

HAMILTON POLICE SERVICES BOARD

- INFORMATION -

DATE: 2019 April 11

REPORT TO: Chair and Members
Hamilton Police Services Board

FROM: Eric Girt
Chief of Police

SUBJECT: *Year-End Report: False Alarm Reduction Unit - 2018*
PSB 19-032

BACKGROUND:

In 2015, the False Alarm Reduction Unit (FARU) welcomed a new By-Law and new procedures to reduce the number of false alarm calls to the Hamilton Police Service (HPS). PSB #14-086 was approved by the Board on July 21, 2014. The new program began on September 1, 2015.

The new By-Law introduced a contract between HPS and Monitoring Stations that regulates conditions for an alarm dispatch. The By-Law allows HPS to recover costs for a false alarm dispatch that is attended or cancelled en route. The FARU discontinued the collection of registration fees and removed suspensions from accounts to allow our officers to continue to provide outstanding protection and service.

The PSB annual report provides a summary of statistical information concerning false alarm dispatches, false alarm fee structure, false alarms invoiced, amounts written off and cost recovery generated for 2018.

1. False Alarm Response

Table 1.1 – Trend: False Alarm Response

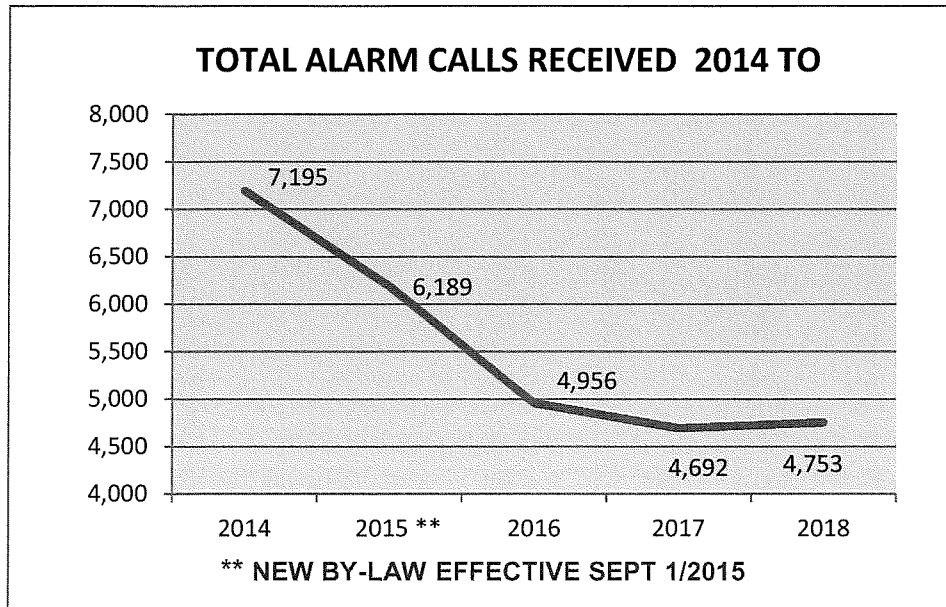
Year	Total Alarm Calls	Alarm Calls Attended	Alarm Calls Skipped	Cancelled En Route	Cancelled Before Dispatch	Total Cancelled Calls	<u>Valid</u> Alarm Calls	% of False Alarms
2014	7,195	4,212				2,559	186	97%
2015	6,189	3,699				2,064	164	97%
2016	4,956	3,107	265	316	1,112	1,428	153	97%
2017	4,692	3,118	245	192	994	1,186	135	97%
2018	4,753	3,145	246	245	900	1,145	214	95%

2018 RATES

False Alarms Attended: \$150 ea

Cancelled En Route: \$75 ea

Cancelled before dispatch: no charge



The chart depicted demonstrates a positive downward trend of annual alarm responses requiring police attendance. The reduction of 2,442 annual calls over a four year period results in a savings of approximately 1,831 hours of front-line time savings, equivalent to 88% of one sworn FTE. This reduction also positively impacts the ability of the HPS to respond to other priority calls.

2. Fee Structure

All fees for service are invoiced directly to the monitoring station representing the alarm owners at a cost recovery rate of \$150.00 per false alarm.

A partial fee of \$75.00 is charged for a cancelled en route dispatch, where Officer(s) have acknowledged the call for service and are actively travelling to the call.

There is no fee if the alarm is cancelled prior to an officer dispatch.

There is no fee if the alarm is valid (e.g. Break & Enter, Property Damage etc.).

In the event a home owner or agent acting on behalf of the home owner calls in an alarm, the home owner will be invoiced at the same cost recovery rate directly.

3. False Alarms Invoiced

In 2018, there was \$530,874.75 invoiced for false alarms. On May 9, 2018, we were directed to start adding 13% HST to our false alarm invoices which is reflected in this total.

4. Write Off Totals

The 2015 By-Law greatly reduced outstanding debt, bad debt and collection measures as the responsibility for the payment of false alarms had shifted from residence/business owners to alarm monitoring stations. The final batch of bad debt invoices, dated prior to the new by-law was written off in 2017.

There were no bad debt/write offs in 2018.

5. Cost Recovery Summary:

The HPS Board By-Law allows for the collection of false alarm fees to recover the costs of false alarms to the Service. The following is a summary of cost recovery generated by the False Alarm Reduction Unit, in the last five years.

YEAR	COST RECOVERY
2014	\$453,396.46
2015	\$276,169.85
2016	\$482,208.60
2017	\$454,480.00
2018	\$563,177.74



Eric Girt
Chief of Police

EG/M. Schulenberg

cc: Frank Bergen, Deputy Chief – Support
Marty Schulenberg, Superintendent – Support Services
Treena MacSween, Inspector – Support Services
David Leclair, Sergeant – Support Services
Karen Derry, Alarm Program Administrator