

From: ["Mochrie, Paul" <Paul.Mochrie@vancouver.ca>](mailto:Paul.Mochrie@vancouver.ca)

To: ["Direct to Mayor and Council - DL"](#)

Date: 3/14/2022 11:22:46 AM

Subject: FW: Re: Vancouver Police Budget Decision - 628882

Attachments: 628882 - Attachment B - Inverleith Report - Section 27(3) Police Act Review.pdf
628882 - Attachment A - Lepine Report - Section 27(3) Police Act Review.pdf
628882 Stewart Wightman Final.pdf

Good morning Council,

Please find attached a letter from the Director of Police Services setting out his decision on the appeal submitted by Vancouver Police Board in respect of the VPD's 2021 operating budget allocation.

We are presently reviewing the decision and accompanying consultants' reports but I can confirm that the Director has determined that the City is obligated to provide the \$5.7M that was withheld from the Police Board's 2021 budget submission.

We will provide further analysis and comment once we have had an opportunity to review these materials in detail.

Best,
Paul

From: PSSG Policing and Security Branch PSSG:EX <SGPSPB@gov.bc.ca>

Sent: Monday, March 14, 2022 10:05 AM

To: Stewart, Kennedy <Kennedy.Stewart@vancouver.ca>; fwightman1@gmail.com

Cc: Palmer, Adam <adam.palmer@vpd.ca>; Mochrie, Paul <Paul.Mochrie@vancouver.ca>;

Stephanie.johanssen@vancouverpoliceboard.ca

Subject: [EXT] Re: Vancouver Police Budget Decision - 628882

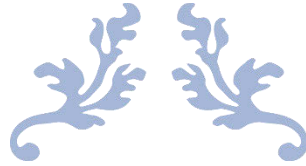
City of Vancouver security warning: Do not click on links or open attachments unless you were expecting the email and know the content is safe.

Good morning,

Please find attached a letter from Mr. Wayne Rideout, Assistant Deputy Minister and Director of Police Services, Ministry of Public Safety & Solicitor General.

Thank you,

*Policing and Security Branch
Ministry of Public Safety & Solicitor General
PO Box 9285, Stn Prov Govt
Victoria BC V8W 9J7
CLIFF# 628882*



VANCOUVER POLICE BOARD REQUEST - SECTION 27(3) POLICE ACT REVIEW

Carried out in conjunction with Inverleith Consulting Inc



FEBRUARY 1, 2022
PETER LEPINE PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

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The Consultants

Peter Lépine, M.O.M., is the sole proprietor of Peter Lepine Professional Services. He served as a member of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police for 30 years, retiring at the rank of Superintendent and Officer in Charge of the Coquitlam Detachment in 2009. Peter then served as Chief Constable for the West Vancouver Police Department until 2014. After 35 years in the policing profession, he continued his public service as a private consultant. In 2013 Peter was inducted as a Member of the Order of Merit of the Police Forces. He was also awarded the RCMP's Long Service Medal with Silver Clasp, The Queen Elizabeth II Golden and Diamond Jubilee Medals, and the West Vancouver Police Department's 100th Anniversary Medal.

Peter Lockie is the sole proprietor of Inverleith Consulting Inc., which provides a range of management consulting services. He has a law degree and trained as a Chartered Accountant with KPMG in the UK. With ten years' experience at senior management levels within a major corporation (BC Ferries) and fifteen years of executive level experience at a post-secondary institution (Camosun College), culminating in his appointment as its interim President, Peter became a highly respected business adviser within each of these organizations, retiring early to form Inverleith and provide consulting services to Provincial, Municipal, and not for profit organizations.

Acknowledgements

We wish to thank the Assistant Deputy Minister and Director of Policing, Public Safety and Solicitor General for the opportunity to conduct this review on behalf of the Province of British Columbia.

Our special appreciation is extended to Mr. David Pilling, A/ Executive Director, Municipal Policing Governance & Oversight, Policing and Security Branch, who oversaw our work and provided leadership along the way.

A special thank you to Vancouver Police Board's Executive Director, Stephanie Johanssen, for her assistance arranging meetings with Board members and sourcing numerous reports and other correspondence used as part of our report.

I also wish to extend our appreciation to Mr. Drazen Manojlovic, Director of Planning, Research and Audit Section, for the Vancouver Police Department, for his unfettered access to the many internal and operational correspondence to clarify critical aspects related to human resourcing within the VPD.

A special thank you to Vancouver Police Union President Ralph Kaisers. His candid views and answers to our questions, particularly concerning overtime, morale, and officer safety, were greatly appreciated.

We also wish to extend our thanks to Chief Constable Adam Palmer and his entire Executive Team. Their collective efforts to source information on short notice during a hectic time for the VPD were appreciated.

A special thank you to CoV City Manager Paul Mochrie and Chief Financial Officer Patrice Impey for taking the time to meet us in the middle of the City's 2022 Budget season. The information provided by both of you was instrumental in attaching the much-required context to the City's financial concerns. In addition, your suggestions regarding how all stakeholders could move forward in the coming years were also of great value to us.

Our report is constructed from many interviews, countless telephone conversations, and thousands of pages of documents that were located through open source and provided to us as a result of my discussions with them. We took great care to ensure that we considered the content and the context contained within all the interviews and documents as we consolidated our thoughts to fit within the terms of reference before us.

Peter A. Lépine, M.O.M.
February 1, 2022

Terms of Reference

Scope: The Director wishes to initiate a study under Section 42 of the Police Act. At the request of the Assistant Deputy Minister and Director of Police Services (*the Director*), our services were engaged to review and examine the following matters.

- a) Assessment of the Financial Management Framework – an examination, evaluation and conclusions on the strength/health of the financial management framework of the Vancouver Police Department, including:
 - a. The budget cycle including the preparation, approval, forecasting, reporting, monitoring, expenditures and board oversight.
 - b. Relevant policies and procedures.
 - c. Assessment of the process for the Board and municipality to communicate and engage on 2021 VPD Budget development and priorities.
 - d. Expenditures as they relate to the specific programs and service delivery.
 - e. Expenditures as they relate to the health and wellness of officers.
 - f. Assessment of adequacy of the Board's budget to carry out its role independently from political influence and at arm's length from the department.
- b) Impacts of Alleged Budget Shortfall on Service Delivery and Public Safety – examination, evaluation and conclusions on the impacts of the alleged budget shortfall on service delivery and whether that amount is required to provide *adequate and effective* policing, including:
 - a. Assessment of any impacts of the alleged budget shortfall to program and service delivery, public safety and adequate and effective policing in the community and, if applicable, to the region.
 - b. An assessment of the impact on VPD's ability to achieve the priorities, goals and objectives established under s. 26(4) of the *Police Act*.
 - c. A review of the policing priorities, goals and objectives of the Province and the priorities of the City of Vancouver, which the Board is required to take into account under s. 26(4.1) of the *Police Act*.
 - d. An assessment of service delivery expectations, needs and priorities of the community.
 - e. The intended use of the alleged budget shortfall.
- c) Emerging Environmental Impacts – an assessment of and conclusions on the broader environmental impacts to adequate and effective policing generally, including:
 - a. The global pandemic, collective agreements, crime trends, socio-economic issues and other relevant considerations or impacts.
 - b. Employee well-being.
 - c. Executive and Police Association perspectives on employee health and safety, deployment, and operational effectiveness.
 - d. Consideration of the use of integrated units to leverage cost efficiencies and policing effectiveness.
 - e. Consideration of the role of policing in the future, specifically as it relates to front-line response to social, health and mental health emergencies and other police reform priorities.

Part "A" focussing on the financial management framework is covered in a separate report authored by Mr. Peter Lockie of Inverleith Consulting Inc. . This report focuses on Parts "B" and Part "C".

Out-of-Scope: The Review is not:

1. Intended to be a detailed operational analysis; or
2. To be an audit or meant to repeat any annual audits conducted by the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General as part of a continuous function of their work. However, this report and information collected during the course of the review may be relied upon as part of these audits; or
3. Meant to provide detailed managerial or operational advice to the Vancouver Police Department and its *Board*; or
4. Meant to replace or supplement the audit and inspection functions of the Vancouver Police Department or any other government department(s); or
5. A review of the performance of either the Chief Constable or member of the VPD Executive Staff; and
6. The review will not examine any records related to a criminal investigation or prosecution, criminal intelligence, police investigative records or other sensitive law enforcement information, or personnel records.

Outcomes: The consultants were requested to submit a written draft and final report to the Director, summarizing the information gathered and considered as part of our review.

Methodology

Written Materials

In conducting the various activities, we reviewed and considered information from several sources, including:

- Submissions of the parties to the VPD Operating Budget dispute
- Applicable Legislation (and Standards)
- Strategic plans and community feedback
- Financial framework documentation, including policies and procedures
- Financial management reports
- Operational reviews
- External and internal financial audits
- Programs and Service delivery statistics and data
- Collective bargaining agreement(s)
- Crime trends, relevant metrics/data
- Other external influences on service delivery and expenditures
- Stats Canada Data
- Open-source Media
- Miscellaneous government reports

Interviews

The study will include interviews with key stakeholders, including the Vancouver Police Board, the City of Vancouver, VPD Police Executive Team members, and the Vancouver Police Association.

Executive Summary

On March 8, 2021, the Vancouver Police Board forwarded correspondence to the Assistant Deputy Minister and Director of Police Services (the Director) requesting that he conduct a review under section 27(3) of the Police Act of the \$5,689,974 reduction resulting from the Vancouver City Council's decision not to approve the 2021 Vancouver Police Department (VPD) Operating Budget as submitted by the Vancouver Police Board.

The Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General (the Ministry) contracted Peter Lepine of Peter Lepine Professional Services and Peter Lockie of Inverleith Consulting Inc. to assist him with any decisions that he would make regarding his intervention as authorized by the Police Act. This report is the culmination of our research, a review of the materials collected, and conclusions based on our findings.

The focus of our work was to determine whether, based on the totality of information reviewed, the cut to the Vancouver Police Board's 2021 Operating Budget could negatively impact the VPD's ability to provide an adequate and effective level of service to the City of Vancouver.

We reviewed a series of strategic, business, and corporate plans used to provide strategic guidance to the VPD management team. These plans were authored by the Vancouver Police Department, the Province of British Columbia, and the City of Vancouver. Our analysis determined that until 2021, the VPD was able to meet or exceed all of the benchmarks they set for themselves or committed to addressing as outlined within these plans. Given that the VPD is the largest municipal police service in the Province of British Columbia, we were not surprised by this finding. Historically, the Department is consulted by many public safety stakeholders within North America and used as a best practice. The VPD also plays a leading role in helping the Province of BC and City of Vancouver establish service level and policing standards. We also found that the VPD's structure and management style lends itself to providing strong leadership, direction, and public accountability in all aspects of their work. This level of accountability and transparency also enabled us to source many years' worth of information deemed pertinent to our review.

We also concluded that to address concerns raised by various national and local stakeholders regarding the cost of policing over the years, the VPD has streamlined their operation to ensure that the service provided is done so as efficiently as possible. This included redirecting tasks from sworn members to civilian employees, introducing a two-tiered system of policing with the introduction of the special municipal constable and traffic authority programs. Except for the Homicide Unit, the VPD also participates in various integrated policing programs within the Lower Mainland.

We also recognize that meeting the targets set out within the various strategic and business plans only represents a small portion of the workload within the VPD. Operationally, the VPD is required to deliver on all of the essential policing functions, including maintaining public order and safety, enforcing the law, and preventing, detecting, and investigating criminal activities. The VPD is also heavily invested with many community partners dedicated to providing an outreach service to several marginalized groups within the City of Vancouver. We determined through our review that the VPD's activities in all of these areas are core to their policing mandate, with little room for the VPD to pull back from any of their current activities without risking community safety.

Much of the material provided to the Director from the stakeholders tended to focus on the VPD workload in 2020 compared to 2021, thereby suggesting that the VPD is fully capable of providing an adequate and effective level of service with a reduced budget. However, we noted that the VPD resource levels were just slightly over the level in place in 2009. In addition, it is our view and experience that using only one year's worth of data is not an appropriate comparison, particularly when it is influenced by an anomaly such as the Covid-19 pandemic. For these two reasons, our research considered a series of trends and statistics going back to 2009.

Compared to 2009 and leading up to 2021, we concluded that the overall workload and increased complexities in investigating crime had increased substantially. We also found that policing standards, judicial decisions, and recommendations from several public inquiries added significant work upon the VPD and all police services within British Columbia.

For the VPD, we found that over the period from 2011 to 2019, overall calls for service increased by over 26%. Response to calls for Priority-1 and Priority-2 complaints also increased by 28%. Overall, property crime has risen by 43%. While overall violent crime has reduced by 20%, homicides have remained consistent, level-2 assaults have increased by 14%, and level-1 sexual assaults have increased by 27%. These key crime indicators were noted to be a constant and gradual increase over these 8 years and not viewed as an anomaly.

We have also concluded that as the volume of work increased, there was a corresponding reduction in proactive policing activities by the VPD. As a result, there was a notable reduction in the number of traffic tickets issued, resulting in a proportional increase in traffic collisions within the City of Vancouver.

We also noted that crimes related to child sexual exploitation and fraud offences had increased significantly over this period and that clearance rates for these two crime types also plunged. This is not to say that the VPD is solving fewer cases, but it demonstrates that as the number of these crimes continues to increase, the VPD is simply unable to keep up. We also found that matters related to exponentially increased levels of cybercrime also pose a significant risk to the VPD's ability to provide an adequate and effective level of service.

In an attempt to accommodate the increase in workload and to meet other benchmarks, the VPD requested that the Director require the City to fund an additional 20 sworn and 10 civilian employees to their current resource levels, in keeping with the "Year 4" of the 2017 Operational Review. Our assessment of this request led us to conclude that based on an independent risk assessment; there is sufficient rationale to support an increase of at least 13 sworn and 4 civilian resources as a priority.

We concluded that despite the increase in overall workload, that up until 2021, the VPD has been able to provide an adequate and effective level of service. However, we have also concluded that meeting this benchmark has two significant impacts. First, the VPD exceeded their 2021 Operational Budget limit approved by the City of Vancouver by over 7 million dollars in order to maintain this level. Secondly, a significant number of operational projects related to public safety and enforcement were conducted with higher cost overtime resources.

We have concluded that to provide an adequate and effective policing service in 2021; the VPD were required to resort to these two strategies as the means to an end. However, it is our further conclusion that for a number of reasons, these two strategies are not sustainable and should not be counted upon as an acceptable business practice to mitigate either insufficient resources or increased workload.

Our review indicated that a significant number of overtime hours was expended in 2021 to deal with policing matters related to public demonstrations and an ever-increasing amount of violent crime. This includes violence inflicted upon employees within the business community, stranger-on stranger assaults, race-based hate crime and street disorder associated with the homeless situation. Moreover, with every indication as noted through an environmental scan, there is no indication that these policing pressures will diminish in the foreseeable future. Consequently, it is our view that the VPD is currently left with little flexibility to deal with these matters but with resources called out on overtime or redirected from areas from other units, which in our view, are already stretched.

Our review indicated that excessive overtime had a significant impact on the health and wellbeing of VPD personnel. Sick time and WorkSafeBC claims, particularly related to stress-related injuries, have increased exponentially, from the equivalent of 47 FTE in 2009 to 84 FTE's in 2020. This resource pressure has also resulted in a situation where several patrol shift deployments operated at below minimum resourcing levels in 2021. Our view is that this impacts officer safety and challenges the VPD to deliver an adequate and effective level of service.

Our review also determined that the most recent community satisfaction survey indicated that overall satisfaction with the VPD diminished by 11% in 2021 over 2020. Therefore, despite the VPD's attempts to manage workload with overtime and to exceed their operational budget, this was still not enough to meet community expectations in 2021.

Our review also determined that all stakeholders believed that the remainder of the new resources outlined in the last two years of the 2017 Operational Review was only deferred and would be considered in the 2023 budget cycle. Therefore, we conclude that based on the totality of information provided to us, there is a need to move forward with acquiring these resources within the next two budget cycles commencing in 2023.

Our review also determined that the various stakeholders agree that a new operational review would better assess what additional resources might be required to provide an adequate and effective level of service in the future. We also conclude that if any future review includes pertinent stakeholders, including representation from the City and the Province of BC, there will be a greater likelihood for a long-term solution to addressing VPD resource pressures for years to come.

Section 1

The Vancouver Police Department 2017 - 2021 Strategic Plan

A significant benchmark in assessing the VPD's ability to provide an adequate and effective service to the residents of Vancouver can be found within the Department's ability to accomplish the various goals, objectives, and initiatives contained within its strategic plan.

Section 26(4.2) and Section 26(5) of the *Police Act* require all municipal police agencies in British Columbia are required to have a valid strategic plan. Specifically, the Police Act states:

(4.2) The municipal police board must provide its priorities, goals and objectives and any changes to them to the Director

(a) within 30 days after their establishment or change, and

(b) when requested to do so by the Director.

(5) The chief constable must report to the municipal police board each year on the implementation of programs and strategies to achieve the priorities, goals, and objectives.¹

The VPD's strategic planning process commenced when, in the fall of 2015, the VPD reached out to the residents, visitors, and businesses in Vancouver to solicit their views into matters related to policing and community safety. In his video report to the community regarding the strategic planning process², Chief Constable Adam Palmer commented that the VPD's 2017-2021 Strategic Plan would be defined by the following categories:

1. The need to focus on issues that make people feel unsafe in their neighbourhoods.
2. Deal with crimes that disrupt their feeling of safety in their community.
3. To focus on mental health issues and help to keep those dealing with mental health issues out of danger from predatory criminals who seek to take advantage of people who may be vulnerable.

This public and stakeholder input, combined with the VPD's internal consultation process, resulted in a strategic plan with four themes supported by eight goals.

The current VPD 2017-2021 Strategic plan is comprised of the following themes:

1. Engage Our Community
 - Foster relationships, understanding and trust with our Diverse Community.
 - Strengthen mental health programs and processes.
2. Enhance Public Safety
 - Address community concerns that affect public safety.
 - Improve road safety for everyone.
3. Fight Crime
 - Fight violent crime and its causes.
 - Combat property crime and its drivers.
4. Support Our People
 - Foster a culture of employee engagement and effective communication.

¹ <https://www.bclaws.gov.bc.ca/civix/document/id/93consol17/93consol17/88053#section26>.

² <https://vpd.ca/policies-strategies/strategic-planning/>

- Promote a healthy work environment where all employees can thrive and contribute to the success of the Department.

The VPD's 2017-2021 Strategic Planning process appears to have followed all of the generally accepted procedures and information gathering steps. The information contained within this plan appears to be supported by all stakeholders and reflects the desires of the community stakeholders stemming from the VPD's 2015 and 2016's information-gathering activities.

The VPD operationalized their strategic plan by creating over 33 strategies and 180 activities which is the basis of the VPD's yearly business plans. The VPD reports out on their business plan's progress biannually. A mid-year report is provided to the Board in the month of July, with a year-end report provided to the Board sometime in the first quarter of the following year.



The annual Strategic Business Plans do not assign a budget to each initiative. However, the plan does indicate where the financial costs associated with these initiatives will come from. As expected, the VPD's day-to-day activities are supported through their operational budget. However, we did note that many of the VPD's strategic initiatives are funded through grants from the Vancouver Police Foundation, grants from the Civil Forfeiture Office, Canucks for Kids, and the Ministry for Public Safety and Solicitor General (PSSG).

As with all strategic plans found within police organizations, neither the VPD 2017-2021 Strategic Plan nor its yearly Strategic Business Plan cover the majority of work performed within the VPD in any detail. Instead, the plan mainly focuses on a strategy that is supposed to be a means to an end, accomplishing overarching goals derived through stakeholder input into policing priorities.

However, the VPD supported goals associated with improving road safety, addressing violent crime and its causes, and combating property crimes and its drivers, are presented in quarterly reports to the Board.

Taken from page 1 of the VPD's Strategic Business Plan Report, the VPD had this to say about their overall workload in 2020:

*"2020 marked a historical anomaly due to the global COVID-19 **pandemic**, and crime metrics (i.e., volume and trends) have been affected as a result. Though there was less overall activity in the City, there was a significant rise in the most serious forms of crime,*

including homicides, serious assaults, hate crimes, and residential break and enters. In addition, VPD operations, investigations, and administrative processes were significantly impacted by the pandemic, as well as by global movements and local protests.”

Further in this same report, the VPD report:

“In addition to delaying or impacting progress on, or the completion of, several of the VPD’s strategic priorities in 2020, the pandemic has culminated in considerable increases in the most serious forms of crime, including a 73% increase in culpable homicides, a 16.8% increase in the most serious types of assaults, a 54.2% in serious assaults against police officers, a 97% increase in hate crimes, a 717% increase in anti-Asian hate crimes, a 12.3% in commercial break and enters, and a 23.6% increase in arson incidents.”

While the above-noted comments by the VPD were made to describe their assessment of their overall performance in 2020, we have concluded that the same could be said about their performance in 2021. As detailed further in our report, homicides in Vancouver were the same in 2021 as in 2020. As well, violent crime was either comparable or higher in 2021, with hate crimes and random street assaults increasing in 2021 over 2020.

However, our view is that the impact of the City’s decision to cut the VPD’s 2021 operating budget did not have a detrimental effect upon the Department’s ability to provide an adequate and effective policing service. However, as will be described in greater detail throughout this report, while the City cut the Board’s 2021 operating budget, the Department still exceeded its funded budget limit. Therefore, there was little operational impact on the VPD’s ability to meet its 2021 Strategic Business Plan targets.

A Review of the Province of BC’s Policing Priorities

In letters to BC Police Board Chairs in June 2019 and again in September 2020, the Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General (PSSG) set out several policing priorities. These priorities focused on matters related to the opioid crisis, organized and violent crime, interagency collaboration, and work with marginalized people and communities.

Our review of the VPD and its Board’s operational practices demonstrates that the VPD overwhelmingly meets or exceeds all of the above Provincial Policing Priorities in 2021. We also noted that these priorities are reflected in the VPD’s 2017-2021 Strategic Plan and form part of the VPD’s yearly strategic business plans.

The degree to which the VPD meets the Provincial Policing Standards is covered throughout this report, particularly in their ongoing collaboration with other police and non-policing partners to deliver on these Provincial Policing Priorities.

A Review of the City of Vancouver’s Policing Priorities

The City of Vancouver does not have a dedicated multi-year strategic plan. Instead, they have approached their service delivery strategy through a yearly corporate plan with a series of goals. We were advised that due to pressures related to Covid-19, the City of Vancouver did not introduce a 2021 corporate plan but instead chose to extend the 2020 plan for an additional year instead.

In our conversation with the VPD and City stakeholders, we were advised that the City of Vancouver understands that the VPD has its own strategic and annual business plans. With this in mind, the City attempted to integrate a few of the VPD strategies within the City's corporate plan.

These city strategies align with many of the VPD's Strategic Plan goals to foster relationships with diverse communities. Given this relationship, there is an excellent incentive for the VPD to work with other civic and community partners to leverage resources to effect positive change. Aside from an additional grant provided by the Vancouver Police Foundation and the *Project Connect* Federal Grant, the VPD funding for the work provided by the VPD in this area comes from their overall operating budget.

It is clear from our review of the vast amount of information that speaks to the City's efforts; the VPD is firmly entrenched with all of the other city partners focused on these city initiatives. Once again, we also note that many of these initiatives align with the VPD's 2017-2021 Strategic Plan, which measures the VPD's own success at meeting their own goals.

Assessment of the Impacts on the VPD's Ability to Achieve the Various Priorities, Goals and Objectives.

The VPD is guided by the strategic goals and public safety priorities of three significant stakeholders; the Province of BC, the City of Vancouver, and of course, their own Police Board. Our assessment of the information provided by these stakeholders would lead us to conclude that there is nothing contained within the information provided by the Province of BC and the City of Vancouver that is not already captured within the Vancouver Police Board's 2017-2021 Strategic and Business Plans.

Therefore, by reviewing any impact on the VPD's ability to deliver an adequate and effective police service against their own 2017-2021 Strategic Plan, we are also touching upon the Province's and City of Vancouver's strategic priorities.

1. The VPD's Strategic Goal to Engage with their Community

Fostering relationships, understanding and trust with the VPD's diverse communities

The VPD has significant resource investments into programs and integrated services to provide a wide range of services and partnerships.

While it can be suggested that some of the activities the VPD participate in may not be critical to their overall service delivery, they are, however, counted upon by others, including the City of Vancouver and the Province of BC, to be a player and leader at the table. However, the hybrid approach to supporting other partnerships is intermingled with resources that carry out frontline police services is core to their policing mandate.

For example, the VPD is working with other City employees to tend to community issues associated with problems related to a homeless encampment by doing their part to provide support to those providing an educational or outreach service. However, the VPD's primary responsibility is to deal with the wide-ranging issues associated with the homeless encampment, such as drug use, violence, property crime, and even sudden deaths. Until now, the VPD has offered a comprehensive response, the first being a proactive response that could mitigate the need to deal with matters that could worsen afterward.

However, the VPD's view is that inadequate funding will place them in a position where their response could be confined to primarily responding to crime and less time dealing with root crime causation. This, in turn, could negatively impact their effort to build the relationship they strive to enhance as per their strategic plan as they deal with the impact on community safety.

A second example can be found with the VPD's work with people involved in the sex industry and women found living within a violent relationship. The tragic situation that permitted perpetrators to kidnap, murder, assault, and exploit women and girls led to a review by the Honourable Wally T. Oppal, QC, which resulted in a significant number of recommendations that profoundly changed the way police in British Columbia work with and serve this vulnerable group. From this tragedy, the Province introduced several policing standards related to how the reporting and subsequent investigation into missing people complaints are conducted.

While policing standards rightly focus on investigative standards with no room for "opting out", the VPD also expend significant resources as they strive to build relationships with people involved in the sex industry and work with other partner agencies to provide outreach services. This strategy is a high priority with a similar degree of risk to public safety. So much so that the VPD Chief Constable is personally involved in the ongoing relationship-building efforts as a specific initiative within the VPD's strategic plan.

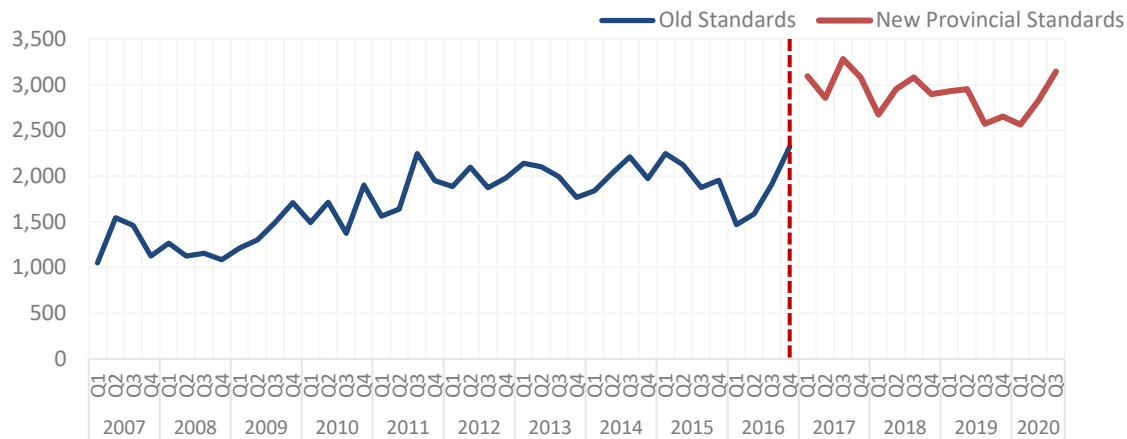
To ensure an adequate standard and quality investigational approach to protecting victims within diverse communities, the Provincial government has enacted several policing standards commencing in 2010. This includes the *BC Attorney General's Violence Against Women in Relationships Policy*, *BC Provincial Policing Standards for Missing Person Investigations*, and the new *Major Case Management Standards*. While these enhanced standards contribute to improving public safety, additional police resources are needed to meet them. The VPD's approach to meeting or exceeding these standards was to improve their operation by assigning personnel as a liaison or to work as subject matter experts. Additional resources were also added to specialized units working with the diverse communities through the 2017 Operational Review process.

Total Patrol Officer-Hours Dedicated to Missing Person Reports³

As part of a supplemental report to the VPD Board, the Department drew attention to the impact of Mr. Oppal's recommendations and subsequent additional policing standards. As a result, the VPD quantifies the impact on their patrol-level workload with the following comment and graph.

"Subsequent to the implementation of these new Provincial Standards, patrol workload on missing person calls suddenly increased by roughly 50%, which is equivalent to approximately 4,100 officer-hours per year or roughly 3-5 full-time patrol officers. Most of that increase is attributable to the fact that all missing person reports must now be assigned to a police officer without delay. The following chart illustrates the workload impact in terms of the number of hours the VPD expend to activities related to missing persons."

³ VPD (February 24, 2021), Further Information on Budget Outlook for 2021, page 17



With this in mind, the VPD Board has advised us that any further cuts to their budget or requirement to redistribute resources to frontline policing will require a reduction of services from those areas that directly impact the relationship with their marginalized communities.

It is our view that public trust in the police is germane to operating as an effective police service. As recently witnessed in the media reports after the murder of Mr. George Floyd in Minneapolis, MN, in May 2020, the lack of public trust in the police played a significant role leading to a North America-wide undertaking to hold the police more accountable to the community.

While the various liaison positions within the VPD may or may not deal with “life and death” situations, they play an essential role in fostering relationships that are not focussed on “being friends with the police”, but instead promote a sense that issues that affect the safety and well-being in the community can be managed in a collaborative manner where the solutions come from several stakeholders, including the VPD.

VPD’s work with strengthening mental health programs and processes

Within the VPD policing model, attending to public safety matters related to mental health issues within the community is both a high frequency and high-risk activity. The VPD strives to enhance their community through several mental health programs in partnership with the City of Vancouver and Vancouver Coastal Health.

Taken from a report “Our Community in Need” outlining the VPD’s community-focused safety strategies, the following police-involved mental health programs include:⁴

Car 87

Car 87 is comprised of a VPD police officer (plainclothes) partnered with a nurse clinician/mental health professional to provide on-site assessment, management, and intervention services for individuals experiencing a mental health crisis. The unit is often referred through patrol files and other community service providers, utilizing the least intrusive resolution response for each situation. The program aims to reduce the need for patrol response, reduce unnecessary hospital admissions, and connect individuals in crisis to appropriate mental health services through community referrals.

⁴ VPD (November 2020), Our Community in Need, pages 9-14

The role of the police officer within the Car 87 program is essential for the safety of the health service provider in emergent, rapidly evolving, and potentially volatile situations, whereby an individual is in the midst of a mental health crisis without access to care. In addition, the VPD officer provides vital services during mental health crises in the case of *Section 28 Mental Health Act* apprehensions.

Project Link

Project LINK, created in 2011, is a collaboration among the Vancouver Police Board, the Vancouver Coastal Health Board, and the Providence Health Care (PHC) Board. Focusing on an overarching shift from a crisis response model to a community-based case management model that aims to prevent personal crises from occurring in the first place. Project Link strives to address the existing issues and circumstances related to mental health conditions while improving health services and criminal justice system outcomes.

Assertive Community Treatment (ACT)

Following the continuum of care, many Car 87 clients continue to access community mental health services following a mental health crisis through the Vancouver Coastal Health Access and Assessment Centre (AAC) and/or other community clinics, providing compliance with treatment plans. However, individuals with mental health issues can often be resistant to treatment. Therefore, it was determined that this traditional model of service provision was insufficient to address the existing gaps, with many individuals overlooked, without access to longer-term care and support.

In addition, for a small group of the most marginalized individuals, frequent use of the emergency medical system was the norm. With extensive police contacts, repeated cycling through the criminal justice system, and prevalent and pervasive barriers to housing and employment, this population experienced challenges with community living.

VPD officers provide critical support to keep the peace during visits with clients, many of whom have a history of violent offences and unstable treatment history, often with complex and/or concurrent disorders. In addition, VPD participation in ACT allows VCH healthcare providers to safely administer medications in the community while providing further context and collateral information about clients during ongoing assessments.

The role of the police within ACT further assists clients in navigating the criminal justice system, as VPD ACT members often accompany clients to court dates and hearings while providing knowledge and understanding for existing criminal charges. In doing so, VPD ACT members contribute to the decrease in the number of police contacts and encourage positive, prosocial behaviours. As a result, through an evidence-based, recovery-focused approach, significant reductions have occurred in both involved with the healthcare and criminal justice systems.

Assertive Outreach Team (AOT)

The Assertive Outreach Team (AOT) was created in 2014 through the Project Link initiative to provide short-term bridging services to assist clients in transitioning from emergency healthcare and/or criminal justice systems to long-term, community-based services, such as ACT. In addition, VPD police officers are allocated to work with VCH psychiatrists, nurses, and clinical supervisors, to reduce incidents of violence, self-harm, victimization, treatment avoidance, and engagement with the criminal justice system.

The role of the VPD within this collaborative program is more extensive than with ACT, as police officers provide community safety support and crisis de-escalation in this interim, transitional period. The presence of a VPD officer helps to ensure the safety and security of both the client and healthcare providers attempting to administer medications in treatment-averse patients. In addition, many AOT client

populations are individuals experiencing homelessness, so VPD AOT members are better equipped to locate clients for treatment services.

Early Warning System

The VPD Mental Health Unit (MHU) aims to reduce the number of individuals cycling through the criminal justice system due to untreated mental health disorders. The VPD MHU's data analyst pulls information for the EWS on a biweekly basis from daily police briefing reports, as well as files flagged with a mental health component in the Police Records Information Management Environment (PRIME) database. The top 150 individual names are compiled by the EWS on a biweekly basis and sent to AOT to determine the need for bridging supports and mental health interventions, thereby providing an opportunity for the interruption to the criminal justice system. This ability of the EWS to predict an imminent mental health crisis makes it invaluable for crime prevention and social health technology. As a referral tool for AOT pre-crisis intervention, not only will clients access necessary mental health treatment, but numerous criminal offences will also be effectively prevented.

While the City of Vancouver is the lead stakeholder, offering outreach services such as housing and other support, Vancouver Coastal Health is the primary caretaker for those requiring medical services either through Vancouver's two hospitals or outpatient services. Within these programs and services, the Vancouver Police are tasked to support this vulnerable group and provide safety and security to the caregivers and partners.

Over the past number of years, much has been discussed in the local and national media regarding a desire to curb the police as the first or primary responder to a mental health-related call for service. These models overwhelmingly result in a successful outcome for both the client and the police. However, there have been rare occasions where this has led to a tragic and fatal outcome. Combined with other factors such as race, or drug dependency, the public has demanded that a different approach be undertaken when a mental crisis requires a call for help. Recently, these public demands have lent themselves to the phrase "defund the police". It was suggested that public funds used to pay for policing should be reallocated to community programs directly related to diverse and marginalized communities.

The police, including the VPD, is the first to say that they would be happy to take a back seat to dealing with such calls for service. However, it would be difficult to imagine that the VPD could simply walk away from this duty without increasing the risk to the safety of all people involved, either as a client or service provider.

Quoted from this same report, the VPD has this to say regarding the conflicted position they are placed in when dealing with mental health-related calls for service.

"Crime prevention notwithstanding, the role of the police officer within each of these collaborative initiatives is key to its function and success, as healthcare workers are unable to fulfill their course of duty if subjected to unsafe and volatile working conditions. In addition, it is important to note that individuals with untreated mental health and/or concurrent disorders may escalate to aggression and violence, both against themselves or others; in either instance, police officers are required to de-escalate the situation safely."⁵

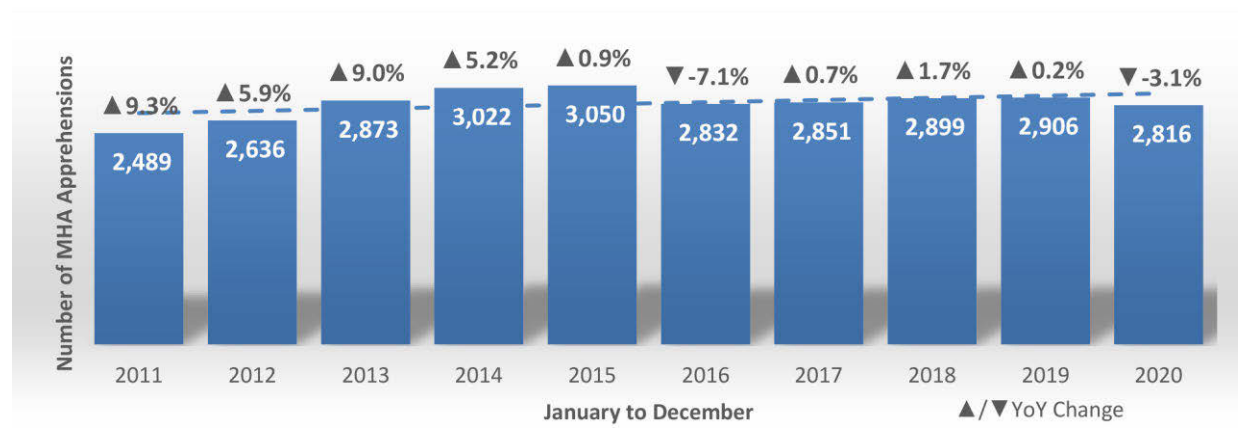
Essentially, the VPD's role within an integrated approach to mental illness issues and intervention within the community is multifaceted, including education, prevention, integration, and enforcement. Of the 13,592 mental health-related calls for service to the VPD in 2020, over 84% required police attendance,

⁵ VPD (November 2020), Our Community in Need, page 14.

as the situation involved harm, victimization, criminal offences, and mental health apprehensions. Additionally, over 12% involved the presence of weapons. We believe these roles are a core function of policing and not a “nice to have” service to the public.

As noted in the below 10-year trend chart reporting on 3rd quarter results, the workload associated with mental health calls for service has shown to be consistent in 2021, compared to the same 3rd quarter time period.⁶

10-Year Trend for Year-end Section 28 MHA Apprehensions



From 2011 to 2015, MHA apprehensions increased each year (from 2,489 to 3,050). Since then, these apprehensions decreased in 2016 (2,832), increased for three consecutive years, then decreased 3.1% in 2020 (2,816). Apprehensions increased by 13.1% when comparing the first three quarters of 2020 to 2011. Overall, section 28 MHA apprehensions have remained somewhat stable over the past ten years. However, there has been a creep in calls for service of approximately 13%.⁷

In their submission to the Province, the VPD commented upon their inability to reduce the workload associated with mental health-related calls for service. Specifically, they say:

“For various legal, logistical, and safety reasons, these are not calls that the police can triage or divert to other partner agencies. Instead, many of these calls are requests for assistance from partner agencies and other service providers, including fire, medical and mental health professionals themselves.”⁸

In a letter to the Vancouver Police Board, the Board’s Finance Committee expresses a desire to ensure that funding remains in place so the VPD can continue collaborating with community partners regarding matters impacting mental health and homelessness within the community.

⁶ Note: Due to this report’s timelines, 2021 year end statistics were not available, and therefore could not be used for a 10-year comparison.

⁷ VPD(October 21, 2021), Quarter 3, 2021 Public Safety Indicators Report. Report #211P01, page 10

⁸ VPD (June 2021), 2021 Budget Appeal Pursuant to Section 27(3) of the Police Act, page 58 paragraph 4.107

Specifically, the Finance Committee states:

“The Committee recognizes the complex social issues in the City and competing priorities for funding. The Committee agrees that the mental health and homelessness crisis needs to be addressed and appropriately funded. Over the past ten years, the Board and the VPD have been highlighting these issues and supporting partnerships with mental health services to collaborate on various treatment plans and approaches to reduce harm in the community (Improving health outcomes for the people of Vancouver requires an integrated multi-government and multi-agency health-focused approach involving long-term strategy through coordination. Any discussion to reallocate funds from the VPD to alternative services must consider the adequacy and availability of necessary support structures and systems to ensure public safety.”⁹

Appendix 2 of the same document provides the Board with background information regarding the VPD’s journey to addressing matters related to VPD resourcing pressures, referencing a 2008 VPD report entitled “Lost in Transition,” which highlighted the lack of community capacity within the mental health system, and its subsequent drain on police resources which was failing those suffering from mental illness and addiction.

This appendix backgrounder outlined a series of 14 accomplishments and initiatives since that time, which has led to significant change across both the public safety and health sectors. This integrated approach outlined within these initiatives forms the VPD’s proactive engagement with the community to strengthen this relationship in keeping with the goals of their Strategic Plan.

From the plethora of letters submitted by many community stakeholders in support of the Board’s 2021 operating budget request, it is clear that matters related to the community’s safety and well-being continue to be an ongoing concern. Therefore, we can only conclude that the VPD’s approach to dealing with this community issue continues to be highly supported and a high priority to the community, the VPD, and the Board. Therefore, the significance of the efforts and strategy employed by the VPD to deal with mental health-related calls for service, in our view, place it a category that is a vital core policing service.

The Potential for the VPD to Pull Away from Mental Health Related Calls for Service

In their report to the Director, the VPD commented that they are responsible for attending a broad range of situations to protect the public and prevent tragic outcomes. They refer to these situations as a quality of life issue call for service, which may turn out to be crimes or the potential to become crimes.

Unfortunately, it is not until a VPD officer attends the scene will they know what, if any, response or investigation may be required. The VPD further state that call types associated with “assisting the general public”, “assist under the Mental Health Act”, “assist police/fire/ambulance”, general disturbances or suicidal persons account for over 18% of their call load in 2019. These categories represent an increase in actual call volume of over 25% compared to 2007.¹⁰

The VPD further state that their studies indicate that contrary to those who might suggest that these specific calls for service would be better suited for others to respond to, only 16%, or eight calls per day, could fall into that category. In the absence of any reasonable method for the police to predict that their services were not required, that judgement can only be made through an assessment made by the officer once they arrive upon the scene.

⁹ Vancouver Police Board Finance Committee (November 30, 2020), Report # 2011F03, page2

¹⁰ VPD(June 2021), 2021 Budget Appeal Pursuant to Section 27(3) of the Police Act, page 58, paragraph 4.106

When it comes to calls for assistance related to mental health matters, the VPD offers the following comment:

“Moreover, it should be noted that there is currently no other agency besides police that can safely, adequately, and effectively deal with mental health crisis calls. Only police have the required combination of statutory authority, crisis intervention/de-escalation training, self-defence or use of force training, and 24/7 coverage via a deployment model that is flexible and adaptable.”¹¹

The Vancouver Homelessness Crises

The findings from the 2020 homeless count show that 2,095 individuals were facing homelessness at the time of the count, including 547 unsheltered individuals. The VPD views the issue as a social condition reflective of society’s failure to support those most vulnerable and marginalized. Often, individuals experiencing homelessness due to a lack of access to affordable and stable housing are further overwhelmed with various personal concerns, including addiction, trauma, criminal victimization, physical health concerns, and complex mental health conditions. Given the complex needs of many individuals experiencing homelessness, the VPD approach to managing their response to calls for service is to default in favour of housing supports instead of criminalization and punishment.

Many individuals experiencing homelessness simultaneously live with complex substance use disorders and/or mental health conditions. As a result, outreach workers risk falling victim to aggression or risk of violence by those clients who may suffer from severe and untreated mental health concerns, with behaviours exacerbated by substance use. VPD presence through the HOC position helps protect individuals involved in community outreach work by de-escalating during collaborative outreach endeavours.

In addition to providing a supportive role to other stakeholders, the VPD is heavily invested in dealing with the fallout of homeless encampments. To that end, this specific homelessness situation has recently garnered a great deal of public and media attention when drawing attention to the impact the encampments are having on the community and those also living within the encampment itself. Unfortunately, the lack of timely attention to the encampments has propagated itself to widespread criminal behaviour through threats, violence, damage to property, property crime, to the illicit drug trade often undertaken to self-medicate. Furthermore, it is not lost on the community that this behaviour tends to be experienced in the general community but can also be found within the encampment itself. Many of the encampment residents are often victims of violent crime.

The VPD plays an essential role in managing and supporting public safety in encampments and is relied upon to carry out court-ordered injunctions when the locations become too dangerous. For example, the HOC, VPD Neighborhood Police Officers, and frontline officers have been heavily involved in the safe, secure, and timely evacuation of the Oppenheimer Park encampment. Having first emerged in October 2018, the Oppenheimer Park encampment resulted in 593 calls for service in 2018, which increased to 899 calls in 2019. Their involvement then moved to assist in evacuating several other encampments in 2021. The VPD’s focus was to prioritize the public safety impact of encampments, including the violence and victimization both outside and inside of these encampments.

This 3-way confluence of mental health issues, addiction, and homelessness are intertwined between social dysfunction and criminal behaviour that place the VPD in a position that does not permit them to choose where they can put their resources easily. A long-standing approach to an effective crime

¹¹ Ibid, page 59, paragraph 4.113

reduction strategy is to focus on its three tenets: prolific offender management, focussing on crime hotspots and doing your part to tackle root crime causation. These tenets are interdependent upon each other, and it is our view and experience that a police service cannot be successful in one area to the expense of the other.

To that end, our view is that the various programs, initiatives, and strategies undertaken by the VPD are core to achieving their goal to engage with their community through relationship building, mutual understanding, and building trust with their diverse communities. Furthermore, our view is that no other agency within the City of Vancouver is either tasked with or capable of conducting the specific duties placed upon the VPD that allows for these services to be delivered to these diverse and marginalized communities in a safe manner.

2. VPD's Strategic Goal to Enhance Public Safety

Addressing Community Concerns Affecting Public Safety

Throughout the 2021 Board budgeting process, the Board received many written submissions that included concerns they had regarding public safety. The most predominant issues raised through these submissions were concerns regarding the impact to the community regarding the problems related to homelessness, mental health, addiction, the physical deterioration of the community by the presence of unsightly garbage, and graffiti.

In addition to these concerns, several letters outlining community concerns were brought forward to the VPD through their strategic planning consultation processes. These concerns focused on public drinking and disorderly conduct, graffiti, and the sale of stolen property in open-air markets.

The VPD response to these community issues is primarily managed by deploying special response teams, much of it on overtime.

Liquor-Related Disorder Within the City of Vancouver

Over the course of 2021, liquor-related enforcement was curtailed in the Granville Strip due to Provincial Health Orders associated with Covid-19. While liquor establishment operations may have been curtailed or even closed, enforcement teams were subsequently required to be redeployed to deal with the increase in non-compliant indoor gatherings as well as large gatherings in public spaces. While it might be suggested that the Covid-19 pandemic may have reduced pressures in a specific area of the city, calls for service related to alcohol-related gatherings leading to street disorder did not lessen the VPD's workload.

This year also saw an increase in street-level robberies and assaults. While this will be expanded upon later in this report, the increase in these violent crimes places additional pressure upon the police to create special teams to target certain violent hotspots. These hotspots were flashpoints for random assaults on people, widespread property damage to businesses, and mass shoplifting incidents where store employees and security personnel were also assaulted. In addition, in response to community concerns associated with street vending, the VPD assigned officers to deal with these issues. Additional officers on overtime were also required on weekends in collaboration with City of Vancouver engineers and sanitation.

Aside from those concerns raised through public discourse, a more significant issue that reflects upon the sense of community safety is those associated with a dramatic increase in public demonstrations and the tragedy resulting from drug overdoses.

While it might be suggested that some of these VPD activities may be discretionary, circumstances and government decisions did not leave much room for discretion. For example, decisions by the government

related to Covid-19 restrictions place most enforcement action requirements upon police agencies. Furthermore, many community outreach strategies were curtailed because of Covid-19, which the VPD suggests led to further issues, particularly in any ongoing work within BC Housing and SRO's and other supportive housing.

Resourcing pressures related to Public Demonstrations

Taken directly from a VPD report to the Board:

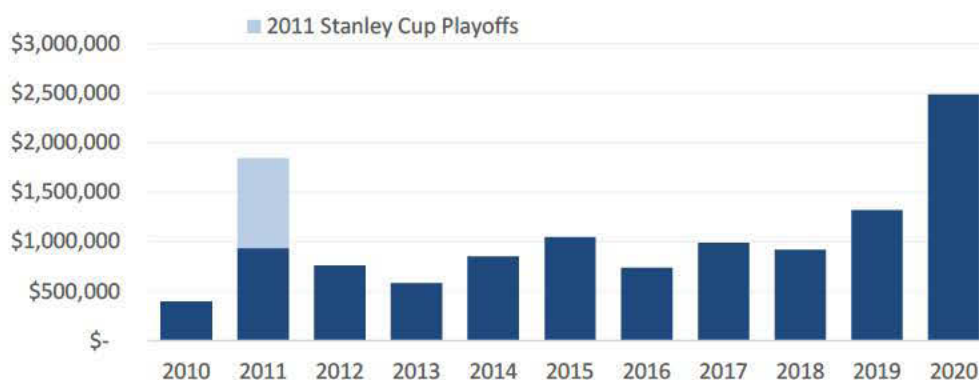
*"The year 2020 saw an unusually high number of protests compared to previous years, and 2021 is on track to exceed this number. Protests and demonstrations span a wide variety of themes with the majority related to the pandemic, the environment, and political and social issues. An increasing number of protests or demonstrations have Vancouver as the centre stage for groups around British Columbia. There were 589 events in all of 2019, 563 in all of 2020, and in the first eight months of 2021 there have been 587 events. The VPD provided staffing for 40% of all public order events in the first eight months of 2021. It is projected there will be over 840 protests or demonstrations for the 2021 year. This is a 49% increase over all of 2020."*¹²

Non-recoverable Policing Costs Associated With Public Events, Protests, and Demonstrations

Responding to, and managing public protests, has risen in both scale, size and duration. While somewhat reflected in their strategic plan requiring a strategy to handle such demonstrations, it is impossible to plan for both the financial and resource requirements.

In 2020, the VPD saw an unusually high number of protests and demonstrations compared to previous years. According to the VPD, 2021 is on track to exceed this number. There were 589 events in all of 2019, 563 in all of 2020, and in the first eight months of 2021 there have been 587 events, with anticipation of over 840 protests before the end of 2021. The VPD provided a presence for 40% of all public order events in the first eight months of 2021. Over 840 protests or demonstrations were projected for the 2021 year, representing a 49% increase over 2020.

As shown in the chart, the unrecoverable costs of these demonstrations in 2020 were close to 2.4 million dollars. It is estimated to be close to 3 million dollars, representing a significant portion of the VPD's anticipated budget reduction for 2021.



¹² VPD(October 21, 2021), 2021 Strategic Policing Issues, page 1

The Drug Overdose Tragedy

In 2016 the Province declared a medical state of emergency when it was noted that more and more people were dying from an accidental drug overdose, mainly as a result of fentanyl-laced heroin. In the five years since, the Province of BC has seen new records set each and every year, including 2021. With little hope of any immediate intervention or prevention solutions, the VPD is also tasked with providing a multi-level service to the community and BC Coroner's Service.

As demonstrated by the below-noted table taken from a report released by the BC Coroner's Service¹³, the City of Vancouver has consistently been the number one location for illicit toxicity deaths. It is also the location for twice as many deaths as the City of Surrey, which is number 2 on the list. While this gap is large, it is disproportionately higher based on their comparative population.

Table 10: Illicit Drug Toxicity Deaths by Top Townships of Injury in 2021, 2011-2021^[3]

Township	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Vancouver	69	65	80	102	138	231	374	397	244	419	419
Surrey	42	44	36	44	76	118	181	215	119	223	221
Victoria	17	18	25	20	23	68	95	97	62	122	110
Abbotsford	16	7	10	7	27	40	52	41	44	66	68
Burnaby	10	10	13	11	15	40	44	49	29	57	61
Kelowna	14	8	12	12	20	47	73	56	34	61	60
Kamloops	2	5	8	7	7	44	38	47	26	60	60
Chilliwack	8	8	6	6	10	13	21	37	21	37	46
Prince George	6	10	7	10	12	18	24	51	25	58	41
Langley	10	5	10	10	10	31	36	33	23	38	40
Nanaimo	8	6	20	16	18	30	56	38	27	38	37
Maple Ridge	4	5	10	14	29	28	33	29	13	39	35
New Westminster	6	3	5	9	12	10	24	37	20	37	34
Vernon	7	1	11	6	8	12	24	23	14	27	33
Richmond	4	1	3	3	6	14	28	12	13	19	28
Other Township	72	74	78	92	118	249	390	396	269	464	489
Total	295	270	334	369	529	993	1,493	1,558	983	1,765	1,782

The VPD advised that they do not typically respond to an emergency call for a drug overdose if at all possible. This decision was made out of an abundance of caution to ensure that their presence would not be seen as a catalyst that would prevent someone from calling 911 for assistance. Yet, they are frequently called as a backup to other first responders who seek their help and conduct sudden death investigations if the situation turns tragic.

In addition to the work pressures related to calls for service for overdose-related incidents, the more significant pressure placed upon the VPD, like all other police agencies, lies within drug trafficking and importation investigations. The VPD is not only engaged in local drug investigations conducted by their own Drug Section, but they also provide resources to the various integrated units within British Columbia. They are also heavily engaged with organized crime gang activity, which are the major drivers for importing and distributing illegal narcotics in British Columbia.

¹³ BC Coroners Service, (December 9, 2021) Illicit Drug Toxicity Deaths in BC January 1, 2011 – October 31, 2021, page 11

Improving Road Safety For Everyone

Before the 2017 Operational Review, traffic enforcement by patrol officers was noted to diminish each year from 2009 onwards as resources levels with the VPD began their downward trajectory. As a result, violation tickets written by patrol members decreased substantially from 18,251 in 2009 to 5,338 in 2016, a decrease of 71.9%.

The Annual Number of Traffic Violation Tickets Written by Patrol Officers



During this same period (2009-2016), the number of reported traffic collisions with injuries increased, as portrayed below.¹⁵

Annual number of ICBC-reported traffic collisions with injuries in Vancouver.



When comparing these two charts together, one can see that as the number of traffic tickets written either climbed or dropped, there was an inverse but corresponding direction with the number of injury-related crashes within the City of Vancouver. While we could not secure long-term data related to traffic fatalities, the 4-year trend, except 2020, which appears to be an anomaly, also increased, as noted in the table below.

¹⁵ VPD (February 24, 2021), Report to the Board, Further Information on Budget Outlook 2021, page 35

City of Vancouver Traffic Fatalities	
Year	# of Fatalities
2018	13
2019	14
2020	8
2021 (end of November)	19

In addition to the VPD's collaboration with the City of Vancouver's Transportation 2040 Program, the Department invests considerable resources towards a wide variety of provincial and federal traffic initiatives focussed on impaired driving, distracted driving, speed enforcement, and several public educational programs. Given the priority placed on these programs by multi-level government entities, it is reasonable to conclude that the resources utilized to deliver these traffic enforcement strategies are a core police function. Where the VPD has been able to carve out any traffic-related non-core functions, they have done so through the use of their Traffic Authority personnel, often on a cost-recovery basis.

As part of every police agency's mandate, the VPD places a significant emphasis on traffic safety and enforcement. The VPD is supported by a full-time traffic enforcement team, participates in the Integrated Road Safety Unit, and encourages their patrol members to dedicate time to traffic enforcement duties.

While the VPD advises that their overall proactive policing work improves overall community safety, traffic enforcement will be impacted by the budget pressures. The Police Board reports that with continued pressures placed on their District Patrol Team members to respond to calls for service, there continues to be little opportunity for patrol members to conduct traffic-related duties.

3. The VPD's Strategic Goal to Fighting Crime

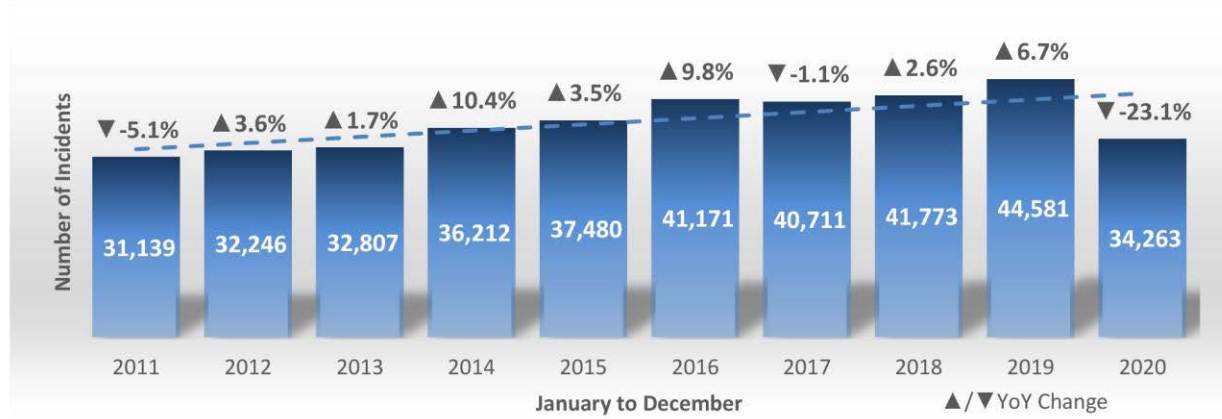
Combating Property Crimes and its Drivers

Over the course of the VPD's 2017-2021 Strategic Plan and their 2021 Strategic Business Plan, the VPD's approach to property crime is geared towards a number of proactive initiatives.

At an operational level, except in 2020, property crime has increased year-over-year since 2011, as noted within these series of charts.¹⁶

¹⁶ VPD(February 3, 2021), Year End 2020 KPI Report to the Board, Report #2102P01, page 9

10-Year Trend for Property Crime Incidents



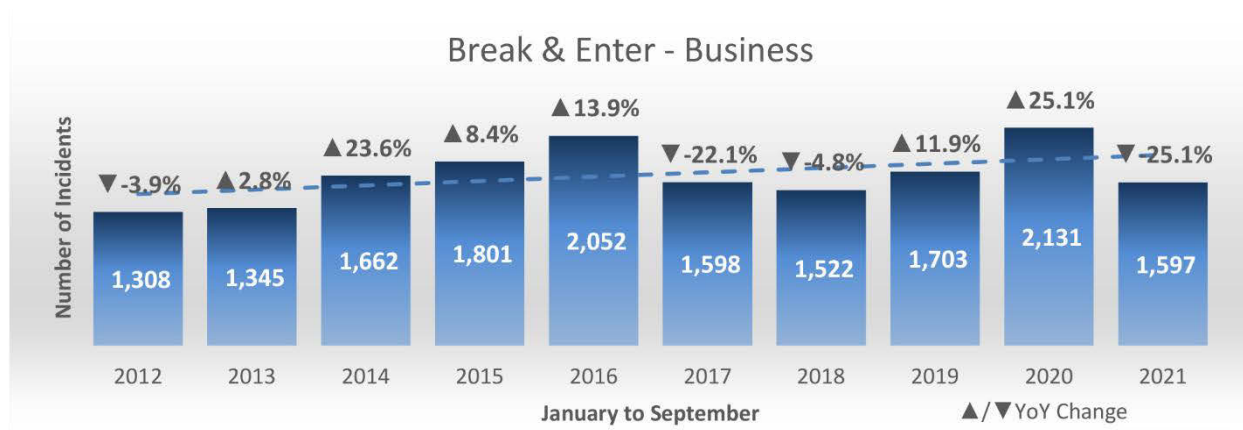
The Downward Trend in Property Crime in 2020

The VPD advised that despite the sharp fall in property crime in 2020, much can be attributed to the COVID-19 pandemic and the associated slowdown in economic activity. As noted in the first “10-Year Trend in Property Crime” chart, Vancouver’s total police-reported property crime had been following a

generally increasing trajectory since 2011. When the Covid-19 pandemic first appeared in March 2020, several Provincial Health Orders were introduced, businesses shut their doors, people began to work from home, and overall vehicular traffic within the City dropped dramatically. With these circumstances at play, it is reasonable to surmise that opportunity for property crime also dropped. With fewer vehicles in parking lots, there were fewer thefts from autos. With more people staying home, there is less opportunity for homes to be broken into. However, it is our view that if Covid-19 was an influencer on these property crime statistics, then as the impact of Covid-19 goes away and businesses open up, these statistics will change. Property crime could increase, thereby adding additional workload pressure upon VPD resources.

Of the total list of all crimes measured by the VPD, the overall drop in property crime can be attributed mainly to a 40% reduction in theft from auto (TFA) in 2020, compared to 2019. This one crime type alone makes up almost 29% of all total property crime in Vancouver. In terms of workload, the crime of theft from automobiles has little impact upon police workload regardless of which direction they go, as most of these crimes are reported online or handled through E-Comm. Additionally, simple thefts dropped by 26% and represented approximately 28% of all property crimes. As a result, these two crime types represent over 57% of the VPD's property crime statistics.

The influence of Covid-19 on crime would also explain the increase in business break-ins, as many businesses were shut down in 2020, which created an increased opportunity for them to be victimized. Therefore, it is not surprising, as more businesses began to open up, business break and enters were noted to drop as represented in the year-to-date third quarter statistics contained within the chart below.¹⁷



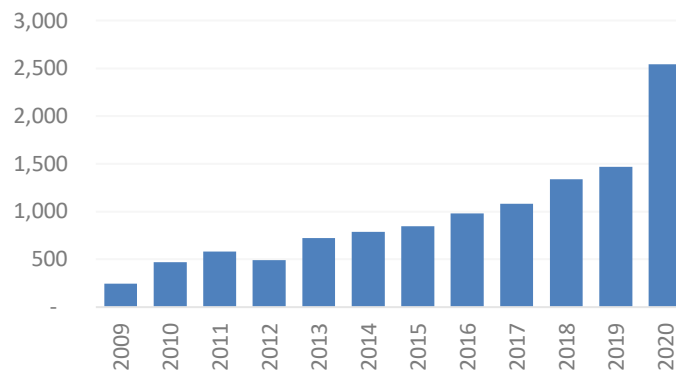
Police Response Related to Property Crimes

Except for a situation where a crime such as a Break and Enter in progress may garner an immediate police response, most other property crime investigations are handled as a “reporting exercise”, also known as a Priority-4 matter. In some circumstances, a property crime report may be considered a Priority-3, which may garner a police response that may take hours to work its way up the queue.

¹⁷ VPD (October 4, 2021), Report to the Board #211P01, Quarter 2, 2021 Public Safety Indicators Report, page 8

Cybercrime within the City of Vancouver

Like other communities, Cybercrime and Financial Crimes in Vancouver are an exponentially growing problem for all residents and businesses. The following chart reflects the growth of Cybercrime within the City over the past eleven years.¹⁸



In their report to the Board, the VPD stated that Cybercrime increased ten-fold over this period, more than doubling every four years. More recently, the number of cases handled by the Internet Child Exploitation Unit increased more than six-fold between 2018 and 2020 (from 69 to 436).¹⁹

There is growing concern that vulnerable residents such as the elderly and new immigrants are a highly targeted group for victimization. More recently, many businesses and government institutions are becoming the target of computer infrastructure hacking and ransomware. This one crime type alone is worrisome enough to have become a specific priority for the City of Vancouver, who is also looking to the VPD for solutions.

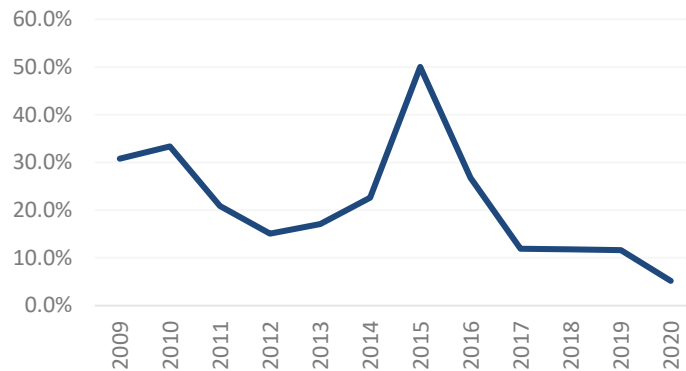
Given the exponential growth in Cybercrime, the VPD has, whenever possible, used internal efficiencies to mitigate the impact that this was having on the community. For example, before 2021, the VPD created a small Cybercrime Unit by reassigning existing officers. In addition, the Internet Child Exploitation Unit was expanded by reassigning investigators from other areas with the Investigation Division. Creating these units was identified as a priority as part of the recommendations made during the 2017 Operational Review. Aside from a recommendation that two new civilian positions be added to these units, all positions for these units came from reassignments from other areas.

As expected, the results are predictable when resources are not put into place to deal with an exponentially growing crime trend. In the case of financial Cybercrime and identity theft, clearance rates for these crime types plummeted in the years leading up to the 2017 Operation Review. As reflected in the below-noted chart, when resources were taken from the Financial Crime Unit to form the Internet Child Exploitation Unit, the Financial Crimes Unit's ability to solve the increasing number of financial cybercrimes remained challenged. In 2016, the total economic impact of Cybercrime was approximately \$8 million. In 2021, this number increased to almost \$33 million in cybercrime-related losses.

¹⁸ VPD (February 24, 2021), Report to the Vancouver Police Board, Further Information on the Budget Outlook for 2021, page 8

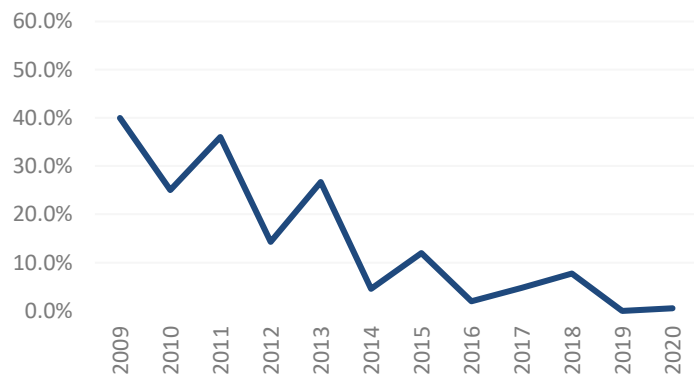
¹⁹ Ibid page 9

Clearance rate for fraud, identity theft and currency counterfeiting cases handled by the Financial Crime Unit.



Furthermore, while the VPD’s Internet Child Exploitation Unit was created after the 2017 Operational Review, the small number of resources dedicated to this unit were challenged to solve these crimes. At that time, there were approximately 60 Internet Child Exploitation investigations. Five years later, the VPD opened 456 investigations, with no new resources added to this unit. In 2009, the VPD solved 40% of their child exploitation cases but dropped well below 10% by 2016. Currently, the solve rate for these investigations is negligible. This is not to say that the VPD is solving fewer cases, but it demonstrates that as the number of these crimes continues to increase, the VPD is simply unable to keep up.

Clearance rate for child sexual abuse material and online child luring cases handled by the Internet Child Exploitation Unit.



As a matter of note, even if the Board had successfully obtained the requested funding for their 2021 budget, no new positions would have been created for Cybercrime or Internet Child Exploitation Units. However, one position was added due to workplace accommodation. As a result, however, the VPD is faced with the possibility that resources from these units may be removed from either the Financial Crimes Unit or the Internet Child Exploitation Unit to support other investigative Divisions within the Department.

It is our view that cybercrime will be an ever-growing pressure upon all police agencies in Canada, not only in an increase in volume but also in complexity. While the internet is a platform that primarily facilitates financial criminal behaviour, the dark web is now used to illegally traffic narcotics, weapons,

identity theft, dirty nuclear materials, human trafficking, and terrorism activities. This criminal platform speaks to additional workload for every municipal, provincial, and federal policing priority. With this issue on our doorsteps, the VPD will be significantly challenged to address the issue as a policing priority in the immediate future.

Fighting Violent Crime and its Causes

Fighting Violent Crime at a Strategic Level

As outlined in their 2021 Strategic Business Plan, the VPD's strategy include the following initiatives:

- Strategically target high-risk violent offenders by gathering and sharing intelligence.
- Continue to target high-risk violent offenders through inadmissible patron programs and asset forfeiture.
- Enhance enforcement of firearms and other weapons.
- Leverage technology and analytics to enhance gang and guns investigations and court disclosure.
- Combat domestic violence and sexually-based crimes by supporting all victims and actively targeting offenders, particularly those who prey upon vulnerable and marginalized communities.
- Target human trafficking and exploitation.

The VPD views these initiatives as critical components to key decisions that must be made when allocating both human and financial resources. The VPD also invests considerable resources within their analytical units to help guide the Department's response to violent crime. Analysts help the operational side of the VPD to identify those individuals who present the highest risk to public safety within the community. Whether it is serial bank robbers, organized gangs, or those at the highest risk of committing domestic violence, the work of the analytical unit helps the management team make the hard decisions of whom they will target as a priority.

The VPD also knows that as a police agency, they cannot do this work alone. For example, some of the most violent offenders are not only transients within the Lower Mainland, but they also move across the Province, across the country, and travel in from around other countries. To that end, the VPD analysts also track the frequency and home provinces of those who come to the attention of the police. With this reality, the VPD is heavily invested in participating in and providing resources to other police agencies as part of BC's integrated or regional policing teams. While these initiatives and strategies form a critical component of the VPD's Strategic Plan, they also directly address several Provincial Priorities outlined earlier in this report.

Fighting Violent Crime at an Operational Level

The following table contains statistical data from Stats Canada²⁰ information covering 2009 to 2020. Unfortunately, data for 2021 is not yet available from Stats Canada, given this report's timeline.

²⁰

<https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=3510018401&pickMembers%5B0%5D=1.23&pickMembers%5B1%5D=2.3&cubeTimeFrame.startYear=2009&cubeTimeFrame.endYear=2020&referencePeriods=20090101%2C20200101>

Violent Crime 2009-2020													
Year	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2020 vs 2019
# of Criminal Code Offences(2)	51779	49707	48802	48796	49402	49204	49861	54118	54008	57178	57948	49226	-15.0%
Violent Offences	10838	10055	10055	9218	9832	8221	8057	7645	7859	8343	8793	9168	4.3%
Homicides	18	12	15	8	6	10	16	13	19	15	12	19	58.0%
Attempt Murder	19	18	15	25	28	27	23	31	16	24	26	14	-53.0%
Assault PO	104	199	251	198	130	171	159	143	130	162	218	206	11.0%
Assaults Level 1	3794	3736	3664	3375	3268	3149	2873	2662	2851	3041	3226	3006	-9.5%
Assaults Level 2	1529	1533	1647	1603	1579	1345	1417	1469	1523	1540	1737	2090	20.0%
Assaults Level 3	55	76	60	72	72	66	54	67	60	48	59	54	-8.5%
Total Assaults	5378	5345	5371	5050	4919	4560	4344	4198	4434	4629	5022	5150	2.5%
Sexual Assault Level 1	442	472	396	403	457	481	471	474	509	568	561	481	-14.9%
Sexual Assault Level 2	14	16	11	12	20	14	14	12	12	9	5	9	79.0%
Sexual Assault Level 3	3	8	3	3	8	0	5	2	4	0	3	3	0.0%
Sex Assault Against Children	42	46	47	51	58	66	54	65	97	82	72	80	10.3%
Child Luring via Computer	10	13	9	3	4	6	3	8	24	11	6	26	433.0%
Robbery	1464	1323	1189	1148	947	770	881	752	656	685	690	700	1.5%
Uttering Threats	1819	1635	1589	1267	1209	1152	1009	923	878	838	1007	1184	17.0%
Total Weapons Violations	1000	868	810	779	952	518	451	510	630	614	829	1009	20.9%
Arson	182	177	244	198	190	192	188	222	193	238	233	291	24.0%

The VPD advised that violent crimes such as assaults increased in 2020 compared to 2019. Our analysis would indicate that in the five years from 2016 to 2021, assaults have grown year over year, including in the 2020 pandemic year, even when many licensed establishments were closed due to Provincial Health Orders. As a note, level-1 sexual assaults were below 2019 levels, but level-2 sexual assaults were higher in 2020. The drop in level-1 assaults can be attributed to the decline in the number of complaints associated with “groping” that may be common in the bar scene.

The VPD report increases in other assault categories. For example, although it is not noted in the above table, the VPD report that Intimate Partner Violence is at an all-time high, 2.4% higher in 2020 over 2019.

Race-related Violent Crime

Hate crimes increased 97% from 142 incidents in 2019 to 280 in 2020. Anti-Asian hate crime incidents rose by 717% from 2019 (12) to 2020 (98).²¹ Some of these incidents were caught on camera, garnering worldwide media attention. Many of these hate crime-related incidents were perpetrated against people of Asian descent, many of whom were either elderly or female.

We believe that race-related crime will continue to grow, particularly in light of the current trend where people of Asian descent are being blamed for introducing and spreading the Covid-19 virus. This situation will, in turn, place additional workload pressures upon the VPD to solve these crimes under the watchful eye of the mainstream media.

Random Acts of Violence Upon Business Employees

In another trending behaviour, there were an increasing number of incidents related to violence in the workplace inflicted upon business employees by customers or those involved in shoplifting. For example, there were instances where hot beverages were tossed at fast-food employees, and items placed on the counter were thrown at them. In addition, shoplifters were assaulting store employees, security guards, customers and responding police attempting to stop people who simply walked into a store and openly walked out with stolen goods. In the period ending November 14, 2021, there were 844 incidents in 2021, which increased 43% over 2020.

²¹ VPD(February 3, 2021), year-end 2020 Year-to-date Key Performance Indicators Report, Board Report #2102P01

Random Street Assaults

As part of his report to the Board on October 21, 2021, the Chief Constable stated that between September 1, 2020, and August 31, 2021, there were 1,700 incidents (roughly 4.5 incidents per day) of random assaults on people minding their own business while out and about in the City of Vancouver. Of those, 47% involved a knife or some type of weapon. In many of these incidents, these were unprovoked and entirely random.

The VPD Response to Violent Crime

Generally speaking, response to violent crimes committed within the City has been handled by the VPD in an evidence-based manner. Analysts provide intelligence as to who and where the VPD might direct their attention regarding matters related to prolific violent offenders. In addition, the VPD has created special teams with resources reallocated from other units and on overtime to focus on specific targets or have teams deployed to particular areas that are more susceptible to incidents involving violent crime.

For example, in a press release dated December 6, 2021, the VPD announced the results of an anti-shoplifting campaign in the Vancouver downtown core. Over 30 days, a team of police officers conducted 323 investigations and made 105 arrests involving the thefts of over \$75,000 in-store merchandise. Of those incidents, 23 cases involved the use of a weapon which also netted a seizure of over 35 weapons over the course of this police operation. The VPD further advised that most arrested people live with complex social needs like drug addiction, homelessness, poverty and mental illness and are prolific offenders. In addition, most of those arrested told the police they were planning to sell the stolen goods either online or in the Downtown Eastside to make a few dollars.

Homicides Within Vancouver

Over the last 11 years, the number of homicides in the City of Vancouver has remained within the range of 13-19 except for two years (2012 and 2013), where they were in the single digits. There were 19 homicides in Vancouver in 2020, which increased 58% over 2019 (12 homicides). As a matter of note, there were 18 homicides in 2021. There was also a corresponding 50% increase in the number of firearms seized in 2020 compared to 2019. Most homicides are related to the ongoing gang conflict, with no sign of slowing down in the near future and did not follow the downward trend associated with Covid-19 Provincial Health Orders.

The VPD has opted to retain their own homicide unit and not participate in the Lower Mainland IHIT model. This decision was based on their assessment that it was more fiscally advantageous for the VPD to remain a standalone unit. Given the uptick in homicides over the past four years, the VPD had intended to supplement their Homicide Unit with additional resources in 2021. However, in the absence of additional funding from the 2021 Operational Budget, the VPD will be required to reallocate resources to this unit from other areas within the Department.

Proactive vs Reactive Policing Responses to Crimes and Calls For Service

For several years, the VPD made “response times” to calls for service a strategic priority as part of all previous 5-year strategic plans. This, however, was not a measurement standard used for their 2017-2021 Strategic Plan. Yet, when it comes to crime prevention and crime interdiction, there is no doubt that the faster an officer can respond to a crime in progress, the more likely they are to diffuse a crisis, minimize violence, or prevent a person’s property from being stolen.

The VPD continues to monitor their response times to Priority-1 and Priority-2 calls as part of an overall measurement of their effectiveness in driving down crime. As exemplified in the below-noted chart, response times for Priority-1 calls for service have increased year-over-year since 2011 and even before that, as referenced in other documents provided to us as part of our review.

10-Year Trend for Year-end P1 Response Times



As a matter of interest, it is reasonable to assume that response times to Priority-1 complaints would increase if there were fewer resources available to respond, as exemplified in the period between 2009-2016. However, after the 2017 Operational Review, VPD resources grew by 80 officers over the first three years of the 5-year Operational Review Plan from 2018-2020. While recognizing that not all of these resources would be deployed to the District Patrol Team, despite these increases, response to Priority-1 calls for service continued to increase, as demonstrated within the above-noted chart. The only exception to this is for 2020, when response times improved, primarily driven by a 10% reduction in calls for service over this same period.

In addition to this reduction to calls for service in 2020, our review indicated that a multitude of temporary factors, primarily influenced the impact of Covid-19, also contributed to this reduction in response times. For example, the VPD also had a greater presence within their District Patrol Team. This increase was attributed to the fact that in-service training was not taking place, and courtrooms were also shut down. Therefore, with fewer officers being away from their primary duties, they could spend more time on patrol responding to calls for service.

As exemplified in the above-noted chart, the average response time to Priority-1 calls, typically violent in-progress incidents, increased steadily from eight minutes in 2009 to nine minutes and 44 seconds in 2016. The VPD also reduced their resources by 59 sworn staff members during this same period. This represented a 22% jump in their response times to these high-priority calls for service. Response times to Priority-2 calls, which typically involve in-progress property theft or damage, increased by 41%. The average response times to Priority-3 and Priority-4 calls increased by 20%.²²

For the VPD, patrol response times are a key performance indicator that emphasizes their ability to intervene in Priority-1 complaints successfully. To quote the VPD:

“Response time was shown to be a key predictor of the solve rate, the charge rate and, ultimately, the conviction rate. As response times increased, these three measures of effectiveness declined in Vancouver. This reflects the fact that police response delays can make the difference between saving a life, preventing someone from jumping from a bridge, catching a hit & run suspect before

²² VPD(February 24, 2021) Report to the Board, Further Information on the Budget Outlook for 2021. page 28

he or she leaves the scene of a serious crash, catching a homicide suspect before he or she flees the scene or gets rid of the murder weapon, and so forth.”²³

Minimum Staffing Levels & Officer Availability to Respond to Priority-1 Complaints

An additional consideration regarding response times is the mere availability of officers to respond in the first place. In a report to their Board, the VPD commented on the correlation between resource levels and response times from 2009 onwards.²⁴

“In 2009, VPD patrol teams deployed at minimum staffing levels 31% of the time. Because of vacancies and staffing pressures, however, 40% of all patrol shifts in 2016 were staffed at minimum staffing levels. As a result, the level of service provided to the public declined. Between 2009 and 2016, the average number of calls waiting to be dispatched to patrol officers increased by 76.9% and the average number of patrol units available to be dispatched decreased by 14%. In 2009, there was an average of 1.1 instances per day where a Priority-1 call was received and there were no patrol units available to respond. By 2016, the frequency of this worst-case dispatch scenario had doubled to 2.2 times per day.”

Another critical area related to the VPD’s ability to deal with crime at the patrol level can be found in the number of times within a shift an officer might be available to conduct proactive enforcement activities or focus their efforts through a more significant presence within identified problem areas. But, again, there is nothing that speaks more to this than a police agency’s ability to conduct traffic enforcement and proactive patrols, particularly in problem areas where there might be a disproportionate number of injury motor vehicle crashes.

As previously reported, proactive traffic enforcement activities dropped and rose proportionally with the overall authorized strength within the VPD. It was also reported that the number of injury-related crashes decreased when traffic enforcement increased.

While the District Patrol Team’s ability to conduct traffic enforcement duties becomes stretched, vehicle crashes and traffic-related fatalities were also noted to increase. Additionally, the likelihood of further victimization in this area is also increased due to the current situation where officers dedicated to full-time traffic enforcement are often pulled from these duties to deal with a Priority-1 complaint occurring in their immediate vicinity. Simply put, a VPD Traffic Unit officer will not allow a robbery or an assault in progress to wait for a patrol member to respond if they are only 30 seconds away.

Other mitigating factors to police availability to respond to calls for service are also impacted by call volume. Except for 2020, the VPD’s call volume grew year-over-year since 2011, as demonstrated in the below-noted chart. Over ten years, from 2009 to 2019, the VPD call volume increased by over 26% and was handled by even fewer authorized resources.

²³ Ibid, page 29

²⁴ Ibid, page 28

10-Year Trend for Year-end Calls for Service



However, our view is that the VPD's ability to meet their multi-level Strategic Goals and priorities was not necessarily negatively impacted by City Council's decision to cut the Board's 2021 Operational Budget. Their ability to maintain the current service levels, both operationally and strategically, can be primarily attributed to the fact that resource levels in 2021 did not actually drop to the degree anticipated by the VPD. Furthermore, as already pointed out earlier in this report, the VPD exceeded their authorized funding, thereby mitigating much of the impact that was anticipated to occur with the use of resources supplemented through overtime callouts.

However, we feel that the VPD's ability to meet its operational and strategic goals could change if the VPD should find itself in either of the following situations:

1. If due to any future operational needs, the VPD should have to collapse any proactive policing programs or remove resources from any of their current liaison positions and divert them to mitigate any frontline operational resourcing issues.
2. The current workload associated with participating in the various collaborative outreach programs should increase over what is already being provided.
3. The VPD should see a substantial reduction in resources due to retirements and departures to other police agencies.
4. Should the VPD be required to reallocate resources from their District Patrol Team to tend to operational priorities in other units.

4. Supporting Our People

Fostering a Culture of Employee Engagement and Effective Communication

VPD employees are spread over numerous physical locations throughout the city and within different operational units, including the various provincial integrated units. Combined with shiftwork schedules, effective communications in this operational environment can be somewhat difficult.

The VPD leverage technology to help mitigate these challenges and hold virtual meetings and training sessions. As a top priority, the VPD executive team has also set out to engage supervisors and team commanders through this same medium at regular intervals in their attempts to foster a sense of inclusiveness.

The VPD is also sensitive that all employees need to feel that their top leadership team cares about their people and takes a genuine interest in their well-being. To that end, the Executive Team ensures that they personally go out of their way to engage employees exposed to traumatic or significant incidents.

As documented further in this report, it is our view that VPD employees are increasingly exposed to many internal and external stressors that affect their health and well-being. While this is not exclusive to just the VPD, it is our view that the VPD management team considers this engagement to be significant enough to make it one of the VPD's top priorities.

Promote a Healthy Work Environment

This strategic priority includes the desire to engage all employees in a series of workplace wellness programs and trauma-related training. Through a collaborative process between the VPD management team and the Vancouver Police Union, the VPD introduced a First Responders Resiliency Program. The Department has also partnered with SportsCardiology BC to conduct cardiology screening and form an Employee Support Committee to consider emerging and critical trends that impact the work environment.

Our observation is that the VPD and its Board put employee well-being at the forefront of their policing operation. Between ongoing communications conducted at all levels and implementing programs and training to monitor and promote employee resiliency, the VPD is taking a very strategic approach to ensure that employees remain as engaged as possible.

However, the VPD is challenged by several situations that impact morale and quality of life issues. As documented further in this report, constant pressures leading to excessive overtime callouts and mental burnout are a growing problem. To that end, our view is that additional resources are a potential solution to mitigating these two issues.

Section 2

Environmental Scan

Emerging Environmental Impacts to Adequate and Effective Policing within the City of Vancouver

As part of our review, the Director asked us to comment on any emergent environmental impacts to policing within the City of Vancouver and assess these impacts to adequate and effective policing.

To effectively meet its broad policing mandate, the VPD does conduct periodic scans of their operating environment to better assist them in developing internal strategies in collaboration with their Police Board. By accurately understanding its environment and communicating its findings to the various stakeholders, the VPD can ensure that future plans adequately consider all factors and seek to optimize their services.

To provide a more holistic context to emerging pressures, the RCMP recently released the results of their 2020 RCMP Environmental Scan. This report serves to identify environmental conditions nationally and allows police agencies to assess what, if any, pressures they may face locally. To that end, we compared the VPD's local assessment with the RCMP's macro view of public safety issues that might also be worthy of their attention.

The VPD encapsulated the results of their 2021 Environmental Scanning activities and presented them to the Board as part of the Chief Annual Report.²⁵ The VPD report documents the impacts of several strategic policing issues framed within the current 2021 resourcing model and includes 21 areas that demand their attention.

VPD Strategic Policing Issues	
1. Public Order/Protests	12. Street Disorder - Encampments
2. Lower Mainland Gang Conflict	13. Increased Crime (Eg: Homicide & Hate)
3. Decriminalizing Drugs	14. Opioid Crises
4. Decriminalizing Poverty & Supporting Community-led safety Initiatives	15. Pandemic
5. E-Comm Levy	16. School Liaison Program
6. Morale & Employee Wellness	17. Digital Evidence Management (DEMS)
7. JIBC – Police Academy	18. Police/Crown MOU
8. Recruiting Succession Planning	19. Surrey Police Service Transition (I)
9. Special Committee on Reforming the Police Act (I)	20. Contractual Fixed Costs (I)
10. Pension Changes(I)	21. Collective Bargaining (I)
11. Provincial Budget Review(I)	

²⁵ VPD(October 21, 2021), Report to the Board, 2021 Strategic Policing Issues

While the RCMP's 2020 Environment Scan encompasses considerable detail and context to the information contained in their report, they summarized their finding into six mega-trends and described in the following table:²⁶

RCMP Key Environmental Scan Areas	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Security and Transnational & Serious Organized Crime 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protecting Human Rights
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demographics & Society 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Climate Change
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The 4th Industrial Revolution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trust, Confidence & Transparency

Our review and comparison of both the VPD and RCMP reports indicate that issues faced by the VPD as they move forward into 2022 are solidly intertwined with the various conclusions drawn by the RCMP. Except for the 6 VPD issues (Items 9,10,11,19,20,21), all others fall well within the 6 RCMP trends identified in their report and present a realistic view of policing pressures within the City of Vancouver, requiring a mitigation strategy.

Of the six areas identified as a VPD local pressure, fixed contractual costs and collective bargaining are financial issues that have already been resolved by the Board and City of Vancouver, thereby minimizing their impact. Matters related to the E-Comm Levy, Recruitment, the Surrey Police Transition, and the Provincial Review of the VPD's 2021 budget relate to resource management challenges within the Department. The only remaining item pertaining to the Province's review of the Police Act should have little substantial impact other than police governance.

All other items on the VPD Environmental Scan list are extensively covered throughout this report, including the answer to the question as to whether they could negatively impact the VPD's ability to deliver an adequate and effective level of policing.

The Environment Scan Picture Related to Diversity and Future of Cybercrime within the City of Vancouver

Two other items identified in the RCMP's 2020 Environmental Scan and not addressed within the VPD's report relate to pressures in the area of Diversity and Cyber Crime. While the VPD's diversity management plan appears to address any flags raised by the RCMP fully, there will always be pressure upon the Department to ensure that they can continue to hire new personnel that reflect the cultural mosaic of the City of Vancouver. However, our view is that the VPD's cultural mosaic is already of a very high standard.

Our review of materials relating to Cybercrime and the comments contained within the RCMP's 2020 Environmental Scan led us to believe that the VPD has a growing gap in resources dedicated to these investigations. As already covered earlier in this report, while all of the flags are present that this area requires further attention, it appears that the VPD is "capped" in terms of any flexibility that they can offer to resource their Cybercrime Unit. While the VPD may eventually be able to increase resources within this unit, it appears that any additional resources that they were hoping to obtain in 2021 were to be deployed to units with more pressing needs.

²⁶ Price Waterhouse Coopers LLP, Royal Canadian Mounted Police 2020 Environmental Scan, page 4

Vancouver's Status as a Metropolitan Core City and its Impact on the VPD to Provide an Adequate and Effective Police Service

The cities of Vancouver and Victoria are unique from almost all other cities in the Province of BC, as they are home to significant but temporary population fluctuations due to “core city” activities. Core cities are cities within a larger metropolitan area offering large-scale levels of employment, commerce, tourism, entertainment, and special events that attract people from their neighbouring jurisdictions.

As the largest city within the province, Vancouver faces a unique situation wherein its “true” population is considerably larger than most official reports would state due to its “core city” status. However, Vancouver’s resident population of about 700,000 is only about 24% of the approximately 2.9 million people living in Vancouver’s Census Metropolitan Area. This metropolitan population significantly impacts policing in Vancouver, particularly when larger celebration, social, or sporting events occur.

Vancouver is the largest city in British Columbia. It is a central business district, an entertainment district, and a major tourist attraction. It is also a core city where many people from neighbouring municipalities travel to work, conduct other business, and partake in recreation and major events. For example, before the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, more than 11 million people visited the City of Vancouver annually, arriving via airlines, SkyTrain, vehicles, and approximately 280 cruise ships came to Vancouver annually.

According to the Liquor & Cannabis Regulation Branch, there are approximately 1,400 liquor establishments or 383,000 liquor seats. Under normal conditions, the immense volume of people coming in and out of Vancouver increases police workload significantly. This, in turn, impacts the crime rate and Crime Severity Index, which are based on the full-time resident population and do not include other visitors to the City.

Our view is that the City of Vancouver will continue to hold its status as a “core city” attractor going into the future. While this speaks well to the vibrancy of the City, it does place an inordinate pressure upon all city services to ensure that with the population that comes in waves, they can be accommodated in a manner that reflects the City in a positive way. However, the downside of this status is exemplified in those areas that the city also becomes an attractor for marginalized people, such as the homeless and the drug-dependent population. Combined with the fact that Vancouver is also a central location to hold demonstrations and protests, these factors present a policing problem for the VPD, thereby creating a financial and resourcing strain upon the Department. With every indicator that these challenges will only grow, they can only detract from the current capacity within the Department to deliver an adequate and effective policing with the City of Vancouver.

Section 3

Workplace and Employee Wellbeing

As of December 2021, the global Covid-19 pandemic will have been with Canadians for the last 21 months. As with many occupations within the public safety or the health care profession, the VPD was not exempt from introducing significant changes to their service delivery model. In addition, the purchase of personal protective equipment (PPE), Covid-19 related overtime related to Public Health Order enforcement, and members forced to isolate due to potential exposure to Covid-19 placed additional strain on VPD resources and significant overtime requirements over this entire period.

Collective Agreements

Partway through our review, the outstanding matter related to the collective agreement between the Board and the Vancouver Police Union was resolved. The Board reached a deal with the VPU through an arbitrated settlement in early December 2021 for a 3-year term ending in December 2022.

Historically, collective agreement-related decisions have occurred after the Board approved and secured funding for their budgets for the year. When decisions are made, the financial impact is then managed internally by the City of Vancouver through a mid-year adjustment, with any increases paid for outside of the Board's budget that is in place at the time. However, the December 2021 arbitrated settlement was made a few days before the Vancouver Council's vote on the Vancouver Police Board's 2022 budget. While this could have presented an additional complication to the budget approval and council support process, Vancouver Council opted to approve the supplemental funding for the arbitrated settlement through additional tax increases and appropriation from one of their financial reserves.

While the wage issues appear to be settled for at least another year, it does fall short of the salary model currently offered to the members of the Surrey Police Service. While the salary gap was recently bridged, it is still not similar to how the Surrey Police Service compensates its officers. Combined with other incentives present, the VPD continues to be concerned with potential resource departures from their police service to the Surrey Police Service.

Impact of the Surrey Police Service Recruitment on the VPD

The Surrey Police Service recruitment drive began in early 2021 with the potential to hire hundreds of experienced police officers from police agencies across Canada, including the VPD. While internal estimates had indicated that the VPD could lose several hundred sworn members from their ranks, approximately 25 members have left as of the end of 2021. While this continues to be an ongoing concern to the VPD, a potential mass exodus was preempted by the Province of BC when limits to lateral hiring were introduced to mitigate this concern. This is further complicated by the current recruit training issues within the Justice Institute of BC (JIBC). As a result, the capacity to accommodate the recruit training needs for their police agency clients is stretched regardless of the agency that may require their services.

It is our view that with higher salaries and shorter commuting times, the Surrey Police Service will continue to be an attractor for members of the VPD who may view this as an opportunity to better their quality of life. This is certain to remain a significant resourcing pressure for the VPD that will impact their front line operations and the integrated provincial teams if the VPD "call back" their resources to fill gaps within their operation.

Impact of the 2021 Operational Budget Reduction on Employee Wellbeing

Impact of Socio-economic issues on the VPD

Issues related to homelessness, drug dependencies, and ongoing victimization of marginalized residents are sure to negatively impact the VPD, particularly from their own officer's mental health perspective. Constant exposure to these ongoing tragedies can often leave an officer feeling helpless in their attempts to intervene in these situations successfully, thereby affecting morale. This situation can manifest itself to the point where a police officer becomes ill or suffer from bouts of depression. A parallel pressure is the continuing situation where special interest groups and some members of the Vancouver City Council who advocate for marginalized citizens consider the police to be an oppressing force and play a counterproductive role in helping the people. Their relentless ongoing protests against the police do take a toll on police morale and overall mental wellbeing.

Operationally, the VPD is committed, and some say are required, to continue collaborating with other service providers as they support these agencies to deliver much-required services, despite some who advocate against this arrangement. However, with the demand for this continued support, the police will be challenged to balance the need to continue with this arrangement to bridge vacancy gaps in other investigative units within the Department.

Employee Wellbeing

The *Workers Compensation Act (Act)* was amended July 1, 2012, to include mental disorders caused by significant work-related stressors, including bullying and harassment, and mental conditions that are a reaction to one or more work-related traumatic events.

In May 2018, the Workers Compensation Act was amended to introduce a presumption for mental disorders. As a result, workers working within eligible occupations, including police officers, who have been exposed to traumatic events in their work and have been diagnosed with a mental disorder that may arise from a traumatic event, the mental disorder is presumed to be caused by employment.

After this amendment fell into place, cases involving people in the policing profession have increased exponentially. In a report authored by WorkSafe BC, over 80% of mental disorder claims processed from 2018 to 2020 have been allowed.

The below-noted table draws a comparison between the number of mental disorder-related claims that are related to Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).²⁷

Year	Claims Reported	Allowed	Disallowed	Allow Rate	Accepted PTSD Injury	% of Accepted Claims Related to PTSD
2020	119	41	10	80%	14	34%
2019	66	32	6	84%	21	65%
2018	61	30	7	81%	17	57%

²⁷ WorkSafeBC, Mental Disorder Claims 2018-2020, <https://www.worksafebc.com/en/resources/about-us/news-and-events/backgrounders/mental-disorder-ptsd-claims?lang=en>

While the numbers within this table are for all Independent BC police agencies combined, the information contained within the WorkSafeBC report is consistent with what appears to be occurring within the VPD.

At our request, the VPD provided their most recent updated financial records regarding their employees' number of hours attributed to sick time. An excerpt of the information related to sick time and WorkSafeBC injury hours was broken down by year and is contained in the following table.

Recap Year	Sick Hours	Police Officer (FTE) Equivalent	WCB Hours	Police Officer (FTE) Equivalent	Total Hours	Police Officer (FTE) Equivalent
2010	79,582	38	17,647	8	97,229	47
2011	78,888	38	22,189	11	101,077	49
2012	90,635	44	32,211	15	122,846	59
2013	88,602	43	22,934	11	111,536	54
2014	98,746	47	30,225	15	128,972	62
2015	103,468	50	38,233	18	141,701	68
2016	103,858	50	37,602	18	141,460	68
2017	100,422	48	36,791	18	137,213	66
2018	102,689	49	50,864	24	153,552	74
2019	109,848	53	52,810	25	162,658	78
2020	109,809	53	64,722	31	174,531	84
2021*	89,130	43	64,144	31	153,274	74
* Up to Pay Period 23, 2021 (out of 26)						

Our analysis of the figures contained within the table draws several conclusions. For example:

- Except for 2013 and 2017, the full-time equivalent (FTE) number of employees away from their workplace due to health-related matters steadily increased. However, it should be noted that for 2021, the numbers reflect only 11 months of the calendar year.²⁸
- Since 2010, the total number of FTE officers off-duty to either an illness or WorkSafeBC injury increased from 47 in 2010 to 84 in 2020. That is an increase of 179%.
- Over ten years, from 2010 to 2020, the total number of hours officers were off duty due to illness increased by 138%.
- Over ten years, from 2010 to 2020, the total number of hours officers were off duty due to a WorkSafeBC-related illness increased by 363%. It is also noted that the number of hours in this area increased significantly after the Presumptive Mental Disorder changes were made to the Workers Compensation Act in 2018.

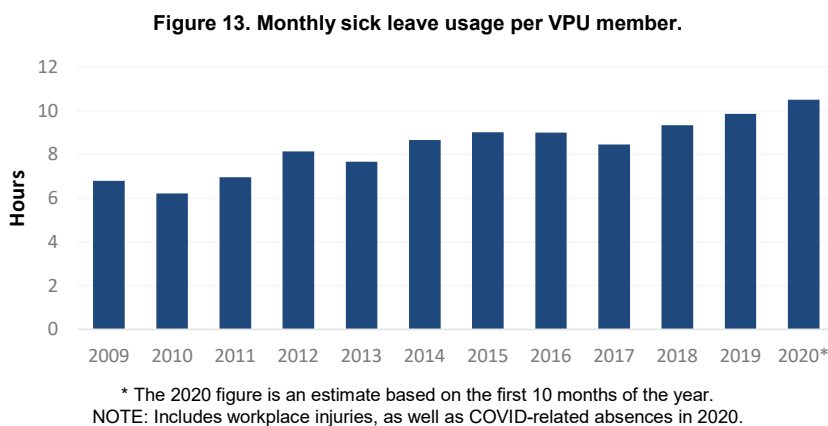
²⁸ The number of FTE equivalent were based on a standard that each employee would work 2080 hours per year and divided into the total number of hours employees were away from work.

When causal factors were examined, the VPD had this to say about the absences from duty by their employees.

“Employee health and wellness previously suffered as a result of reduced VPD staffing. Between 2009 and 2016, as the VPD was compelled to hold vacant up to 59 sworn and the equivalent of more than 20 civilian positions, sick leave usage by officers rose 20% and the number of hours lost due to workplace injuries more than doubled.

A 2015 survey commissioned by the Vancouver Police Union (VPU) revealed that 14% of all respondents had moderate to severe symptoms of depression, nearly one third fell in the clinical diagnostic range for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), and 44% reported moderate to high levels of exhaustion.

As shown by Figure 13, sick leave usage by sworn officers has continued to trend upwards ever since. These trends emerged despite the fact that the VPD launched a broad range of innovative programs and initiatives to support employee health and wellness.”²⁹



Throughout the submissions made to the Director by the various stakeholders leading to this review, a standard resource comparison was drawn of the VPD resource levels between 2009 and 2020. By December 2020, the VPD had 1,348 sworn officers on staff, representing an increase of 21 officers over 2009. It is our view that when using these two years as a reference point, the additional 27 FTE absences due to sick leave in 2020 diminishes any net gain in officer resources. Furthermore, the VPD’s ability to appropriately staff their units and deliver an adequate and effective policing service is substantially impacted.

Impact of Trending Increase of Assaults Upon VPD Personnel

Another trending indicator affecting employee wellbeing is the continuing increase in assaults upon Vancouver Police Officers. The violence inflicted upon the police appears to be a growing trend upon the police throughout Canada. As indicated in the below-noted chart, the number of assaults on Vancouver police officers seems to have doubled over four years from 2016-2019 and continued to grow into 2020. In the case of Stats Canada data, the statistics would be standardized to reflect the same criteria used by all police agencies in Canada, which from a comparison perspective would indicate that the situation

²⁹ VPD (February 24, 2021), Report to the Vancouver Police Board, Further Information on Budget Outlook for 2021, page 25

within the VPD is much worse. Although both data sources may have different numbers, they differ only in the interpretation of criteria used to determine what constitutes an assault upon a police officer.

Assaults On VPD Officers					
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020*
VPD Records	66	71	85	118	123
Stats Canada Records	143	130	162	218	206
*Pandemic Year					

The increase in violence directed upon the police places the Department in a precarious position wherein, given this increased risk, they more often consider responding with more than one officer to a complaint when, at one time, a single officer would have been the norm. Even if only a tiny fraction of the calls for service results in an assault upon an officer, police dispatchers are less likely to send only one officer if there is even a remote possibility that a situation could turn violent. Tying up two or more officers on a single complaint until officers can be assured that the situation is stabilized will only compete for officer availability to other priority complaints.

Several studies reviewed as part of our work on this subject have a common theme regarding the outcomes of violence inflicted upon the police. First, the impact both physically and psychologically cannot be ignored. While broken bones and cuts may heal in a relatively short time, many officers report suffering from negative psychological impacts that remain with them for considerable periods. Secondly, the police agencies are impacted through increased costs to support operations while officers are off duty with injuries, increased Workers Compensation premiums. Third, there are constant financial and resource management pressures for the ongoing training for all police officers to recertify in their *Use of Force Options* and meet the related *Provincial Policing Standards*. Finally, there are increased demands for the police to implement body-worn cameras. While they may undoubtedly offer some potential violence reduction, if implemented, this equipment will also place additional financial pressure upon the VPD to equip, train, store, and disclose materials gleaned from these cameras. The cumulative impact is sure to impact both the VPD's operating budget and put additional pressures upon their resources to bridge the gap or manage the associated workload stemming from these four areas.

Impact of Excessive Overtime Upon VPD Employees

During several conversations with the various stakeholders, we were advised that given the current resourcing levels and the multiple pressures that impact deployable resources, the VPD is consistently challenged to deploy the minimum number of resources to each patrol shift.

As reported earlier in this report, in 2009, the VPD patrol teams deployed at minimum staffing levels 31% of the time. That increased to 40% of all patrol shifts in 2016. The VPD could not advise if overtime callouts were required to maintain their minimum shift deployments leading up to 2016. However, we were informed that overtime callouts were, and continue to be, needed on many shifts for the last number of years to maintain shift resource minimums.

As reported earlier in this report, increased police requirements related to homelessness, drug dependency, demonstrations, and crimes specifically imposed upon the business sector have also placed additional pressure upon the VPD to provide an adequate response. However, this response has recently been built upon deploying resources on overtime. In addition, dedicated patrols and special enforcement squads are often brought together in an ad hoc fashion to deal with spikes in crimes related to these groups.

Even though resource levels may have increased by 80 sworn staff members between 2016-2020, additional work pressures related to a wide variety of work-related activities meant that these resources did not all go to the District Patrol Team. In an interview with the president of the Vancouver Police Union, we were advised that pressures to deploy a minimum number of resources to the District Patrol Team has become such a challenge that patrol shifts are regularly challenged to meet its minimum deployment requirements. The VPU President further advised that it is now his experience and understanding that members are going to some length to avoid being called out on overtime, citing employee burnout and increased stress.

We believe that when this situation occurs, not only is an adequate and effective service level not met but officer safety is also placed at risk. Therefore, it should be no surprise that sick time and assaults on police officers will increase.

A review conducted by the Richmond RCMP detachment in 2015 indicated that 27 to 32 percent of the overall resource time was taken up with work-related obligations such as training and court attendance, various leave entitlements, and extended absences from work. These obligations outside of the regular patrol function only exacerbate the deployment shortfall. The RCMP used this information as part of a review to address operational deployment issues within their Vancouver Airport District.

Our view is that this increased reliance on overtime to shore up everyday work assignments has a negative impact on officer burnout and a detrimental effect on their quality of life outside the workplace. As further commented upon by the Vancouver Police Union President, the opportunity to work an overtime shift is no longer seen as a positive work incentive. He further comments that today's generation of police officers are not necessarily motivated to earn more money but instead place more value on their time off.

During the 2017-2021 Strategic Planning process, 63% of all VPD work units cited insufficient staffing levels as a critical strategic challenge and a critical work stressor. Similarly, the 2016 VPD Employee Satisfaction survey found that the number one reason for declining job satisfaction amongst sworn and civilian VPD employees was inadequate staffing levels.³⁰

As new collective agreements come into play, additional time away from work will serve as a more valued work benefit than a salary increase. As already indicated through WorkSafeBC statistics, with mental health-related claims increasing exponentially, increased absences away from work will create significant pressure upon the VPD to fill that gap. Our view is that overtime is not an appropriate long-term solution to a problem that is likely to grow. In the absence of any increase in human resource capacity to the VPD, the only reasonable solution is to strategically reduce service levels and consolidate resources to focus on the most urgent priorities, even to the detriment of any proactive policing models known to reduce calls for service.

³⁰ VPD Operational Review (December 2017), page 6

Section 4

Intended Use of the Resources Sought by the Vancouver Police Board

The Director was asked, in part, to consider the Board's request to move forward with an additional 20 sworn and 10 civilian positions in keeping with "Year 4" of the 2017 Operational Review. The Board's submission went so far as to advise the Director where these resources would be placed had their 2021 budget been supported by the City.

In 2017, the Board and City Council mutually agreed with the findings of an independent Operational Review. The Review determined that the public safety service gaps that remained after implementing all possible internal efficiency changes could be most effectively addressed by adding 120 sworn officers and 52 civilian staff. City Council and the Board subsequently agreed to spread these additional resources over a more extended, five-year period from 2018-2022, instead of over a preferred period of 4 years to minimize the funding impact on the City of Vancouver annual budgets. These staffing recommendations were approved to ensure adequate and effective policing would be maintained, as required by the *Police Act*.³¹

As part of our work, we were asked to inform the Director of the intended purpose of the additional resources sought by the Department as part of their 2021 Operational Budget submission. As referenced throughout this report to the Director and explained in several supplemental reports provided by VPD and Board, the VPD's request for additional resources was in keeping with the 2017 Operational Review "Year 4" and "Year 5" resource implementation schedule. In that Review, the 2021 budget year aligns with "Year 4" of this operational review report, which suggests that the VPD should be further supported with 20 sworn and 10 civilian positions.

As part of their report to the Director, the VPD expanded upon this request with a detailed breakdown and rationale for the intended use of the additional resources. Therefore, we have taken the liberty to provide the following information, which is a condensed version of the information contained within the VPD's report.³²

1. Indigenous Liaison

Requested: 1 sworn member

Recommendation 5.7 from the *Report of the Missing Women Commission of Inquiry* completed in 2012 by Commissioner Wally Oppal called for an Indigenous Liaison Officer. Their responsibilities would include assisting Indigenous persons in their interactions with the VPD's Missing Persons Unit. The VPD responded by creating a temporary Indigenous Liaison Officer. However, the position was never formally added to the VPD's authorized strength. The Indigenous Liaison Officer works closely with the urban Indigenous population to effectively communicate their safety needs and concerns to the VPD.

³¹ Vancouver Police Board Finance Committee, Letter to the Vancouver Police Board, November 30, 2020, Report number 2011F03, page 1

³² VPD (June 2021) 2021 Budget Appeal Pursuant to Section 27(3) of the Police Act

2. District Patrol Team

Requested: 2 sworn members

Two Constable positions would be added to the two Alpha shift teams in District 4 (one for each), as these teams are currently staffed with only eight officers per team while all other patrol districts have 9 or 10. In addition, the Alpha shift covers a critical period, early in the morning, where there is no backup coverage by any other patrol team. During that time, Alpha shift officers are the only on-duty patrol officers available to respond to in-progress incidents and other emergencies.

3. Emergency & Operational Planning Section (EOPS)

Requested: 1 sworn member

Major public events require careful emergency preparedness and planning assessments. For example, the COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the importance of maintaining internal VPD capacity to research and develop police response plans for actual or imminent emergencies. The increasing risk of extremism has also created a need for enhanced policing at many public events and public assemblies, even though they have been historically peaceful.

4. Homicide Unit

Requested: 3 sworn members

In addition to the Homicide Unit handling more homicide cases with fewer officers, the complexity of each homicide investigation has increased due to rising legal standards. Previously, each of the three teams in the Homicide Unit was staffed with one supervisor and eight investigators. However, after the Resource Allocation Review (RAR) in 2015, each team lost two investigators. This reduction was based on the fact that there was an average of 7.7 murder cases per year in the previous three-year period in Vancouver, which was significantly below historical levels. Since 2015, however, the annual number of homicides in Vancouver has reverted to an average of 15. With 15 homicides per year, 30 homicide investigators would be required to attain the generally accepted baseline staffing ratio of two investigators per case. As a result, the VPD Homicide Unit currently has an authorized strength of 22 investigators and supervisors.

In addition to alleviating workload pressures within the Homicide Unit, additional homicide investigators would also create the capacity to revisit cold cases. Historically, the VPD had achieved an average homicide clearance rate close to 70% in years when staffing in the Homicide Unit exceeded a ratio of two investigators per case. When the ratio falls below that threshold, the homicide clearance rate is closer to 50%.

5. Domestic Violence & Criminal Harassment Unit (DVACH)

Requested: 2 sworn members

The DVACH Unit is tasked with following up on the highest-risk cases involving intimate partner violence, criminal harassment, and elder abuse that come to the attention of police. These files are the highest risk based on the level of violence observed or the potential for serious injury and death. In their presentation to Council in November 2020, the VPD advised that incidents of intimate partner violence increased by almost 4.5% over 2019, which is in keeping with increased incidents throughout many police jurisdictions across Canada.

Historically, the DVACH Unit assigned an investigator in 15% of eligible cases. By 2017, however, a DVACH investigator was assigned to follow up on only 5% of the files routed to the Unit. This lack of capacity is believed to be responsible for reducing the number and proportion of intimate partner files that resulted in criminal charges (e.g., from 22% in 2011 to 17% in 2016).

With dedicated resources assigned to this Unit, the VPD can deploy specialized investigators who can develop proper safety plans, prevent further violence, and systematically assess the risk factors that may be present.

6. Property Crime Unit

Requested: 2 sworn members

The Property Crime Unit investigates significant property offences, including residential break and enters, commercial break and enters, and serial theft cases such as shoplifting rings. In addition, the Property Crime Unit proactively targets known property crime offenders and develops offender profiles. Despite a sharp fall in 2020 attributable to the COVID-19 pandemic and the associated slowdown in economic activity, total police-reported property crime in Vancouver has been following a generally increasing trajectory since 2011. Commercial break and enters, in particular, increased by 47% between 2009 and 2020. Fraud cases increased by 55% during the same period, and mischiefs increased by 37%.

Coinciding with the general increase in property crime over this same 11-year period is a corresponding decline in clearance rates. For example, in 2009, the clearance rate for all property crimes was 15%. Conversely, by 2019 the VPD cleared less than 10% of all property crime. A subset of the total of all property crimes includes Break and Enters. While the number of break and enters has generally remained stagnant over these 11 years, clearance rates went from 6% in 2009 to 10% in 2017 and generally remained that way in the subsequent year.

7. Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) partnership Car 87/88

Requested: 2 sworn members

As the Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) partnership grew from two teams in 2012 to six teams in 2020, the number of ACT clients increased commensurably. Since 2014, however, VPD staffing assigned to the ACT teams has failed to keep pace with demand. Therefore, the VPD advises that two additional constables would bolster the ACT teams and be available to backfill Car 87/88 shifts, thus reducing overtime costs.

8. Missing Persons Investigations

Requested: 1 sworn member

The Missing Persons Unit is responsible for reviewing and investigating all missing persons and sudden death files in Vancouver. Each case is prioritized based on risk and investigated promptly, particularly when vulnerable people are involved. This includes children, the elderly, sex trade workers, homeless persons, persons with alcohol or drug addictions, people with mental illnesses, or people with physical disabilities.

The Provincial government has enacted major new policing standards since 2010. This includes the BC Attorney General's Violence Against Women in Relationships Policy, BC Provincial Policing Standards

for Missing Person Investigations, and new Major Case Management standards. While these enhanced standards contribute to public safety, additional police resources are needed to meet them. The additional resource sought by the Board is intended to ensure that investigations into these critical matters are conducted, recorded, and analyzed promptly.

9. Duties Related to Disclosure, Source Handline, Forensic Services, Intercept and Source Handling³³

Requested: 4 sworn members and 4 civilians

The VPD summarized the current resourcing pressures within these units as follows:

A significant change to the judicial process occurred in 2016 with the Supreme Court of Canada decision in *R. v. Jordan*. In its decision, the Supreme Court of Canada established maximum timelines to conclude criminal cases in court. If these timelines are not met, it is presumed that the delays are unreasonable unless proven otherwise by Crown counsel and a violation of an accused person's Section 11(b) Charter of Rights. The timelines were set at 18 months from the time charges are filed until the matter is concluded in a Provincial Court and 30 months for matters that proceed in a Superior Court.

R. v. Jordan changed how police conduct investigations and the required resources because disclosure timelines were non-negotiable. As a result, Crown counsel now typically requires the complete investigative disclosure package prior to making a charge approval decision.

Because criminal charge approval from Crown counsel can only be obtained once the entire case has been thoroughly investigated, documented, and disclosed, all analysis work must now be completed immediately. This "full disclosure" requirement has exacerbated backlog issues, especially in areas that support police investigations.

In another instance, a court decision in 2015, *R. v. McKay*, resulted in the requirement for confidential informant records and documents to be disclosed more frequently during court proceedings. Complying with these court requirements is resource-intensive, as there is an inherent need to vigorously protect the identity of human sources. Therefore, the VPD intended to place one additional position within the Source Handling Unit to conduct the necessary work to ensure that information safety was guarded while adhering to the legal requirements imposed by the courts.

10. Training, Recruiting, HR, Quality Control, and IT

Requested: 6 sworn members and 4 civilians

Several Operational Review positions requested for 2021 and 2022 were intended to facilitate new training and technological advances. These positions also would have contributed to mitigating risk and enhancing perceptions of safety.

Like all other police agencies with British Columbia, the VPD must design and implement additional training to all its employees to comply with new provincial policing standards and address several systemic gaps in service revealed in several reviews and public enquiries.

³³ Ibid, pages 65-67

Risk Analysis & Recommendation

In preparation for any recommendations to the Director regarding these requested “Year 4” 2017 Operational Review” resources, we undertook an exercise to weigh several factors in keeping with an integrated risk management process championed by the RCMP. The risk management model requires an examination of three risk areas:

- Consideration of several risk categories associated with the decision.
- What is the likelihood that an identified risk will occur?
- What level of impact may the risk have on the organization if it happens?

The following table provides the details in each of these areas:

Operational Risk Management		
Risk Activities: 1. External Environment 2. Legal & Regulatory 3. Strategy 4. Governance 5. Operational		6. Information 7. Human Resources 8. Technology 9. Financial
LIKELIHOOD: To determine the likelihood of an occurrence, one needs to consider the probability of something going wrong in the activity. Many factors could increase the possibility of the activity not being conducted in the manner intended. In considering all of the available information, the question should be asked, “Based on the risks identified, what is the likelihood that something could go wrong”?		
High	Medium	Low
Risk is likely to occur	Risk may occur	Risk is unlikely to Occur
IMPACT: To determine the impact of something going wrong in the activity, one should consider any effects that a breakdown in the activity may have on the organization and the community. Examples of potential impacts include the inability to achieve objectives, non-compliance with laws and regulations; safety concerns; and loss of assets and human resources.		
High	Medium	Low
Serious impact, problems would be costly/difficult to fix, if repairable	Significant impact, but with some efforts/investment, it could be fixed	Minimal impact, not to worry

In conducting this assessment, we have considered such factors such as:

- importance of the activity in the delivery of the Unit’s operational or administrative services
- need for compliance with the law and organizational directives; and
- Potential repercussions to the VPD; including
 - risk of public exposure/embarrassment to the VPD
 - risk of exposing the VPD to legal action
 - the credibility of the VPD
 - loss of assets
 - public and officer safety issues

- risk of not accomplishing their strategic objectives

The following matrix attempts to assess a score on a scale of **1(lowest risk) to 9(highest risk)**, in keeping with the same integrated risk management model.

VPD Operational Units	# of Resources Requested by the Board	Risk Assessment		Required to Meet Board, Provincial & City Priorities	Required to Meet Provincial Standards	Required in Response to External Enquiries	Risk Score (1-9)
		Likelihood	Impact				
1. Indigenous Liaison	1	Medium	Medium	Yes	Yes	Yes	5
2. Patrol	2	Medium	High	Yes	No	No	8
3. EOPS	1	Low	Low	No	No	No	1
4. Homicide	3	High	High	Yes	Yes	No	9
5. DVACH	2	High	High	Yes	Yes	No	9
6. Property Crime Unit	2	Medium	Low	No	No	No	2
7. Mental Health Unit	2	Medium	Medium	Yes	Yes	No	5
8. Missing Persons Unit	1	High	High	Yes	Yes	Yes	9
9. Forensic, Covert Intercept/Source Handling	4/4	High	High	Yes	Yes	No	9
10. Training/Recruiting/HR, IT	2/6	Medium	Medium	No	Yes	No	5

It is our conclusion based on the totality of the information reviewed within the integrated risk management matrix, at least 13 sworn and 4 non-sworn staff are required to fill these high-risk service delivery gaps as a priority. These reflect the resources highlighted in green in the above-noted table.

We believe that the positions related to EOPS, the Property Crime Unit, Mental Health Unit, and Training Branch (highlighted in yellow) do not present an overt risk that cannot be mitigated in 2021 through other alternative strategies. However, this is not to say that the risk rating will not change at some point in the future, particularly in the area of resources to deal with property crime.

The Reduction of the Board's 2021 Operating Budget and its Impact on Providing an Adequate & Effective Policing within the City of Vancouver

The Status Quo Resource Levels within the VPD

Contained within their submission to the Director, Vancouver Police advised that the \$5,689,9747 reduction to their 2021 Operating Budget was equivalent to not hiring 61 police recruits. While the total number of pending vacancies was unknown at the time of their submission to the Director, the VPD estimated that 34 employees would retire in 2021, a target which they subsequently attained by October 2021. The Department could only backfill 21 vacancies with newly graduated recruits already hired by the VPD and in training at the JIBC in late 2020.

The Department also anticipated a significant number of departures from their ranks in 2021 to seek employment with the Surrey Police Service. While the number of departures was not as substantial as anticipated, they did see 25 sworn staff and one civilian staff employee leave for that purpose.

What is unknown at this time is the anticipated number of employees who will retire from the VPD in 2022. The VPD advises that several sworn staff members held off from retiring in 2021 due to the

ongoing Covid-19 Pandemic restrictions, which hampered travel opportunities for new retirees. This is further influenced by pending changes to the Municipal Pension Plan (MPP) to come into effect in January 2022, wherein MPP pension incomes will now be determined on a member's best 4-year average salary instead of the historical 5-year average. These changes would have significantly influenced a pension plan member's decision to delay retirement to 2022. In addition, a retiring VPD employee could also benefit from an entire year's worth of vacation entitlements if they hold off until April 1, 2022. Therefore, the actual number of employees who plan to retire will not be known until the second quarter of 2022.

Some of the pending vacancies will be offset by the 45 recruits currently enrolled at the JIBC, with their deployment to the front line not expected to be complete before June 2022. However, despite these new resources, the current resource level cannot exceed the 1348 sworn staff members approved within the newly approved 2022 Operational Budget. As of January 1, 2022, the current resource number is only 21 members, more than the 1327 sworn members in place in 2009.

Balancing Current and Future Policing Needs with Current Resource Levels

Over the years, Canadian Police agencies faced ongoing pressures to adjust their policing models to meet the ever-changing public and government expectations that challenge the status quo way of doing business. We believe that over the past 15 years, the VPD has not shied away from any undertaking to conduct their own reviews and make changes where possible. This is demonstrated in both the 2007 and 2017 Operational Reviews and response to any number of Provincial reviews and enquiries over this same period.

For the VPD, that has meant introducing a private-public approach to community safety, a tiered policing deployment and the implementation of the Community Safety Officers. They are also participants in several Lower Mainland Integrated Policing Units, civilianizing certain service delivery services, and the introduction of an evidence-based crime reduction strategy.

It is our view that resource adjustments will always be required to accommodate changing social conditions. However, we are also of the opinion that there is little in terms of further significant changes the VPD can reasonably undertake without negatively impacting their ability to provide an adequate and effective level of service. Our further view is that the only reasonable adjustment that can now be considered should be focused on any of the services that may not be considered a core policing function, which in reality are very few.

Potential Elimination or Reductions in Service

In anticipation of the Board's request not being supported by the Director, the Department laid out a series of policing activities that will be scaled back significantly or permanently terminated. Some of these activities include:

- traffic enforcement campaigns targeting seatbelt usage, distracted driving, bicycle safety, and speeding around parks and/or school zones;
- police-driven public awareness campaigns targeting safety issues such as drug and alcohol-facilitated sexual assaults and elder abuse;
- bylaw enforcement;
- commercial vehicle enforcement;
- active promotion of bicycle theft prevention and deterrence initiatives (including Project 529);
- programs supporting local students such as athletic and safety-focused initiatives previously delivered by VPD School Liaison Officers;

- community policing activities such as Neighbourhood Policing Officers embedded in community policing centres (CPCs);
- business liaison;
- homeless outreach and liaison with supportive housing;
- police escorts that support the City's enhanced street cleaning crews, people living in and around encampment sites, and Downtown Eastside Street Market clients;
- deployment of two mental health cars per day (Car 87/88), which could be reduced to a single-shift model.

It is our view and experience that the above programs related to traffic enforcement, physical safety enhancement programs, mental health, and working with marginalized communities are core policing functions. As part of their service adjustment assessment, the VPD also state that they risk any substantial ability to conduct follow-up and proactive investigations into:

- organized criminal activity related to credit card frauds,
- shoplifting and theft rings,
- drug trafficking offences,
- online crime,
- violent street crime,
- wells as organized crime groups identified as part of the provincial or national tactical enforcement priorities.

However, the VPD were confident of their continued participation in the various Lower Mainland Integrated Policing Units. Given that the VPD is compensated for each resource they provide to these units, there is no negative impact upon the department's overall financial or resourcing pressures.

In the City of Vancouver's 2022 Budget Survey, the Vancouver Business Community expressed their profound displeasure with police service levels in 2021. It is our view that, given this public sentiment, the VPD will be hard-pressed to pull back from many of these investigations. However, this will place the VPD in the unenviable position of reallocating resources from their District Patrol Team or addressing these investigation pressures with resources on an overtime basis, at twice the salary costs, and further delaying response times to Priority-1 calls for service.

Therefore, we believe that any reductions in service to these areas impose a substantial likelihood that strategic initiatives, including several Provincial priorities, will be impacted, thereby presenting a profound challenge in their attempts to provide an adequate and effective service to the citizens of Vancouver.

Can the Reduction to the Board's Budget Still Allow for Adequate and Effective Policing?

Essential to the Director's request is the ability to determine, based on a multitude of factors and social conditions that exist in 2021 whether or not the VPD can provide an adequate and effective policing service.

It is our view that up until now, the VPD has adjusted their policing strategies to meet community expectations and comply with all policing standards and operational priorities. They have also made every effort to comply with court-imposed and external enquiry recommendations and requirements.

We also believe that given the entirety of the information reviewed, combined with decisions already made by the stakeholders themselves, the VPD has delivered an adequate and effective level of service to the City of Vancouver. It is, however, our view that this level of service has come with some negative impact to their employees and reduced public confidence, which can no longer be realistically sustained. We also believe that without either a further injection of resources or a reduction in their workload, the VPD's ability to maintain this level of service is compromised at the least or most likely not to materialize.

In their request, the Board asked the Director to conduct a review stemming from the City of Vancouver's decision to reduce the Board's 2021 Operating budget by \$5,689,974. While the Board was moot regarding any specific areas they wish the Director to review, the totality of the information provided to us would indicate that the VPD management team and the Board were asking the Director to make two significant decisions.

- 1) To restore the \$5,689,974 shortfall to their 2021 Operating Budget, thereby allowing the VPD to hire the necessary resources to maintain a status quo service level; and
- 2) To determine, through the standard of "adequate and effective policing," whether additional resources as set out in "Year 4" of the 2017 Operational Review should be added to the current authorized strength of 1348 sworn and 411.5 civilian staff resources.

Request for the Director to Restore Council's Reduction to the VPD's 2021 Operational Budget

As documented in our report related to the financial management framework, the VPD has consistently forecasted and remained within its police budget for at least the last 16 years. Through their consistent financial acumen, the Board determined from the outset of 2021 that Council's decision to cut the Board's 2021 Operating budget would fall short of what they required.

Direction Regarding Additional Resources to the VPD's 2021 Authorized Strength

As reported throughout the materials provided to the Director and discussed at length in this report, the Director is asked to decide if the VPD should be sufficiently funded to acquire additional resources consistent with "Year 4" of the 2017 Operational Review.

It is our view that an argument can be made that after the release of this Operational Review in 2017, all stakeholders, including the Vancouver Council of the day, agreed that the VPD could proceed with hiring 120 sworn and 52 civilian resources over a period over five years. While not the most desirable outcome for the VPD, who would have preferred this to occur over 4 years, the agreed-upon formula served as an acknowledgement that a suitable business case had been made for these additional resources. The City could further support this agreement at that time, as it appeared to be a manageable compromise that would enable the City of Vancouver to accommodate this increase in resources within their 5-year financial plan strategy.

For the next three years, from 2018 to 2020, the VPD moved forward with the planned resource increase. By the end of 2020, the VPD had managed to recoup the gap in their authorized strength that existed since 2009. Then in 2021, the City decided to cut the VPD Board budget, effectively capping any net gain to 2009 levels.

The 2017 Operational Review identified a need for the resources that were eventually agreed to by all stakeholders. While the City of Vancouver decided to reduce the Vancouver Police Board 2021 Operational Budget, the need and work pressures remained. To that end, we believe that these "Year 4"

2017 Operational Review resources are supported through independent research, later deemed by all stakeholders to be justified.

However, despite this conclusion, the Vancouver Police Board opted to defer any request for these new resources, opting to defer to 2022. The decision was made out of an acknowledgement of the 2021 fiscal challenges faced by the City resulting from the impacts of Covid-19.

It is our view that with this Board decision, the Director may not be compelled to require these resources to be funded within the 2021 budget, as it appears that the stakeholders have already risk-managed the decision to defer any requests for new resources. From the totality of our review, the VPD was able to provide an adequate and effective level of policing in 2021, albeit while going over budget and with a higher dependency on resources called out on overtime.

Section 5

Director's Concerns Regarding Adequate & Effective Policing Beyond 2021

While the VPD, the Police Board and the City of Vancouver may have mutually resolved that no new resources would be added to the 2021 authorized strength, the Director is left to ponder whether or not the VPD will be capable of providing an adequate and effective level of service in the oncoming years.

As reported in our Financial Framework Report, the Board approved their 2022 Budget in November 2021, then submitted it to the City of Vancouver for inclusion into the City's budget. Of three options the Board considered, a decision was made to approve a budget to fund the resources levels currently authorized at the end of 2020. While the Board would have preferred to move forward to hire the additional resources outlined in Year 4 of the 2017 Operational Review, the Board once again deferred any further resource increases in acknowledgement of the City of Vancouver's ongoing financial challenges related to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Policing Services Beyond 2022

The Vancouver Police Board's 2022 Operational Budget was funded in keeping with the Board's request. However, the Director may wish to ponder what, if any consideration, he may want to give to determine if the VPD will be capable of providing an adequate and effective level of service in the years beyond 2022.

In 2017, the primary stakeholders, including the VPD, the Vancouver Police Board, and the City of Vancouver, supported a resource allocation of 120 sworn and 52 civilian personnel to be implemented over five years. During our interviews, the stakeholders advised that they mutually support deferring the 2017 Operational Plan "Year 4" resources to be implemented in 2021 to the 2023 budget cycle. Nobody we spoke with indicated a preference to collapse the remainder of this resource management plan, each emphasizing that this was a deferral only.

It is, however, our view that despite their current position, there is no binding agreement that would see the two remaining years of the 2017 Operations Review proceed at any time in the future. Furthermore, the City of Vancouver will undergo a municipal election in October 2022. It is entirely possible that a new council will not share the same view regardless of any previous acknowledgement or business case indicating that these resources are needed to provide an adequate and effective police service. Therefore, any new council may not be willing to make the same commitment to supporting the resources outlined in the remaining two years of the 2017 Operational Review.

The VPD is currently providing police services to the City of Vancouver with the same number of resources they had in 2009. However, as demonstrated throughout this report, there has been a dramatic shift in social conditions and policing environment over these past 12 years. For example, workload complexities related to investigating crime have changed. The number of steps required to complete an investigation into most crime types has grown exponentially, thereby requiring more time to investigate each criminal complaint.

We also found that the social conditions related to homelessness, mental health, drug dependency, and marginalization within the vulnerable communities will continue to rely on the VPD to work with their community partners to support them with their primary mandates. With no indication that any level of government will introduce solutions to reduce reliance upon the VPD for their support, there is a high degree of certainty that they will be required to continue injecting resources into these areas for the

foreseeable future. Provincial Police standards related to investigations, training, and investigational procedures will most likely increase over the coming years, particularly with the pending changes to the Police Act.

As it has done these past 12 years, future court decisions that will influence changes in investigational procedures can only place additional pressures upon the VPD to ensure compliance and ensure that justice is delivered to victims of crime. Work pressures that already exist in this area have already established the need for additional resources as a priority. The VPD has recognized that in the absence of any growth, they will be required to reallocate resources from other units, even though they may be needed elsewhere.

Summarized from our review, we conclude that the following key indicators will place a significant challenge for the VPD to provide an adequate and effective level of service to the residents of Vancouver.

1. Calls for service have gradually increased from 212,479 in 2011 to 269,626 in 2019. While there were fewer calls in 2020, we have determined this to be an anomaly, as explained earlier in our report. We fully anticipate that as the local population increases and “Core City” activities return to normal, calls for service will undoubtedly rise.

2. Response times to Priority-1 calls for service have increased from 8 minutes 16 seconds in 2011 to 10 minutes 34 seconds in 2019. While response times were shorter in 2020, we have also determined this to be an anomaly once again, as demonstrated earlier in our report. Unless additional resources are added to the District Patrol Team, these response times will likely increase over time.

3. Section 28 Mental Health apprehensions by the VPD increased from 2,489 in 2011 to 2,906 in 2020, with higher spikes occurring in 2014 and 2015, reaching over 3,000 apprehensions. While several strategies were introduced to reduce the time an officer spends with a case where a “Section 28 committal” is being sought, other issues are now at play that requires officers to spend more time with many of these cases. With ongoing external pressures for police officers to divest themselves of their involvement in mental health matters, the police cannot walk away from these responsibilities, particularly when a potential solution may be sought through the community courts. It is our view that in the absence of an alternative solution supported by the key stakeholders being introduced, the VPD will sustain further pressure to deploy additional resources to this area of their policing mandate.

4. There is no indication that any level of government will introduce initiatives that will provide a long-term solution to social issues related to homelessness, drug dependency, or mental health illness. Given this reality, there is little likelihood that the VPD will be able to reduce the level of support that they are currently providing to their community partners who have a primary responsibility to provide a long-term solution to this marginalized group.

5. There were 10,838 cases involving incidents of violent crime in 2009. This number began trending downward until 2017 and started an upward trend towards 2020. These crime types are most influenced by additional pressure to ensure compliance with legal requirements related to disclosure, increased investigational procedures, and higher investigational standards. We are of the view that as violent crime rates continue to rise in 2021, the VPD will be under considerable pressure to deploy resources to those criminal activities such as the “stranger on stranger” and downtown core business crime with violent overtones, many of which involved the presence of weapons.

6. Property crime was noted to increase over this same 12 year period. At the same time, investigations into property crime may not require a significant reliance on police resources. However, over the last two years, there have been a substantial number of instances where property crime has resulted in violence being directed to property and business owners, leading to significant levels of fear and unrest amongst

the people of Vancouver. As outlined earlier in our report, this issue has had a significant impact on the police, as they were required to deploy considerable overtime resources to control this matter. In addition, we believe that the many underlying issues related to property crime will place additional pressures upon the VPD to intervene in what is now becoming a systemic crime problem.

7. As our Review has indicated, cybercrime-related events, including attacks on computer infrastructure equipment, fraudulent financial transactions, identity theft, and internet child exploitation, have increased exponentially over the past three years. While the VPD has staffed their cybercrime unit with resources allocated from other areas within the Department, we believe that additional resources are required to address the investigational gap that exists appropriately.

8. With information supported from our Environmental Scan review, we believe that public protests and demonstrations will continue to grow both in frequency and size within the City of Vancouver. This pressing situation will continue to pressure the VPD to provide containment, oversight, and potential intervention to ensure public safety to both the demonstrators and the general public.

9. With information gleaned from the supplementary materials provided to us by the VPD and the VPU, we are of the view that unless the VPD secure additional resources, they will continue to rely on overtime callouts to support the short-term deployment squads, deployment for crowd control, and to supplement basic District Patrol Team shift rotations. The VPU asserts that many officers are no longer motivated by monetary incentives in 2021, opting to seek a better quality of life with appropriate time off between shift rotations.

10. As demonstrated through their resource management reports, there is a high likelihood that more employees will book off sick due to workplace burnout or WorkSafeBC stress-related injuries. With decisions being made to operate patrol shifts below minimum deployment levels as a last resort, this will present a risk to officer safety and decreased service levels to the community.

Conclusions Related to the Requirement for Additional Resources within the VPD

1. We conclude that despite the increase in overall workload undertaken by the VPD, up until 2021, the VPD has been able to provide an adequate and effective level of service. However, we have also concluded that meeting this benchmark has two significant impacts. The first is the VPD's over-expenditure of their 2021 Operational Budget limit approved by the City of Vancouver. Secondly, a number of operational projects related to public safety and enforcement and general patrol deployment were conducted with overtime resources.

2. We also conclude that this increased workload is negatively impacting the overall morale and well-being of VPD employees and is unsustainable over time.

3. We further conclude that the VPD has limited opportunity to realign its current resources to deal with additional and growing policing priorities without compromising their current policing obligations. Any attempts to do so risk compromising their ability to provide an adequate and effective level of service.

Views Related to the Creation of a New Operational Review

Our review also determined that the various stakeholders agree that a new operational review is warranted to better assess what, if any, additional resources might be required to provide an adequate and effective level of service in the future. We also conclude that if any future review includes pertinent stakeholders, including representation from the City and the Province of BC, there will be a greater likelihood for a

long-term solution to addressing VPD resource pressures for years to come. The stakeholders acknowledged that given the last review commenced in 2015, there was a sufficient shift in the policing environment and changing community safety needs in the past six years to warrant a new study.

During our stakeholder meetings, the City of Vancouver participants expressed a desire to play a more appropriate but more meaningful role in determining any terms of reference for a new operational review. The City of Vancouver Stakeholders also expressed concern that much of the work that went into the development of the 2017 Operational Review was void of any meaningful participation of any Council members or City Senior Staff. The timing of the Board's approval of the recommendations contained within the 2017 Operational Review and subsequent consultation with the City of Vancouver was conducted just as "the old council" was wrapping up their mandate, leaving the new council with the requirement to implement a multi-year commitment for 4 of the 5 remaining years.

We also believe that any potential new review will permit the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General (PSSG) to work with the stakeholders to ensure that any concerns related to their area of responsibility outlined within the Police Act are also considered.



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**Study Under Section 42 of the Police Act in
Support of the Director of Police Services'
Determination under Section 27 (3) of the
Police Act**

**Vancouver Police
2021 Operational Budget**

January 17th, 2022

Carried out in conjunction with Peter Lepine Professional Services

Executive Summary

Overall, we concluded that the Vancouver Police Department and the Vancouver Police Board have a strong financial management framework in place.

We observed a culture of strong governance oversight, appropriate financial policy and procedures, robust budget building and financial reporting processes and an internal and external audit function in place.

Expenditures relating to specific programs and service delivery and the health and wellness of officers are regularly reported and monitored.

The board's own budget is not sufficient to meet its role and responsibilities, however, the additional expenditures to achieve this are being incurred and the budget overrun is being managed as part of the overall Vancouver Police Board budget.

Additional information to assist the Director of Police Services make a determination under section 27 (3) of the Police Act is detailed on pages 11 and 12 of this report.

Introduction

Following a request to the Director of Police Services from the Vancouver Police Board (VP Board) to make a determination under section 27 (3) of the Police Act resulting from Vancouver City Council's decision not to approve the 2021 Vancouver Police Operating Budget submitted by the VP Board; he initiated a review of the Vancouver Police Department (VPD) and the Vancouver Police Board (VP Board).

The Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General (the Ministry) contracted Peter Lockie of Inverleith Consulting Inc. and Peter Lepine of Peter Lepine Professional Services to undertake a study of VPD and the VP Board which will include a review of the financial framework and budget cycle and the impacts of the alleged budget shortfall on service delivery and adequate and effective policing.

This report focuses on the **first of three areas** identified in the terms of reference as follows:

Assessment of the Financial Management Framework – an examination, evaluation and conclusions on the strength of the financial management framework of the Vancouver Police Department including:

- a. The budget cycle including the preparation, approval, forecasting, reporting, monitoring, expenditures and board oversight.
- b. Relevant policies and procedures.
- c. Assessment of the process for the police board and municipality to communicate and engage on budget development and priorities.
- d. Expenditures as they relate to the specific programs and service delivery.
- e. Expenditures as they relate to health and wellness of officers.
- f. Assessment of adequacy of the board's budget to allow it to carry out its role independently from political influence and at arm's length from the department.

Review Methodology

The review included an analysis of key documents and interviews with VPD executive and management, VP Board members including the Vice Chair and the Chair and former Chair of the Finance Committee, the President of the Vancouver Police Union and the City Manager and Chief Financial Officer of the City of Vancouver (the City).

Financial Management Framework

Governance Model – the VP Board is responsible for financial oversight of VPD and is assisted in fulfilling its oversight responsibilities by a Finance Standing Committee of the Board which has core terms of reference including oversight of the following:

1. Budget development processes and financial planning;
2. The financial information that will be provided to the VP Board, City Council and other stakeholders;
3. The systems of internal controls established by VPD management and the VP Board; and
4. Any audit processes outside of the City audit.

Primary responsibility for budget development, financial reporting, information systems, risk management and internal controls is vested in VPD management with governance oversight being provided by the VP Board.

We found that the VP Board governance model provided strong financial oversight of the VPD.

Financial Policies and Procedures - VPD follows the substance and intent of the City's financial policies and procedures although in some cases they are adapted to include more limitation. It has a small number of its own financial policies and procedures that are specific to VPD operations such as employee expenses, travel, training and overtime.

VPD operates with a financial and purchase authority framework which is aligned with the City's framework.

The VPD Board has a small number of financial policies and procedures relating to its board operations.

We found that financial policies and procedures were appropriate and have no concerns with them.

Process for the Police Board and Municipality to communicate and engage on budget development and priorities – the operating and capital budget processes are summarized at a high level in the City's policies and in the Police Act.

The City's operating budget process, which the VPD and VP Board forms a part of, includes the following phases:

- ⇒ Budget Preparation – March to May
- ⇒ Budget Setting – June to August
- ⇒ Budget Building – September to October
- ⇒ Budget Finalizing – November to December

Under the Police Act:

1. S 27 (1) On or before November 30, a municipal police board must prepare and submit to the council for its approval a provisional budget for the following year to provide policing and law enforcement in the municipality.

2. S 27 (2) Any changes to the provisional budget under subsection (1) must be submitted to council before March 1 of the year to which the provisional budget relates.

The capital budget process follows a similar planning framework and timeline to the operating budget process with several City departments (for example, technology and fleet services) including VPD capital needs in their budget submissions.

Both VPD and the VP Board are engaged with the City throughout the annual process. VPD's Chief Constable is a member of the City's Corporate Leadership Team and participates throughout the budget development process while providing updates for discussion with the VP Board Finance Committee and Board.

The VP Board Finance Committee and other board members attend meetings with Vancouver Council to obtain budget perspectives from them and provide answers to them related to the VP Board budget and initiatives. Substantive amounts of background information and financial context are provided by the VP Board to Council members and there is dialogue about key budget issues.

The VP Board Finance Committee reviews, discusses, and recommends to the VP Board a final operational and capital budget submission to the City before the November 30 deadline. Council then reviews and approves the related budgets in December.

We found that there is a robust process in place which allows both parties to fully engage on key budget matters. In the 2021 budget process, the engagement was deeper than in past years when much of the presentation had been led by the Police Chief, 2021 included a higher level of engagement with Council from the VP Board Finance Committee and other VP Board members.

Financial System and Reporting - VPD uses the City's financial system (SAP) to record its transactions and generate financial reports. It is an acceptable but not ideal financial system for VPD who use Microsoft Excel and other tools to present financial data in a form that is more suitable for its activities and users.

VPD finance staff calendarize the annual budget to align with the anticipated timing of operations which is monitored monthly with a more detailed review and updated forecast prepared and presented to the VP Board Finance Committee and Board on a quarterly basis.

With actual results to date being generated by the financial system, forecast results are prepared using actual results to date plus a projection based upon the remaining budget and anticipated activity informed by prior year timing trends and known events. VPD holds back some of its strategic but discretionary expenditure until later in the year when its overall financial performance can be forecast with an increased level of confidence. Remaining expenditure items are then approved based on their priority.

Senior finance staff from both VPD and the City meet quarterly to review the financial results. Both parties agree that this working relationship is positive and outside of regular scheduled meetings there is ongoing communication of any significant financial issues that arise.

There are many moving parts within the VPD budget with the largest components by order of magnitude being salaries and benefits (90%) offset by recoveries (-10%) and non-salary items (20%).

In the most recent 2021 quarterly variance report for the nine-month period ended 30 September 2021, actual results to date show a \$4 million deficit and project a \$7.2 million deficit for the 2021 year, of which \$4.1 million arises from operations and \$3.1 million is related to unfunded employee benefit cost increases.

Significant variance analysis of the 2021 forecast compared with budget is as follows:

Recoveries are projected to be \$5.5 million more than budgeted:

- \$2.7M Secondments (offsets salaries and benefits, currently 87 sworn officers and 7 civilians)
- \$1.3M Provincial and municipal cost share programs
- \$1.1M Grants and donations (Vancouver Police Foundation and Civil Forfeiture Office)
- \$0.7M Third party events (sporting, filming, community, and construction road closures)

Salaries and benefits are projected to be \$10.4 million more than budgeted:

- \$4.2M Sworn and court overtime (protests and demonstrations, construction and COVID testing sites)
- \$2.5M Sworn salaries (largely budgetary reduction cost pressure)
- \$3.1M Benefits (2021 rates now known, budget built on 2020 rates)

Non-salary items are projected to be \$2.3 million more than budgeted:

- \$2.0M Professional fees (legal fees are twice the budgeted amount, jail nursing services had a contract increase)
- \$1.6M Equipment and Fleet (underfunded fleet maintenance, uniform acquisition timing)
- (\$1.1M) Travel and training (savings from COVID impact)

Material expenditure variances relating to specific programs and service delivery are identified within the quarterly report. One of the key performance measures that is reported monthly in detail to all VPD managers is overtime usage and cost.

Employee wellness forecasts show sick leave and workers' compensation total hours to be very similar to the experience in 2020 with sick leave hours lower and workers' compensation hours higher.

Excluded from the 2021 forecast is the cost of 2020 collective agreement wage settlements that have not yet been ratified. Past practice has been that the City funds any wage settlements. Since this quarterly review, an arbitrated settlement has been made in respect of police officers and we have been told that those incremental costs will be funded by the City.

We found the financial reporting framework to be appropriate with monthly and year to date revenue and expenditure details including variances by account categories to enable appropriate review by management and oversight by the VP Board Finance Committee and Board.

Financial Results - VPD's summarized budgeted and actual operating results for the last five years were as follows:

Year	Total Budget	Surplus
2016	\$266 M	\$68 K
2017	\$274 M	\$45 K
2018	\$287 M	\$16 K
2019	\$301 M	\$14 K
2020	\$314 M	\$24 K
Total	\$1,442 M	\$167 K

There is a very consistent financial performance over the last five years that shows VPD's actual results have always been very close to, but just below, its annual budget. The total surplus as a per cent of total budget for the five years is one hundredth of one per cent which is exceptionally close. We were advised that VPD has delivered this positive result for each of the last sixteen years.

At the request of the VP Board Finance Committee, the City's Internal Audit Division carries out an annual review of VPD's financial statements to provide assurance that the statements have been prepared, in all material respects, consistent with the City's and Public Sector Accounting Board standards. We reviewed the last two year's reports and found that found both years successfully obtained that confirmation.

We found that the VPD and VP Board demonstrate strong financial reporting processes.

Reserve Funds – the City has a reserves policy and carries its own financial stabilization reserves as a mitigation measure for key risks to the City's financial stability. This reserve can buffer the impact of unplanned events, unforeseen emergencies and provide contingency for unanticipated cost increases or revenue reductions outside the control of the City. This funding is limited and can only be used on a temporary one-time basis and cannot be used to fund ongoing budget increases.

The City maintains a number of other reserve balances that are restricted to specific uses. These reserves cannot be used to offset operating budget shortfalls.

The VP Board does not have its own financial stabilization reserve and any operating deficit would have to be dealt by the City drawing from its financial stabilization reserve.

The VP Board does have some specific reserves that are available to meet their defined purpose, but they cannot be used for operating deficits. Access to these would be obtained through agreement between the Chief of Police and the City Manager or Chief Financial Officer.

With the VP Board's most recent forecast operating deficit for 2021 of \$7.2 million (operational deficit \$4.1 million, unfunded benefits \$3.1 million), the City has confirmed that this will need to be funded by the City's general revenue financial stabilization reserve.

Having no financial stability reserve of its own, the VP Board is dependent on the City's ability to offset any operating deficits that occur. Our observation is that the VP Board

would be in a stronger position if it had its own financial stability reserve. To achieve this would require planning ahead to fund the reserve and a supporting policy around its purpose and access.

Audit Oversight – VPD’s annual results and assets and liabilities are included within the City’s consolidated financial statements and audited annually by an external audit firm, currently KPMG. Their audit includes sampling and verification of VPD financial results. We were advised that there have been no audit concerns identified from this process.

The City’s Internal Audit Division (a separate independent division reporting to the City Manager) also carries out financial reviews that cover VPD, including the annual review of VPD’s financial statements noted above. These reports are shared with the VP Board Finance Committee.

Lastly, VPD has its own small audit department that primarily carries out operational compliance reviews and special projects. It reports to the Director of Planning and Audit. Their reports are normally shared with the VPD Executive and sometimes, when deemed appropriate, the VP Board Finance Committee.

We found that the VPD and VPD Board have a robust audit function overseeing and reviewing operational performance and financial results.

2017 Operational Review – this extensive operational review, completed by an independent group of academics that were experts in the policing field, identified the following six major themes prior to making staffing recommendations that were accepted and endorsed by the VP Board and Vancouver Council:

1. Ensuring frontline service level
2. Responding to higher legal and policy requirements
3. Promoting employee health and wellness
4. Interdicting upstream drivers of crime
5. Leveraging technology and information, and
6. Managing ongoing and emerging challenges

Additional staffing requirements were identified on a four-tier spectrum of service delivery with the most pressing needs being tier 1. A decision to adopt tier 2 was made as well as a plan to implement the change over a 5-year period which would ultimately result in the addition of 120 sworn officers and 52 civilians.

For the first three years following the operational review, additional staffing approved in the operating budget followed the accepted plan. In year 4, which was 2021, the VP Board deferred asking for the planned additional staffing resources in recognition of the financial challenges facing the City. We understand that this deferral has occurred again in the requested and approved budget for 2022

The City has confirmed that the year four and five staffing additions are included in its five-year financial plan but were deferred in 2021 and 2022 due to financial constraints.

Expenditures as they relate to Health and Wellness of Officers – the most current data at the time of the report (from 23 of 26 pay periods in 2021) shows that sick leave hours and cost are running about 8% below 2020 levels while workers' compensation hours and costs are running about 12% above 2020 levels – taken together total hours are very similar to 2020 levels.

Sick leave hours appear to have stabilized over the preceding five years following a period of growth while workers' compensation has almost doubled in that period.

Adequacy of the Board's budget to allow it to carry out its role independently from political influence and at arm's length from the department – starting with 2019, the financial results show that board expenditure has exceeded the allocated budget amount. This is primarily the result of a need for additional legal and consulting services and computer supplies for board members all in response to greater expectations from the Province, the Office of the Police Complaint Commissioner and media and public requests for information. Support staffing has remained constant with one full time Executive Director and one part time Executive Assistant.

Undoubtedly the workload of the Board has increased over the last few years which has placed additional strain on the existing resources. The VP Board made a submission to the Special Committee on Reforming the Police Act which included some suggestions to strengthen police governance by ensuring adequate resourcing of Boards through new mechanisms for financial independence from the departments that they oversee, including the possibility of Provincial funding

The VP Board budget is a component of the VPD budget and recent years' experience shows that it is not sufficient to meet its requirements. Increased board resourcing, including staffing, has been identified as a need but delayed in recognition of the overall financial challenges.

The VP Board works to carry out its role independently from political influence by using its governance structure to allow VPD to focus on operations while it oversees and communicates the policing and related funding needs to the City.

The VP Board works to maintain an arm's length relationship with the VPD through its overall governance model which identifies operations as the primary responsibility of the VPD and oversight as the primary responsibility of the VP Board – this is achieved through a variety of methods including well prepared and trained board membership, ongoing review and requests for supporting information at board and committee meetings, in camera meetings and several board governance plans and procedures that clearly identify the board's role. Improved governance continues to be a work in progress with further additional steps to clarify roles under consideration.

We found that the VP Board has a governance framework that allows it to carry out its role independently from political influence and at arm's length from the department - its web site clearly communicates details of its mandate, board membership, policy and procedure manual, board meeting agenda and minutes, service and policy complaint role and strategic plan. Adequate resourcing of the Board may well require to be increased to align with the increasing role and responsibilities of the Board.

Risk management - the VPD applies a decentralized approach to risk management e.g., finance, insurance, information technology and operations although the introduction of a broader more formal enterprise risk management program is a future vision that they would like to move to.

We found the current approach to risk management to be acceptable.

Determination under section 27 (3) of the Police Act – the VP Board's request is for the Director of Police Services to make a determination if the amount of \$5,689,974 requested in the 2021 operating budget but not approved by Vancouver City Council should be included in the budget.

With the VP Board's most recent forecast operating deficit for 2021 of \$7.2 million (operational deficit \$4.1 million, unfunded benefits \$3.1 million), the City has confirmed that the actual deficit will need to be funded by the City's general revenue financial stabilization reserve.

The VP Board has stated that the \$5.7 million is not simply a one-time budgetary shortfall and, if not added back, will put the budget at risk of deficit in every year going forward. They have also stated that the VP Board and the City intentionally removed the 2021 shortfall amount from the 2022 operating budget submission with the understanding that it was being addressed separately through the section 27 (3) determination process.

Although the VP Board is encouraged that the City will be able to fund the 2021 projected deficit through its general revenue financial stabilization reserve it believes that the budget approval decision is a separate matter from the funding treatment of the projected deficit and that the budget reduction has created a structural deficit which will recur unless remedied. We concur with this assessment.



March 14, 2022
Ref: 628882

His Worship Kennedy Stewart
Mayor, City of Vancouver
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Vancouver BC V5Y 1V4
Email: kennedy.stewart@vancouver.ca

Faye Wightman
Vice-Chair, Vancouver Police Board
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Dear Mayor Stewart and Faye Wightman:

On March 8, 2021, the vice chair of the Vancouver Police Board (the Board) submitted a request asking me to make a determination under my authority in section 27(3) of the *Police Act* (the Act), on a “\$5,689,974 shortfall resulting from Vancouver City Council’s (Council) decision not to approve the 2021 [VPD] Operating Budget as submitted by the [Board].” On June 10, 2021, in response to my request, the City of Vancouver’s City Manager made submissions on the council’s behalf. On June 24, 2021, the Board made further submissions in a 138-page report prepared by the Vancouver Police Department (VPD).

I write now to provide my decision.

Section 27(3) states:

If a council does not approve an item in the budget, the director, on application by the council or the municipal police board, must

- (a) determine whether the item or amount should be included in the budget, and
- (b) report the director's findings to the municipal police board, the council and the minister.

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In other words, my authority is limited to making a decision on whether a budget item or amount in dispute should be included in the police budget. In this case, the amount in question is \$5,689,974 that was withheld from the Board 2021 operating budget submission.

While section 27 does not provide me with specific criteria on which to base my decision, the Act does offer general guidance in terms of the respective responsibilities of the Province, the municipality, the police board and the chief constable.

It is the Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General's responsibility to ensure an adequate and effective level of policing and law enforcement in BC. At the core of this responsibility is public safety. It is my job as Director of Police Services to superintend policing and law enforcement through specific functions set out in the *Police Act*, including: inspecting and reporting on the quality and standard of policing and law enforcement services delivery, establishing policing standards, providing advice to chiefs of police and police boards on matters relating to policing and law enforcement and making recommendations to the minister on board appointments.

The responsibilities of a municipality with a municipal police department are financial in nature and include the obligation to bear the expenses necessary to generally maintain law and order (s. 15) and to include in its budget the costs of the provisional police budget prepared and submitted by the police board, subject to section 27(3) (s. 27(4)).

A police board's governance and oversight functions under the Act fall into four main categories: establish the direction of the police department; employer of the police department; financial oversight of the police department; and management of the service and policy complaint process under Part 11.

Under section 34, the chief constable, under direction of the police board, provides general supervision and command over the police department. In turn, the police department must perform the duties and functions respecting the preservation of peace, the prevention of crime and offences against the law and administration of justice, all under the chief constable's direction.

Process

To assist in making my decision on the amount in question, I retained two consultants, Peter Lockie of Inverleith Consulting, Inc. and Peter Lepine, to conduct a study and prepare reports under section 42 of the *Police Act*. The consultants' reports (enclosed), were shared with the parties under cover of my January 31, 2022 letter.

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I asked the consultants to focus on three key areas relevant to the dispute:

1. the strength/health of the financial management framework of the VPD;
2. the impacts of the alleged budget shortfall on service delivery and public safety; and
3. emerging environmental impacts on adequate and effective policing including, the global pandemic, collective agreements, crime trends, socio-economic issues and other relevant considerations or impacts.

While the reports provided useful context and analysis, the decision is my own.

In addition to the consultants' reports, I considered the following:

- the parties' respective submissions;
- the parties' respective comments on the consultants' reports; and
- the *Police Act*.

I would like to thank the municipality, police board and VPD for their cooperation with the consultants' studies and my review. I would also like to thank them for their considered submissions and the comments they provided on the consultants' reports. Finally, I wish to thank the two consultants for their work.

Analysis

Numerous events across North America over the past two and half years have had significant influence on public perception of policing and its role in public safety and in some respects eroded public confidence. In part in response to some of these events, the Legislative Assembly established the Special Committee on Reforming the Police Act to examine, among other things, the role of the police with respect to complex social issues including mental health and wellness, addictions and harm reduction, the scope of systemic racism in police agencies, and reforms related to independent oversight, transparency, governance, service delivery, funding and training. The Committee's report is expected to be submitted to the Legislative Assembly by April 28, 2022.

During the same time period our province has endured a pandemic, an increase in civil disobedience and environmental disasters that have created new demands on police resources across BC. As evidenced by the parties' submissions and consultants' reports, there are noticeable variations in crime statistics during the pandemic, which make it challenging to determine the overall impact on VPD's service delivery capacity.

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Like many municipalities in BC, the City of Vancouver has seen rising costs and decreased revenue throughout the pandemic; in 2020 operating revenues were \$89 million below budget and in 2021 they were \$19 million lower than 2020 budget levels. In 2020, the City of Vancouver cut funding to many of its departments' budgets by 1% in response to the financial challenges associated with the pandemic. Over the summer of 2020 the Board refused the City's request to reduce the approved police budget by the same proportion. Incidentally, I understand VPD was the only municipal police department that received a reduced 2021 operating budget.

In his report, Peter Lockie concluded that VPD and the Board have a strong financial management framework in place, with strong financial oversight and appropriate financial policies and procedures as well as a robust budget development process and financial reporting process and internal and external audit functions in place.¹ He also notes that the VPD had not run a budget deficit until 2021. The deficit for 2021 was \$7.2 million (operational deficit of \$4.1 million, unfunded benefits of \$3.1 million), which I understand the City has agreed to cover from its reserves. Finally, Mr. Lockie observed the Board's concerns that it will likely continue to run a structural deficit in future years as a result of the alleged shortfall in the 2021 operating budget, unless remedied.

I appreciate that the governance framework for municipal police departments can be a source of frustration for municipalities. In accordance with the Act municipalities are required to select and fund one of three types of policing and law enforcement service for their community. Police budgets are typically the largest line item in a municipal budget representing up to 30% its total budget. (In Vancouver, police services are funded by property taxes). However, municipal police boards are created independently from municipal councils in part to remove boards from the influence of partisan politics.² The municipality plays no oversight role of the police department (except financial accountability under the Act) and has no legislative authority to direct the police department or determine its service and/or deployment model. In this respect, the municipal police department is distinguished from other services and departments funded by the municipality.

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¹ Peter Lockie report (in conjunction with Peter Lepine) 2022, p. 2

² BC Police Board Handbook, 2015.

These limitations do not mean a municipal council's public safety concerns can or should be ignored by the police department or board; in fact, I would suggest that boards and police departments do this at their peril.³ Instead, it is imperative that these parties operate within a spirit of collaboration in pursuit of their mutual interest in public safety and to ensure adequate and effective policing and law enforcement in their community that reflects the levels of service required to meet public safety needs and priorities. To a large extent, this seems to have generally been the case in Vancouver in recent years.

While there are variations in the way municipal police budgets are prepared and approved in accordance with the Act, each of the 12 municipal police departments and police boards (serving 13 municipalities) in BC, follow a similar process. First, the police board develops a strategic plan in consultation with the chief constable, that sets out the department's priorities, goals and objectives for policing and law enforcement in the community (s. 26). The police board must take into account the policing priorities of the Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General and the priorities of the municipality (s. 26(4.1)). Once the priorities, goals and objectives are established (i.e., the strategic plan), the department, under the direction of the chief constable, develops the programs and services to implement them. It is the strategic plan (and any annual business plans) and the corresponding programs and services that should serve as the foundation for the provisional police budget that the police board is responsible for preparing and submitting to municipal council by November 30 of each year (s. 27).

A good strategic plan is based on extensive consultation to determine the community's public safety needs and priorities and to inform a suitable level of service delivery and deployment model. The BC Provincial Policing Standards on the Promotion of Unbiased Policing - 6.1.2 (Community Engagement) will require municipal police boards to ensure processes are in place by July 2023 to obtain input on the priorities, goals and objectives for policing and law enforcement, from a broad spectrum of their community, including from: (a) municipal council(s); (b) Indigenous leaders; (c) school district(s); (d) community organizations and groups (e.g. advocacy groups, leadership at places of worship, Indigenous organizations); (e) members of the public; and (f) the business community.

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³ As discussed later, a police board is required, under the s. 26(4) of the *Police Act* to take into account the priorities of the municipality when determining the priorities, goals and objectives of its police department

In this case, the VPD Strategic Plan 2017-2021 was the result of community engagement on matters relating to policing and community safety. It resulted in the establishment of 4 overarching themes: *Engage Our Community, Enhance Public Safety, Fight Crime and Support Our People*. From these themes, goals and objectives were established and operationalized through 33 strategies and 180 activities which is the basis of VPD's yearly business plans.⁴ The strategic plan was developed not just with community input but based as well on the priorities of the Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General.⁵ As noted in Mr. Lepine' and Mr. Lockie's report the City of Vancouver attempted to integrate a few of VPD's strategies within its annual corporate plan:

"These city strategies align with many of the VPD's Strategic Plan goals to foster relationships with diverse communities. Given this relationship, there is an excellent incentive for the VPD to work with other civic and community partners to leverage resources to effect positive change..."

*It is clear from our review of the vast amount of information that speaks to the City's efforts; the VPD is firmly entrenched with all of the other city partners focused on these city initiatives. Once again, we also note that many of these initiatives align with the VPD's 2017-21 Strategic Plan, which measures the VPD's own success at meeting their own goals."*⁶

The two consultants further concluded that the priorities, goals and objectives of the City and the Province were captured in the 2017-2021 Strategic Plan and VPD's annual business plan.⁷

Based on their research and analysis, the consultants conclude that despite the 2021 operating budget shortfall, VPD was able to maintain an adequate and effective level of policing in the community. However, this appears to have come at a substantial cost to several department programs, overtime costs and employee health and wellbeing:

It is our view that up until now, the VPD has adjusted their policing strategies to meet community expectations and comply with all policing standards and operational priorities. They have also made every effort to comply with court-imposed and external enquiry recommendations and requirements.

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⁴ Peter Lepine report (in conjunction with Peter Lockie, Inverleith Consulting Inc.) 2022, p. 11

⁵ Ibid., p. 12

⁶ Ibid., p. 13

⁷ Ibid.

We also believe that given the entirety of information reviewed, combined with decisions already made by the stakeholders themselves, the VPD has delivered an adequate and effective level of service to the City of Vancouver. It is, however, our view that this level of service has come with some negative impact to their employees and reduced public confidence, which can no longer be sustained. We also believe that without either a further injection of resources or a reduction in their workload, the VPD's ability to maintain this level of service is compromised at the least or most likely not to materialize.

They further state in the context of the current Strategic Plan and VPD's current police service delivery model:

It is our view that resource adjustments will always be required to accommodate changing social conditions. However, we are also of the opinion that there is little in terms of further significant changes the VPD can reasonably undertake without negatively impacting their ability to provide an adequate and effective level of service. Our further view is that the only reasonable adjustment that can now be considered should be focused on any of the services that may not be considered core policing function, which in reality are very few.⁸

To look at this another way, the adequacy and effectiveness of service provided must also consider the level of service committed to under the Strategic Plan.

In his report on the strength of the financial management framework, Mr. Lockie acknowledges the Board's sentiment that the budget shortfall has created a recurring structural deficit. It is conceivable that the budget shortfall and any resulting structural deficit will affect the level of service delivery and the deployment model and the chief constable's ability to achieve the priorities, goals and objectives set out in the Strategic Plan and annual business plans.

Similarly, a shift in the level of service delivery and the deployment model and the adequacy and effectiveness of the implementation of that service/model can have significant impacts on the police budget. Ultimately, it appears that Council's decision on the 2021 operating budget was based primarily on its own financial situation without due regard for the priorities, goals and objectives that define the current level of service delivery and deployment model.

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⁸ Ibid., p. 53

I am not suggesting that a municipal council cannot refuse to approve a police budget item or amount. Nor am I suggesting that a police department is free to implement any service delivery or deployment model at any cost. On the contrary, the board and chief constable must continually examine and evaluate the service levels, deployment model, programs, services and staffing needs and explore opportunities to reduce costs and leverage operational efficiencies in a manner that reflects the community's public safety needs and priorities. They should also work with the municipality to ensure its service is financially sustainable. This appears to generally have been the case in Vancouver.

Similarly, I would suggest Council consider any budget decisions, in addition to any financial concerns it may have, through the lens of the downstream impacts to the public safety and service delivery. Public safety is a shared responsibility among the municipality and the police department. The chief constable and police board prepare a budget according to a general level of service delivery and/or deployment model based on local public safety needs and priorities. Ultimately, if a budget decision will impact service delivery and/or the deployment model, or if a municipality and its elected officials wish to adjust the role or focus of police, or explore a differential deployment model, it should do so through constructive engagement with the chief constable and police board, and well in advance of November 30. The development of policing priorities, goals and objectives takes time and adjustments require engagement and consultation, including with the municipality.

Decision

Based on the discussion above, my decision is to restore the amount requested by the Board in the 2021 VPD Operating Budget by restoring the shortfall of \$5,689,974.

I would encourage the parties to re-engage in the spirit of collaboration and, where possible, strive for a shared vision for public safety for the community. While respective visions may not always fully align, I have no doubt this will better serve public safety in the community and will reduce the reliance on section 27(3) to resolve future budget disputes.

The consultants' reports contain useful information that VPD and the Board can use to help inform future decisions. I encourage them to look at the conclusions and findings to inform their future planning and budget processes. They may also consider another operational review or wait until the results of the City's auditor general report.

Mayor Stewart and Faye Wightman
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Again, I want to thank the parties for their assistance, cooperation and for their patience. I would also like to commend the parties for their respective efforts and attempts to mitigate the impacts of the events of the past few years on the community and public safety.

Regards,



Wayne Rideout
Assistant Deputy Minister
And Director of Police Services
Policing and Security Branch

Encl.

Lepine Report – Section 27(3) Police Act Review
Inverleith Report – Section 27(3) Police Act Review

cc: Adam Palmer, Chief Constable, Vancouver Police Department
Paul Mochrie, City Manager, City of Vancouver
Stephanie Johanssen, Executive Director, Vancouver Police Board