

The Regional Municipality of York Police Services Board

Public Board Meeting
November 24, 2021

Report of the Chief of Police

2020 National and Provincial Crime Statistics Rankings and Crime Severity Index Overview

1. Recommendation

1. That the Board receive this report for information, pursuant to Police Services Board Crime, Call and Public Disorder Analysis Policy No. 02/00-5.

2. Summary

Every year, York Regional Police conducts a review and analysis of police reported crime statistics released by the Canadian Centre for Justice and Community Safety Statistics, a division of Statistics Canada, and compiles national and provincial crime statistics rankings and crime severity index overview reports.

In these reports, York Regional Police is ranked amongst nine comparable national and provincial police jurisdictions. The 2020 crime data rates from Statistics Canada indicate the following:

- Nationally, York Regional Police is ranked second for lowest Total Crime and Crimes Against Property, and third for Crimes Against Persons
- Provincially, York Regional Police is ranked third for lowest Total Crime and Crimes Against Property, and fourth for Crime Against Persons

- Nationally, York Regional Police retained first rank for lowest Violent Crime Severity Index and second for Non-violent and Total Crime Severity Index
- Provincially, York Regional Police ranked second for lowest Violent Crime Severity Index and third for both the Total Crime Severity Index and Non-violent Crime Severity Index categories
- York Regional Police improved its rank for the Property Crime Clearance Rate and Non-violent Crime Weighted Clearance Rate, but its ranking declined for the Violent Crime Clearance Rate.

3. Background

Police services in Canada are required to respond to both crime and investigate incidents and report them to the Canadian Centre for Justice and Community Safety Statistics. Reported criminal incidents and those that come to the attention of York Regional Police are submitted monthly to the Canadian Centre for Justice and Community Safety Statistics.

CRIME REPORTING METHODOLOGY

Uniform Crime Reporting

In Canada, police services gather information on criminal incidents using the Uniform Crime Reporting Survey developed by Statistics Canada. One incident can involve multiple offences. The Uniform Crime Reporting methodology allows for the reporting of four serious offences in a criminal incident. To provide better comparability, Statistics Canada reports only the most serious offence of each submitted incident whereas York Regional Police's official crime statistics reports include all violations. Traditional Uniform Crime Reporting crime rates do not include traffic violations. This overview has been compiled based on all criminal incidents reported to Statistics Canada from January to December of 2020.

Crime Severity Index

Crime Severity Index measures were introduced by Statistics Canada in 2009. They are measures of police-reported crime that reflect the relative seriousness of individual offences and track changes in crime severity over time. The weights given to offences are based on incarceration rates and average prison sentence lengths from the criminal courts. The Crime Severity Index was developed to address the limitations of traditional crime statistics that are driven by high volume, but relatively less serious offences. They complement, but do not replace, the volume-based method of reporting uniform crime statistics by 100,000 population.

The Crime Severity Index measures both the volume and the severity of crimes reported to police. Unlike the traditional crime rate, all *Criminal Code* offences including criminal traffic violations are included in the Crime Severity Index. The Crime Severity Index is available for three separate indices: Total Crime, Violent Crime and Non-violent Crime. The Violent Crime

Severity Index is comprised of all police-reported violent violations such as crimes against persons, and the Non-violent Crime Severity Index is comprised of all police-reported property violations, other *Criminal Code* violations, other federal statute violations and *Criminal Code* traffic violations.

Crime Severity Indices are standardized to 100 to facilitate comparisons across police services and against the national and provincial averages. Crime Severity Index scores below 100 imply that the police service has a lower crime rate compared to other police services, and a Crime Severity Index score above 100 for a police service indicates a more serious crime rate compared to other police services.

Weighted Clearance Rate

Statistics Canada introduced weighted clearance rates in 2009 to enhance comparability of police clearance rates. The Weighted Clearance Rate measures the percentage of police-reported criminal incidents that are cleared, weighted by crime severity. Clearance rate weights are assigned based on the same principle as the Crime Severity Index, where a more serious offence will have a higher 'weight' than less serious offences. Weighted clearance rate measures have been established for Total Crime, Violent Crime and Non-violent Crime.

OPERATIONAL CONTEXT AND COMPARABILITY

The York Regional Police operating environment changed significantly in 2020. The World Health Organization declared a novel coronavirus COVID-19 outbreak a global pandemic on March 11, 2020. On March 17, 2020, Canada and the Province of Ontario declared a state of emergency. With provincial policies in place to contain the spread of the virus, Canadians were required to stay home for longer periods of time, which significantly influenced crime patterns across the country. Each province had varying levels of restrictions in place at different times throughout 2020.

The limitations of the data in this report should also be noted. Crime data from different policing jurisdictions, even standardized Uniform Crime Reporting statistics, should be compared and interpreted with caution. Crime data is not a reflection of overall police workload. Crime data for every policing jurisdiction is influenced by several different factors.

- substantive, such as victims' reporting rates
- legal, such as offence definitions and interpretations
- statistical, such as Uniform Crime Reporting scoring methodology changes and internal counting rules

Other factors affecting reported crime and clearance rates include:

- population composition, for example, racial and ethnic makeup, age and gender profile and family structure

- internal practices such as investigator coding and report validation processes
- crime type, for example local and multi-jurisdictional and violent or non-violent
- crime complexity and solvability, such as organized or non-organized
- service delivery models, such as in-person police response versus alternative service delivery options available

These factors complicate comparisons and the findings of this report are only one component of assessing the overall crime picture and trends in York Region.

4. Analysis

This 2020 National and Provincial Crime Statistics Ranking Overview Report is prepared by comparing crime rates and clearance rates for Total Crime, Violent Crime and Property Crime. In addition to the traditional crime and clearance rates comparison, the Crime Severity Index and Weighted Clearance Rate measures are also compared with other police services.

NATIONAL AND PROVINCIAL COMPARISONS

York Regional Police has been compared to nine police jurisdictions nationally and nine police jurisdictions provincially that serve the largest populations. The national comparator police services are Toronto, Montreal, Peel, Calgary, York, Ottawa, Edmonton, Winnipeg and Durham. The provincial comparators include the police services of Toronto, Peel, York, Ottawa, Durham, Halton, Waterloo, Hamilton and Niagara.

Crime Rates and Ranking

Tables 1 through 3 show Statistics Canada crime rates per 100,000 population for the five largest national and provincial policing comparator jurisdictions. Table 1 shows 2020 rates for Total Crime excluding Traffic, Crimes Against Persons and Crimes Against Property in York Region, Ontario and Canada, as well as the rates of change in York Region from 2019.

Table 2 shows that the York Regional Police 2020 crime rate ranked second lowest to Peel Police amongst its national comparators for the categories of Total Crime excluding Traffic and Crimes Against Property, and ranked third lowest to Peel and Durham for Crimes Against Persons. Table 2 also shows that, provincially, York Regional Police ranked third lowest (to Halton and Peel) for Total Crime and Crimes Against Property, and ranked fourth lowest (to Halton, Peel and Durham) for Crimes Against Persons.

Five-year crime rate rankings for York Regional Police are shown in Table 3. Appendix 1 provides crime rate ranking details for the last five years for all nine national and provincial comparator police services.

Table 1
Crime Rate per 100,000 Population in York Region, 2019-2020

Indicator	2020 York Region	2019 York Region	% Change York Region	2020 Ontario	2020 Canada
Total Crime	2,433	2,789	-12.7	3,734	5,301
Crimes Against Persons	638	651	-2.0	898	1,254
Crimes Against Property	1,554	1,844	-15.7	2,329	3,071

Table 2
2020 Crime Rate Ranking by Police Service (Lowest to Highest)

National	First	Second	Third	Fourth	Fifth
Total Crime	Peel	York	Durham	Ottawa	Montreal
Crimes Against Persons	Peel	Durham	York	Ottawa	Calgary
Crimes Against Property	Peel	York	Durham	Ottawa	Montreal
Provincial	First	Second	Third	Fourth	Fifth
Total Crime	Halton	Peel	York	Durham	Ottawa
Crimes Against Persons	Halton	Peel	Durham	York	Ottawa
Crimes Against Property	Halton	Peel	York	Durham	Ottawa

Table 3
Five-Year Crime Rate Ranking for York Region (Lowest to Highest)

National	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Total Crime	Second	Second	First	First	First
Crimes Against Persons	Third	Second	Second	Second	First
Crimes Against Property	Second	Second	First	First	First
Provincial	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Total Crime	Third	Third	Second	Second	Second
Crimes Against Persons	Fourth	Third	Third	Third	Second
Crimes Against Property	Third	Third	Second	Second	Second

Clearance Rates and Ranking

Tables 4 through 6 show clearance rates and rankings for the five largest national and provincial policing jurisdictions, including York Regional Police. York Regional Police's clearance rate for Total Crime excluding Traffic decreased 2.1 percentage points in 2020 to 38.4 percent from 40.5 percent in 2019 as shown in Table 4.

Table 4
Clearance Rate in York Region, 2019-2020

Indicator	2020 York Region	2019 York Region	% Change York Region	2020 Ontario	2020 Canada
Total Crime	38.4	40.5	-2.1	37.9	37.5
Crimes Against Persons	57.3	61.9	-4.6	63.5	60.1
Crimes Against Property	23.4	25.8	-2.4	18.6	18.8

In 2020, York Regional Police improved its Crimes Against Property clearance rate ranking to first amongst national comparators. In the categories of Crimes Against Persons and Total Crime excluding Traffic, York Regional Police rankings decreased from fourth to fifth, as shown in Table 5. Table 6 shows the clearance rate rankings of York Regional Police over the last five years. Appendix 1 provides clearance rate ranking details for all nine national and provincial comparator police services.

Table 5
2020 Clearance Rate Ranking by Police Service (Highest to Lowest)

National	First	Second	Third	Fourth	Fifth
Total Crime	Edmonton	Durham	Peel	Montreal	York
Crimes Against Persons	Peel	Montreal	Durham	Winnipeg	York
Crimes Against Property	York	Durham	Peel	Ottawa	Winnipeg
Provincial	First	Second	Third	Fourth	Fifth
Total Crime	Halton	Durham	Peel	York	Ottawa
Crimes Against Persons	Halton	Peel	Durham	York	Hamilton
Crimes Against Property	Halton	York	Durham	Peel	Ottawa

Table 6
Five Year Clearance Rate Rankings for York Region (Highest to Lowest)

National	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Total Crime	Fifth	Fourth	Third	Second	First
Crimes Against Persons	Fifth	Fourth	Third	Second	Third
Crimes Against Property	First	Second	Second	First	First
Provincial	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Total Crime	Fourth	Fourth	Third	Second	Second
Crimes Against Persons	Fourth	Fourth	Fourth	Third	Fourth
Crimes Against Property	Second	Third	Third	Second	Second

Crime Severity Index and Ranking

Table 7 shows the Crime Severity Indices for York Regional Police for the indicators of Total Crime, Violent Crime and Non-violent Crime, as well as the provincial and national averages. For all the crime categories, York Region scores decreased from the 2019 values. The indices were also significantly lower than the corresponding provincial and national indices.

Table 8 includes the 2020 Crime Severity Index rankings for the five largest national and provincial comparator police services. Nationally, York Regional Police ranked first in the Violent Crime Severity Index category and ranked second for the Total Crime Severity Index and Non-violent Crime Severity Index. Amongst the provincial comparators, York Regional Police ranked second in the Violent Crime Severity Index category and ranked third for the Total Crime Severity Index and Non-violent Crime Severity Index.

Table 7
Crime Severity Index in York Region, 2019-2020

Indicator	2020 York Region	2019 York Region	% Change York Region	2020 Ontario	2020 Canada
Total CSI	39.0	44.4	-16.0	55.7	73.4
Violent CSI	43.7	50.4	-13.3	69.5	87.0
Non-violent CSI	37.2	42.1	-11.6	50.6	68.4

Table 8**2020 Crime Severity Index Ranking by Police Services (Lowest to Highest)**

National	First	Second	Third	Fourth	Fifth
Total CSI	Peel	York	Durham	Ottawa	Toronto
Violent CSI	York	Durham	Peel	Ottawa	Calgary
Non-violent CSI	Peel	York	Durham	Toronto	Ottawa
Provincial	First	Second	Third	Fourth	Fifth
Total CSI	Halton	Peel	York	Durham	Ottawa
Violent CSI	Halton	York	Durham	Peel	Ottawa
Non-violent CSI	Halton	Peel	York	Durham	Toronto

Table 9 provides the annual rankings of York Regional Police amongst its national and provincial comparators for 2016-2020. Appendix 2 provides the Crime Severity Index ranking details during the same timeframe for all nine national and provincial comparators.

Table 9**Five Year Crime Severity Index Ranking of York Region (Lowest to Highest)**

National	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Total CSI	Second	Second	First	First	First
Violent CSI	First	First	First	First	First
Non-violent CSI	Second	Second	First	First	First
Provincial	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Total CSI	Third	Third	Second	Second	Second
Violent CSI	Second	Second	Second	Second	Second
Non-violent CSI	Third	Third	Second	Second	Second

Weighted Clearance Rates and Ranking

Table 10 shows the York Regional Police 2020 Weighted Clearance Rate percentages for the indicators of Total Crime, Violent Crime and Non-violent Crime, as well as the corresponding provincial and national rates. York Regional Police's Weighted Clearance Rate for Total Crime marginally decreased to 39.3 percent in 2020 from 39.6 percent in 2019. For Violent Crime, the Weighted Clearance Rate decreased 6.5 percentage points to 54.9 percent in 2020, from 61.4 percent in 2019. For the Non-violent Crime category, the Weighted Clearance Rate increased to 32.7 percent in 2020, from 30.3 percent in 2019.

Table 10
Weighted Clearance Rate Percentages, 2019-2020

Indicator	2020 York Region	2019 York Region	% Change York Region	2020 Ontario	2020 Canada
Total Weighted Clearance Rate	39.3	39.6	-0.3	40.2	37.1
Violent Weighted Clearance Rate	54.9	61.4	-6.5	61.5	58.3
Non-violent Weighted Clearance Rate	32.7	30.3	+2.4	29.7	27.3

Table 11 includes Weighted Clearance Rate rankings for the five largest national and provincial police services in 2020. Amongst its national comparators, York Regional Police ranked third highest for the Total Weighted Clearance Rate and Non-violent Weighted Clearance Rate, and ranked fourth highest for the Violent Crime Clearance Rate. Provincially, York Regional Police ranked fourth highest for all three weighted clearance indicators.

Table 11
2020 Weighted Clearance Rate Rankings by Police Service (Highest to Lowest)

National	First	Second	Third	Fourth	Fifth
Total Weighted Clearance Rate	Peel	Durham	York	Edmonton	Winnipeg
Violent Weighted Clearance Rate	Peel	Durham	Montreal	York	Edmonton
Non-violent Weighted Clearance Rate	Peel	Durham	York	Edmonton	Ottawa
Provincial	First	Second	Third	Fourth	Fifth
Total Weighted Clearance Rate	Halton	Peel	Durham	York	Hamilton
Violent Weighted Clearance Rate	Halton	Peel	Durham	York	Niagara
Non-violent Weighted Clearance Rate	Halton	Peel	Durham	York	Hamilton

In 2020, York Regional Police improved its ranking from fourth to third for the Non-violent Weighted Clearance Rate, and dropped to third for the Violent Weighted Clearance Rate. Table 12 includes the Weighted Clearance Rate rankings over the last five years for the five largest national and provincial comparator police jurisdictions. Appendix 2 provides further

details on Weighted Clearance Rate rankings for all nine national and provincial comparators.

Table 12
Five Year Weighted Clearance Rate Ranking of York Region

National	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Total Weighted Clearance Rate	Third	Third	Third	Second	Second
Violent Weighted Clearance Rate	Fourth	Third	First	Second	First
Non-violent Weighted Clearance Rate	Third	Fourth	Fourth	Second	Third
Provincial	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Total Weighted Clearance Rate	Fourth	Fourth	Fourth	Third	Third
Violent Weighted Clearance Rate	Fourth	Fourth	Second	Third	Second
Non-violent Weighted Clearance Rate	Fourth	Fourth	Fifth	Second	Fourth

5. Financial

There are no financial implications.

6. Conclusion

York Regional Police's crime statistics rankings in 2020, on most indicators, remained the same as last year, except for violent crime. Improvements were observed in the rankings of property crime clearance rates and Non-violent Weighted Clearance rates, but the rankings decreased for violent crime clearances. Though there are a few ranking changes in 2020, York Region is considered to be one of the safest communities in Canada and Ontario, on both traditional crime rates and crime severity index measures.

When examined together with internal crime statistics, the statistics produced by the Canadian Centre for Justice and Community Safety Statistics provide a greater understanding of York Region crime trends. We will continue to review the annual crime statistics released by the Canadian Centre for Justice and Community Safety and Statistics Canada in order to assist us with the development and review of our policing priorities, operational strategies and crime prevention programs.

Accessible formats or communication supports are available upon request.

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Chief of Police

JMS/sd

Attachments -Appendix 1: National and Provincial Crime Rate Comparisons, 2016-2020
-Appendix 2: National and Provincial Crime Severity Index Comparisons,
2016-2020