization.

**Objective - Improve road safety by focusing enforcement on driving behaviours that cause the greatest harm**

*Collisions*

The percentage of collisions involving impairment (Indicator #62) increased by 40.5% from 1.11% in 2023 to 1.56% in 2024. This indicator reinforces continued concern around impaired driving, enforcement effectiveness, and community safety. The rate of fatal collisions per 1,000 registered vehicles (Indicator #60) and the percentage of collisions involving aggressive driving (Indicator #63), however, both declined from 2023 to 2024 (-18.3% and -68.8% respectively). Roadway safety continues to be a priority among Durham Region residents. According to our last community engagement survey<sup>4</sup>, aggressive driving and impaired driving were the top two roadway safety issues among participating residents.

**Objective - Provide the necessary and timely resources (financial, physical, and human) for members to effectively maintain the safety of the community**

*Overtime Hours for Frontline Officers*

In 2024, DRPS had 106,010 overtime hours for frontline officers (Indicator #69), which is a 34.5% increase from 2023. This substantial increase suggests the presence of operational pressures, staffing shortages, or an increase in workload demands. With time, the increase in frontline officers expected from the 2025 budget should help reduce these overtime hours.

**Objective - Support the health and well-being of members and foster an inclusive workplace to enable members to be as effective and productive as possible**

*Sworn Members Off Work Due to On-Duty Injuries*

In 2024, 6.5% of sworn members were off work due to on-duty injuries (Indicator #79), which represents a 47.7% increase over 2023 when 4.4% of sworn members were off with such injuries. This points to workplace safety concerns and operational strain on remaining officers. This is not unique to DRPS, across Ontario, police and firefighters have some of the highest number of allowed workers' compensation claims relative to other industries (Van Eerd, et al., 2024; Workplace Safety and Insurance Board, 2024). The Member Wellness, Engagement and Support Unit continues to support our members and is engaging in research-driven program evaluation to ensure DRPS is offering effective support. The 2025 budget has also allocated resources for a sergeant to formalize the reintegration program.

**CONCLUSION**

DRPS is committed to transparency through the continued monitoring and presentations of its performance through the various indicators included in this report. The above report and attached appendix identify areas where challenges may exist and successes lie. In so doing, DRPS, the Police Service Board, and the community have a greater understanding of its current state. DRPS will use this information to identify priorities and directions for future efforts.

Success in meeting the Strategic Plan's goals depends on consistent engagement and accountability measures. As such, DRPS not only presents these indicators to the Police Service Board and the public bi-annually, but monitors them throughout the year internally. DRPS is also working towards enhanced engagement with the Strategic Plan through the introduction of additional presentations to the Police

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<sup>4</sup> The survey ran in 2022/2023 as part of the 2024 Strategic Plan development.

Service Board throughout the year. These brief presentations will showcase DRPS initiatives aligned with Strategic Plan goals to further demonstrate DRPS' efforts beyond quantitative metrics.

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## Report Approval Details

Document Title:	Strategic Plan Updates - March 17, 2025.docx
Attachments:	- Appendix A - Strategic Plan Scorecard.docx
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This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

Stan MacLellan

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Moreira', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Peter MOREIRA