



Metro Vancouver Transit Police 2023 Report to the Community

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METRO VANCOUVER
**TRANSIT
POLICE**

Message from the Chief Officer

Safety on transit for all passengers and employees became a topic of significant discussion in 2023. With multiple transit authorities across Canada reporting increased incidents of concern, in April 2023 the Canadian Urban Transit Association put out a media release calling for immediate action. Despite the overall volume of crimes reported to Metro Vancouver Transit Police decreasing between 2022 and 2023, our agency experienced similar incidents of concern compared to other Canadian cities.

Metro Vancouver is unique in that it is the only Canadian city that has a dedicated Transit Police force, responding to all modes of transit (bus, train and ferry), spread across 1800 square kilometres and 22 different communities. The first Pillar of our Strategic Plan, Cross Regional Policing, recognizes that the success of our agency in meeting our core purpose, safety for all transit Users, depends on working in partnership with police agencies across the region.



During April 2023, over a two-week period, Transit Police responded alongside our partners to a number of high profile assaults and one homicide (in support of the Integrated Homicide Team). While there were no linkages or commonalities between these occurrences, which happened in different cities and on various modes of transit, each incident further raised anxieties amongst those who rely on our expansive transit system on a daily basis.

During Q2 2023, Transit Police Officers assigned to speciality teams were redeployed to frontline patrols for passenger safety reassurance, often partnering with local police agency partners or Transit Security for joint high visibility patrols. With the issue of transit safety being a top story for most media outlets, numerous interviews were provided to television and online news outlets, some of them in Mandarin, Cantonese and Punjabi, to provide important safety information such as details of the Transit Police text service (87-77-77).

In the latter part of the year, Transit Police also expanded our ranks with the inaugural Community Safety Officer classes. By the end of the year, 20 officers had been sworn in and 10 were fully deployed. Community Safety Officers provide an additional high visibility presence on the transit system, taking on low risk duties and allowing our police officers to focus more time and attention to proactive policing and investigations.

Finally, in September 2023, we wished Chief Officer Dave Jones a fond farewell as he retired from Transit Police. Having first joined in April of 2019, he leaves Transit Police as the longest serving police chief in our 18-year history. During his time as Chief Officer, Chief Jones led our organizational response to the COVID-19 pandemic and oversaw the development of a new Strategic Plan and the creation of several specialty units, such as our dedicated crime reduction and targeted enforcement teams. On behalf of everyone at Transit Police, we acknowledge his dedication and wish him a sincere thank-you and our best wishes.

Finally, I want to recognize the dedicated service of our sworn officers and civilian professionals, who demonstrate a high level of professionalism and accountability to the safety of our transit system every day.

Suzanne Muir, Chief Officer - Metro Vancouver Transit Police

Message from the Police Board Chair

The connection between police and the communities they serve is an important one, and the considerable efforts made to engage with diverse communities in 2023 is reflected in the more than 800 events attended by Transit Police personnel throughout the year. These efforts are often led by our Community Engagement Team, comprised of Neighbourhood Police Officers, an Indigenous Liaison Officer and a Mental Health Liaison Officer.

The work of our Mental Health Liaison Officer was a focus in 2023 as Transit Police reported a 220% increase in mental health referrals. Working with jurisdictional police, the local health authorities and other health partners, the Mental Health Liaison Officer works to ensure that transit riders who are experiencing mental health challenges have a support team in place and are regularly receiving the individual supports they require. At the same time, frontline Transit Police Officers saw a reduction in the number of apprehensions under Section 28 of the Mental Health Act, where individuals experiencing a mental health crisis are taken to hospital due to a concern for their safety or the safety of others.

Engaged Community Partners, the second Pillar of our Strategic Plan, is of course broader than mental health alone. It requires outreach and regular communication with people across Metro Vancouver, from seniors to youth, from Indigenous Peoples to new Canadians to refugees, spread across all 22 different Metro Vancouver communities. In order to better communicate with such a broad audience, in 2023, Transit Police complemented our direct outreach efforts with an expanded See Something Say Something communication campaign. This included thousands of additional safety messages placed on SkyTrains, on bus overhead panels, on bus windows and at bus stops.

Assisting others is only successful when we first support our own people, which is why the third Pillar of our Strategic Plan is Modern Policing Culture. Assessing and advancing our recruitment, training, retention and leadership strategies requires a collaborative approach at all levels of the organization. In 2023, the Employee Morale Survey was distributed to Transit Police employees in order to determine how well we were doing in each of these areas and where we could further improve. New questions related to equity, diversity and inclusion were included for the first time, mirroring similar questions distributed to other transit enterprise companies. The information gathered will assist us in establishing a baseline from which to compare future initiatives in the years to come.

Finally, as we prepare for future system expansion and growth in our agency, we acknowledge the challenges in recruitment impacting all police agencies, not just locally but also across Canada. In 2023, our outreach and communications teams, but most importantly our incredible recruitment teams, worked diligently to identify a pool of candidates, both for sworn and civilian positions. For 2024, we will continue to focus on outreach and recruitment efforts in order to compete successfully for future talent.

Marnie Larson, Chair - Metro Vancouver Transit Police Board

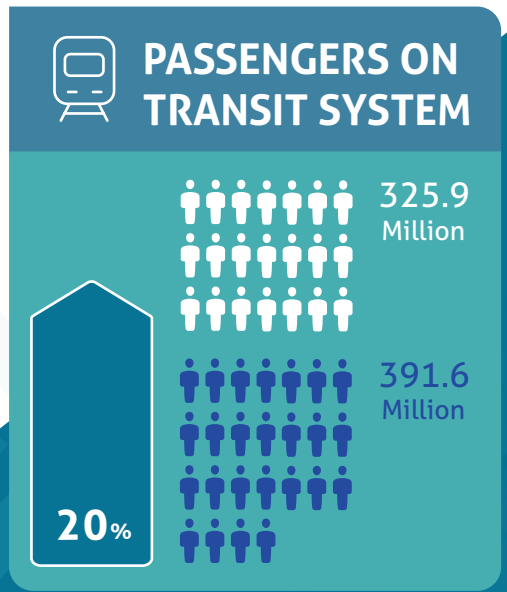


Transit Police Performance Statistics

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, including reports on the Transit Police website.

Of note, by Q4 2023, the first Transit Police Community Safety Officers were out on the transit system. These newly established peace officers will contribute positively to officer visibility, proactive patrols, fare enforcement and transit conduct and safety regulation compliance. Some of their performance statistics are included in the totals listed below.

2022 2023



OFFENCES

Crimes Against Persons (includes assists)



The rate of Crimes against Persons per 100,000 Boarded Passengers was down by 22% from .51 to .40

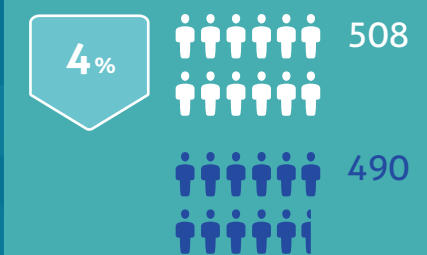
Crimes Against Property (includes assists)



The rate of Crimes against Property per 100,000 Boarded Passengers was down by 28% from .59 to .43

ARRESTS

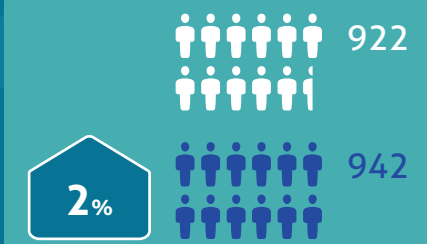
Arrests on New Charges



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

Total # of breach files now includes assists, as it represents a more accurate count of those offenders removed from the transit system.

Warrant Arrests



Breaches*



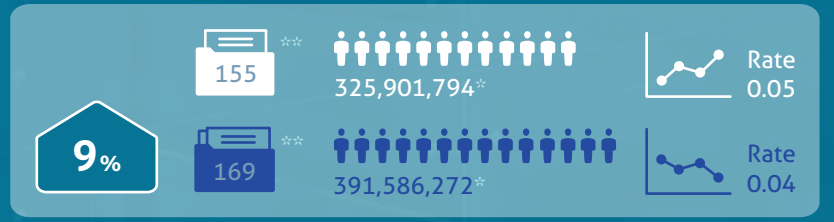
*A breach charge occurs when an individual fails to comply with any Court order.



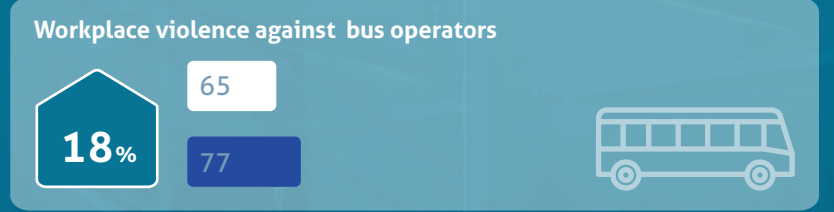
Our work is guided by four operational priorities in order to ensure that we are delivering the best possible service to transit users.

1 REDUCING SEX OFFENCES (INCLUDES ASSISTS)

*Boarded Passengers
**Reported Sex Offences

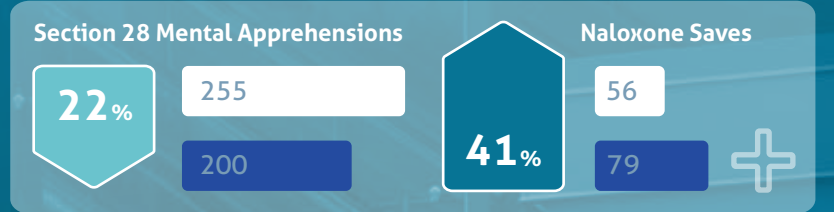


2 REDUCING FRONTLINE WORKPLACE ASSAULTS

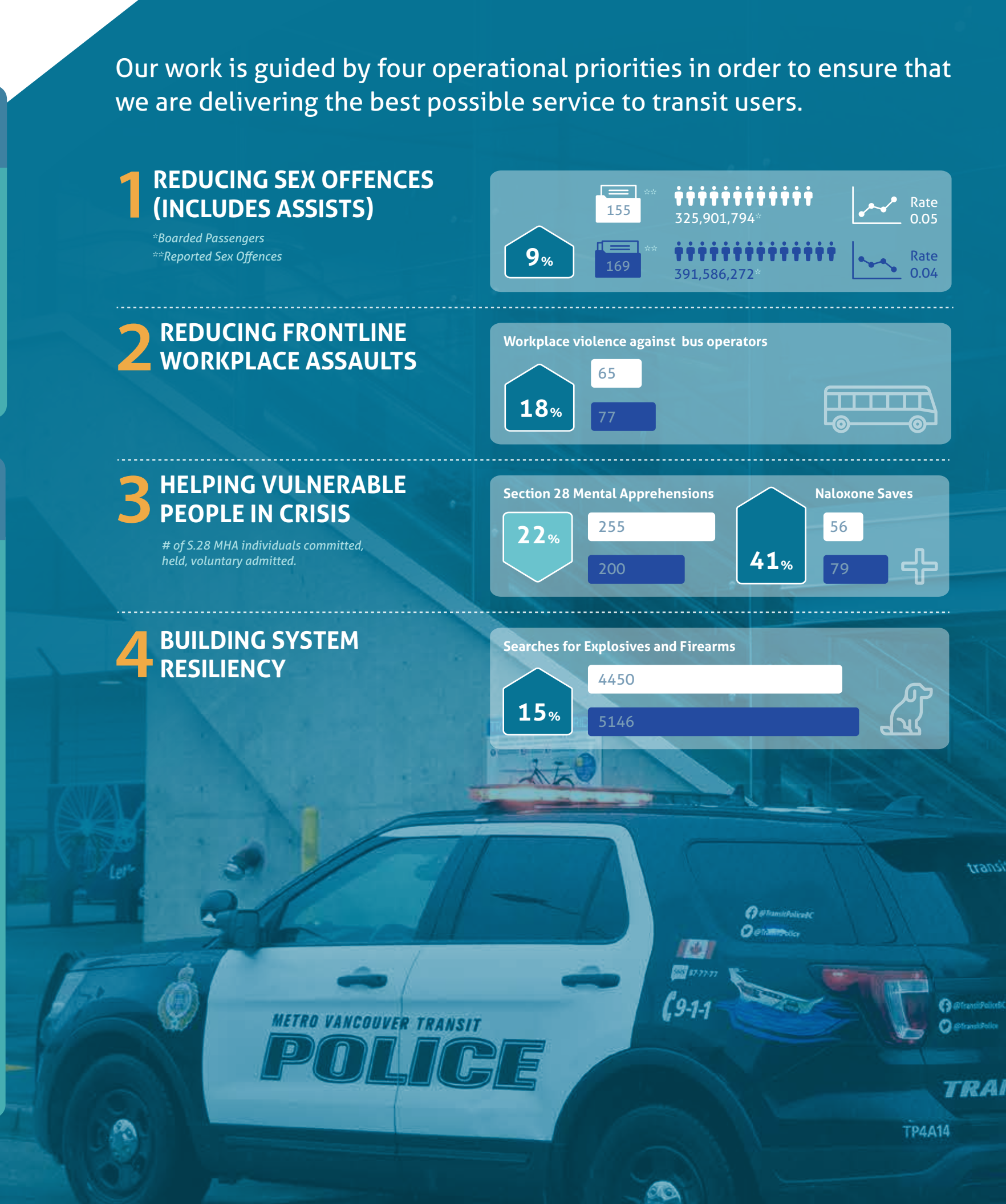
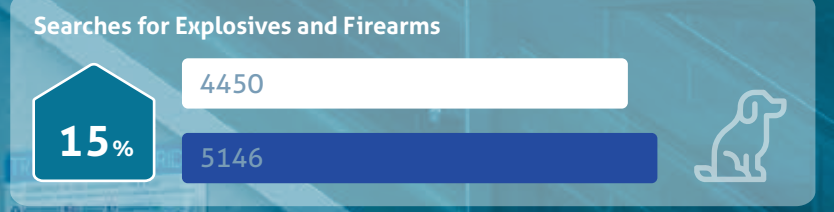


3 HELPING VULNERABLE PEOPLE IN CRISIS

of S.28 MHA individuals committed, held, voluntary admitted.



4 BUILDING SYSTEM RESILIENCY



Cross Regional Policing

Metro Vancouver Transit Police polices a transit system spanning 1800 square kilometres, serving 22 communities and including bus, SkyTrain, SeaBus and West Coast Express. Proactively patrolling and responding to safety issues across such a large service area, our officers work closely with jurisdictional police partners and engage in targeted initiatives, joint safety and security planning, and investigations.

Frontline Patrols and Response

Transit Police Patrol Officers daily deployments are broken down into six Community Service Areas, ensuring Officers are able to respond to all modes of transit. In 2023, the first Community Safety Officers were trained and deployed, providing enhanced visibility and support to police operations. The Waterfront Community Policing Centre (CPC) Program also continued to operate weekly, with volunteers patrolling around busy transit hubs in Downtown Vancouver and on the North Shore.



Transit Police Patrol Officers



Community Safety Officers



Community Policing Centre Volunteers

Targeted Deployments through Specialty Teams

In addition to daily patrol deployments of Police Officers and Community Safety Officers, Transit Police specialty teams are out on the transit system every week engaging in targeted initiatives. These include investigations led by our General Investigations Unit, crime intervention projects led by our Crime Suppression Team, explosive detection sweeps by our single-purpose Dog Team, enforcement projects led by our Targeted Mobile Enforcement Team and numerous community engagement events at schools, community centres, health authority partners, transit centres and more, led by our Community Engagement Team.



Explosive Detection Dog Team



Targeted Mobile Enforcement Team



Community Engagement Team

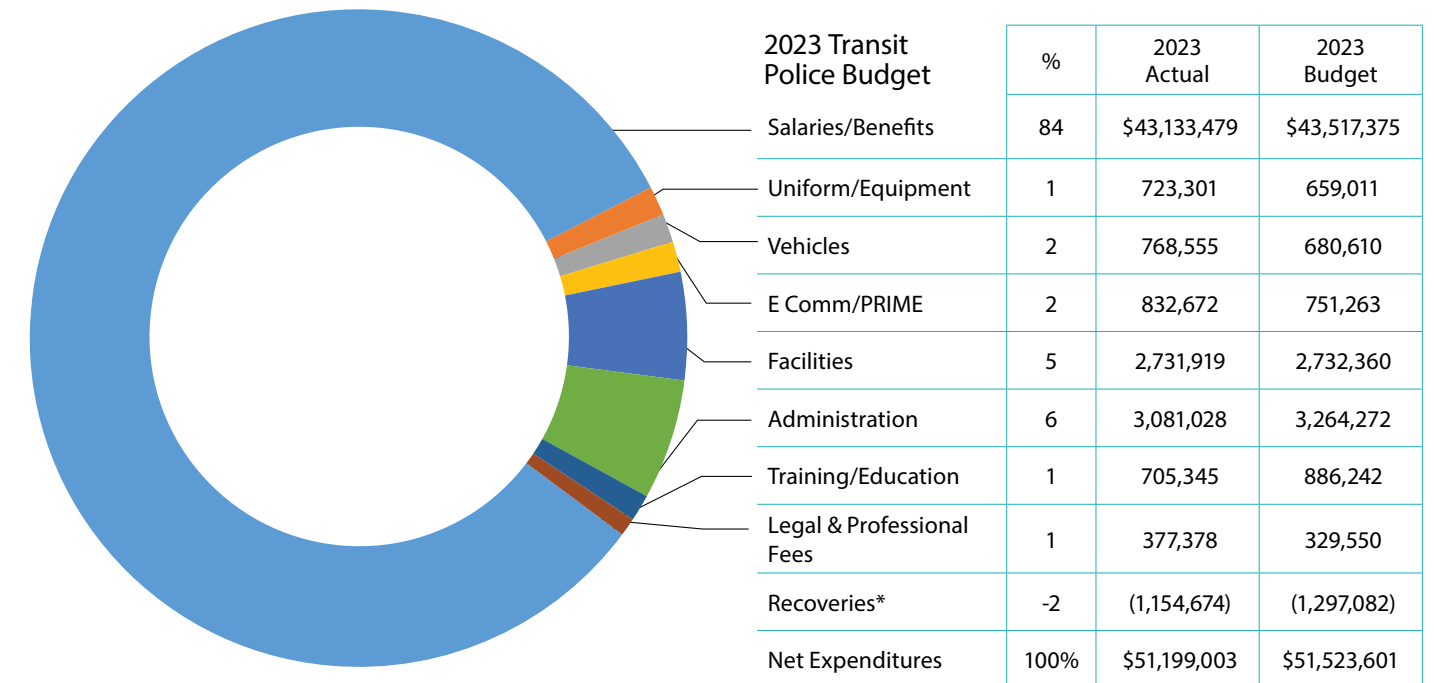


Transit Police's New Community Safety Officer ("CSO") Program

The first two classes of CSOs were sworn in during 2023. By year-end, ten CSOs were graduated and fully deployed while the second class was in training.

Financial Summary

The Transit Police budget for 2023 was \$51,523,601. Total actual expenditures were \$51,199,003. The expenditures include TransLink allocated costs of \$5.3M for centralized services (premises rent and information technology services).



*Salaries represent the net costs to Metro Vancouver Transit Police after recoveries (i.e. those officers seconded and paid for by other joint police initiatives).
 **Transit Police salaries are consistent with those of independent municipal police agencies in Metro Vancouver.



Transit Police's Operations Communication Centre is always available, 24/7, via text message - 87.77.77. Transit Police attends numerous schools every year to ensure that students have this essential contact number saved into their phones.

For a complete breakdown of strategic initiatives at Metro Vancouver Transit Police in 2023, see our Strategic Plan Year End Update located at: <https://transitpolice.ca/news/strategic-plan-2022-2026/>



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