



## METRO VANCOUVER TRANSIT POLICE REPORT FOR SEPTEMBER 2022 TRANSLINK BOARD MEETING

### TransLink Strategic Priority: Customer First

- **Special Events Policing**

Transit Police appointed a Sergeant to a new operational planning position, formed in late 2021. The role includes the operational planning for special event policing as well as many of the joint operations with Jurisdictional Police. It was essential to have this critical position in place (full-time) to address the return of large public celebrations and sporting/arts/culture events in the region after the lifting of COVID-19 pandemic restrictions in 2022, as well as to perform the operational planning necessary to ensure safety for transit riders and staff when there are civil disturbances/protests occurring. Over 2022 Q1-Q2, the Sergeant developed new/renewed relationships with local government emergency/special event planners, police agencies and transit partners.

Unique to the Transit Police is how one day of celebration may bring multiple events across the Transportation Service Region, thus requiring Transit Police to deploy sufficient resources in different cities at the same time. The objective of such special event policing includes: ensuring public safety in and around transit infrastructure, protecting transit staff and property, providing a reassuring police presence, maintaining public order and enforcing the *Liquor Control and Licencing Act* and other public order related statutes, and restoring the public peace as expeditiously as possible in the event that it is breached. As well, during such events, Transit Police must continue to be ready to respond to emergency situations and provide intelligence to internal command and partner emergency command centers.

On Canada Day 2022, numerous events took place across Metro Vancouver. The celebrations in Downtown Vancouver, Central Park Baseball Field in Burnaby, Rocky Point Park in Port Moody and Town Centre Park in Coquitlam had the greatest impact on the transit system, due to their size and proximity to SkyTrain stations. Transit Police had extra resources on duty on Canada Day (plus other civilian support resources), with focused deployment around Waterfront, Lafarge Lake, Moody Centre and Patterson Stations as well as other key locations where the public would be coming from or transferring through. Transit Police specialty teams were also deployed, including the Explosive Detection Dog Teams who conducted preparatory sweeps as well as were prepared to respond to suspicious packages incidents, the Crime Suppression Team who was active with liquor interdiction on the transit system, and the Transit Police Media/Communications Team who engaged in external communications and were available for support to any critical incidents.

For Canada Day, Transit Police had a multi-layered Incident Command in place, in addition to officers assigned to the Vancouver Police – Department Operations Centre, Vancouver Police - Criminal Intelligence Unit, SkyTrain – Operations and Maintenance Centre ("OMC") and Canada Line Operating Centre. Other liaison took place with additional police operations centers. For two of the Celebration of Lights event nights, Transit Police also operated its own

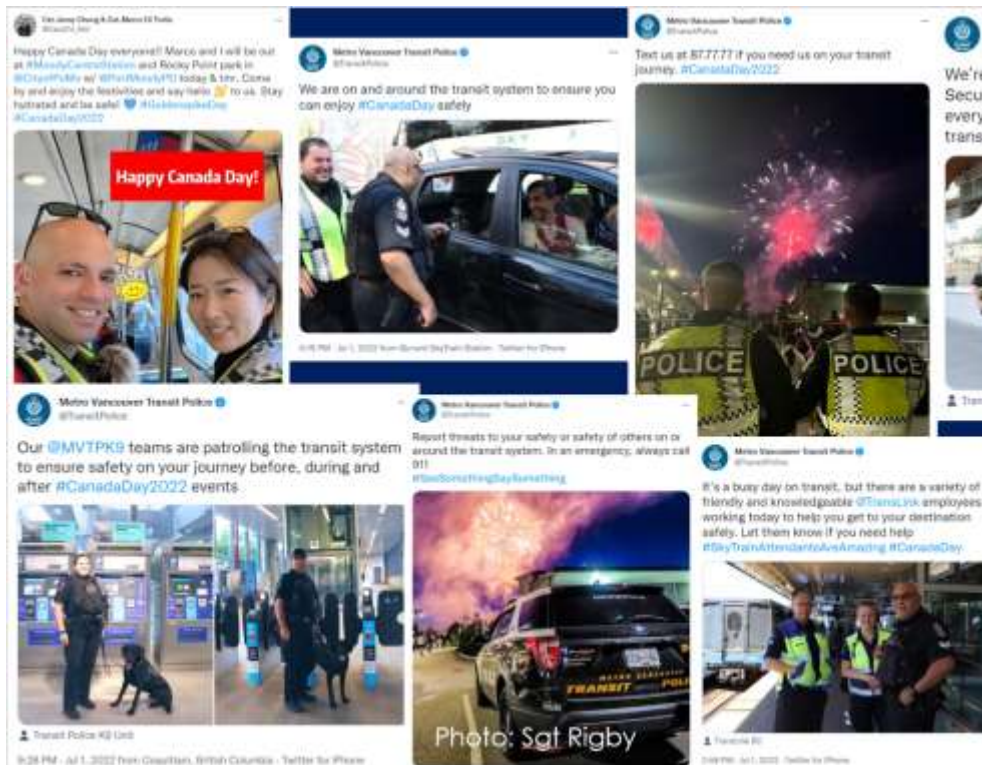
temporary Transit Police – Emergency Operations Centre at Sapperton Headquarters (“Transit Police EOC”). TransLink Operating Companies were invited to participate in the Transit Police EOC and BC Rapid Transit Company had a live video feed for monitoring and emergency response purposes.



The Transit Police EOC provided an excellent opportunity to test collaboration and emergency response preparedness within the TransLink enterprise. A new multi-purpose meeting space is currently being completed within Transit Police facilities at Sapperton and, in the future, can be used for ad hoc Transit Police critical incidents and EOC purposes.

### Stabbing at Renfrew Station

Around 9 pm on July 1, 2022, an emergency passenger strip alarm was triggered on board a train approaching Renfrew SkyTrain Station. This led to a Transit Police Officer, assigned to the SkyTrain OMC on Canada Day, to review footage from the station and learn that a stabbing had occurred. Transit Police were dispatched to Renfrew SkyTrain Station and the victim and witnesses were assisted. The victim suffered a stab wound to his left hand and he was transported by BC Ambulance to hospital. An investigation followed and the suspect was later arrested (for ‘Aggravated Assault’) in the area of Grandview Highway and Rupert Street, and taken to Vancouver Police Department cells.



- **Disturbed and Suicidal Persons**

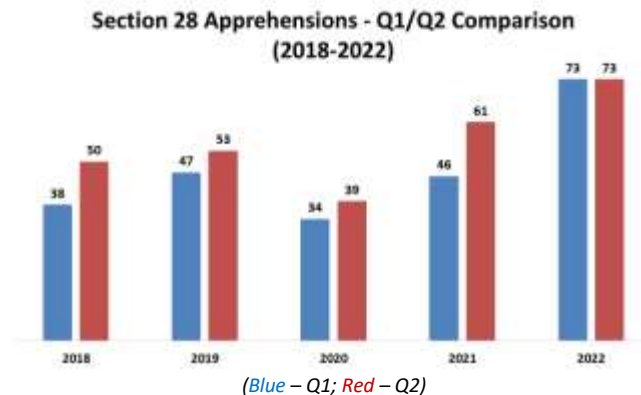
Strengthening support for diverse and vulnerable persons is a Strategic Objective within the Transit Police Strategic Plan, in particular providing support to those exhibiting safety related mental health issues. Transit Police training includes the *Mental Health Act (“MHA”)*, crisis de-escalation and Trauma Informed Practice. Transit Police works closely with the TransLink operating companies, community and health care partners, and Jurisdictional Police to:

- Support vulnerable people and those in a mental health crisis on transit;
- Prevent suicide occurring on the transit system;
- Effectively manage the impacts of suicide on the train operations; and
- Effectively support staff impacted by the response to suicide calls.

The chart below shows the number of events during the 2022 Q1-Q2 period that the Transit Police handled in relation to disturbed persons, suicide and Section 28 apprehensions under the *MHA*. (*Under s. 28 of the MHA, a police officer may apprehend and immediately take a person to a physician for examination if satisfied from personal observations, or information received, that the person is acting in a manner likely to endanger that person's own safety or the safety of others, and is apparently a person with a mental disorder.*)

Metro Vancouver Transit Police Disturbed Persons / Section 28 MHA / Suicide			
	2022 Q1-Q2	2021 Q1-Q2	% Change
<b>Disturbed Person</b>	150	126	19%
<b>Section 28 MHA</b>	146	107	36%
<b>Suicide</b>	0	2	

For 2022 Q1-Q2, there was a 36% increase in the number of s. 28 apprehensions when compared to the same period in 2021. It is the highest quarterly numbers in the past five years, as shown on the chart below.



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 number also shows the dependency on the transit system of this vulnerable group. Upon assessment at hospital, in 2022 Q1-Q2, 81% of the individuals apprehended under s. 28 of the *MHA* by Transit Police were committed, held, or self-admitted at hospital. Some examples of incidents follow:

Mental Health Crisis Response – In July 2022 at Moody Center Station, a man who was barefoot and disoriented was located at the station. Transit Police made queries and it was learned that the man has a history of suicidal ideation and progressive dementia. Transit Police connected with other agencies who had been trying to assist the man. Transit Police assessed that the man was unable to care for himself and apprehended him under s. 28 of the *MHA*. He was transported to hospital for continued medical assessment as well as social service resource support.

Suicidal Ideation – In March 2022, a group of four were travelling together on the platform of Stadium Station when one of the group entered the guideway with the intention of committing suicide. Another person in the group went into the guideway in an attempt to get the individual out. The SkyTrain – Operating and Maintenance Control Centre received intrusion alarms so the trains were stopped and the power shut down. Transit Police attended and had to get both individuals out of the guideway. The individual of concern was emotional, intoxicated and expressed suicidal ideations. The individual was apprehended under s. 28 of the *MHA* and then transported to hospital and certified by a physician.



Transit Police, station attendants, bus operators and support staff (i.e., Transit Police communications, T-COMM, SkyTrain operations) all work cooperatively to play an important role in helping identify persons with suicidal ideations on the transit system and notifying the Transit Police or taking initial action. It is positive that there were zero suicides on the transit system in 2022 Q1-Q2. This excludes sudden deaths occurring on the transit system due to medical issues.



In 2022 Q1-Q2, Transit Police attended to five sudden death reports. These types of incidents can require Transit Police to administer Naloxone and/or administer other forms of first aid (i.e., CPR) until such time as BC Ambulance attends. The Transit Police also must follow investigation and policing response protocols with the BC Coroner's Service and assist as required, including notification of Next of Kin. Such incidents are extremely stressful/traumatic for the responding Police Officers and there often is psychological trauma to customers and staff witnessing such incidents. Transit Police has a Critical Incident Stress Management Team in place to provide support in such incidents, along with a variety of other forms of support being made available to the impacted staff.

- **2021 Report to the Community**

Transit Police released its 2021 annual report to the community in June 2022. The video and written video companion is available via the [Transit Police website](#). Some of the highlights include the completion of a new Strategic Plan in December 2021, adaptation to changing public health orders, increased calls for service via the text number, and the creation of both the Blue Eagle Community Cadet Program and the Waterfront Community Policing Centre.



**TransLink Strategic Priority: State of Good Repair**

- **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. The following is a snapshot of key statistics for 2022 Q1-Q2 as compared to 2021 Q1-Q2. In 2022 Q1-Q2, Transit Police had 7,540 Police Files, which is a 6% decrease from the same period last year.

Metro Vancouver Transit Police Crime and Safety Statistics	2022 Q1-Q2	2021 Q1-Q2	% Change
<b>Crimes Against Persons/100,000 Boarded Passengers</b> <i>(primary and assists)</i>	.51	.72	-29%
<b>Crimes Against Property/100,000 Boarded Passengers</b> <i>(primary and assists)</i>	.62	1.01	-39%
<b>Other Criminal Code Violations/100,000 Boarded Passengers<sup>1</sup></b> <i>(primary and assists)</i>	.28	.45	-36%
<b>Provincial Violation Tickets (“VTs”)</b>	2,334	2,863	-18%
<b>Arrests - Warrants Executed (All)</b>	451	695	-35%
<b>Arrests - New Charges<sup>2</sup></b>	233	268	-2%
<b>Total S. 28 Mental Health Act Apprehension Files</b>	146	107	36%
<b>Sexual Offences</b> <i>(primary and assists)</i>	64	47	36%
<b>SCBCTA Fare Infraction Notices</b>	2,346	2,312	1%
<b>SMS Texts Conversations Converted to Police Files</b>	1181	1388	-15%

Ridership levels increased 58% in 2022 Q1-Q2 when compared to the same period in 2021 (148,897,845 versus 94,436,015), which was during the pandemic. The 2022 Q1-Q2 results show positive movement with the 29% decrease in the 2022 Q1-Q2 rate of Crimes Against Persons and 39% decrease in the rate of Crimes Against Property, as compared to the same period in 2021. Continued decrease of these two rates is anticipated into Q3 2022. The rate change is largely due to the increase in ridership. The actual number of Crimes Against Persons in 2022 Q1-Q2 increased by 12% as compared to the same period in 2021, while the actual number of Crimes Against Property in 2022 Q1-Q2 decreased by 4% as compared to the same period in 2021. As previously reported during 2020 and 2021, criminal activity continued on the transit system throughout the pandemic.

<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> Arrest means an actual arrest and all other cases where charges were recommended to Crown Counsel.

Stranger Assault on Bus – In June 2022, a woman was on a bus travelling north bound on Main Street in Vancouver, when a man, not known to her, boarded the bus at Marine Drive and sat several seats away. Shortly after the bus departed, the man stood up and aggressively approached the woman. He stood inches from her face, allegedly shaking his fist in the air and threatening to punch her. The victim approached the bus operator to make him aware of the situation, while the suspect paced back and forth. As soon as the bus stopped, the suspect approached the victim as she was speaking with the bus operator. Then, without provocation, allegedly punched her in the head and face several times, causing her to fall to the ground. Fortunately, the victim did not sustain any serious physical injuries in the attack. Within the investigation, Transit Police asked for the public’s assistance to help identify the suspect. The suspect was identified, arrested and held in custody.

It is noted that in 2022 Q1-Q2, the number of assaults were 19% higher than the same period in 2021 and 25% higher than the overall average<sup>3</sup>. However, assaults with a weapon were down 27% in 2022 Q1-Q2, as compared to same period in 2021.

The number of sexual offence files for 2022 Q1-Q2 was up 36% from 2021 Q1-Q2; however, the monthly average for sexual offences in 2022 Q1-Q2 does remain on par with the overall average<sup>4</sup>. Transit Police had experienced a reduction in reports of sexual offences during the pandemic. Transit Police takes all reports of sex offences seriously and investigates thoroughly. 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. During the 2022 summer, Transit Police did some anti-sexual offence and ‘See Something – Say Something’ messaging on social media. *(No large anti-sexual offending campaign is scheduled for 2022.)*



Four Women Sexually Assaulted – In the afternoon of May 13, 2022, a woman was sitting on a bench inside Pacific Centre Mall, near Granville Station, when a man allegedly approached her, touched her hip and attempted to pull her toward him. The suspect was interrupted by a security guard, who shouted at him to stop and called police. The suspect made his way inside Granville SkyTrain Station where he allegedly attempted to grab a second woman’s pubic area, which she was able to block using her hand. The suspect continued his behaviour with a third woman, allegedly touching her breast while uttering sexually explicit comments. The woman used the emergency phone on the SkyTrain platform to call for help. The fourth known woman to be victimized was walking out of the station when the suspect allegedly stepped in front of her, grabbed her wrist and attempted to forcefully pull her into a nearby business. The woman screamed for help as the suspect allegedly shouted sexually explicit and vulgar comments. The struggle drew the attention of several bystanders, who intervened and helped the woman break free. Transit Police rushed to the scene, where they were assisted by multiple witnesses, including several ‘loss prevention officers’ from the adjacent department store. As a result, the suspect was quickly located and arrested without incident and taken to Vancouver Police cells.

<sup>3</sup> The ‘overall average’ takes into account data from 2012 onward.

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When comparing 2022 Q1-Q2 to 2021 Q1-Q2, there was a 15% decrease in SMS Text conversations with the Transit Police - Operations Communication Centre that led to a police file being generated. Some of this decrease continues to be attributed to the reduction in complaints about non-compliance of mask wearing by riders, as Public Health Orders for the pandemic changed from 2021. SMS text 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**

One of Transit Police's three Strategic Pillars in the 2022-2026 Strategic Plan is to improve public safety by working closely with our cross regional police partners and developing strategies that prevent crime. In 2022 Q1-Q2, Transit Police Officers made 451 arrests for outstanding criminal warrants, which included RCMP, Municipal Police and Transit Police issued warrants from BC and elsewhere. The number of warrant arrests in 2022 Q1-Q2 was 35% lower than the same period in 2021. The reason for this drop is unknown. The number of new charge arrests by Transit Police also dropped by 13% in 2022 Q1-Q2, as compared to the same period in 2021.

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.



Warrant Arrest – In July at Gilmore SkyTrain Station in Burnaby, a SkyTrain Attendant called in about a male passed out under a blanket and that a gun and a Taser were lying on the ground next to the male. Transit Police attended Code 3 and, as a precaution, the Watch Commander coordinated with the SkyTrain – Operating and Maintenance Control Centre to run trains straight through the station (not stopping). Restricted radio protocols were initiated when Members arrived on scene. Upon investigating the matter, Transit Police ascertained that the gun and Taser were replicas. However, they did find that the male had a warrant out of Vancouver for Breach of Probation. BC Ambulance attended to check the well-being of the male, after which, he was transported by Transit Police to Burnaby RCMP 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. In comparing 2022 Q1-Q2 to 2021 Q1-Q2, there was an 18% decrease in the number of VTs. 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.

Multiple Warrants – In April 2022, Transit Police were conducting fare checks at Surrey Central SkyTrain Station when they observed a male appearing to evade police in the Station. Police located the male on the mezzanine level of the station and the male stated that he did not have a fare and he pushed through the fare gates. Police queries revealed that the male had five outstanding warrants on a Vancouver Police Department file. The male was arrested, taken into custody and transported to Surrey RCMP cells.