




HAMILTON POLICE SERVICE

INFORMATION REPORT

TO:	Chair and Members Hamilton Police Services Board
BOARD MEETING DATE:	May 21, 2021
SUBJECT:	Year End Report: False Alarm Reduction Unit
REPORT NUMBER:	21-053
SUBMITTED BY:	Frank Bergen, Chief of Police
SIGNATURE:	

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The False Alarm Reduction Unit 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 2020.

- 91% of all alarms responded to by HPS in 2020 were deemed false
- The Verified Response protocol implemented in 2019 has resulted in a 73% reduction in false alarms calls that require police response
- The reduction in false alarm calls attended by HPS translate to approximately 192 officer hours per month
- Cost recovery reductions in 2020 are correlated to the efficiencies created by reducing the volume of false alarm calls

INFORMATION

The Hamilton Police Service responds to reports of alarms in accordance with the services Priority Response System (PRS). A significant majority of all alarms reported to police are false. A change to a HPSB By-Law in 2015 (PSB #14-086) resulted in a considerable decrease to the volume of calls received. Invoicing was redirected to the alarm monitoring company rather than the alarm owner. The rate of this decrease was accelerated on September 1, 2019 with the implementation of the HPS False Alarm Verified Response protocol. This protocol improved the verification of a call prior to dedicating police resources to it.

Vision: To be a trusted partner in delivering public safety.

Mission: To serve and protect in partnership with our communities.

Our Values: Compassionate, Dedicated, Inclusive, Integrity, Innovative, Professional, Teamwork

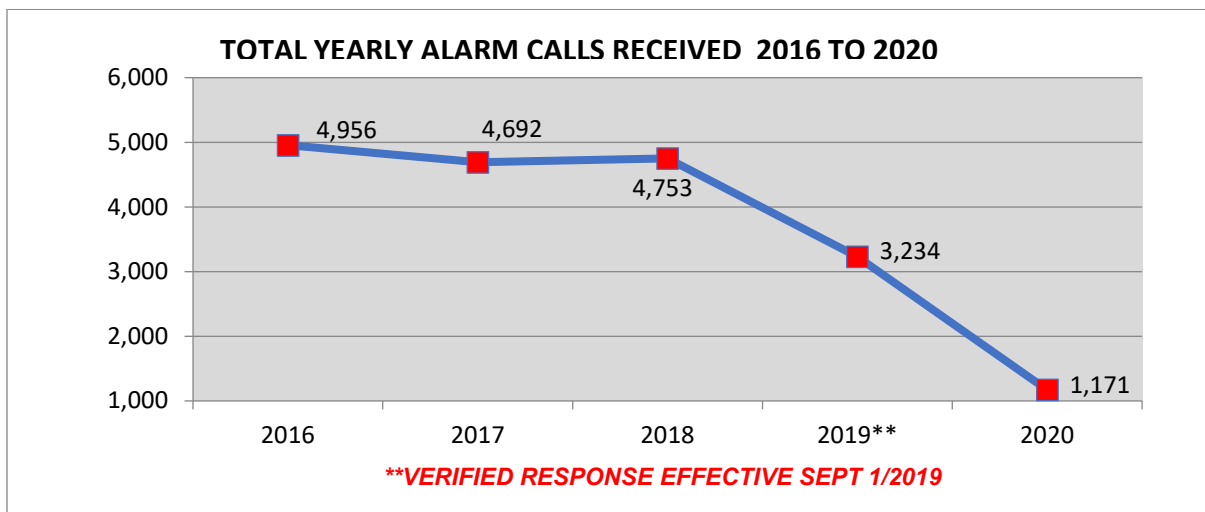
Since the inception of the Verified Response protocol in September 1, 2019 a reduction of 73% in alarm calls has been achieved. The reduction in alarm calls requiring police attendance in turn allows officers to be effectively deployed to other calls for service. During this first sixteen months of the program, officer-time saved averages 192 hours per month.

The False Alarm Response Trend chart and graph below displays alarm statistics for the past five years. The decreasing total alarms are attributable to the initiatives mentioned above, together with the diligence of the False Alarm Coordinator, working closely with alarm holders to reduce false calls.

HPS False Alarm Responses 2016 - 2020

Year	Total Alarm Calls	Alarm Calls Attended	Alarm Calls Skipped	Canceled En Route	Canceled Before Dispatch	Total Canceled Calls	<u>Valid</u> Alarm Calls	% of False Alarms
2016	4,956	3,107	265	316	1112	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%
2019	3,234	2,147	242	139	568	707	138	95%
2020	1,171	679	182	59	144	203	107	91%

Trend Graph: False Alarm Calls Received 2016 – 2020



Fee Structure

Vision: To be a trusted partner in delivering public safety.

Mission: To serve and protect in partnership with our communities.

Our Values: Compassionate, Dedicated, Inclusive, Integrity, Innovative, Professional, Teamwork

All fees for service are invoiced directly to the monitoring station representing the alarm owners at a cost recovery rate of \$169.50 (\$150 + HST) per false alarm.

A partial fee of \$84.75 (\$75 plus HST) is charged for a cancelled en-route dispatch. (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 homeowner or agent acting on behalf of the homeowner calls in an alarm, the homeowner will be invoiced at the same cost recovery rate directly.

False Alarms Invoiced

In 2020, there was \$120,090.75 invoiced for false alarms.

Write Off Totals

There was \$0.00 written off in 2019.

Cost Recovery Summary

HPSB By-Laws allow for the collection of false alarm fees to recover the costs of false alarms to the Service. The chart below is a summary of cost recovery generated by the False Alarm Reduction Unit, over the past five years. The reduction in total false alarms attended, directly impacts cost recovery. This reduction should be interpreted in the context of the fewer calls for service, allowing for police resources to be diverted to other public safety needs.

HPS False Alarm Cost Recovery 2016 – 2020

HPS False Alarm Cost Recovery					
Year	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Cost Recovery	\$482,208.60	\$454,480.00	\$563, 177.74	\$409,691.88	\$124,726.50 *Includes Nov-Dec 2019 receivables of \$4635.75

Vision: To be a trusted partner in delivering public safety.

Mission: To serve and protect in partnership with our communities.

Our Values: Compassionate, Dedicated, Inclusive, Integrity, Innovative, Professional, Teamwork

Conclusion

The growth of electronic and video monitoring technologies improve efficiencies and reliability in the pursuit of public safety. Many of these new and emerging technologies are being applied to safety of the person by the way of panic and personal safety alarms. The False Alarm Coordinator is closely monitoring these market trends to understand and respond to the impact they may have on police resources. The work done to reduce false alarm calls positions the service to better dedicate valuable resources to confirmed emergencies within our community.

The Hamilton Police Service will continue to respond to alarms that require police response in order to ensure public safety.

FB/M. Schulenberg

cc: Ryan Diodati, Deputy Chief – Support
Marty Schulenberg, Superintendent - Support Services
Karen Derry, Alarm Program Administrator

Vision: To be a trusted partner in delivering public safety.

Mission: To serve and protect in partnership with our communities.

Our Values: Compassionate, Dedicated, Inclusive, Integrity, Innovative, Professional, Teamwork