



METRO VANCOUVER TRANSIT POLICE REPORT FOR MARCH 2023 TRANSLINK BOARD MEETING

TransLink Strategic Priority: Customer First

- **Community Safety Officer Program to launch in 2023**

By Fall 2023, transit passengers and staff can expect to see a new uniform on the transit system as Transit Police introduces the recently approved Community Safety Officer (“CSO”) program. CSOs will be a new category of frontline Transit Police employee who will supplement patrol police officers. They will provide additional uniformed visibility on the transit system and address low risk incidents that do not necessarily require the powers and tools of a police officer. In addition to regular patrol duties, CSOs will assist with tasks such as community engagement, transit safety education, perimeter security at police incidents, crowd control, fare enforcement, and support at major events and emergencies, along with other responsibilities.



Recruitment of CSOs began in January 2023 and, once hired, they are required to complete a rigorous training program (starting in summer), followed by field training. CSOs, as peace officers, are empowered to enforce transit bylaws and the *Transit Conduct and Safety Regulation*.

- **Accredited Facility Dog**

Transit Police has welcomed a PADS Accredited Facility Dog (“AFD”) named “Norquay” to its dog team. Unlike the existing seven Transit Police dogs that are trained to detect explosives and firearms, Norquay’s job is to assist with the mental health of Transit Police employees. In December 2022, Norquay (a 3-year-old Labrador Retriever Cross) and his handler successfully completed the AFD training program and began working to provide physical, social and emotional support to all Transit Police personnel. The situations faced by police officers, dispatchers and other staff can leave them at an increased risk of stress, anxiety, and emotional trauma. Norquay’s calming presence and AFD training allows employees to decompress and better defuse after an event.



Norquay was bred, raised and trained by PADS (Pacific Assistance Dog Society). Accredited Facility Dogs differ from traditional “therapy dogs” in that they are purpose bred for a

strong health and temperament – including the high level of resilience that is required to work full time in a role like this. Norquay lives with his handler, who is a Transit Police employee.

[Click here to view video on “Transit Police welcome new Accredited Facility Dog”.](#)

- **Saving Lives – Naloxone**

Every year Transit Police save the lives of many individuals who are overdosing. In 2022, Officers administered Naloxone to 56 individuals. This is a significant jump when compared to 47 in 2021, 32 in 2020 and only 20 each year in 2017 to 2019. Given the critical opioid crisis in BC, it continues to be important that Transit Police (as well as many of the Transit Police volunteers) carry Naloxone and that they can administer it when events occur on the transit system as well as in the community.

Transit Police are also first aid trained and, in one shift in January 2023, one Transit Police patrol team were first responders to three medical emergencies in a short period of time, as highlighted below.

Overdose/Sudden Death – Two Transit Police Officers were flagged down by a person around Hasting & Main Street, who advised of individual who had taken Fentanyl and was overdosing. Naloxone had been given but the individual had ceased breathing. Transit Police began CPR and requested Fire and Emergency Health Services to attend. Unfortunately, the person was deceased on scene. A mandatory Critical Incident Stress Management debrief was later conducted with involved officers.

Overdose/Naloxone Deployment – While dealing with the above noted sudden death incident, the same Officers were alerted to another person overdosing and unresponsive. The Officers administered Naloxone to the individual, who regained consciousness and was transferred to the care of Emergency Health Services.

Arterial Bleed and Tourniquet Applied – Later that evening, the same Officers were conducting routine patrols when they observed a man bleeding profusely from the leg (with caution tape wrapped around his leg) and a long trail of blood on the ground. One of the Officer’s applied a tourniquet to the man’s leg – possibly saving the man’s limb. The man was then rushed by Emergency Medical Services to hospital.



• **Transit Police – Specialty Units**

In addition to patrol squads, Transit Police operates a number of speciality units, with the year-end results of three units being as follows.

General Investigation Unit (“GIU”)

GIU investigates serial/complex/serious offences that exceed the Patrol Section’s ability to investigate fully. Their main focus is on crimes against persons (i.e., sexual offences, robberies, assault, criminal harassment, hate crimes). However, GIU also leads investigations into significant crimes against property, including crimes impacting transit assets and property. Crimes against property can have a public safety element as well as impact transit operational efficiencies and revenues. In 2022, GIU had 128 charges, an increase of 37% from 2021. They had an 89% file solve rate and made 65 arrests, an increase of 10% over 2021. In 2022, the top 25% of GIU files related to assaults, mischief under, sexual offences and possession of a weapon. Overall, the team worked in seven different jurisdictions, with Vancouver representing nearly 50% of the files.

Highlights of three files follow:

- GIU identified and recommended charges against a suspect for 11 incidents of shooting a pellet gun at the windows of moving buses;
- GIU identified two individuals that stabbed a male victim at a station (after the individuals had an earlier confrontation with the male at a house party), recovered the machete used, and the individuals plead guilty; and
- GIU reviewed captured video and identified a suspect in seven ‘indecent act’ incidents. A BOLF (Be-On-Lookout-For) was released with the suspect’s travel pattern and Transit Police - Patrol Officers located the male, who was arrested and later deported.

Targeted Mobile Enforcement Team (“TMET”)

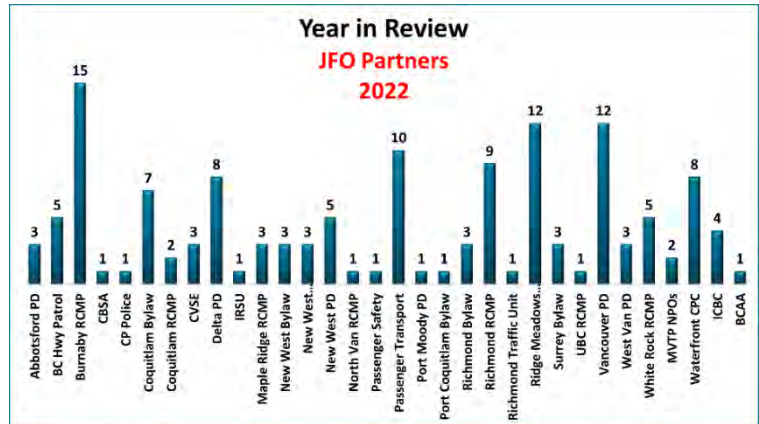
TMET responds to intelligence reports, crime statistics and complaints received from the public. They often work in partnership with Jurisdictional Police and public safety agencies to provide strategically focused enforcement on and near the transit system. This small team focuses on providing enhanced transit fare enforcement, arresting those found breaching conditions or wanted on warrants, and focusing on enforcement around bus lanes and exchanges in order to improve safety for transit operators, riders and the general public.

In 2022, TMET had:

- 3,397 Provincial Violation Tickets written,
- 2,756 Fare Infraction Notices written,
- 50 Warrant Arrests,
- 268 Files generated,
- 14 Reports to Crown Counsel,

- 59 Immediate Roadside Prohibitions, and
- 72 Joint Enforcement Projects with partners.

TMET worked with 32 different partners throughout 2022, as shown the following chart.



TMET is active on social media, often reminding the public to obey laws and informing the public about Transit Police work to keep transit riders, transit staff, and the community safe.



Crime Suppression Team (“CST”)

CST is able to quickly and effectively respond to incidents in real-time or focus on project-based investigations, most of which are conducted with our Jurisdictional Police partners when crime trends or hot spots are identified on or near the transit system. CST also maintains contact with other agencies such as the “End Gang Life” initiative run by the BC Combined Forces Special Enforcement Unit, and receives/shares intelligence with police partners. This collaborative work contributes to providing safe journeys for transit riders on transit as well as before and after their transit ride.

In 2022, CST made 90 warrant arrests, 40 Reports to Crown Counsel, nine requests for Information to Obtain a Search Warrant, and opened 325 new files. Some highlights from 2022 follow:

- CST conducted a four-month drug trafficking investigation involving drug dealers who were meeting drug buyers at various SkyTrain stations in New Westminster. The investigation resulted in the execution of a search warrant on a residence in New Westminster, with the assistance of their Emergency Response Team. Over 3 Kg of marijuana, .5 Kg of fentanyl, \$22,000 cash and two vehicles were seized.
- CST located a person at King George SkyTrain Station who attempted to discard a backpack when they saw police. The backpack contained drugs, money and a prohibited sawed off rifle. The person was arrested and held in custody.

- CST observed a group of males with known gang ties in a business next to Gateway SkyTrain Station. One of the individuals had court conditions not to associate with another person in the group. CST arrested the individual of concern and located a loaded handgun on one of the other persons in the group.
- The Integrated Homicide Investigation Team requested assistance from CST in locating a male wanted for murder, who frequented the Surrey Central area. Within days of the request, CST located and arrested the wanted person on the murder charges.
- CST members were on-duty when Coquitlam RCMP responded to an armed robbery, where the suspects had stolen multiple vehicles and exchanged gun fire with the Coquitlam RCMP on Highway 1, before crashing their vehicle. One suspect then carjacked a female in the United Blvd area. A CST members, clearing headquarters, located the recently carjacked vehicle traveling on Burnette Avenue. The CST member was able to follow the vehicle, while broadcasting the location to multiple other police resources. This ultimately led to the quick arrest of the suspect and recovery of the stolen vehicle, without further violence.

- **2022 Year-End Strategic Plan Report**

Transit Police completed the first year of its 2022-2026 Strategic Plan. [Click here to view the 2022 Year-end Strategic Plan Update](#). Throughout 2022, Transit Police made important progress against the 11 Plan Objectives. In 2022, Transit Police employees were provided with a level of understanding about the Plan’s Pillars, Objectives and Desired Results, and how each applies to their respective work areas. The first metrics for newly established Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) were tabulated and they provide a baseline to compare performance against in future semi-annual reports. Focus areas identified as part of the strategic planning process in 2020/2021, such as recruitment and retention pressures, were reinforced by early KPI data received. Numerous initiatives in support of the 35 Strategic Actions were initialized, while there were some early completions (i.e. Community Safety Officer Program approval, new Operational Planning Sergeant position, rollout of a new Equity/Diversity/Inclusion policy and training, expansion of Blue Eagle Cadets to Surrey and conducting an Employee Pulse Check). In 2023, continued progress in the identified priority areas will further support Transit Police’s core purpose of ‘Safety for all transit users in Metro Vancouver’.



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 as compared to 2021. In 2022, Transit Police had 19,669 Police Files, which is a 1% decrease from 2021.

Metro Vancouver Transit Police Crime and Safety Statistics	2022	2021	% Change
Rate of Crimes Against Persons/100,000 Boarded Passengers (primary and assists)	.48	.61	-21%
<i>Actual Number of Crimes Against Persons</i>	1572	1367	15%
Rate of Crimes Against Property/100,000 Boarded Passengers (primary and assists)	.54	.80	-33%
<i>Actual Number of Crimes Against Property</i>	1756	1789	-2%

Other Criminal Code Violations/100,000 Boarded Passengers¹ (primary and assists)	.17	.37	-55%
<i>Actual Number of Criminal Code Violations</i>	547	838	-35%
Provincial Violation Tickets (“VTs”)	4138	4242	-2%
Arrests - Warrants Executed (All)	858	1094	-22%
Arrests - New Charges²	439	480	-9%
Total S. 28 Mental Health Act Apprehension Files	255	225	13%
<i># of S.28 MHA individuals committed, held, voluntary admitted</i>	76%	80%	-4%
Sexual Offences (primary and assists)	150	138	9%
SCBCTA Fare Infraction Notices	3955	4616	-14%
Number of Unique SMS Text Conversations	4805	6064	-21%
Number of Police Files Generated from SMS Texts Conversations	2541	2677	-5%

Ridership levels increased 46% in 2022 when compared to 2021 (325,901,794 versus 223,544,079), which is about 84% of pre-COVID-19 level. The 2022 results show positive movement with decreases in the 2022 rates of both Crimes Against Persons (dropped 21%) and Crimes Against Property (dropped 33%) per 100,000 Board Passengers, as compared to 2021. The rate changes are largely due to the increase in ridership. While the Crimes Against Person rate has not yet returned to the 2018 rate, the Crimes Against Property rate is now slightly lower than 2018. (As previously reported, during 2020 and 2021, criminal activity continued on the transit system throughout the pandemic, which resulted in the higher rates.)

In 2022, the actual number of Crimes Against Persons files increased by 15% when compared to the 2021. Within that category, total assaults increased 24% over 2021 and was 31% higher than the overall average going back to 2012. While ‘common assault’ files were up 31% when compared to 2021, ‘assault with weapon’ files were down 3% when compared to 2021.

In 2022, the actual number of Crimes Against Property files decreased slightly (-2%) as compared to 2021. Within that category, the number of ‘theft’ incidents was up 31% as compared to 2021 and 27% above the overall average (the monthly average of theft files in 2022 was the highest Transit Police has recorded going back to 2012).

Of note, there was a 13% increase in persons in mental health crisis apprehended by Transit Police under Section 28 of the *Mental Health Act (“MHA”)*. 2022 saw the highest monthly averages in approximately eight years. Of persons apprehended under Section 28 of the *MHA*, 76% were committed, held, or voluntary admitted once at hospital.

The number of sexual offence files (both primary and assists) for 2022 was up 9% from 2021; however, the monthly average for sexual offences in 2022 is still slightly below the overall average³. Transit Police had experienced a reduction in reports of sexual offences during the pandemic, but the volume is moving back towards the pre-pandemic range. Transit Police takes all reports of sex offences seriously and

1 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.

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

3 The ‘overall average’ takes into account data from 2012 onward.

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.

There was a 21% decrease in unique SMS Text conversations with the Transit Police - Operations Communication Centre when comparing 2022 to 2021. Some of this decrease is attributed to a reduction in complaints about non-compliance of mask wearing by riders, as Public Health Orders for the pandemic changed in 2022 from 2021. There also was a 5% reduction in the number of text conversations that led to a police file being generated when comparing 2022 to 2021. However, of note, is that, in 2022, there was

Posted by u/SavingsDirection4651 3 days ago 🗨️ 📧
1.6k
Transit Police
Discussion

Around midnight I was at King George station headed back downtown after a Christmas party. While there, a couple in their 20s got into a heated argument and the man physically attacked his 5-foot-nothing-100lbs-soaking-wet girlfriend - he threw hands at her and then tossed her on the ground.

No one else was around and I was hesitant to personally intervene - I am a woman, this man was violent, and I was concerned about my own safety.

I texted 877777 - the number posted on the train - and reported the incident. To my surprise, within 3-4 minutes the police were there.

I know a lot of folks (myself included) like to complain about the police, and many times these complaints are valid. That said, my experience tonight reminded me that they do indeed have a vital role in our community. Thank you for your timely response - I felt a lot safer during my trip home and I'm happy that the young girl had some support.

an increase to 53% of all text conversations that were converted to a police file (compared to 44% in 2021); this a 9% increase. This increase may possibly reflect growing understanding of the purpose of the using SMS text 87 77 77 versus what should be directed to TransLink customer service. SMS text 87 77 77 continues to be promoted as a way for transit riders to discreetly contact Transit Police when issues of concern arise while on transit.

Warrant and Indecent Act – In December 2022, at Commercial Broadway Station, a passenger observed a male who was touching his genitals. The passenger texted a complaint to Transit Police. Transit Police attended and entered the train, and observed the male trying to close his pants zipper. The male was directed off the train. He was not forthcoming with his real name and ‘obstruction of police officer’ was advanced. The Transit Police’s Operations Communication Centre assisted in providing information that lead to the true identity of the male and existence of a warrant. He was arrested for the outstanding Warrant and transported to a detention facility, and then the investigation for the sexual offence proceeded.

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, Transit Police Officers made 858 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 was 22% lower than 2021; however, there was an increase in Transit Police issued warrants that were executed and it remains higher than the overall average from 2012. In part, some of the decrease may be attributed to a reduction in deployable officers due to attrition, pending recruit graduations and medical leave. The number of new charge arrests by Transit Police dropped by 9% in 2022, as compared to 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 Look Out For), and the Transit Police Offender Management Program.



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 to 2021, there was a 2% decrease in the number of VTs. The Transit Police Targeted Mobile Enforcement Unit and Crime Suppression Team both had fewer deployable officers during parts of 2022, which contributed to a reduction in VTs (and FINs). 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.

Periodically, Transit Police Officers may encounter a vulnerable person without the necessary fare media. In such cases, the Officer may exercise discretion and provide the person with a complimentary fare pass so the person is able to complete their travel and not be issued a FIN.

Warrant Arrest – In February 2023, Transit Police were conducting foot patrols in the area of Main Street SkyTrain Station when they observed a person follow someone through the fare gates. The person was stopped for a *Transit Conduct and Safety Regulation* offence and for the purpose of issuing a Violation Ticket. The male was found to have an outstanding Canada-Wide warrant for robbery and he was also in possession of a knife, contrary to condition of his undertaking. The person was arrested and transported to the Vancouver Police’s detention facility.