



The Regional Municipality of York Police Service Board

Public Board Meeting
April 23, 2025
For Information

Report of the Chief of Police

2024 Use of Force Annual Report

1. Recommendation

That the Board receive this annual report pursuant to Use of Force Board Policy No. 01/14.

2. Purpose

In accordance with the Board's Use of Force Policy No. 01/14, this report includes the 2024 annual use of force statistics provided to the Board for their information.

3. Background

This report summarizes interactions between York Regional Police officers and the public from January 1, 2024, to December 31, 2024. It contextualizes interactions necessitating the Ministry of the Solicitor General's standardized "Use of Force Report." Under Use of Force and Weapons Regulation (O. Reg. 391/23), officers must submit a report following any public-police interaction where force is used or displayed. Since January 1, 2020, Ontario police services must also report the perceived race of individuals involved in use of force incidents under the *Anti-Racism Act (2017)*.

HISTORY AND OVERVIEW OF USE OF FORCE

In Ontario, under the *Criminal Code of Canada (Code)*, officers are authorized to use reasonable force as required for their lawful duties. Section 25 grants this authority on reasonable grounds. Additionally, Regulation 391/23 of the *Community Safety and Policing Act (CSPA)* outlines the types of firearms and weapons officers are permitted to carry;

alongside Regulation 87/24 outlines mandatory training requirements for the use of force and firearms. These regulations also mandate when officers shall report use of force.

Since January 1, 2020, the *Anti-Racism Act* requires data on the perceived race of individuals in use of force incidents to be collected and reported to the Ministry of the Solicitor General. To comply with this requirement, all Ontario police agencies are obligated to electronically submit standardized Use of Force Reports for centralized collection by the Ministry of the Solicitor General.

On July 7, 2023, the Ministry of the Solicitor General introduced the Ontario Public-Police Interactions Training Aid, replacing the 2004 Ontario Use of Force Model, emphasizing de-escalation and procedural justice. This training aid prioritizes cooperative public-police interactions, grounded in de-escalation strategies and procedural justice principles. The York Regional Police Training and Education Bureau's Practical Skills Unit immediately adopted this procedure, providing support to members through the transition.

Support included access to various training resources, such as:

- The Ministry of the Solicitor General's Ontario Public-Police Interactions Training Aid graphic and framework document 2023
- In-class familiarization sessions
- Updates to the York Regional Police Use of Force Procedure AI 012/AI 014
- The replacement of all 2004 Ontario Use of Force Model graphics and reference materials, to align with the new Training Aid graphic

MANDATORY REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

When an officer has displayed or applied force that meets mandatory reporting regulations in Ontario, they are required to complete and submit an electronic Use of Force Report. When multiple officers are involved in the same incident and have utilized reportable force, each officer must submit individual reports. A single incident involving multiple officers may result in several Use of Force reports being submitted for the same incident.

Under the Ministry submission guideline, Emergency Response Units and Public Order Units have the option to submit a single electronic Use of Force Report, documenting the collective use of force by their respective teams.

A member shall submit a Use of Force Report when:

- (a) a handgun is drawn in the presence of a member of the public, excluding a member of the police force who is on duty, points a firearm at a person or discharges a firearm. A member of the public includes a suspect or arrested person;
- (b) a member uses a weapon that is not a firearm on another person;

- (c) a member uses physical force on another person, not in relation to training conducted by the Training and Education Bureau, that results in an injury requiring medical attention; and
- (d) a member deploys a Conducted Energy Weapon (CEW) on a person or an animal or displays the CEW in the Demonstrated Force Presence Mode.

ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY

The reporting requirements for use of force incidents are outlined in the *Community Safety and Policing Act*, O. Reg. 391/23. Officers must submit an electronic Use of Force Report whenever force is displayed or applied outside of training. Each report undergoes multiple layers of review, starting with the officer's supervisor, followed by supervisors of the Practical Skills Unit, and ultimately the Officer-in-Charge of the Training and Education Unit and the Bureau Commander of Corporate Development.

Since 2023, York Regional Police has worked collaboratively with the Ministry of the Solicitor General and internally with York Regional Police's Business Intelligence Unit to enhance data validation procedures, ensuring greater accuracy and transparency. Data submitted to the Ministry of the Solicitor General is subject to a rigorous verification process by Ministry personnel before being approved for inclusion in this report. This multi-validation process reinforces accountability and ensures that only verified data is used in the annual Use of Force Report, further strengthening public trust and transparency within the York Region communities.

USE OF FORCE COMMITTEE

The Use of Force Review Committee serves as a critical oversight body to ensure the integrity of York Regional Police's use of force policies and training methods. The committee also provides recommendations and findings to the Executive Leadership Team. It is composed of the Officer-in-Charge of the Training and Education Bureau, the Staff Sergeant and Sergeant from the Practical Skills Unit, the Practical Skills Unit Training Analyst, a representative from the Real-Time Operations Centre appointed by the Deputy Chief of the Community Safety Branch, a Sergeant from the Quality Assurance & Risk Management Unit, and a rotating Patrol Sergeant.

TRAINING

Training serves as the foundation for enhancing officers' critical decision-making, de-escalation and other practical skills, which are utilized during all public-police interactions. Training curriculum is continuously evaluated and updated as needed, based upon use of force data analysis, legislative changes, tactical advancements, and innovations in policing technology.

TRAINING & EDUCATION BUREAU

The Training and Education Bureau is responsible for overseeing the training and educational programs of York Regional Police. It ensures that recruits, sworn officers, and

police professionals receive up-to-date and continuous instruction in academic, tactical, and technological areas. In-service training includes sessions focused on de-escalation techniques, tactical strategies, crisis intervention, updates to legislation and departmental procedures, and engagement with the community. All sworn officers and special constables undergo comprehensive practical skills training as recruits and are required to re-qualify annually to meet or exceed the standards set by the Training Standard (O. Reg. 87/24).

Training places emphasis on conflict prevention focusing on critical decision-making, de-escalation and proficiency of practical skills to ensure the safety of the public and officers. York Regional Police officers and special constables are trained as per Ministry guidelines in a relational approach to public-police interactions emphasizing fairness, respect, empathy, and voluntary subject cooperation, without the use of force, whenever feasible. Any use of force by York Regional Police officers is governed by the legal principles of necessity, proportionality, and reasonableness. From the Ontario Police College onward, officers train extensively in the justifiable use of force, de-escalation techniques, and scenario-based exercises to reinforce situational judgment and tactics. Continuous in-service training ensures officers stay current with evolving policies, legal updates, and best practices.

DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

In addition to Ministry reports, General Occurrence reports are documented in the police Records Management System. These reports offer a comprehensive account of each incident, detailing the nature of police actions and the results of interactions. For every use of force incident, supplementary data not covered in the Ministry reports is digitally extracted using Business Intelligence tools. This data is coded for in-depth analysis by a joint committee comprising members from the Business Intelligence Unit and the Practical Skills Unit.

Analyzing use of force data strengthens York Regional Police's evidence-based approach to improving officer training. The insights gained from this process are used to enhance de-escalation and judgment-based training, ensuring officers are better equipped to handle complex situations, while promoting accountability and safety.

4. Analysis

USE OF FORCE INCIDENTS VS. TOTAL INTERACTIONS

In 2024, York Regional Police officers responded to 405,726 calls for service. Of these, 269 incidents involving 372 subjects led to the application of force, representing 0.066% of all public-police interactions. Use of force incidents are infrequent, with York Regional Police's incident rate sitting well below the Canadian national estimate (RCMP 2023) of 0.10%.

Of the 269 incidents, 32 involved the humane dispatch of animals or situations where no direct interaction with a subject occurred (e.g., an officer drew their firearm in the presence of a member of the public without engaging a subject). It is important to note that a "use of force incident" refers to any occurrence that meets the mandatory reporting requirement. A single

incident may involve multiple officers or multiple subjects, potentially generating multiple Use of Force Reports for the same event.

The total number of use-of-force incidents in 2024 remained consistent with those in 2023, totaling 265. In 2024, of the 269 incidents reported, 150 involved armed subjects. Of these, 95 incidents involved 181 subjects who were armed or perceived to be armed with firearms. This was followed by 41 incidents involving edged weapons, and 14 incidents involving blunt force weapons or vehicles used as weapons. Despite the stabilization in overall use-of-force incidents from 2023 to 2024, the five-year trend indicates a marked increase in encounters with armed subjects for York Regional Police officers since 2022. Specifically, from 2020 to 2024, there was a 187.9% increase in incidents involving subjects who were armed or perceived to be armed with a firearm. From 2023 to 2024 alone, there was a 21% increase, pointing to a significant shift in policing dynamics, including de-escalation and tactical principles.

OFFICER ASSIGNMENTS AND CHARACTERISTICS

The data indicates that 72% of use-of-force incidents involved frontline uniformed members, while 22% involved the Emergency Response Unit (ERU) and Canine Unit. The remaining 6% of use-of-force incidents involved officers assigned to Investigative Services as plainclothes officers. Officers with less than five years of service are more frequently involved in use-of-force incidents. A key factor influencing this trend is the nature of their frontline assignments. Compared to their more experienced counterparts, these officers are typically assigned to frontline uniform patrol duties, which mainly involve responding to both citizen-generated and officer-generated service calls.

Figure #1

UNIFORM OFFICER, UNIFORM SUPPORT SERVICES, PLAIN CLOTHES OFFICERS

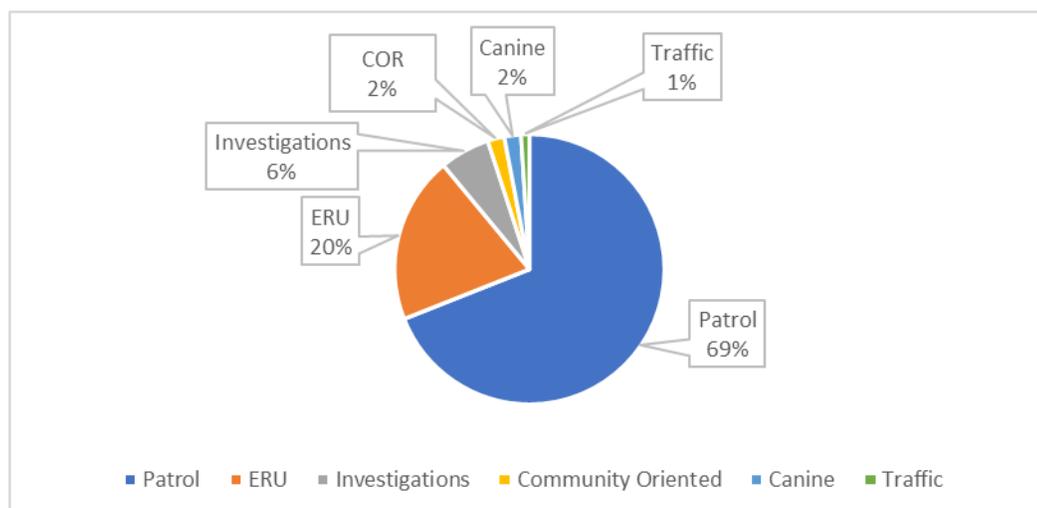


Figure #1 provides a detailed breakdown of officer assignments in use-of-force incidents for 2024. It is important to note that both Traffic Enforcement and the Community Oriented Response (COR) Unit are classified as uniformed officers.

Figure #2

OFFICER TENURE

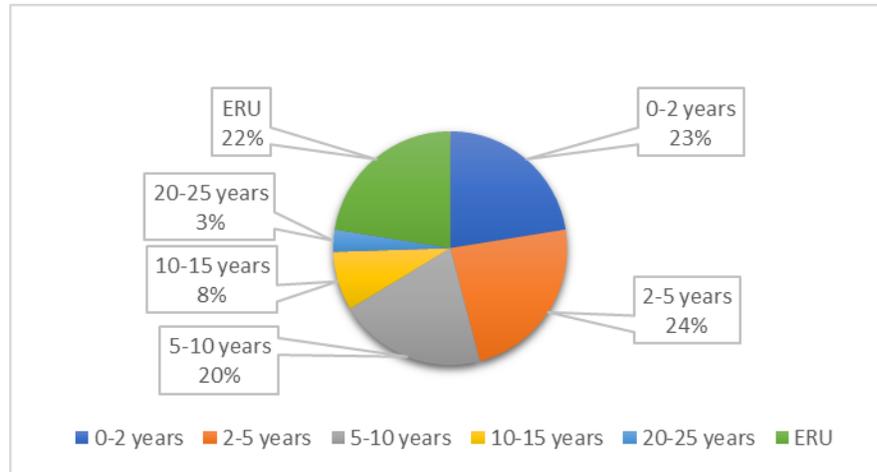
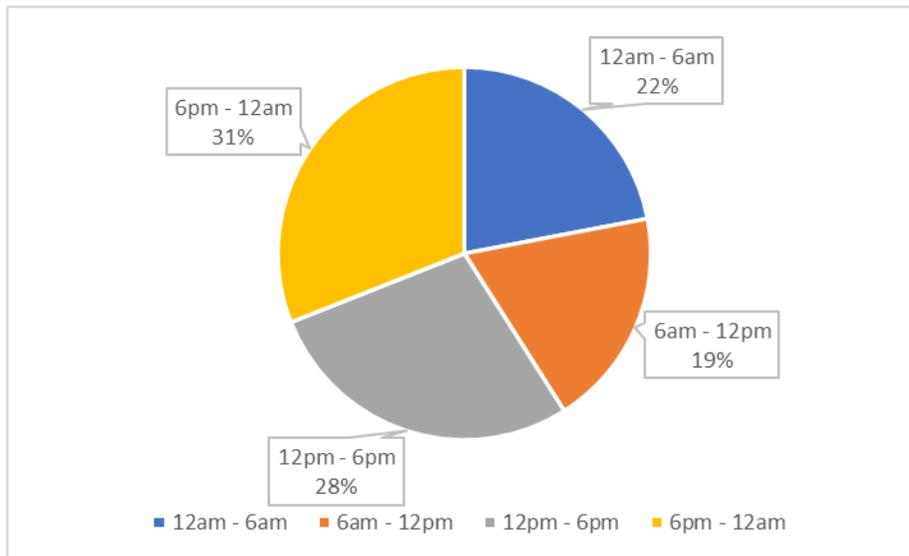


Figure #2 provides a detailed breakdown of officer tenure. However, it is important to note that the Emergency Response Unit (ERU) is authorized by the Ministry of the Solicitor General to submit team reports, meaning individual officer tenure data is not captured.

NIGHTTIME VS. DAYTIME

Consistent with the five-year trend, police use of force is evenly distributed between nighttime and daytime. In 2024, 47% of the use of force incidents occurred during daytime hours, and 53% occurred during nighttime hours.

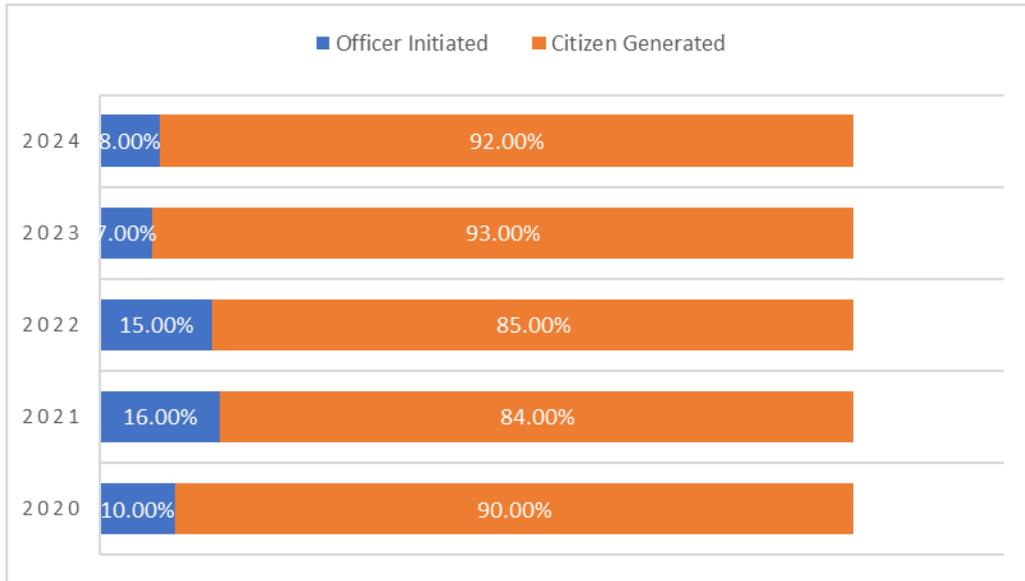
Figure #3
NIGHTTIME VS. DAYTIME



CALL TYPES

In the majority of cases, officers were responding to information provided by a member of the public, including subject behaviours, descriptions, involvement of weapons and the nature of the call, which shaped their decision-making during these interactions. Most use of force incidents, approximately 92% are associated from citizen-generated calls for service. Among proactive police activities that resulted in the application or display of force, warrant executions (20%) and traffic stops (3%) accounted for the majority of officer-initiated incidents.

Figure #4
CALLS FOR SERVICE



Community feedback through consultations highlighted the need for a comprehensive catalog of all call types that led to the submission of a Use of Force Report. Table #1 illustrates this data, with a more detailed breakdown provided in Appendix A. This extensive list enhances understanding of the diverse circumstances contributing to use of force incidents. While calls involving weapons remained a primary driver, the decline in reports related to domestic disputes and person-in-crisis situations may indicate the effectiveness of ongoing training focusing on crisis intervention, communication, de-escalation, and critical decision-making.

Table #1
TYPE OF CALL

| TYPE OF CALL | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
|------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| ASSAULT | 6 | 3 | 7 | 1 |
| CHECK WELFARE | 1 | 6 | 2 | 3 |
| DOMESTIC DISPUTES | 24 | 15 | 21 | 21 |
| PERSON IN CRISIS | 10 | 11 | 6 | 11 |
| ROBBERY: CAR/HOME/COMMERICAL/ | 3 | 12 | 17 | 8 |
| UNKNOWN TROUBLE | 7 | 2 | 7 | 7 |
| WARRANT EXECUTION | 1 | 2 | 20 | 36 |
| WEAPONS CALL | 60 | 44 | 60 | 53 |
| TOTAL CALLS RESULTED IN UOF | 230 | 199 | 265 | 269 |

NOTE: This table provides an overview and does not include all calls. Please refer to Appendix A for a comprehensive list for all types of calls which resulted in police use of force.

WEAPON CALL TYPES / ACCESS TO WEAPONS

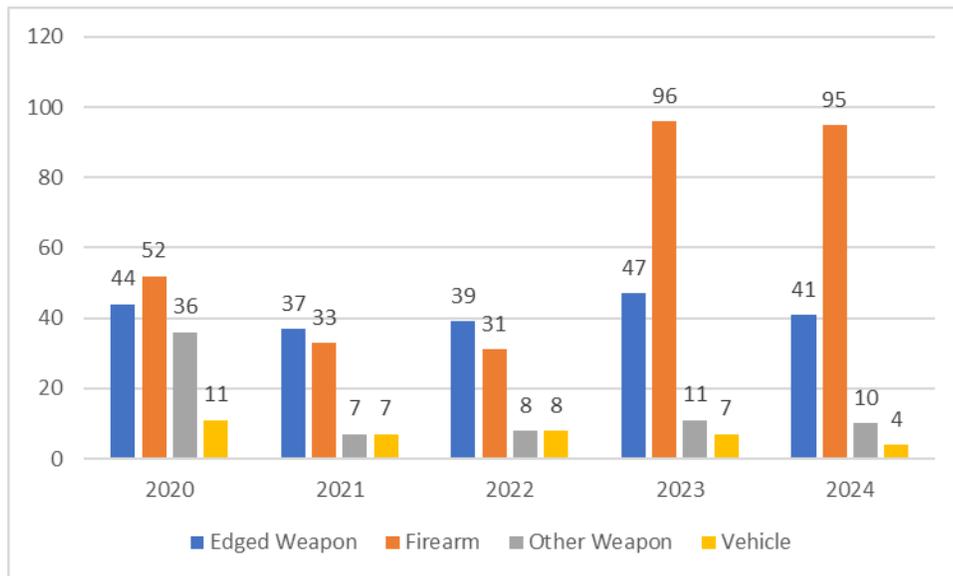
In 2024, 68% of subjects involved in use of force incidents were either armed or perceived to be armed with a weapon. An officer's decision to use force is influenced by multiple factors, including the requirement to safeguard the public, fulfill legal duties such as making an arrest or apprehension, or to protect themselves. A key predictor of use of force incidents is the involvement of a subject who is armed or perceived to be armed, given the heightened threat posed to both the public and officers.

Officers' information indicating a subject's possession of a weapon can originate from various sources, including 911 calls from citizens, a subject's prior interactions with police, or investigative information. Firearms were the most commonly perceived weapon, accounting for 49% of all armed subjects. The presence of firearms remains a significant concern for both public safety and officers, as firearm-related calls inherently carry a higher risk of serious bodily harm or death. As a result, officers often respond to such calls and display lethal force, as other response options may not be sufficient to address an immediate threat. However, de-escalation strategies continue to be a factor in reducing the stress and intensity of these incidents.

Beyond weapons presence, a subject's behaviour and prior interactions with police can influence an officer's response. Of the 150 reported use of force incidents involving weapons, 95 (63%) involved firearms. Additionally, 41 incidents (27%) involved edged weapons, 10

incidents (7%) involved blunt force objects, and 4 incidents (3%) involved vehicles used as weapons. While firearm-related incidents have increased, the frequency of encounters involving other weapons has remained consistent compared to the previous year. Figure #5 illustrates the five-year trend in the types of weapons carried by armed subjects.

Figure #5
INCIDENTS WITH ARMED SUBJECTS



USE OF FORCE OPTIONS

Point Firearm

In 2024, officers pointed their firearms at a subject in 152 of the 269 reported use-of-force incidents (57%). In most incidents, the combination of de-escalation strategies, the availability of less-lethal options, and the controlled demonstration of force effectively resolved the incident without the need to discharge a firearm.

Discharge of Firearm

Despite a notable increase in encounters with armed subjects, the five-year trend indicates that the use of lethal force by officers remains rare in York Region. Out of 405,726 public-police interactions in 2024, only one incident resulted in officers discharging their firearms. This incident was subject to an independent investigation by the Special Investigations Unit (SIU), the province’s civilian oversight body for police. Following their review, the SIU found no reasonable grounds to believe that any officer had committed a criminal offence in connection with the use of lethal force.

Humane Dispatch of Injured Animals

In 2024, officers discharged their firearms during 18 incidents in the humane dispatch of injured animals. These incidents primarily originated from citizen-generated calls for service, often following traffic collisions involving wildlife.

Conducted Energy Weapons

The Conducted Energy Weapon remains an effective less-lethal use of force option. In many cases, merely displaying the CEW as a demonstration of force, enhanced de-escalation efforts, securing compliance without the application of additional physical control options. In 2024, officers utilized a CEW in 76 incidents. Of these, 52 involved the CEW being deployed in a demonstrated mode, meaning it was displayed to the subject and not physically applied. In the remaining 24 incidents, the CEW was deployed in probe mode i.e., the probes were propelled from CEW striking the subject.

Physical Control

Physical control refers to the application of force to physically control a subject's actions. These techniques, range from escort techniques and handcuffing, to strikes or grounding techniques. When physical control was used without causing injury or in the absence of other use of force options, these actions do not require a Use of Force Report.

Impact Weapons and Aerosol Weapons

The deployment of impact weapons such as, batons and aerosol weapons, like oleoresin capsicum (pepper spray), remained limited in 2024. There were no baton applications hard (strikes) or soft (used to pry a limb such as an arm) reported. This is consistent with the 2022-2023 data. Similarly, aerosol weapons were utilized on one occasion, mirroring the data from 2022-2023. Officers minimal use of these use of force options continues to demonstrate a consistent trend in the reduced deployment of impact weapons, with only aerosol weapons being utilized, accounting for a small fraction of all Use of Force Reports.

Police Service Dogs

Police Service Dogs play a critical role in law enforcement operations, assisting in tracking, searches, and suspect apprehensions. In 2024, there were eight incidents where a police dog bite occurred during an apprehension. While police service dogs are deployed for a variety of purposes, incidents involving dog bites or damage to suspect clothing remain rare, accounting for just 2% of all reported use of force incidents.

Figure #6
USE OF FORCE OPTIONS

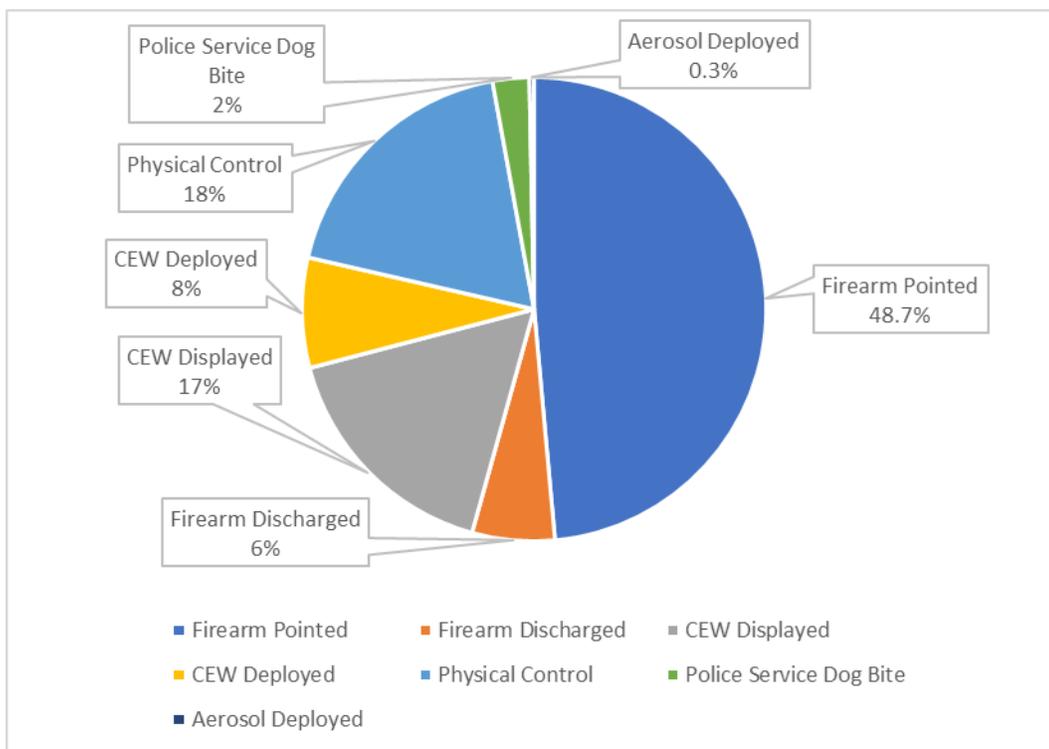


Figure #6 presents the percentage breakdown of each use-of-force option by incident.

RACE AND IDENTITY BASED DATA

The Modernized Use of Force Report captures various situational factors which officers consider during use of force incidents, in addition to valuable data surrounding subject behaviour and perceived race. This data aligns with the Ontario Public-Police Interactions Training Aid (see Appendix B). A key data set includes race-based data collection, which is mandated under the *Anti-Racism Act (2017)*. The *Anti-Racism Act* aims to eliminate systemic racism, advance racial equity, and measure progress across Public Sector Organizations. A key component of this initiative is identifying racial disparities through standardized data collection.

Under Ontario Regulation 267/18, police services are required to collect and report de-identified data on a subject's perceived race in use of force incidents. The selection of a subject's race is based solely on the officer's perception at the time of the encounter. Officers do not ask individuals to self-identify their race, nor do they seek alternative methods to determine it. While officer perception introduces the potential for inaccuracies, this approach allows for the monitoring of racial disproportions and disparities in police interactions.

This requirement enhances accountability and transparency in the justice sector by helping to identify and address potential racial disparities in policing. To ensure consistency, all

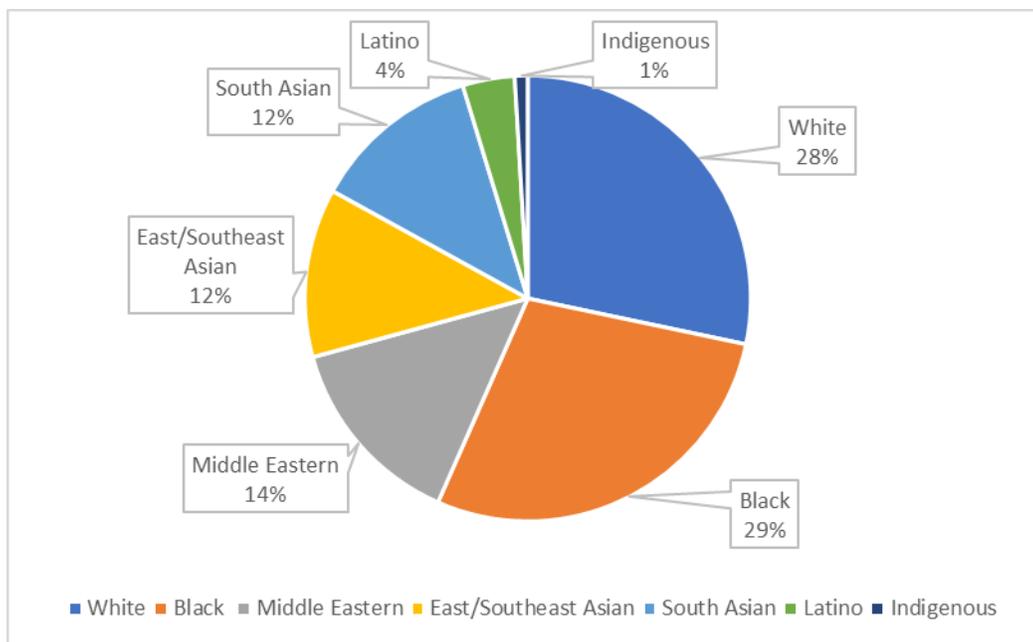
police services in Ontario must complete a standardized Ministry Use of Force Reporting Form, which captures data across seven race-based categories: Black, East/Southeast Asian, Indigenous, Latino, Middle Eastern, South Asian, and White.

Use of Force and Perceived Race and Identity Data

Within the Use of Force Report, officers are required to categorize the perceived race of subjects using the Ministry-defined seven racial categories. It is important to recognize that because this data is based on perception rather than self-identification, there is potential for both over and under-representation of certain racial groups.

It is also critical to highlight that 92% off all use of force incidents originated from citizen-generated calls for service. Even after considering this statistic, it is imperative to recognize that racial disparities exist, particularly in the use of force against Black and other racialized groups, underscoring the ongoing need for intentional training and strategies to address systemic biases within the criminal justice sector.

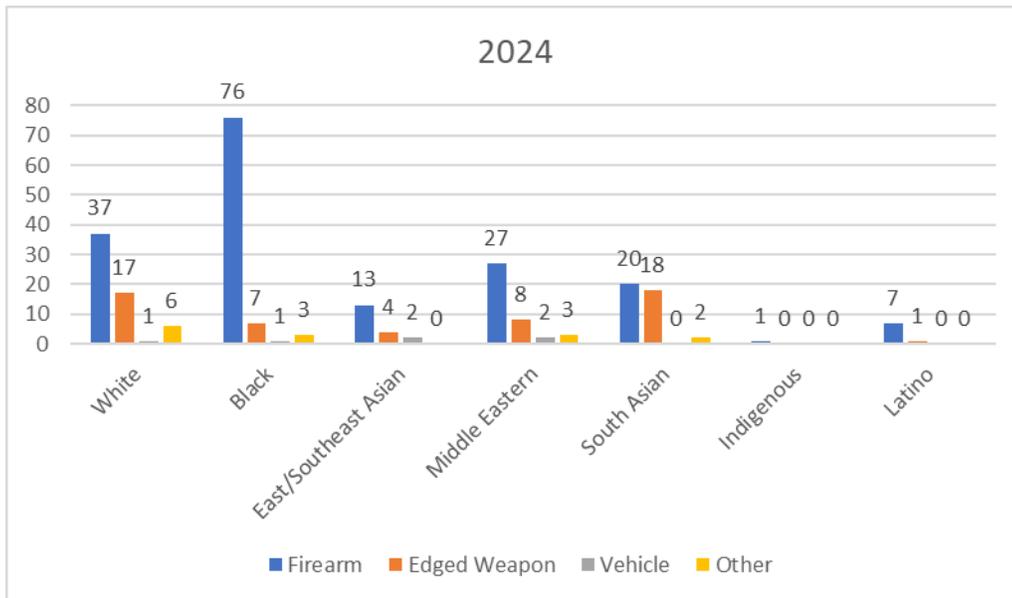
Figure #7
PERCEIVED SUBJECT RACE



Armed Subjects' Perceived Race

Figure #8 provides insight into the correlation between a subject's perceived race and the prevalence of subject's possessing weapons during use of force incidents. In 2021, 44% of use of force incidents involved an armed subject, increasing slightly to 45% in 2022. However, encounters with armed subjects rose significantly in 2023, reaching 66% (215 subjects), and continued to climb in 2024, with 68% (254 subjects) of use of force incidents involving an armed subject. This upward trend underscores the growing prevalence of encounters where officers must respond to armed individuals, emphasizing the ongoing need for de-escalation strategies and tactical principles.

Figure #8
ARMED SUBJECTS' PERCEIVED RACE



Unarmed Subjects – Information and Factors

Community consultations have frequently raised concerns regarding the use of force on unarmed subjects, with many questioning whether unarmed individuals pose the same level of risk to the public or officers, as armed subjects. In the majority of cases where force was applied, the initial information provided to officers, often from citizen-generated calls (91.83%), indicated that the subject may have been armed or had displayed threatening behaviour. Upon further investigation, it was later determined that the subject was unarmed at the time of the public-police interaction.

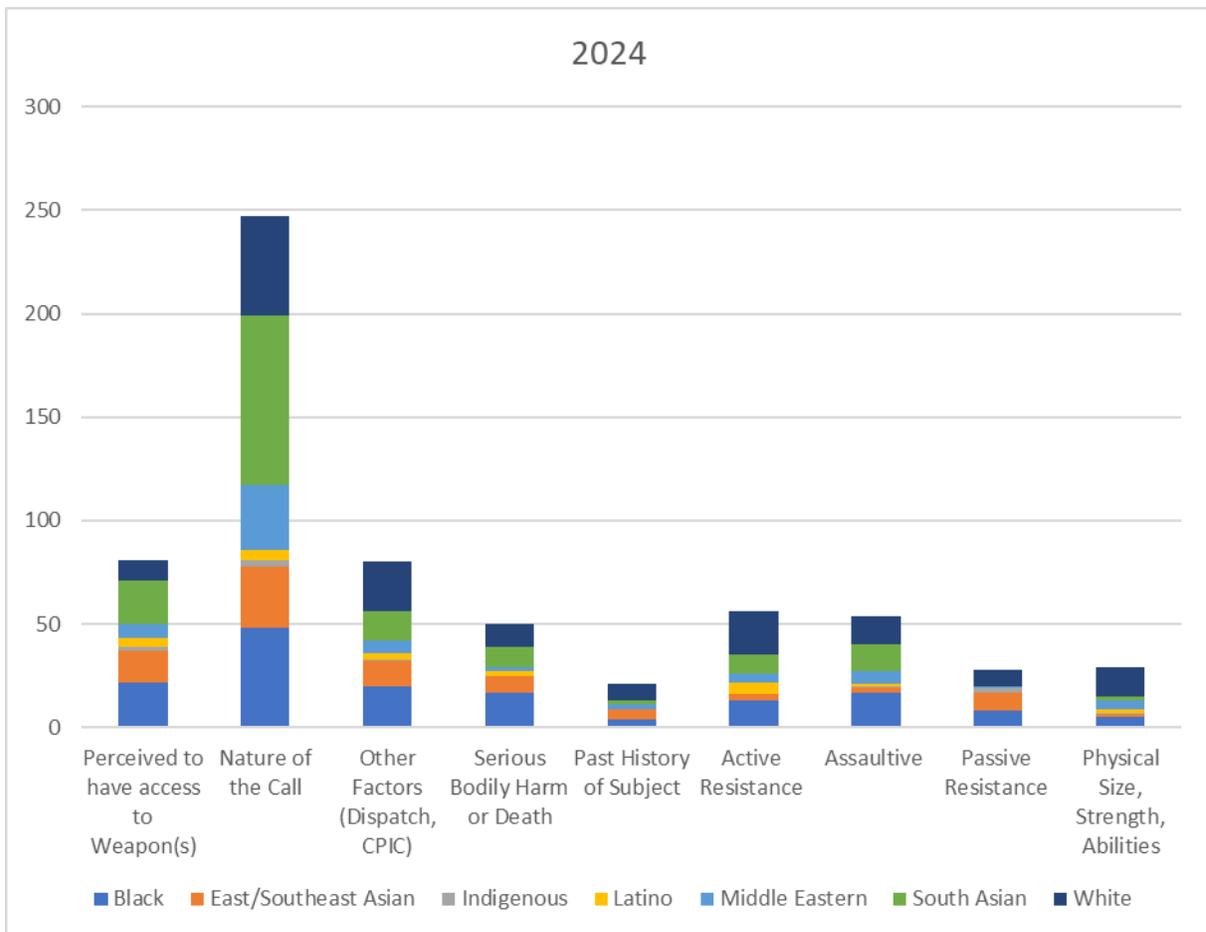
In some cases, unarmed subjects presented an imminent danger to themselves, the public, and/or police. While they did not possess a weapon, the immediacy and severity of their actions necessitated an officer’s response and application of force, to prevent harm.

In 2024, York Regional Police officers used reportable force on 118 unarmed subjects during a variety of call types where force was required to protect public safety. Each of these incidents was subject to a thorough review to ensure the response was justified, reasonable, and proportionate based on the subject’s behaviour. Data suggests that an officer’s decision to use force on an unarmed subject is impacted by various situational factors.

Officers could select multiple contextual factors for each incident, meaning percentages will not total 100%. Based on available data from both the Ministry of the Solicitor General and General Occurrence reports, the most common reasons for applying force were effecting an arrest (43%) and protecting the public (44%). Additional contributing factors included: the nature of the call; Warrant Execution, where information confirmed through investigation that weapons will be present, or Weapons Calls where citizens contacted police advising of armed subjects (32.3%), subjects perceived to have access to weapons (24.2%), and information received through dispatch and/or the Canadian Police Information Centre

(14.9%). In 8.3% of reports, force was applied due to an imminent threat of serious bodily harm or death. Based on a number of factors, including armed subjects, increases in types of criminal activity and threats to public safety, despite some racial groups being overrepresented based on population data, there were no observed disparities that could be attributed to racial bias. A detailed breakdown of call types is provided in Appendix A – Comprehensive List of Call Types to further contextualize these incidents.

Figure #9
INFORMATION / FACTORS THAT INFLUENCED OFFICER RESPONSE



5. Financial Considerations

There are no financial implications.

6. Local Impact

This report aims to provide the community with a clearer understanding of what constitutes a reportable use of force incident, the trends influencing police decision-making, and the legal principles governing these actions. It also highlights the training undertaken by York Regional

Police to ensure that public-police interactions are guided by conflict prevention and de-escalation principles and a commitment to preserve and protect life.

7. Conclusion

The data presented in this report provides a detailed analysis of use of force incidents involving York Regional Police officers in 2024, highlighting the situational factors, subject characteristics, and trends that influence police decision-making. It underscores the complexity of public-police interactions, particularly when responding to armed subjects, individuals in crisis, and unarmed subjects who still pose a significant risk to public and police safety.

York Regional Police remains committed to transparency, accountability, and continuous improvement in its policing practices. Through collaboration with the Ministry of the Solicitor General, we have enhanced the accuracy and reliability of data collection, ensuring a comprehensive assessment of use of force incidents. By leveraging data-driven insights, prioritizing de-escalation strategies, and addressing public concerns, we continue to uphold the highest standards of professionalism and integrity, ensuring that our approach to public safety remains fair, equitable, and community-focused.

York Regional Police is in compliance with the *Community Safety and Policing Act*, the Policing Standards Manual, York Regional Police Use of Force Procedure AI 012/AI 014 and the *Anti-Racism Act*.

Alternative formats or communication supports are available upon request.

Approved for Submission: Jim MacSween, M.O.M., B.A.A.
Chief of Police

Attachments (3) - Appendix A
- Appendix B
- Appendix C