

68 Church St.,  
St. Catharines  
Ontario, Canada  
L2R 3C6



Tel. (905) 688-4111  
Fax. (905) 685-5081  
www.nrps.com  
nrps@nrps.com

# Niagara Regional Police Service

Chief of Police Wendy E. Southall

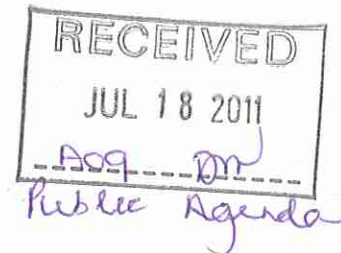
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## REPORT OF THE POLICE SERVICE

TO

THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF NIAGARA POLICE SERVICES BOARD

**Board Report Number:** 153/2011  
**Date of Report:** 2011-06-28  
**Date of Board Meeting:** 2011.07.28



**Acting Chairperson Todd Shoalts  
and Members of the  
Regional Municipality of Niagara Police Services Board**

**Reference: Police Services Board Report on  
By-Law 216-2000 Domestic/Family Violence**

**Recommendation: Receive for Information**

### **Background:**

On 2000.11.30 and 2000.12.14, a number of Regional Municipality of Niagara Police Services Board By-Laws was enacted in response to the *Provincial Adequacy Standards Regulations*. These new by-laws contain provisions requiring the Chief of Police to report specific information in order to ensure compliance with the Legislative guidelines.



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This report is submitted to provide the Board with the necessary and required information, pursuant to the by-law respecting Domestic/Family Violence. Subsequent reports will follow annually to continue with this reporting process.

**By-Law No. 216-2000, Domestic/Family Violence:**

By-Law # 216-2000, a by-law Respecting Domestic/Family Violence, was enacted as a result of *Provincial Adequacy Standards Regulation, Law Enforcement 024- Domestic Violence Occurrences*. This by-law details specific requirements that are reported as follows:

The Chief of Police shall make a written report to the Board on or before August 30<sup>th</sup> of each year in respect to the investigation to Domestic/Family Violence occurrences. The report shall include:

- a) a summary of the written procedures concerning Domestic/Family Violence Investigations, including changes since the date of the last report;
- b) the status of Service compliance with the said procedures;
- c) a summary of the training given to Members with respect to domestic/family violence;
- d) a summary of the steps taken by the Service to monitor and evaluate responses to domestic/family violence occurrences; and
- e) a summary of the issues dealt with by the Domestic/Family Violence Coordinating Committee.

The following is a detailed response to each of the above noted requirements:

- (a) "...a summary of the written procedures concerning Domestic/Family Violence, including changes since the date of the last report..."**

*General Order 114.07, Domestic/Family Violence*, is awaiting approval of revisions to more accurately describe the Service's responsibility relative to several areas of Domestic Violence Investigations.

Approval of revisions will include:

Post Arrest Procedures will include; Wanted Person Trigger Word+b. Description: This category is used to record data on a person who is arrestable and/or whom a warrant or apprehension order has been issued. The person must be known

and be identifiable. Persons wanted on provincial, Canada –wide and extraditable warrants (as per CPIC Manual) are recorded on this file.

Investigating officers shall, where practical, attempt to obtain a statement from the victim in cases of domestic violence. This method of statement taking should be in accordance with the R. v. KGB Guidelines. One DVD will be retained by the investigating officer and the second copy shall be included in the Crown Brief.

New Section: The Central Courts Officer shall submit a supplementary report indicating the courts disposition in all domestic cases, including early in-custody pleas.

New Procedure: The rubber stamp for entering SIP's on CPIC will no longer be utilized; a text template has been added to Versadex named "Domestic Warrant Request". The Officer requesting the warrant will complete the top portion of the template and contact their supervisor. The Supervisor will review the request and complete the remainder of the template. The Supervisor will notify CPIC at Ext. 4402 and send a notification through workflow to HCPIC handle.

*General Order: Violent Crime Bail 019.04.05*

New Section for approval: The Central Courts Bail Officer shall submit a supplementary report indicating the courts disposition in all domestic violence cases, including early in-custody pleas.

The NRPS Domestic Violence Coordinator is a Provincial Coordinator and sits on an advisory committee with the Ministry Of Community Safety and Correctional Services. The Coordinator is also a member of a sub-committee that was formed in 2009 to review and revise LE-024-Legislative/Regulatory Requirements-Domestic Violence Occurrences (last review-February 2000). The sub-committee anticipates completion of the revisions in the Fall of 2011. The revisions will be forwarded to the Ministry of the Solicitor General for approval. After approval the revisions will be reflected accordingly in NRPS General Order 114.07 Domestic/Family Violence.

**b) "...the status of Service compliance with the said procedures..."**

The Niagara Regional Police as required by Provincial Adequacy LE-024, Domestic Violence Occurrences has policy on investigations into domestic violence occurrences. The following General Orders are consistent and in compliance for undertaking and managing investigations into domestic violence incidents:

*Assistance for Victims and Witnesses - G.O.115.04*

*Domestic/Family Violence - G.O. 114.07*

*Parental and Non-Parental Abductions - G.O. 173.06*

*Violent Crime Bail - G.O. 019.05*

*Domestic Violence Emergency Response (DVERS) Programs - G.O. 052.03*

In 2009, a committee was formed to review and revise Women's Shelter protocol within the Niagara Region associated to Domestic/Family Violence. The revised protocol has been delayed, however, completion is anticipated for the Fall of 2011.

The Niagara Regional Police ensures that it has access to trained domestic violence investigators and uniform officers throughout the Region by incorporating the following models as designated by the Ministry:

- Ensuring that an adequate number of patrol officers have received the Enhanced Domestic Violence Investigators Course and Designated Domestic Violence Investigators in Eastern and Central District Detective Offices.
- The Western Region Domestic Violence Unit is responsible for undertaking, managing and reviewing the investigations of domestic violence. In the Fall of 2010 two "Career Development" positions were created in accordance with the NRPS Business Plan. As a result of these two new positions, the Western Region Domestic Unit now includes 8 District.

Western Region Domestic Violence Statistics:

- 2010 - 459 Investigations
- 2009 - 414 Investigations

All domestic incidents in the Versadex System that involve intimate partner relationship are flagged "IN" (intimate) and routed to the Domestic Violence Investigator within the respective District and the Domestic Violence Coordinator.

### **Mandatory Reporting/ Mandatory Charge**

A detailed General Occurrence report shall be filed in response to all domestic/family violence incident complaints, whether or not an offense has occurred. In cases where charges are not laid by police, the report must include why charge(s) were not laid.

The Niagara Regional Police has adopted the Attorney General's Mandatory Charge Policy whereby officers shall lay charges in all incidents of "Intimate Partner" domestic violence occurrences where there are reasonable grounds for a criminal offence.

**c) "...a summary of the training given to members with respect to Domestic/Family Violence..."**

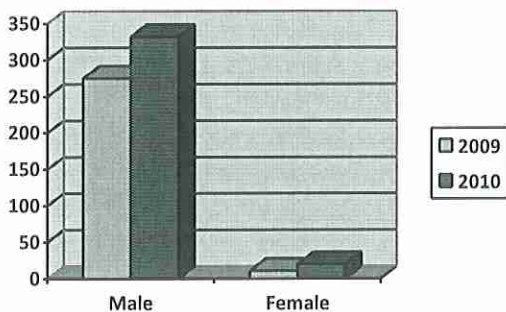
The Niagara Regional Police Service continues service-wide training involving detectives, front line officers and communication staff.

▶ Domestic Violence Investigators Course	22 Police Officers
▶ Front Line Supervisors Course	15 Police Officers
▶ Fifth Annual Domestic Violence Conference	5 Police Officers
▶ Domestic Violence Threat and Risk Assessment	4 Police Officers

A component of service wide training in domestic violence is being planned for 2011 in the Advanced Patrol Training (APT) Fall session.

**d) "...a summary of the steps taken by the Service to monitor and evaluate response to Domestic/Family Violence occurrences..."**

In 2010, the Niagara Regional Police responded to 6996 domestic calls involving "intimate partners" for crisis intervention. From these calls, 893 criminal charges were laid. A significant increase was noted in the number of accused with previous charges relating to domestic violence.



The Chief Coroner's Domestic Violence Review Committee has recommended that strategies be put into place regarding high risk cases, case management, and use of risk assessment tools. In response to these recommendations and to the Ontario Government's commitment to protect Ontarians from high-risk offenders and enhance victim's safety, Niagara has developed the High Risk Review Team.

The High Risk Review Team is a case management strategy between community and justice partners to assess and actively manage high-risk cases of violence.

The High Risk Review Team is drafting the final “Terms of Reference” and anticipated for completion in the Fall of 2011. Currently the team meets every second Friday.

In compliance with the Niagara Regional Police 2010-2012 Business Plan the Domestic Violence Coordinator has scheduled joint semi-annual focus groups with community stakeholders to discuss concerns, share information and to improve police responsiveness to Domestic/family Violence.

The “Coalition to End Violence against Women” (CEVAW) works collaboratively with the Niagara Regional Police to resolve issues with the respective agency. Currently there are twenty-five (25) community/justice agencies.

The Niagara Region has been recognized as a Neighbours, Friends and Families (NFF) community. NFF is a public education campaign to raise awareness of the signs of woman abuse so that those close to an at-risk women or and abusive man can help. The Domestic Violence Coordinator sits on Niagara’s Executive NFF Committee.

Through participation and membership of the following committees the Domestic Violence Coordinator monitors and evaluates domestic/family violence in the Niagara Region.

- ▶ Domestic Violence Emergency Response Systems (DVERS)
- ▶ Domestic Violence Court Coordinating Committee (DVCCC)
- ▶ Stop Family Violence-It’s Everybody’s Business
- ▶ YWCA-Week Without Violence
- ▶ St. Catharines Family Court Liaison Committee
- ▶ Niagara Children Youth Services Advisory Committee
- ▶ Ontario Domestic Violence Coordinators Network
- ▶ Domestic Violence Advisory Committee (DVAC) (Ministry Advisory Committee-Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services)
- ▶ Coalition to end Violence Against Women (CEVAW)
- ▶ New Comers to Canada
- ▶ Welland Bench Bar Committee
- ▶ Niagara-High Risk Team
- ▶ Domestic Violence Advisory Committee (DVAC)-Sub-Committee-Provincial Adequacy Standard-LE 024-Revisions and Review Committee
- ▶ DVAC-Sub-Committee- Electronic Domestic Violence Supplementary Report
- ▶ DVAC- Working Sub Committee-Domestic Violence Investigation: A Resource for Ontario Police Responding to Domestic Violence

The Domestic Violence Coordinator is active throughout the Niagara Region and is responsible for liaising with Crown Attorneys, Probation and Parole Services, Victim Witness Assistance Programs, Family and Children Services, local services and community representatives responsible for responding to issues related to domestic violence.

**e) "...a summary of the issues dealt with by the Domestic/Family Violence Coordinating Committee..."**

The Domestic/Family Violence Coordinating Committee (DVCC) meets on a regular basis to facilitate and monitor the Domestic Violence Court Process, provide a forum for information sharing, process review, problem solving and promote a coordinated, effective justice response to domestic violence in a multicultural environment.

Throughout the year the DVCC addresses a variety of issues and challenges, many reoccur year to year. In 2010 a summary of priority challenges included:

- Challenges to working with abusive men to ensure they receive appropriate service. (Counseling –PAR Programs, Caring Dads program)
- The rural nature of the Niagara region poses additional challenges to families where domestic violence has occurred. Women in these areas do not have access to service, often suffer from isolation and may suffer in silence if they are being abused.
- The absence of a comprehensive transportation system in Niagara.
- The importance of housing (women's shelter, second stage housing-g geared to income). Safe, secure and affordable housing is a key component of a community response to domestic violence. A significant number of women stay in an abusive relationship due to the lack of housing or have had to find shelter outside the region.
- Victim Services Niagara- Referrals from NRPS- requires more compliance from front line officers
- Family Court/Criminal Court delays
- Safety of victims with regards to sentencing and release conditions
- Ensuring the collaboration of domestic violence services
- Judges assigned to Domestic Courts regularly attend and participate in the workings of the Domestic Violence Coordinating Committee

**Conclusion:**

This report is submitted to the Board for review and consideration of information relating to Domestic/Family Violence investigations in the Regional Municipality of Niagara.

**Relevant Policy Considerations:** By-law No. 216-2000, A By-law Respecting Domestic/Family Violence

General Order 114.05 Domestic/Family Violence

**Cost of Recommendations:** There is no cost associated to this recommendation.


**Alternative Options:** To not accept this report.

**Reasons for Recommendations:** Police Services Board Requirement

Prepared by:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**Richard Cizek**  
Detective Sergeant  
Domestic Violence/Victim's Services Coordinator

Reviewed by:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**James McCaffery**  
Inspector  
Investigative Support

Approved by:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**Cliff Sexton**  
Superintendent  
Emergency & Investigative  
Support Services

Recommended by:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**Joseph Matthews**  
Deputy Chief of Police

Respectfully submitted by:

  
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**Wendy E. Southall**  
Chief of Police