

Subject: Public Safety Service 2021 and 2022 Annual Report

File Number: ACS2023-EPS-PSS-0002

**Report to Emergency Preparedness and Protective Services Committee on 18
May 2023**

and Council 24 May 2023

Submitted on May 9, 2023 by Beth Gooding, Director Public Safety Service

**Contact Person: Lisa Petch, Strategic Support Coordinator, Business and
Technical Support Services, Emergency and Protective Services**

613-580-2424, extension 36319, Lisa.Petch@ottawa.ca

Ward: Citywide

REPORT RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Emergency Preparedness and Protective Services Committee recommend Council receive this report for information.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Public Safety Service is responsible for providing a safe and secure environment for City employees, residents, and visitors. It is comprised of the following functions:

- Office of Emergency Management
- Corporate Security
- Public Safety Systems (Corporate Radio and 9-1-1)
- Systems Coordination Support (specific to corporate security systems)

This report presents an overview of the Public Safety Service's achievements in 2021 and 2022, including performance metrics. It also highlights the Public Safety Service's emergency response, along with upcoming service priorities.

BACKGROUND

The Public Safety Service reports annually to the Emergency Preparedness and Protective Services Committee on the service's operations and key accomplishments.

The Public Safety Service is responsible for protecting City employees and assets, as well as preparing for, responding to, and recovering from large scale planned events and emergencies. The Public Safety Service is comprised of four functions – the Office of Emergency Management, Corporate Security, Public Safety Systems (Corporate Radio and 9-1-1) and Systems Coordination Support. For more information on the 9-1-1 service, please refer to the 2021 and 2022 9-1-1 Annual Report ACS2023-EPS-PPS-0003.

Due to the COVID-19 response in 2021 and various Emergency Operations Centre mobilizations last year, the 2021 Public Safety Service report was deferred. This report will cover two years of activities.

DISCUSSION

Emergency Responses

In 2021, the Office of Emergency Management continued to support the City's on-going response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The focus was on ensuring that all residents in Ottawa who wished to receive their first and second vaccine doses, could do so. The first part of 2021 saw a significant surge effort on the part of the City and Ottawa Public Health to implement a vaccine campaign. By August 2021, however, the situation had stabilized enough for the City to reduce its Emergency Operations Centre such that only a small footprint was maintained to support Ottawa Public Health.

The end of 2021 saw the emergence of the COVID-19 Omicron variant, which was highly transmissible. In addition to posing a health risk to priority populations, such as older adults, it created high absenteeism rates that were impacting businesses. The City re-escalated and augmented its Emergency Operations Centre so that it could lead a joint City-Ottawa Public Health response to the new COVID variant. The focus was on supporting the continuity of City operations and ensuring that residents in Ottawa had

access to a third dose of the COVID-19 vaccine, in a timely manner.

The Office of the Auditor General conducted an [Audit of the Governance of the City's Pandemic Response](#), which was tabled on February 17, 2023 at Audit Committee.

In January 2022, as the City's Emergency Operations Centre remained mobilized in response to the COVID-19 Omicron variant, hundreds of trucks and vehicles began to organize under the banner of the self-named Freedom Convoy. Their goal was to converge in Ottawa at the end of the month to protest actions taken by the federal government in front of Parliament Hill. As is the case for all protests in the City of Ottawa, the Ottawa Police Service was the lead for the overall planning and response to the Convoy Protest. The City mobilized a second, concurrent Emergency Operations Centre in order to support the Ottawa Police Service and to mitigate impacts to residents, businesses, and essential services, where possible.

The Convoy Protest officially began in Ottawa on January 28, 2022 and did not terminate until February 18 – 21, 2022. The Office of the Auditor General conducted an [Audit of the City of Ottawa's Response to the Convoy Protest](#), as well as audits of the roles and activities of both the Ottawa Police Service and the Ottawa Police Services Boards. These audits are all publicly available on [the Office of the Auditor General's website](#).

The rest of 2022 saw sporadic "Freedom"-related protests in the City of Ottawa; the largest of which were Rolling Thunder at the end of April, Canada Day, and a Dutch Farmers Solidarity protest in the summer. The Ottawa Police Service was the lead for these events and worked with the City's Office of Emergency Management, and other City services, to plan for and mitigate City Service-related impacts.

The final significant emergency response for 2022 is the 17-day Emergency Operations Centre mobilization in response to the May 2022 severe wind event/"Derecho". This was a devastating situation, which resulted in prolonged, widespread power outages. The City's response was led through the Emergency Operations Centre, with a focus on supporting residents in a variety of ways. To name just a few examples: the City

organized a special organic waste collection program; it cleared fallen trees and branches from City roads and parks; it worked with social services partners to distribute food to priority populations in the community; it conducted thousands of wellness visits to support residents without power; and, it opened community support centres to provide residents with locations to charge their devices, use washrooms/showers, get access to snacks and water, and receive the information they needed.

The Office of Emergency Management, with support from an independent consultant, conducted a formal After-Action Review of the May 2022 Derecho storm, which was presented to Committee on March 30, 2023 ([ACS2023-EPS-PSS-0001](#)).

Office of Emergency Management

The Office of Emergency Management ensures the safety of all residents and visitors by:

- planning, preventing, and preparing prior to an emergency;
- responding and ensuring the continuation of essential services during an emergency;
- activating the Emergency Operations Centre Control Group (a multi-departmental Steering Committee), when needed; and
- helping the city recover after a situation.

Definition of situation types

Monitoring (formerly Situational Awareness) involves informing services, departments, partners, and stakeholders to be cognizant of an evolving situation and to understand how the situation may impact their normal operations.

Enhanced Operations involves a situation outside of normal operations. The situation is imminent or occurring and could threaten public safety, public health, the environment, property, critical infrastructure, and economic stability.

Activated Operations involves a situation that requires the engagement of Senior Management and mobilization of the Emergency Operations Centre Control Group and Operations Group for decision-making and strategic support.

A State of Emergency is considered when the City has entered into Activated Operations level. Only the Head of Council or their delegate may declare a State of Emergency on behalf of the municipality.

Situations in 2021 and 2022

Table 1 outlines the number of situations by type throughout 2021 and 2022. The total number of unique events in 2021 was 82 and in 2022 was 45.

Table 1: 2021 and 2022 Number of Situations

Level of Escalation	2021	2022
Monitoring	81	46
Enhanced Operations	1	6
Activated Operations	2	3
State of Emergency	1	1

In 2021, the Office of Emergency Management coordinated the City’s response to the following major situations:

- January to August: COVID-19
- May 20: Gas Leak – Paul Anka Drive and Uplands Drive (emergency reception centre mobilized)
- June to August: Extreme Heat (Emergency Cooling Centres mobilized due to many public spaces still not being accessible as a result of COVID-19 measures)
- June 30: Via Rail / van collision (family reunification centre mobilized)

- December 13, 2021 to Winter 2022: COVID-19 Omicron variant

In 2022, the Office of Emergency Management coordinated the City's response to the following major situations:

- January 13: Merivale Eastway Tank Explosion (family reunification centre mobilized)
- January 15 to 17: Significant Winter Weather Event
- January to February: Demonstrations / Convoy / Occupation
- March to May: Planned demonstrations (Nex Gen, Rolling Thunder, March for Life)
- May 21 to August 8: Severe Weather Event (Derecho)
- June 15 to July 4: Canada Day events (planning and operations)
- July 8: Rogers Network Outage (Canada-wide)
- September 19: Operation London Bridge – National Commemoration for Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II
- October 1: Panda Game
- October 12: City fuel sites off-line
- December 20 to 24: Winter Weather

In addition to responding to these incidents, in 2021, the City was in Monitoring for 200 days, Enhanced Operations for 115 days and Activated Operations for 45 days. In 2022, the City was in Monitoring for 291 days, Enhanced Operations for 15 days and Activated Operations for 74 days. The City was in a declared State of Emergency for COVID-19 from March 25, 2020 to July 22, 2021 for a total of 485 days (282 days in 2020 and 203 days in 2021) and for the Convoy/Occupation from February 6 to 24, 2022 for a total of 18 days.

2021 and 2022 Spring Freshets

The City of Ottawa established a Spring Freshet Task Force following the flooding of 2017. The goal of the Task Force is to prepare for, monitor, and respond to the needs of residents across the City. The Task Force is now led by the Public Works department, with support from the Office of Emergency Management. Should conditions in any year escalate, such that there is the potential for significant flooding requiring a City-wide emergency response, the lead department would transfer over to Emergency and Protective Services to coordinate that response through the Emergency Operations Centre. That threshold was not met in either 2021 or 2022.

Hazard Assessment, Mitigation and Prevention

The Hazard Assessment, Mitigation and Prevention Program is a four-phase process that enables the Office of Emergency Management to identify the hazards most likely to impact the City of Ottawa, their potential consequences, and any gaps in mitigation.

In Q4 2022, the Office of Emergency Management completed Phase Two of the Program, which saw subject matter experts from all City services and key external stakeholders submit the hazard mitigation actions their service areas have in place to either reduce the likelihood or the consequence of the top 30 hazards deemed present in Ottawa.

Phase Three of the Hazard Assessment, Mitigation and Prevention Program is currently in progress and is assessing the effectiveness of each hazard mitigation action plan that the subject matter expert put forth in Phase Two. The final phase of the Program is a vulnerability analysis and is expected to be completed by the end of Q4 2023.

Public Education and Awareness Program ‘Are You Ready?’

The City of Ottawa’s “Are You Ready?” program provides residents and businesses with information on how to prepare for an emergency or disaster. Residents can visit ottawa.ca to learn more about how to plan for the first 72 hours of an emergency or contact the [Office of Emergency Management](#) for more information.

In 2021 and 2022, the Office of Emergency Management, had limited capacity to deliver Are You Ready? presentations, or participate in TV and radio interviews. Due to

COVID-19 considerations, there were no displays coordinated in 2021 or 2022. However, the Office of Emergency Management delivered two virtual Are You Ready? Presentations in 2021 and four virtual Are You Ready? Presentations in 2022.

Despite a high number of emergency responses in 2021 and 2022, the Office of Emergency Management was able to finalize two new product offerings under the Are You Ready? Program. The first was an Emergency Management Handbook for Members of Council and the second was a [Community Emergency Toolkit](#) for community associations, faith-based groups, and other organized entities.

Training and Exercise Program

Every municipality in Ontario under the Ontario Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act is required to conduct training and exercises to ensure the readiness of the municipality to manage and respond to emergencies.

In 2021 and 2022, a total of 428 and 758 participants (respectively) received in-class or virtual training on their specific roles and responsibilities in an emergency. Of the participants in 2021, 412 were internal staff and 16 were external partners. The external partners participated in Introduction to Emergency Management and EM 200: Basic Emergency Management. In 2022, there were 729 internal participants and 29 external participants. The external partners participated in Introduction to Emergency Management and IMS 200: Basic Incident Management Systems.

In 2021, most courses were held virtually with EM 200: Basic Emergency Manager and IMS 200: Basic Incident Management Systems being held in-person. In 2022, most courses were held virtually with 14 IMS 200: Basic Incident Management Systems and all IMS 300: Intermediate Incident Management System being held in-person.

Tables 2 and 3 provide additional information on breakdown of courses offered and the number of participants in attendance at each.

Table 2: 2021 and 2022 Training and Exercise Courses

Name of Course	2021	2022
Introduction to Emergency Management	10	12
Duty Officer Training	2	5
Emergency Operations Centre Control Group	5	12
EM 200: Basic Emergency Management	1	0
IMS 100: Introduction to Incident Management Systems	12	12
IMS 200: Basic Incident Management Systems	11	16
IMS 300: Intermediate Incident Management System	0	1
Emergency Management Scribe	1	2
Total	42	60

Table 3: Number of Participants in Courses and Exercises

Name of Course	2021	2022
Introduction to Emergency Management	190	288
Duty Officer Training	5	5
Emergency Operations Centre Control Group	7	19
EM 200: Basic Emergency Management	12	0
IMS 100: Introduction to Incident Management Systems	59	85
IMS 200: Basic Incident Management Systems	132	308
IMS 300: Intermediate Incident Management System	0	13
Emergency Management Scribe	23	40
Total	428	758

Internal training participants include City staff from all departments. External partner agencies that participated in training included: Emergency Management Ontario, The Ottawa Hospital, Queensway-Carleton Hospital, The Royal, Ottawa Volunteer Search and Rescue, The Salvation Army, Ottawa Community Housing, Royal Canadian Mint, St. John Ambulance, University of Ottawa, Akwesasne, Carleton Place, Casselman, Pembroke, Smiths Falls Police, and Welland.

Annual Training Exercise

In accordance with the Ontario Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act, the City is required to conduct an annual training exercise for the Emergency Operations Centre Control Group.

On November 25, 2021, the Office of Emergency Management, in collaboration with Ottawa Public Health, facilitated a tabletop exercise for the Emergency Operations

Centre Control Group. The simulated scenario was regarding a winter weather event, with one of the injects being an electrical energy failure.

On June 21, 2022, the Office of Emergency Management, in collaboration with Transit Services Department and the Ottawa Police Service, facilitated a tabletop exercise for the Emergency Operations Centre Control Group. The simulated scenario was in preparation for Canada Day activities, with injects including extreme heat, public transit system situation, and civil disorder or public safety threat.

Corporate Security Program

Corporate Security is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all persons at City facilities through the delivery of security services. These services include:

- 24/7 Corporate Security Operations Centre
- Security Guard Services at City administrative facilities
- Physical security system design and installation (Access Control, Intrusion Alarm, CCTV)
- Incident management and investigation services
- Photo Identification services
- Security related education/ training to staff (including the Protective Measures Program)
- Event security planning for special events at City facilities
- Security audits at City facilities

Corporate Security responded to over 31,700 service requests in 2021 with upwards of 16,630 related to Photo Identification services. Staff in the Photo Identification Centre created over 7,280 identification/access cards and performed thousands of access modifications. In 2022, Corporate Security responded to over 27,900 service requests

with 16,300 related to Photo Identification services. Staff in the Photo Identification Centre created 6,128 identification/access cards in 2022.

Over 7,111 alarms were received by the Security Operations Centre in 2021 and 3,796 in 2022. The significant decrease in alarms can be attributed to the Security Operations Centre no longer monitoring the Ottawa Police Service's OPS facilities. In 2021 and 2022, 390 and 448 mobile alarm responses and/or security patrols were performed, respectively.

The number of security-related incidents in 2021 was down with only 793 incidents reported. This was largely due to ongoing pandemic restrictions and a gradual return to office that year. In 2022, the total number of security-related incidents that were reported increased to 1,271 which is slightly above pre-pandemic levels.

In 2021, the top incident types included 227 reports of causing a disturbance, 111 responses to personal incidents (e.g., assault, harassment, threat of violence etc.), and 93 responses to vandalism of City property/vehicles. In 2022, the top three incident types were 290 reports of causing a disturbance, 173 responses to vandalism of City property/vehicles, and 164 responses to drugs and alcohol on City property.

Table 4 shows a detailed breakdown of the type of reported security incidents received by Corporate Security in 2021 and 2022.

Table 4: 2021 and 2022 Reported Security Incidents

Incident Type	2021	2022
Break and Enter	16	12
Causing a Disturbance	227	290
Demonstration/Protest	10	26
Drug and Alcohol on City Property	74	164
Fraud and Waste	1	0
Other Non-Security	62	55
Personal Incidents	111	151
Suspicious Activity	76	140
Theft	68	151
Trespassing	55	109
Vandalism	93	173
Total Number of Incidents	793	1271

Education and Awareness

As outlined in Table 5, security advisors delivered two security awareness education sessions to City staff in 2021, and 14 in 2022. They also completed seven security audits at City facilities and parks in 2021 and 13 in 2022. There were 178 security projects completed in 2021 and 163 in 2022. Corporate Security is seeing a return to a similar level of activity that existed pre-pandemic and in some cases, an increase.

Table 5: Number of education sessions, security audits and security projects in 2021 and 2022

Activity	2021	2022
Security Awareness Education sessions	2	14
Security audits at City facilities and parks	7	13
Security projects	178	163

Corporate Security Support to Emergency Operations

Beginning in 2020 and continuing in 2021, Corporate Security staff were actively involved with the COVID-19 Vaccine Task Force as they prepared for the unprecedented City-wide vaccination effort, by providing security expertise to help ensure the mass immunization and pop-up clinics were ready and safe. Additionally, staff in Corporate Security took a lead role in readying the City’s vaccine storage and distribution facilities to ensure they were prepared to receive and safely store vaccines at all times. In 2021, Corporate Security provided and planned for the use of security guards at mass vaccination sites throughout the city.

In 2022, Corporate Security continued to support the City’s COVID-19 response as part of a surge effort, on the part of the City and Ottawa Public Health, to offer COVID-19 booster vaccines at select City facilities, as a layer of additional protection against the Omicron variant. That year also saw Corporate Security provide support to the Emergency Operations Centre to ensure that an appropriate security posture was in place at City facilities throughout the Truck Convoy Protest, as well as for subsequent protest events throughout 2022.

Program Development and Audit Update

Corporate Security continues to make program enhancements relating to the recommendations stemming from the 2018 Audit of Corporate Security. The Ottawa Auditor General’s recommendations included items related to policy development and reporting practices, procedures for Photo Identification card management, risk-based

planning, false alarm reduction, security guidelines for Council meetings, fostering security awareness at the City, Protective Measures Program implementation and staff orientation and awareness.

In 2019 and 2020, Corporate Security closed out 10 out of 17 recommendations stemming from the Ottawa Auditor General’s report. In 2022, Corporate Security was able to close an additional recommendation related to photo identification and access. Also in 2022, Corporate Security began a Security Supervisor pilot initiative at the City’s three administrative buildings, which is helping to inform an assessment related to the optimal composition of the program (i.e., the make-up of permanent and contracted security personnel).

As part of its Ottawa Auditor General’s follow-up work, Corporate Security has made a significant reduction in the number of false alarms by revisiting system programming standards and working collaboratively with clients in City facilities to address accidental alarms. Corporate Security implemented a weekly automated report to Facility Operations area managers that highlights all false alarms where a mobile responder was dispatched to a City facility for situational awareness and follow-up. The number of false alarms for the period of January 1 to October 31 for 2017 (original data set), to 2022 are outlined in Table 6:

Table 6: Total number of false alarms from 2017 to 2022

Year	Total False Alarms
Jan 1 – Oct 31, 2017	1421
Jan 1 – Oct 31, 2018	915
Jan 1 – Oct 31, 2019	744
Jan 1 – Oct 31, 2020	209
Jan 1 – Oct 31, 2021	232
Jan 1 – Oct 31, 2022	248

Corporate Security also implemented new security measures in 2022, in support of the personal security of members of Council. Incidents involving vandalism, harassment, and abuse toward elected officials have been documented at all levels of government in recent years. The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated existing trends of polarization, anti-government rhetoric and incivility, which has resulted in an increase of violent threats and abusive behaviour towards elected officials.

In December 2022, Council approved new measures aimed at ensuring that Council members are provided with the option of receiving the following personal/home security supports on a voluntary basis:

- A home security audit conducted by Corporate Security personnel;
- Up to \$4,000 to fund personal/home security measures such as an alarm panel and security cameras; and
- Up to \$100 per month for reimbursement of any security measure monthly monitoring fees.

Corporate Security is working in 2023 to update its Service Review and develop a new Security Framework that will include multiple policies to reflect the City's evolving operating environment before presenting to Council. Staff estimate this report will come forward later in 2023 or in early 2024.

Corporate Radio System

The Public Safety Service is responsible for managing and operating the City's Corporate Radio system. The service's responsibility includes managing the contract between Bell Mobility Radio and the City of Ottawa, as well as the administration of approximately 7,400 radios used by Ottawa Police Service, City departments, and external partners (e.g., Canadian Border Services Agency, Ottawa International Airport Authority, and Canadian Air Transportation Safety Authority). In 2022, the City saw an increase in usage of the Corporate Radio System by external partners, in particular, the Ottawa Police Service who have augmented the number of radios they have on the network to handle surge requirements during special events and demonstrations.

The Corporate Radio System program continues to ensure that the City has a reliable, public safety-grade radio service available for first responders and other City users. A governance structure for the City's Corporate Radio system was developed in 2022 and has been implemented. The governance structure provides a formal mechanism through which to share information, prioritize user requirements, and enable collaborative decision-making, across the City's client departments and services.

Conclusion

The Public Safety Service continues to provide a safe and secure environment for City of Ottawa residents and visitors. The COVID-19 pandemic, as well as multiple EOC mobilizations in 2022, required that the Public Safety Service re-prioritize some of its activities; however, key deliverables were met in 2021 and 2022, and the Service will continue to deliver on its commitments.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal impediments to receiving the information in this report.

COMMENTS BY THE WARD COUNCILLOR(S)

There are no comments from Ward Councillors as this report is city-wide in nature.

CONSULTATION

There were no consultations undertaken related to the recommendations of this report. The Public Safety Service is committed to consulting and collaborating with residents and community partners to ensure the safety of all in Ottawa.

ACCESSIBILITY IMPACTS

Public Safety Services operates in accordance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act and the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulations. The City's Office of Emergency Management has been working with the City's Accessibility Office to better

understand the experience of people with disabilities during emergencies. This work will continue throughout 2023.

DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY IMPLICATIONS

Section 5 of the [Delegation of Authority By-law](#) (2023-67) states that “in cases of emergency or special circumstances where it is necessary to act within the normal mandate of a department, but such action is not strictly within the terms of a delegated authority, a General Manager or Director, in respect of their specific department, may take such action as necessary to rectify the situation.” Further, in Schedule F of the Delegation of Authority By-law, the General Manager of Emergency and Protective Services and the Director of Public Safety Service are provided with administrative authority:

- to approve, amend, extend, and execute agreements for emergency management and planning, corporate security services and corporate radios;
- to approve and implement operational policies, practices, and procedures for corporate security; and
- to issue notices to the public in an emergency situation.

The Public Safety Service reports annually to Emergency Preparedness and Protective Services Committee with the other service areas in Emergency and Protective Services. The last reporting was on March 30 via the [Use of Delegated Authority in 2022 by Emergency and Protective Services](#).

There are no new delegated authority requirements associated with this information report.

CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

The Public Safety Service is a key stakeholder in the City’s Climate Resiliency Strategy. Forecasting studies led by the City’s Climate Resiliency group indicate that Ottawa is expected to become warmer and wetter over the next several decades. This warming due to climate change favors conditions conducive to extreme weather such as storms,

tornadoes, and wildfires. The Climate Vulnerability and Risk Assessment identifies the additional pressures from the expected increase in frequency, duration, or intensity of extreme weather events as a top climate risk.

INDIGENOUS, GENDER AND EQUITY IMPLICATIONS

The Public Safety Service is committed to the Corporate Diversity and Inclusion Plan. Recognizing that vulnerable populations are disproportionately impacted by emergencies, the Public Safety Service is working on formal actions as part of the City's Anti-Racism Strategy and applying the Women and Gender Equity Lens, to incorporate an equity, diversity and inclusion lens into the City's emergency preparedness, response, and recovery work.

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

Public Safety Service considers and manages risk in all the branches within the service area. These risks have been articulated throughout the report as well as their mitigation strategies.

RURAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no specific rural implications associated with the recommendations of this report. However, the Public Safety Service does consider the varying needs of those living in different parts of the city when developing emergency plans.

TERM OF COUNCIL PRIORITIES

The services provided by Public Safety Service continue to align with the 2019 – 2022 Term of Council Priority of Thriving Communities: Promote safety, culture, social and physical well-being for our residents.

DISPOSITION

The Public Safety Service will implement any direction arising from receipt of this information report.