



2003 ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN UPDATE SUMMARY

PREFATORY NOTE:

Due to the long-term nature of many trends outlined in previous Environmental Scans, and to align with the Service's Business Planning process, the Scan is now produced every three years.

For the years in which a complete scanning process is not undertaken, Corporate Planning provides a brief update, mainly statistical, of most chapters.

This update does not provide extensive analysis of the statistics provided nor of the various trends noted.

Detailed analysis of many of the trends noted in this update can be found in the 2002 Environmental Scan.



I. DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

Information based on demographic and social trends provides a basis for good planning, identifying areas where changes are likely to occur. The task is then to relate the population and social changes to possible service needs: what are the implications for current and future decisions regarding the delivery of police service, provisions of programs, allocations of resources, and so on.

HIGHLIGHTS

- According to Statistics Canada census data, the population of Toronto increased 4.0% between 1996 and 2001, from 2,385,421 to 2,481,494.
- With the population growth between 1996 and 2001, there was a corresponding increase in population density in Toronto from 3,786.9 people per square kilometre to 3,939.4 people per square kilometre.
- It is projected that by 2011, four in ten people in Toronto (41%) will be 50 years of age or older.
- According to 2001 census data, the median age of Toronto overall was 36.9 years. Etobicoke and North York had the largest proportions of seniors 65 years and older, while Scarborough and York had the largest proportions of children under 15 years of age.
- In 2001, visible minorities represented just over two-fifths (42.8%) of Toronto's population, up from 37.3% in 1996.
- Use of Language Line Services increased 17.3% between 1998 and 2002, while the average cost per call decreased about 31.1%; the average time spent on each call increased slightly, from 6 to 7 minutes.

II. CRIME TRENDS

The nature and extent of crime are social indicators of the safety and security of the public and are often used for the evaluation of effectiveness of policies and programs to reduce crime. In policing, a significant portion of police activity is spent in the prevention and detection of crime and the apprehension of offenders. Information about changing crime patterns or types of offenders allows Police Service members to develop strategies to address changing problems, make rational decisions, and plan activities according to, or in anticipation of, crime-related trends. Analysis of crime trends by specific areas is a vital component of community policing in terms of deriving feasible operational strategies and measuring the impact of change.



HIGHLIGHTS

- In 2002, a total of 199,878 non-traffic Criminal Code offences occurred in Toronto, representing a slight 0.5% decrease from 2001, when there was an increase after eight consecutive annual drops. Over the past five years, total crimes decreased 5.4%.
- The trend of decreases in the crime rate (number of crimes per 1,000 population) appeared to have levelled off from the peak of 119.8 offences in 1992. The overall crime rate for the past four years remained at about 76 occurrences per 1,000 population. In 2002, an average of 76.3 non-traffic Criminal Code offences occurred for every 1,000 population, of which 13.6 were violent crimes, 38.3 were property crimes, and 24.5 were other Criminal Code offences. The overall crime rate was a slight decrease from 77.4 in 2001 and a more marked decrease from 84.1 in 1998.
- Decreases were noted for two major offence categories, violent crimes (4.8%) and other Criminal Code offences (0.5%), while an increase was noted for property offences (1.2%).
- Robberies decreased 6.5% in 2002 compared with 2001, when there was an increase after five consecutive years of decreases. There were also decreases in cases involving swarming and mugging, home invasions, and financial institution robberies, but an increase in vehicle-jackings.
- Most of the crimes that are perceived to affect community quality of life showed decreases, including mischief, being drunk in public place, prostitution, drugs, break & enter, vehicle theft, and theft from vehicle. There were, however, increases for offences related to consumption of liquor in public place and causing disturbance.
- Once again in 2002, most sexual and non-sexual assaults (about 69%) involved suspects known to the victims. The proportion of strangers as suspects for these two offences has remained relatively unchanged over the past five years, however, these proportions have increased from 10 years ago.
- Over the past five years, the proportion of cases involving spouses decreased slightly for sexual assault, while that for other assaults increased.
- The proportion of cases involving the use of weapons decreased for both robbery and assaults over the past five years. The proportion of robberies involving the use of firearms also decreased.
- Despite the recent decrease in number of drug offences and arrests, information published by the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health has indicated that illicit drug use did not change much over the past years.
- There was a slight increase in number of persons arrested/charged for Criminal Code offences in 2002. However, the number of persons arrested/charged decreased for all major



offence categories except property crimes. Males in the younger age groups continued to have the highest arrest rates.

- While the proportion of females in the total arrest population remained low, the arrest rates for females in the older age groups increased, particularly for violent crime.
- Divisions 52, 42, 41, and 14 remained the busiest stations in terms of number of crimes occurred and dispatched calls serviced.
- Relative to 17 Canadian cities of 'comparable' population size, in 2001, the crime rate in Toronto ranked below middle (tenth) in overall crimes, and ranked fifth and thirteenth in violent crimes and property crimes, respectively. Between 1997 and 2001, Toronto had the third largest decrease for both the overall crime rate and the property crime rate, and the fourth largest increase in the violent crime rate. Toronto also had the seventh largest increase in the per capita cost among the 16 cities that had an increase.

III. YOUTH CRIME

Concern about youth, crime and 'disrespectful' attitudes has been common throughout history. Nevertheless, this should not minimise the concern and effects of violence and crime by youth in our society nor should it be allowed to act as an easy response and explanation for not taking action. The search for solutions to this social problem demands a commitment to develop a comprehensive response strategy that will address both the individual and systemic factors contributing to this phenomenon. The Service's community policing philosophy provides the necessary approach for reaching creative and effective solutions to youth violence.

HIGHLIGHTS

- The enumeration of youth crime is different from the enumeration of crimes in general. While crimes in general are counted in terms of number of criminal incidents that occurred, youth crimes are compiled on the basis of arrests, when the age of the suspect can be ascertained. For this reason and a number of other factors, the number of youth crimes recorded is likely lower than the actual number of crimes committed by youth.
- To put the problem of youth crime in perspective, three issues must be noted. First, a very small proportion of youths (aged 12 to 17 years) are involved in criminal activity, and even fewer are involved in violent crimes. Second, youth crime statistics reflect the number of youths arrested for criminal offences, not the actual level of crime involving young offenders. Third, it is believed that only a small portion of youth crime is actually reported to police.
- The *Youth Criminal Justice Act*, passed in February 2002, clearly states its primary purpose as the protection of society by preventing crime, imposing sentences that are appropriate and proportional, and by rehabilitating youth involved in criminal activities. The new *Act* became effective in April 2003, replacing the *Young Offenders Act, 1984*.



- National youth crime statistics showed that, in 2001, the overall youth charge rate (the number of youths charged per 1,000 population) was 41.4, of whom 18.2 were charged for property crimes, 13.8 for other Criminal Code offences, and 9.4 for violent crimes. Although the overall youth charge rate increased slightly in the past two years, the rate in 2001 still about 30% lower than that reported a decade ago.
- In 2002, 7,048 young persons (aged 12 to 17 years) in Toronto were charged for all types of Criminal Code offences, down 6% from 2001, and 11.2% from 1998. In comparison, adult crime increased 1.9% and 5.4% in the last year and past five years, respectively.
- Youths accounted for 14.9% of the total persons charged for Criminal Code offences, which is much larger than their 8.2% representation within the total population aged 12 and over. Over the past five years, the proportion of youth decreased for all major offence categories.
- The decrease in youths charged over the past five years was mainly due to the large decrease in number of youths charged for property crimes. There was a significant 24.0% decrease in youths charged for property crimes, and only a 2.3% decrease in youths charged for violent crimes.
- Non-sexual assault and robbery together constituted the bulk (93.0%) of the violent offences for which youths were charged. Over the past five years, the number of youths charged for minor assault slightly increased, while those charged for robbery and major assault decreased.
- In 2002, a total of 522 female youths were charged for violent offences, a 6.5% increase over the past five years, compared to a 4.7% decrease for their male counterparts. The participation of young females in violent crimes has increased and the gender gap has narrowed. The increasing involvement of females in criminal activities, particularly violent crimes, has raised concern, although the proportion of young females in total youths charged for violent crimes remains low (23.0%).
- The average age of youths charged under each of the major offence groups increased over the past five years, an indication that the increasing participation of younger youths in criminal activities noted in previous *Scans* may have discontinued.
- In 2002, an average 39.2 of every 1,000 young persons were charged for Criminal Code offences in Toronto, including 12.4 charged for violent crime, 13.9 for property crime, and 12.8 for other Criminal Code offences. The overall charge rate for youths is about double that for adults. These rates were lower than the rates seen five years ago.
- Male youths had a charge rate about 3 times higher than that of female youths. Changes in the charge rate differed between males and females. While female youths showed a larger decrease than male youths in the charge rate across most Criminal Code offence groups in 2002, the decreases over five years ago were much less than for their male counterparts.



- The total number of crimes occurring on school premises decreased 7.0% in 2002. Non-sexual assault remained the most frequent crime (27.4%), followed by theft (14.3%), uttering threats (10.4%), and mischief (8.8%). Over the past five years, crimes occurring on school premises decreased by only 0.6%.
- In 2002, a total of 415 youths were charged with drug-related offences, a decrease from 2001 (460) but an increase over 1998 (370). In terms of number charged per 1,000 youths, the 2002 rate of 2.3 persons was a decrease from 2001, and was about the same as in 1998.

IV. VICTIMISATION & GROUPS AT SPECIAL RISK

A continuing priority for the Toronto Police Service is not only to prevent victimisation to those individuals and groups most vulnerable to it, but also to address the concerns and fears of those most at risk and the public in general. Changing patterns of victimisation will have implications both for the deployment of police resources and for the types of services the police must provide

HIGHLIGHTS

- The number of victims of selected violent crimes decreased 4.7% between 2001 and 2002, from 36,145 to 34,431 victims.¹ Similarly, the rate of victimisation by violent crimes decreased 5.0%, from 13.9 victims per 1,000 population in 2001 to 13.2 per 1,000 in 2002.
- While the number of reported victimisations between 1998 and 2002 increased 4.5%, the rate of victimisation remained relatively unchanged (13.1 victims of violent crime per 1,000 population in 1998 and 13.2 in 2002).
- The rate of victimisation for both men and women decreased between 2001 and 2002, while the 2002 rates were similar to those seen in 1998. The rate of victimisation for men was higher than the rate for women in all years.
- Total criminal harassment (stalking) incidents reported to the Service increased 1.4% in 2002 over 2001 and 37.8% from 1998. Women were most commonly stalked by ex-boyfriends or by someone known by name.
- The greatest number of victims of the selected crimes of violence were aged 25-34 years. However, when the difference in the size of the population at each age was taken into account, those 12-17 years of age were found most likely to be victimised in each year.
- Those aged 12-17 years were more likely than any other age group to be victims of swarming in each of the past five years, with a 26.0% increase between 1998 and 2002. Robberies and assaults were the most likely violent crimes involved in all years for all age groups.

¹ This chapter focuses on victimisation related to selected crimes of violence only – homicide, sexual assault, assault, and robbery.



- The number of suspected child abuse offences reported to police increased between 2001 and 2002, and over the five year period between 1998 and 2002 (3.6% and 11.6%, respectively).
- The 7,131 family violence occurrences involving Criminal Code offences in 2002 were a 4.3% decrease over 2001, but a 26.3% increase over 1998.
- Spousal violence typically accounts for about two-thirds of all reported family violence occurrences in Toronto (65.3% in 2002). The 4,659 spousal violence occurrences involving Criminal Code offences in 2002 were a 3.1% decrease over 2001, but a 26.4% increase over 1998.
- There were 219 hate crimes reported in 2002, representing a 35.2% decrease from the 338 such crimes reported in 2001 and a 3.9% decrease over the 228 occurrences in 1998.
- Assault and robbery were the two violent crimes most frequently experienced by those in service occupations. In 2002, 5.3% of assault victims were Toronto Police Service officers, 3.3% were security guards, 0.6% were taxi drivers, and 0.7% were Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) employees. With regard to robbery in 2002, 1.6% of victims were delivery persons and 0.9% were taxi drivers.
- Requests to the Victim Services Program for support, information, and intervention increased by 26.3% in 2002 over 2001, and 51.5% over 1998.

V. TRAFFIC

Motor vehicles of all types have been a major factor associated with public safety and police activity. Traffic patterns and trends affect both the demand for and deployment of police resources. Traffic collisions, in addition to being a problem requiring police resources, also have an impact on the public's perception of safety. Concerns over traffic congestion and pedestrian safety in specific neighbourhoods are issues that the Police Service has to address with the community.

HIGHLIGHTS

- There were 71,760 reportable collisions in 2002, a 1.9% decrease from the 73,174 reportable collisions in 2001.
- The average time spent on property damage collisions in 2002 decreased by 7.6% to a total of 105.4 minutes per event.
- The average time spent on personal injury collisions in 2002 decreased by 3.0% to 230.3 minutes per event.
- In 2002, 97 people were killed in traffic collisions, an increase of 70.2% over the 57 killed in 2001 and a 10.2% increase from the 88 killed in 1998.



- In 2001, 281,732 *Highway Traffic Act* charges were laid, the lowest number in the previous five years. In 2002, the number of *HTA* charges increased 22.2%, to a total of 344,383 charges.

VI. CALLS FOR SERVICE

Knowing what types of calls for service are received and how the Service responds to those calls provide a foundation for decisions relating to the allocation of resources, including personnel, and to service delivery options and priorities to meet the needs of the communities served.

HIGHLIGHTS

- A trend of increase in calls for service was noted over the past five years.
- In 2002, more than half of the calls (54.0%) were received through the emergency line and the rest (46.0%) were received via the non-emergency line.
- Over the past five years, the number of calls received through the non-emergency line decreased slightly (0.7%), while calls received through the emergency line increased (21.6%).
- Less than half (45.8%) of the calls received were dispatched for police response, which was a decrease from 2001 (46.2%) and 1998 (48.3%).
- The number of dispatched calls in 2002 was a 1.9% and a 4.6% increase over 2001 and 1998, respectively, despite a decrease in proportion of the total number of calls.
- Response times for both emergency and non-emergency calls increased in recent years, with a similar proportion of calls meeting the recommended Service standards.

VII. URBAN TRENDS

The jurisdiction of the Toronto Police Service encompasses the largest urban area in Canada. Trends involving urban development, public and private service, transportation, recreation, the environment, and so on, affect the nature and frequency of the police services that are required. The solutions to urban problems will involve alliances among the public, private, and voluntary sectors. Protection of public safety will require coordinated efforts in planning and service delivery. These efforts may range in focus from environmental design to growth patterns in the municipality and service delivery methods.



HIGHLIGHTS

- Ridership on Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) vehicles (surface and subway) went down 1.1% between 2001 and 2002, from 419,993,000 to 415,539,000 riders.
- In 2002, there were 0.59 TTC-related crimes reported to the police per 100,000 riders, which equalled the number reported in both 2000 and 2001.
- Even though the number of visitors to Toronto declined in 2001 from 2000, visitor spending has increased steadily since 1997.
- The recent World Health Organisation (WHO) travel advisory, although now rescinded, warning against non-essential travel to Toronto as a response to Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) will have a significant impact on tourism and the City's economy.
- There was a 0.3% increase in events attended involving hazardous materials from 2001 to 2002. These events included natural gas leaks, explosions, and chemical hazards. In 2002, there were 1,142 such events, while in 2001 there were 1,139 events

VIII. POLICE RESOURCES

Changes in the nature and scope of police services needed and police services demanded require constant adjustment by this Service. These adjustments affect the composition and organisation of the personnel who deliver police service, how they are managed, and what their priorities will be. Further, because over 90% of the total Police Service budget is dedicated to human resources, changes in available financing have a direct and critical impact on this area. Human resources are central to the organisation and all external and internal trends impact, to some degree, on the recruitment, maintenance, and development of these resources.

HIGHLIGHTS

- As of December 31st, 2002, the total strength of the Toronto Police Service was 7,073 members. This was up 1.9% from the 6,938 members in 2001, but down 1.1% from the 7,155 members in 1993. Between 2001 and 2002, uniform strength increased 1.3%, from 5,264 to 5,334, while civilian strength increased 3.9%, from 1,674 to 1,739.
- Between 2001 and 2002, the number of officers per 100,000 population in Toronto decreased 3.4%, while the national average number of officers per 100,000 population increased 1.1%.
- During 2002, 52.8 non-traffic Criminal Code offences were reported per constable, a 0.8% decrease from the 53.2 reported in 2001 – the result of a decrease in the number of reported non-traffic Criminal Code offences and an increase in the number of constables.



- Analysis of age characteristics illustrates a significant increase in the proportion of officers 40 years of age and older and a comparable decrease in officers less than 30 years of age. The median age of uniform officers in December 2002 was 40 years.
- In 2002, 42.2% of uniform members had 20 or more years of service, and between 25 and 30 years service was the most frequent service level; the next most frequent service level was between 0 and 4 years due to the recent recruitment drive.
- The average age of primary response constables was 35.7 years as compared to 38.4 years for all constables. The average years of service for primary response constables was 9.8 years as compared to 13.6 years for all constables.
- The 322 total separations in 2002 – 191 retirements and 131 resignations – was a 32.4% decrease from the 476 separations in 2001.
- In 2002, 79.6% of officers were assigned to divisions or Operational Support units, down from 81.2% assigned in 2001 and the lowest level reported in the past ten years.

IX. TECHNOLOGY & POLICING

The significant number of computers in our society has brought the legal system and policing community challenges of new crimes and new ways to commit old ones. Computer crime has become one of the most publicised aspects of computer use and although computer crime is experiencing exponential growth, the various crimes associated with computers are difficult to evaluate or measure in terms of magnitude or frequency. Policing is experiencing a paradigm shift from tangible crime, to intangible crime. The ability to critically examine paradigms, how policing is viewed in the information era, is very much a part of the ability to accept change, both individually and organisationally. The way in which police respond to communities' dynamic technological demands now and how we evolve to continue meeting these challenges will demonstrate the extent to which Toronto Police Service is able to recognise and respond to the global paradigm shift.

HIGHLIGHTS

- The Toronto Police Service's Fraud Unit expects an increase in identity thefts in order to facilitate debit and credit card fraud.
- In 2002, the Service received \$2 million from the Provincial government to fund a 2-year pilot project, "Assisting and Preventing Child Victims of Sexual Abuse through Focussed Investigation of Child Pornography Cases".
- The Child Exploitation Section of the Toronto Police Service's Sex Crimes Unit, had four additional members assigned to investigate Internet child pornography, bringing its total strength to ten members.



- The Technical Support Section of Detective Services – Intelligence Support had two officers dedicated to forensic examination of computers and retrieval of evidence, and recently added an additional six officers.
- Most new operating systems, such as Windows XP, have built-in encryption, making commonplace what was once considered a sophisticated application.
- Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs) that transmit pictures or movies to the Internet or to another palm pilot by using a wireless Internet card. Cellular phones now also can take pictures or movies and transmit them in the same manner.