



METRO VANCOUVER TRANSIT POLICE REPORT FOR MARCH 2022 TRANSLINK BOARD MEETING

TransLink Strategic Priority: Customer First

- **Appointment of Deputy Chief Officer Furlan**



On January 4, 2022, RCMP Superintendent Anita Furlan was appointed as the new Deputy Chief Officer with the Transit Police (following her secondment since September 2020). Deputy Chief Furlan brings to the organization 24 years of policing experience in BC, including time spent with the Border Integrity Team, Integrated Gang Task Force, the provincial Major Crime

section, Combined Forces Special Enforcement Unit – Organized Crime section and serving as the Officer in Charge of the BC - Real Time Intelligence Centre. She is the first woman Deputy Chief Officer for the Transit Police and her appointment is an important part of succession planning within the Transit Police. Her knowledge, skills and experience will help the police service to evolve and advance a modern police culture and Equity/Diversity/Inclusion, develop stronger relationships with the many Transit Police partners, and address changing societal issues that impact police.

- **First Year - Waterfront Community Policing Centre Volunteer Program**

The Transit Police's Waterfront Community Policing Volunteer Program was launched in February 2021 during the pandemic. During the year, there were up to 60 volunteers. The total volunteer hours in 2021 was over 3800 hours. Highlights include:

- Generating over 32 police files with Transit Police and local police agencies;
- Registering over 400 bikes through Project 529;
- Handing out blankets and care packs to vulnerable population on/around transit;
- Saving two lives by administering Naloxone;
- Joining Transit Police Neighbourhood Police Officers, local police agencies and ICBC in support of the Pedestrian Road Safety Campaign - handing out reflectors;
- Helping with set up for approximately eight speed & distracted driver events by TMET;
- Assisting TransLink with safety survey and the reindeer bus; and
- Nine of the volunteers also volunteering with the Blue Eagle Community Cadet Program.



Two of the volunteers have now become police recruits (one at Transit Police and one at another police agency), and more volunteers are anticipated to follow this path in the future. New volunteer applications have continued to come in early 2022.

- Transit Police – Targeted Mobile Enforcement Team (“TMET”)**

TMET is a Transit Police specialty unit (one Sergeant and six Constables) that became operational in September 2020. Responding to intelligence reports, crime statistics and complaints received from the public, TMET works in partnership with Jurisdictional Police and public safety agencies to provide focused enforcement on and near the transit system. TMET provides strategic, project-driven enforcement of provincial statutes, *Transit Conduct and Safety Regulation* and TransLink bylaws, and the *Criminal Code*. Whether responding to concerns about pedestrian safety at a transit hub, lane changes that increase the chance of collision due to vehicles parked in bus lanes, or removing impaired drivers from the road during roadblocks on TransLink bridges, TMET is driven by its core focus on increasing public safety.

An example of enforcement was on Feb. 8, 2022, when TMET acted on intelligence and data and then carried out checks that led to several arrests, including a man now charged with breaching his conditions and possession of drugs for trafficking.

Vancouver Transit Police seize 70g of meth in targeted bus and station checks

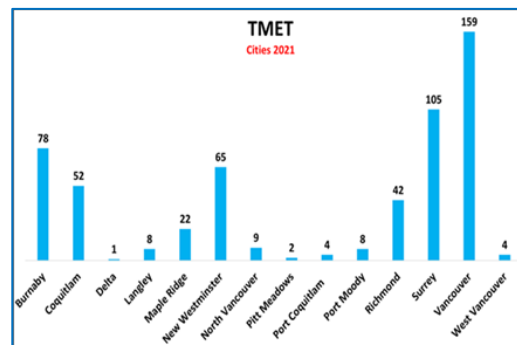
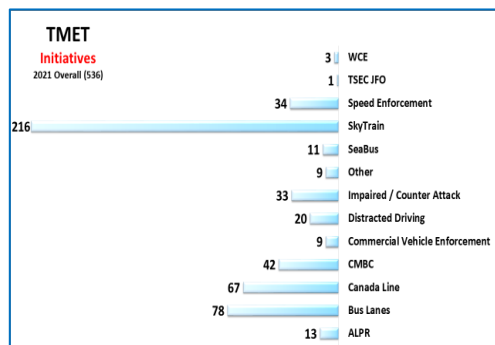
Cash, cannabis and cocaine were also seized during the checks

Cameron Thomson
Feb 9, 2022 12:23 PM



In 2021, TMET received a Deputy Chief Officer Unit Commendation for their significant targeted work:

- Made 100 warrant arrests;
- Opened 413 Police Files;
- Issued 23 Immediate Roadside Suspensions;
- Submitted 21 Reports to Crown Counsel;
- Issued 3,861 Fare Bylaw Infractions;
- Issued 2,430 Prov. Violation Tickets (i.e., *Transit Conduct and Safety Regulation*); and
- Conducted 92 joint forces operations with over 12 different police agencies, integrated law enforcement units and security partners.



- **Blue Eagle Community Cadet Program Expansion**

In 2021, the Transit Police launched its Blue Eagle Community Youth Cadet Program¹; a developmental program for youth aged 12-15 (and held at the Britannia Community Center in Vancouver). Transit Police developed this program in partnership with the Vancouver Aboriginal Community Policing Center and the Vancouver Police (Diversity, Inclusion and Indigenous Relations Section). The inaugural program ran from March to June 2021 and the fall program runs from September 2021 to June 2022.

In July 2021, the coordinators of the Blue Eagle Community Cadets in Vancouver were approached to expand the Program to Surrey. Transit Police senior management supported the proposal. The concept received support from a variety of Surrey community, educational and civic organizations, as well as the Surrey RCMP and Surrey Police Service. Since Q3 2021, joint work continued on the implementation tasks, including acquiring funding and in-kind services. An open house was held in January 2022. By February 2022, the Surrey Blue Eagle Community Cadet Program had 17 youth attending and registrations are expected to grow over spring 2022.



Metro Vancouver Transit Police Indigenous Liaison, Constable Kirk Retberg, in video about the Blue Eagle youth cadet program, coming to an elementary school in Surrey. (YouTube.com)

Blue Eagle cadet program flies to Surrey for lessons in Indigenous culture, policing

'We're trying to make it easier for youth to interact with us and to start to trust the police'

TOM ZILLICH / Jan. 19, 2022 10:30 a.m. / COMMUNITY

New to Surrey is a free program for youth that aims to develop leadership skills and educate about Indigenous culture and policing.

In 2021, Metro Vancouver Transit Police launched its Blue Eagle Community Cadet program for all youth aged 12 to 15, at Britannia Community Centre in East Vancouver.

Now, an open house about the program expansion to Surrey is planned for 5 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 27 at A.H.P. Matthew Elementary, 13367 97 Avenue, in Whalley.



¹ The Blue Eagle Community Cadet Program serves to empower Indigenous youth by offering culturally connected mentorship, building of leadership skills, supporting and empowering youth as they discover their potential and explore career options (including policing), increasing mental and physical health, learning/reconnecting about Indigenous culture (many urban Indigenous youth may not have any connection to their home community and lands, thus putting them at greater risk of suffering the harmful effects of trauma), and helping the community.

TransLink Strategic Priority: State of Good Repair

- **Overdose Crisis**

Transit Police is a part of the provincial initiative to respond to the opioid overdose crisis. Members are trained in First Aid as well as administering of Naloxone. From 2017 to 2021, Transit Police Officers administered Naloxone in 127 events to resuscitate overdose victims. This response tool also contributes to transit system resiliency. Significantly, in 2021, there were 35 events where Transit Police administered Naloxone – the highest number in any year since 2017. Transit Police has also trained its volunteers at the Waterfront Community Policing Centre in administering of naloxone and, in 2021, volunteers deployed it in two events – for which they received formal recognition.

Medical Check – On December 11, 2021 at Lougheed SkyTrain Station, Transit Police were on patrol and discovered a man passed out with shallow breathing. The Officers administered Naloxone, began chest compressions and used an AED before the male regained consciousness. BC Ambulance and Fire units attended and the man was then transported to hospital.

- **New Transit Police 2022-2026 Strategic Plan**

The Transit Police recently released its Strategic Plan for 2022-2026 (the “Plan”). While the development timeline for a new Plan was impacted in 2020 by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Plan was able to be finalized late in 2021 by the Transit Police Board.

The Strategic Plan was developed with input from the Transit Police Board and employees, TransLink and its operating companies, TSML Board, cross-regional policing partners, Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General, Chief’s Community Council, community organizations, Indigenous partners and transit riders. This Plan is intended to support the priorities of TransLink including ridership recovery and transit system expansion. Ongoing communications and input from TransLink partners will continue to inform the future evolution of the Plan over the next five years.

The Plan centers on three Pillars:

- Cross-regional Policing
- Engaged Community Partners
- Modern Policing Culture.

The complete Plan is available on the Transit Police website ([click here](#)).

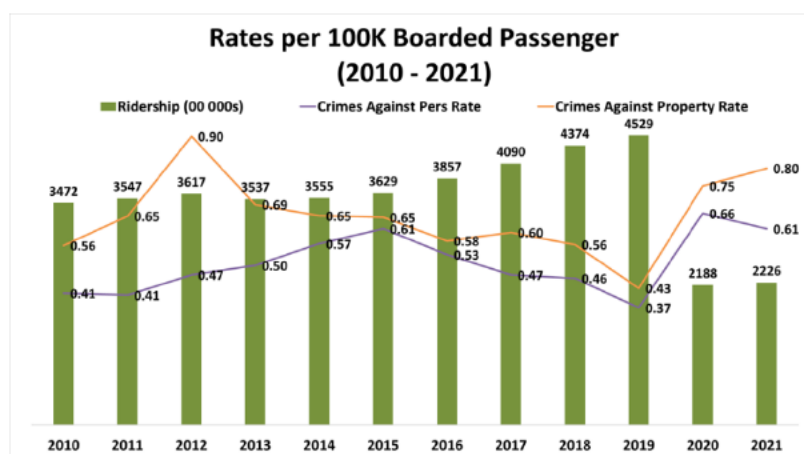


- **Performance Measurement Culture**

Transit Police is an intelligence-led and data-driven police agency, and gathers comprehensive statistics in relation to crime and organizational performance. Transit Police shares statistical and performance information with the public, TransLink and stakeholders through a variety of tools. A snapshot of key statistics for 2021 as compared to 2020 follows. In 2021, Transit Police had 20,111 Police Files, which includes a 9% increase in ‘assist’ files to other police agencies in 2021.

Metro Vancouver Transit Police Crime and Safety Statistics	2021	2020	% Change
Crimes Against Persons/100,000 Boarded Passengers (primary and assists)	0.618	0.668	-8%
Crimes Against Property/100,000 Boarded Passengers (primary and assists)	0.805	0.750	7%
Other Criminal Code Violations/100,000 Boarded Passengers ² (primary and assists)	0.370	0.422	-12%
Provincial Violation Tickets ("VTs")	4,583	6,142	-25%
Arrests - Warrants Executed (All)	1,092	778	40%
Arrests - New Charges ³	500	709	-29%
Total S. 28 Mental Health Act Apprehension Files	225	181	24%
Sexual Offences (primary and assists)	126	125	1%
SCBCTA Fare Infraction Notices	4,616	5,621	-18%
SMS Texts Conversations Converted to Police Files	6,064	4,983	22%

Notwithstanding the pandemic impact on ridership levels (51% decrease from 2019), criminal activity continued on or near the transit system. In 2021, there was continued high rates of Crimes Against Persons per 100,000 Boarded Passengers and Crimes Against Property per 100,000 Boarded Passengers. While there was positive movement with the 8% decrease in the 2021 rate of Crimes Against Persons (0.618) from 2020 (0.668), there was however a 7% increase in the 2021 rate of Crimes Against Property (0.805) as compared to 2020 (0.750). These two crime rates are an anomaly to historical trending prior to 2020, as shown on the following chart (the respective 2019 rates were 0.37/Persons and 0.43/Property). It was 2015 that the Transit Police adopted its community based policing – service delivery model.



² Other Criminal Code Violations: Includes such offences as weapons, disturbing the peace, child pornography, obstruct peace officer, possess break and enter instruments, intimidation and threats, breach/bail violations, indecent acts/exposing, and counterfeiting.

³ Arrest means an actual arrest and all other cases where charges were recommended to Crown Counsel.

Suspect Charged after Senior Assaulted – Around 1 pm on December 4, 2021, a man boarded a SkyTrain at Scott Road Station. As he attempted to sit down, he accidentally bumped into another man about to sit in the same seat. The victim (67-year-old) ignored the accidental bump and moved to a different part of the train. Moments later, the suspect allegedly approached the victim, got close to his face and demanded an apology. The victim pushed the suspect into a nearby seat and attempted to hold him down until help could arrive, when he felt a sharp pain in his side. The victim looked down and allegedly saw that the suspect had a knife in his hand. When the SkyTrain arrived at Gateway Station, the suspect ran off the train and out of the station. The victim was taken to the hospital with multiple, but non-life-threatening stab wounds. Transit Police worked around the clock to identify the suspect involved and, weeks later, while dealing with a man on an unrelated matter, the Crime Suppression Team members recognized this person as the possible stabbing suspect. Further investigative action by the General Investigation Unit led to the arrest of the 19-year-old suspect. He was arrested and charged with Aggravated Assault and Possession of a Weapon for a Dangerous Purpose, and held in custody.

Series of Stranger Assaults on Transit Solved – On February 14, 2022, Transit Police arrested a suspect following a series of five seemingly random assaults on transit passengers. The incidents took place between October 2021 and February 2022. The first incident occurred in front of Commercial-Broadway SkyTrain Station in Vancouver, when a man exiting the bus, was approached from behind by the suspect, who allegedly then kicked the victim several times in the legs and attempted to hit him in the face. The second incident occurred near Royal Oak Station, when the suspect on board a SkyTrain got up from his seat and, without provocation, allegedly kicked the victim in the face. The third and fourth alleged assaults occurred on board a SkyTrain near Metrotown Station, when the suspect, again without provocation, allegedly punched a fellow passenger in the back of the head multiple times. Shortly after, the suspect boarded another train and allegedly hit another passenger in the face with an empty beer can. The last incident took place on board a train nearing Patterson Station, where the suspect allegedly punched a SkyTrain passenger multiple times. In all incidents, the suspect and victim were not known to each other, nor was there interaction between the two prior to the alleged assaults. Thankfully, none of the victims in these incidents sustained serious physical injuries; however, the escalating violent behaviour of the suspect was very concerning, especially as it was directed at complete strangers. Stranger assaults are difficult to solve but the Transit Police's General Investigation Unit was able to link the series of assaults to one suspect, arrest him, and recommended five counts of assault for a 35-year-old New Westminster man (known to police). Transit Police continues to investigate whether any other events may be linked to this suspect.

The number of sexual offence files (primary and assists) for 2021 was up 1% from 2020; however, the monthly averages for sexual offences in 2020 and 2021 were the lowest since 2012. In part, the low numbers may be attributed to the lower ridership during the pandemic and greater visibility for a person if they were to attempt to commit a sexual offence. However, Transit Police continues to be concerned with possible under-reporting of incidents and promotes reporting through a variety of initiatives, including texting 87 77 77. In 2021, there was a transit safety tip campaign and presentations for post-secondary students returning to school. Further, Transit Police conducted training for Station Attendants on sexual offending on transit and the role that they can play in identifying/reporting incidents.

Sexual Assault Suspect Arrested – Around midnight on November 27, 2021, a woman was approached by a man at 29th Avenue SkyTrain Station, who blocked her from walking past him multiple times. The suspect allegedly wrapped his arms around the victim, groped her, and forced her to the ground. The victim courageously fought back and pushed the suspect away before he allegedly shoved her down a set of stairs and grabbed her phone. The victim punched the suspect, yelled for help, and retrieved her phone. Transit Police commenced an investigation and sought help from the media and public to identify the suspect. Multiple tips were received, which led to the suspect's identity and arrest within 24 hours. The suspect was a 20-year-old Vancouver man, known to police, and charges of Sexual Assault and Robbery were recommended. The suspect was held in custody.

There was a 24% increase in number of S. 28 apprehensions under the *Mental Health Act* from 2020 to 2021. The number of S. 28 files during the COVID period (2019, 2020, 2021) were the highest number of S. 28 arrests that Transit Police has seen since 2015, even with ridership cut in more than half. In part, the volume of apprehensions may be due to the focus of Transit Police and other Transit staff to watch out for vulnerable persons and check on wellness, as well transit riders being encouraged to report disorder or issues of safety/concern. The numbers also indicate the dependency on the transit system of this vulnerable group.

Section 28 Apprehension after Guideway Intrusion – In November 2021, a woman entered into the SkyTrain guideway at VCC-Clark Station and began walking toward Commercial Station. SkyTrain Control received the intrusion alarm and notified the Transit Police - Operations Communication Centre. Transit Police attended both Commercial Station and VCC-Clark to contain the woman. For safety of the woman and Officers, the trains were stopped and tracks were powered down. As Transit Police were about to start their sweep of the guideway, the woman came running toward them. She was escorted out and appeared to be suffering from a mental illness, believing that people with weapons had chased her onto the tracks. CCTV confirmed that no one was chasing the woman. Given the woman's state and the fact that she put herself in danger, she was apprehended under S. 28 of the *Mental Health Act* and transported to Vancouver General Hospital, and then certified by a physician.

It is noted that there was a 22% increase in SMS Text conversations with the Transit Police Operations Communication Centre that led to a police file being generated. 87 77 77 continues to be promoted as a way for transit riders to discretely contact Transit Police when issues of concern arise while on transit.

Criminal Warrant Arrests

Reducing crime and disorder on transit and the surrounding community was a Strategic Objective of the 2016-2021 Transit Police Strategic Plan. In 2021, Transit Police Officers made 1,092 arrests for outstanding criminal warrants, which included RCMP, Municipal Police and Transit Police issued warrants from BC and elsewhere. The number of warrant arrests for the 2021 was 40% higher from 2020; this is even higher than in 2019 before the pandemic (1,086). This increase is partly reflective of the targeted work being done by two Transit Police specialty units – the Crime Suppression Team and the Targeted Mobile Enforcement Team. The number of new charge arrests by Transit Police dropped by 29% in 2021 from 2020.



Many warrant arrests arise from on-view work of Transit Police Officers in their Community Service Areas (assigned patrol area), calls for service, confirming identity incidental to criminal arrest or during enforcement of a provincial statute offence (such as misuse of a fare gates). However, Transit Police Officers also familiarize themselves with offenders and criminals of concern or offenders wanted through law enforcement intelligence sharing, regional BOLFs (Be on the Look Out For), and the Transit Police Offender Management Program.

Illustrations of Warrant Arrests

In the evening of February 11, 2022, Transit Police were conducting fare checks at the Production Way SkyTrain Station, where a woman was detained for failure to produce fare. The woman provided an alias name and was warned for obstructing police. Her true identity was then provided and queries revealed that she had an outstanding warrant from Powell River for missing court. She was arrested and transported to police cells.

On February 23, 2022, Transit Police were dispatched to Broadway City Hall SkyTrain Station regarding a woman who was refusing to exit the elevator within the station and refusing other passengers to use it. Transit Police escorted the woman out of the elevator; however, she could not produce valid fare-media and would not provide identification. The query on the Police records system showed that the woman had an outstanding warrant from New Westminster Police for a breach violation. She was arrested and transported to police cells.

Misuse of Fare Gates and Provincial Violation Tickets (“VTs”)

Issuance of Violation Tickets (“VTs”) is associated to Transit Police Officers’ active observations and enforcement of the provincial offences, including the misuse of fare gates, which was new legislation in 2017. In comparing 2021 to 2020, there was an 18% decrease in the number of VTs. This decrease is reflective of the lower ridership and it may be partly attributed to an adjustment to Transit Police operational deployment models and policing practices during the pandemic. Further, some patrol resources were redirected to the Crime Suppression Team.



Of critical importance to the safety of transit customers/staff and public, is how the process of confirming an offender’s identity allows Transit Police to learn whether there is a criminal record or conditions of release, and if there are any outstanding warrants to be executed. These warrant arrests contribute positively to the work of our Jurisdictional Police partners and their offender management and community safety/crime reduction efforts.

2022 Safety Campaign

In 2022, Transit Police will be launching a new Safety Reassurance campaign that will include information on transit safety features and tips, Transit Police special resources, as well as ways to contact Transit Police. This campaign will be complemented by the ongoing work of the Transit Police – Community Engagement Team, which will be able to increase its in-person engagement with removal of public health orders arising from the pandemic.