



# VANCOUVER POLICE DEPARTMENT

## ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

**REPORT DATE:** September 4, 2009  
**BOARD MEETING:** September 15, 2009  
**BOARD REPORT #** 0951

*Regular*

**TO:** Vancouver Police Board  
**FROM:** Jim Chu, Chief Constable  
**SUBJECT:** Taser Use Comparisons for 2008

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### **PURPOSE:**

This report compares Vancouver Police Department (VPD) 2008 Taser use statistics with other large Canadian police departments.

### **BACKGROUND:**

At the January 2009 Police Board meeting, a question was asked regarding how the Vancouver Police Department (VPD) compares to other jurisdictions in terms of the frequency of Taser use. A report was prepared in March of 2009 outlining some preliminary statistics around Taser use in other jurisdictions. However, at that time many departments had not yet tabulated their own data nor released it for public information. This report is an update to the Vancouver Police Board with more complete data from 2008 comparing VPD Taser use with other departments in Canada.

### **DISCUSSION/IMPLICATIONS/ALTERNATIVES**

Sixteen police agencies were asked to provide data regarding their 2008 Taser usage for public disclosure to the Vancouver Police Board. Only five did not return the survey provided by the deadline of June 19, 2009 (Durham Regional, Montreal, Ottawa, RCMP Surrey, and Waterloo Regional).

Table 1 on the following page shows the level of use of the Taser as well as the number of times the Taser was presented but not discharged in 2008. Also population figures and number of members currently authorized to use the Taser are included to allow for better comparisons.

**Table 1**

Agency	Used	Presented	# of Members Authorized	Population of Jurisdiction
Toronto Police Service	367	150	454	2,503,281
Edmonton Police Service	91	420	344	750,000
Calgary Police Service	73	14	1,200	1,042,892
Winnipeg Police Service	68	75	1,269	660,600
Peel Regional Police Service	56	not tracked	180	1,100,000
Niagara Regional Police Service	44	54	316	427,421
London Police Service	42	not tracked	80	355,000
<b>Vancouver Police Department</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>615,000</b>
York Regional Police Service	26	0	23	1,011,360
Hamilton Police Service	25	10	185	520,000
Victoria Police Department	20	10	173	95,499
Halifax Regional Police Department	5	56	450	200,000

It is clear from Table 1 that the VPD uses the Taser relatively infrequently (8<sup>th</sup> out of 12) compared to other agencies policing areas of similar or larger populations. Population of the jurisdiction appears to have little relationship to the number of times the Taser was presented or used<sup>1</sup>. As well, the number of members authorized to use the Taser within the police force had no statistically significant correlation on the number of times it was used or presented during an incident. This suggests that the provision of a Taser to more members has very little to do with their use.

## CONCLUSION:

In 2008, VPD members were fairly judicious in their actual use of Taser, utilizing it only 33 times, or in other words, only once every 11 days. Compared with 11 other large Canadian police departments, the VPD ranked 8<sup>th</sup> in actual uses in 2008.

<sup>1</sup> Correlation analysis showed a very strong positive relationship between population and use of the Taser when all agencies were in the analysis ( $r=.91$ ,  $p<0.001$ ), suggesting that police in bigger cities used the Taser more often than those in smaller cities. However, Toronto is a clear outlier in the data and likely skewed this analysis. Indeed, once Toronto was removed from the analysis, no relationship remained.

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Submitting Executive Member (signature):

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

This report has been prepared in consultation with the sections/divisions listed below, and they concur with its contents.

Concurring:

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