

Classification **PUBLIC**

Meeting **March 18, 2013**

Agenda Item **Monitoring Report:
Assistance to Victims of Crime**



Recommended Motion:

THAT the Board finds that all provisions of the *Assistance to Victims of Crime Board Policy Monitoring Report* have been complied with.

Assistance to Victims of Crime

I hereby submit my monitoring report on your Ends Policy, Assistance to Victims of Crime, according to the schedule set out. I certify that the information contained in this report is true.

Signed: _____
Chief of Police

Date: _____

Broadest Policy Provision:

The police are often the first point of contact within the criminal justice system for victims of crime, who have a wide range of needs based on their own unique circumstances. Having experienced the trauma of being victimized, all victims deserve special care and attention.

It is the policy of the Durham Regional Police Services Board that the Durham Regional Police Service will extend victims of crime an abundance of respect, understanding and appropriate levels of support and services.

"Citizens or visitors who are victims of a crime in Durham Region are referred to appropriate support services."

Interpretation of the Chief of Police:

It is my interpretation that the Board End of Community Safety is directly related to Section 1, principle 4 of the *Police Services Act, 1990* - *"The importance of respect for victims of crime and understanding of their needs"*. The Victim Services Board End is also responsive to sec 4(2) (3) of the *Police Services Act*

regarding adequate and effective police services involving: assistance to victims of crime. This Board End encompasses all manner of victim services either provided directly or indirectly by or for the Durham Regional Police Service.

It is my interpretation of this policy that it requires that victims of crime receive and/or are referred in a timely manner to the appropriate level of support in accordance to the severity of the crime and the vulnerability and needs of the victim. While providing service to every victim of a crime is ideal, neither the Service nor the related community agencies currently have the capacity to meet that ideal. Therefore it is my interpretation that the “appropriate levels of support and services” includes the option of providing no referral to victims of very minor offences, or for those who decline or apparently are not in need of such support. Further it is my interpretation that referral means providing the victim’s information (only with the victim’s approval) to other victim service providers.

It is my further interpretation that in every case where we provide a Crown Brief to the Ministry of the Attorney General that this constitutes de facto referrals to Victim Witness Assistance Program (VWAP) of the Ministry of the Attorney General.

It is my further interpretation that “appropriate levels of support and services” is one that refers the victim to an agency that provides services in the field or specialty that the victim needs and that said agency either has a memorandum of understanding with us or is funded and/or regulated by the Federal, provincial or municipal levels of government.

Compliance Statement:

I report **compliance** with this policy.

Data Support:

Year End 2012		Victims Served				Follow Ups		
Incidents/Occurrences		Male (Adult)	Female (Adult)	Children (0-15yrs)	Total Victims Served	In Person	Telephone	Number of Victims
Abduction	3	2	2	0	4	0	1	2
Assault (Domestic)	3392	1187	2738	20	3945	45	435	293
Assault (All Other)	99	66	106	6	178	9	50	40
Break and Enter	137	80	95	2	177	2	10	11
Criminal Harassment/Stalking	106	33	86	7	126	0	23	17
Elder Abuse (Crime Related)	23	7	21	0	28	0	3	3
Hate Crime	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Homicide	20	6	28	0	34	15	40	39
Human Trafficking	4	0	5	0	5	0	7	3
Motor Vehicle Accident	12	14	9	0	23	0	2	2
Robbery	54	34	38	2	74	2	11	11
Sexual Assault	80	24	72	12	108	14	57	43
Theft / Fraud	25	2	22	1	25	1	1	2
Vandalism	3	2	2	0	4	0	2	1
Other Crime Related	109	28	94	3	125	3	26	22
Tragic Circumstance	228	137	207	14	358	4	37	59
	4295	1622	3525	67	5214	95	705	548
Services Provided to Client								
Phone contact made to client								2397
Face to Face Meeting								127
Information Package/Home letter sent								2329
Accepted Victim Support Workers info								2049
Information & Referral Provided								
Health Organizations/Counselling								3068
Domestic Violence SACC								19
Shelters/Emergency Housing								150
VWAP								356
Bereavement								348
Safety Planning								641
Other (Educational, Financial, Legal, etc)								2220
								6802
Additional Information								
Number of Incidents/Occurrences Reviewed								4249
DRP officers special request to contact a victim								111

NOTE: Incidents and occurrences include contact we are required to make with victims from neighbouring jurisdictions but the people affected reside in Durham Region.

Victim Services Unit

The Durham Regional Police Victim Services Unit (VSU) is the primary provider of support to victims of crime within the Service. The unit is comprised of civilian specialists from Victims Services of Durham Region (VSDR), a program of the Ministry of the Attorney General (MAG).

During the course of 2012, VSDR provided support to 5214 victims of crime and tragic circumstance as a result of 4295 incidents. Of those 5214 victims, 548 required on-going follow up and support, 3525 were female, 1622 were male and 67 were children under the age of 15 years of age. VSDR ensured that the needs of our community members were met in each instance either by the provision and/or offering of direct support, advice, or consultation.

Of the 4295 incidents cases, 6802 referrals were made to our Community Partners for further intervention, assistance or support as required.

In 2012 the Durham Regional Police Service provided 7781 Criminal prosecutorial briefs to the Durham Region Crown Attorney's Office. This is in comparison to 8,521 briefs in 2011. Each brief constitutes a referral to the Victim Witness Assistance Program (VWAP – MAG).

In addition to the great services provided by our VSU, we have also enhanced our support for victims of domestic violence by adding a fourth officer to our Domestic Violence Offender Management Unit (DV OMU).

Unit Mandate:

The mandate of the (DVOMU) unit is to ensure the safety of all victims of crime, especially victims of domestic violence, due to their particular vulnerability to re-victimization. The primary objective is to protect these victims, by monitoring high-risk offenders who pose a risk both to the victims and to the community. Through management of these offenders by enforcement we will better manage the risks involved.

The secondary goal is to assist members in locating domestic offenders who are outstanding; especially when officers have concerns that the outstanding offender may re-offend. This applies to any outstanding offender regardless of the criminal charge as long as it relates to a domestic violence incident.

By monitoring high-risk Domestic Violence offenders and ensuring their compliance with their court-imposed conditions, the Durham Regional Police Service demonstrates its commitment to ensure the safety of victims of crime, and specifically victims of domestic violence. In so doing, the Service sends a message to victims of domestic violence. We are sensitive to their personal safety concerns and are actively working towards ensuring their safety. It also sends a message to domestic violence offenders: We are aware of the concerns

of our communities and have engaged a team of dedicated officers to enforce release conditions with a zero tolerance strategy. In turn, this will improve the safety of our community.

One of the major activities conducted by the officers is to ensure release conditions or probation conditions are met, through regular compliance checks.

They also:

- Receive cases referred by the HART (High-Risk Assessment Review Team) - committee made up of justice partners;
- Manage high-risk offenders by conducting door-knocks, by conducting static surveillance, and by maintaining victim contact, in order to gather further information in order to ensure conditions are being followed;
- Assist front-line officers to locate and arrest outstanding DV offenders who are still at large and wanted in existing investigations;
- Conduct compliance checks based on the request of Victim Services Unit, VWAP and Probation and Parole, where victim has voiced safety concerns and accused may be breaching;
- Conduct compliance checks based on requests received from other police services, where the investigation occurred outside of Durham Region and the offender resides in Durham.
- Assist other police services as requested to locate suspects and execute warrants placed on CPIC by those agencies.

The overarching goal and mandate of the DV OMU is achieved by contacting domestic violence victims for follow-up information pertaining to offender compliance levels, among other things. The unit members contact victims both by in-person visits and phone calls to gain relevant information, which will allow them to better enforce conditions. This contact gives victims peace of mind and reassures them of their safety by communicating to them the DV OMU function of conducting ongoing and thorough compliance checks. It also decreases breaches by consistently holding offenders accountable through regular compliance checks.

Complaints

The Victim Services Unit and the Professional Standards Unit confirm that our Service has not received any complaints, from victims or our community partners, regarding the provision of victim assistance services.