

Report to / Rapport au:

**OTTAWA POLICE SERVICES BOARD
LA COMMISSION DE SERVICES POLICIERS D'OTTAWA**

26 February 2024 / 26 février 2024

Submitted by / Soumis par:

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SUBJECT: PERFORMANCE REPORT: FOURTH QUARTER 2023

OBJET: RAPPORT SUR LE RENDEMENT : QUATRIÈME TRIMESTRE 2023

REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Ottawa Police Services Board receive this report for information.

RECOMMANDATIONS DU RAPPORT

**Que la Commission de services policiers d'Ottawa prenne connaissance du
présent rapport à titre d'information**

BACKGROUND

As per the Calendar of Monitoring Requirements, this report provides the Ottawa Police Services Board (Board) with information on selected operational metrics of police performance. The report expands on Board Policy BC-2 Monitoring Requirements and AI-001 Framework for Business Planning providing the Board with quantitative performance metrics on calls for service every three years.

DISCUSSION

The OPS is committed to monitoring and reporting on operational performance. Metrics provide insight into evolving service demands and highlight service improvement opportunities and organizational achievements relative to service standards. The following metrics, which are presented to the Board quarterly, have been developed in consideration of guidance from the Citizen's Advisory Committee:

- Total demand for police service (calls for service and online reports)
- Emergency response calls for service, by priorities
- Priority 1 response performance (on-scene in 15 min, 95% of the time)
- Service time (citizen-initiated, mobile response calls)
- Number of Criminal Code offences handled per police officer

Control charts help understand the quarterly variation in the results. The time series includes a central line and upper and lower control limits (UCL/LCL) as a visual reference for detecting shifts or trends. This Quarterly Performance Report covers the reporting period between October 1 and December 31, 2023. It compares the fourth quarter (Q4) data with the same period last year and the five-year average.

Total demand for service – calls and reports received online.

In 2023, the OPS received over 427,400 demands for service through both calls for service and online reporting. This result is the highest in the past 10 years, it was 15 percent higher than the five-year average of 371,253 and the total demands for service in 2022 (370,315).

There were approximately 400,000 calls for service received through the OPS computer-aided dispatch system (CAD) in 2023, which represents 94 percent of total demand for service. When compared to 2022, overall calls for service increased by 15 percent (57,100 calls more). This increase was focused in the year's first half, while the latter half saw a decline.

Figure 1 below shows the total demand for service over the last five years by quarter.

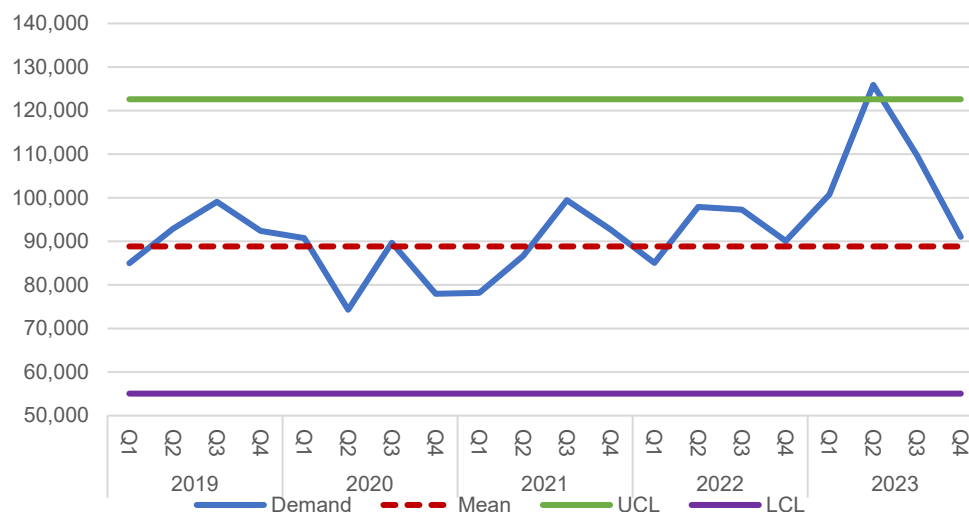


Figure 1: Total demand for service by quarter, 2019-2023

In the fourth quarter of 2023, the OPS received close to 91,040 demands for service through both calls for service and online reporting. This level of quarterly demand for service was 2.5 percent higher than the five-year, fourth-quarter average of 88,833.

Approximately 83,700 calls for service were received through the OPS computer-aided dispatch system (CAD) in 2023 Q4. The volume of calls received through CAD was the lowest for a quarter in 2023, however, in line with the five-year, fourth-quarter average of 83,309. This result was driven in part by calls initially coded as Emergency 911 Activation Assessment and final as False 911 – No Emergency Identified. After making coordinated efforts to engage various manufacturers in North America and Europe, the automatic SOS function in Android devices, which had caused abnormally high levels of 911 calls, was fixed. The update to address this issue has started to be pushed during 2023 Q4. More specifically, in 2023 Q4 there were over 21,700 false 911 calls, less than 15 percent the number of false 911 calls in 2022 Q4 (25,615 false calls).

In the fourth quarter of 2023, there were 7,333 online reports. This is a 33 percent increase from the five-year, fourth-quarter average of 5,524. Shoplifting accounts for over 37 percent of all reports received online. In the fourth quarter, there was an increase in shoplifting of 76 percent compared to 2022 Q4. This increase was driven in part by LCBO, which had previously limited online reports to 25 per day for all their locations but reported more than 1500 shoplifting incidents in 2023 Q4, compared to over 720 incidents in 2022 Q4 (a 110% increase). Other reports frequently received online include traffic complaints (9% of Q4 online reports) as well as mischief to property (7%) and theft under 5,000 (5%).

Response types

The OPS call response protocol reflects the need to respond to an event that corresponds to the seriousness of the incident while weighing the interests of the safety of police officers and the public. When the OPS Communications Centre receives a call, operators ask a series of questions to determine the priority level of the call. This process complies with Ontario's Police Adequacy and Effectiveness Standards Regulation LE-002 Communications and Dispatch.

Calls for service determined to be Priority 1 or 2 generally involve imminent danger to life or risk of serious bodily harm. In Q4 2023, 12 percent of the calls for service were Priorities 1 or 2. Priorities 3 and 4 reflect threats to persons, property, or evidence. These categories made up most calls for service (78%).

The other Priorities (5, 6, and 7) are used for police radio broadcasts and calls directed to the Police Reporting Unit (PRU), Collision Reporting, Information Desk, and Property Room. These Priorities made up the remaining 10 percent of calls in Q4 2023.

Emergency Calls for Service (Priority 1)

Calls classified as Priority 1 (P1) include events involving actual or imminent danger of bodily injury or death, often with the known presence of weapons. In the fourth quarter of 2023, the OPS received approximately 900 P1 calls, a sharp increase of 39 percent compared to the five-year, fourth-quarter average 646. More than three-quarters (77%) of P1 calls were assisting other emergency services, including paramedics.

Figure 2 shows the variation in P1 calls over the last five years. As can be seen, the number of P1 calls decreased during the pandemic when the tiered response agreement (TRA) between emergency services was suspended to limit the transmission of COVID-19. As such, significantly fewer OPS officers were dispatched to assist another emergency service in top-priority calls during the pandemic. Since the start of 2023, the TRA has been reactivated, which explains the rise in officer dispatch numbers.

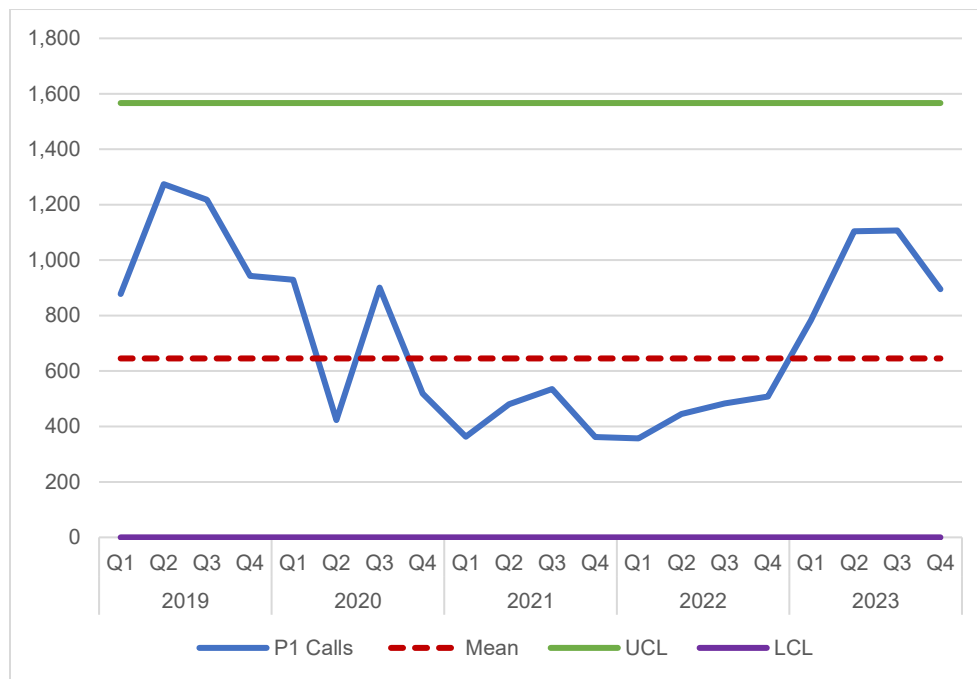


Figure 2: Priority 1 (P1) calls for service by quarter, 2019-2023

Priority 1 (P1) response performance

In accordance with the organization's call response protocol, the OPS aims to respond to P1 calls for service within 15 minutes, 95 percent of the time. Once a call is dispatched, the priority level of the call does not change in the computer-aided dispatch (CAD) system. Information received during a response is relayed to officers enroute through the radio or messaged on the computer system. This new information can alter the urgency of the response. Instances, where the urgency has been lowered due to decreased risk, will result in response times below the P1 service standard.

In Q4 2023, the OPS met this response performance standard – arriving on scene within 15 minutes 94 percent of the time. This is an improvement compared to 2022 Q4, where officers responded within 15 minutes 90 percent of the time and is slightly above the five-year, fourth-quarter average of 93 percent. Of the approximately 900 calls classified as P1, officers took over 15 minutes to respond to 40 calls. Of these, in 21 occurrences the calls were dispatched quickly, and the delay appears to be due to travel time; nine calls were initially assigned a less urgent category and then upgraded to P1; only in four calls is there an indication that officers were delayed due to resource issues.

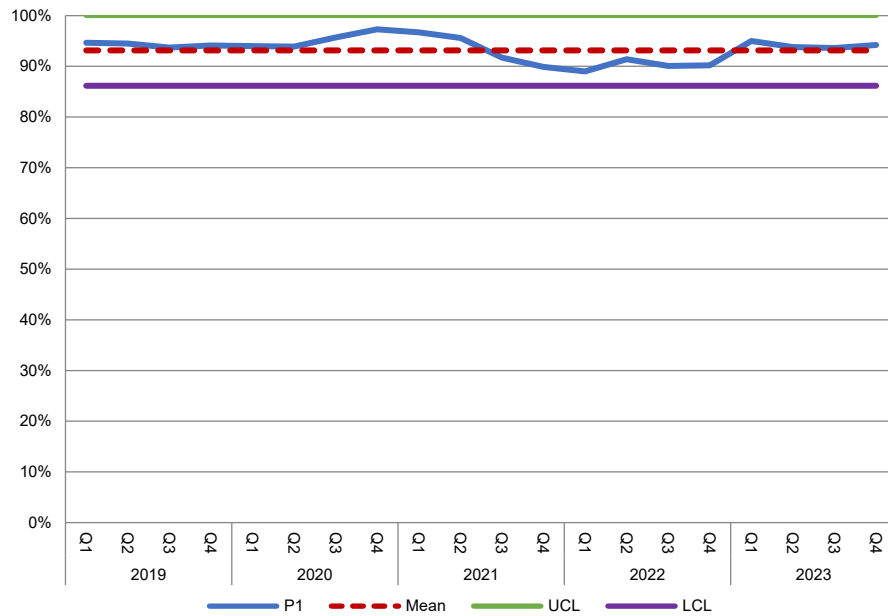


Figure 3: P1 Response performance by quarter, 2019-2023

Service time (citizen-initiated, mobile response)

Service time refers to the cumulative amount of time (in hours) officers spend responding to and dealing with calls for service from the public. Service time for citizen-initiated dispatched calls has gradually risen over the last five years. The cumulative time in 2023 was around 369,200 hours, the highest of the past 10 years, being 15 percent higher than the five-year average of 321,200 hours, and 9 percent higher than 2022 cumulative time (338.650 hours).

Following the overall increase, in the fourth quarter of 2023, service time was approximately 92,500 hours. This is an 18 percent increase from the previous year and is 16 percent higher than the five-year, fourth-quarter average of 79,641 hours. Figure 4 shows the variation in service time over the last five years.

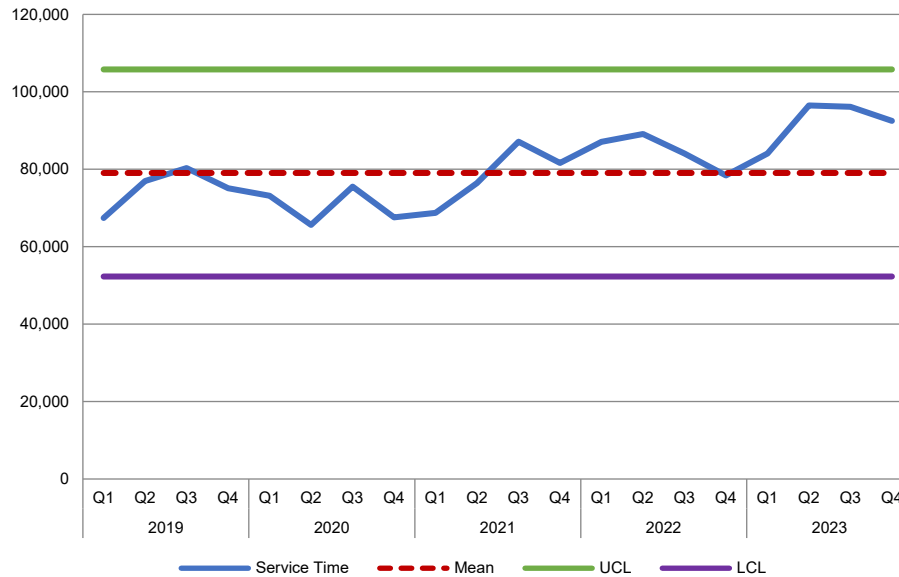


Figure 4: Service time (citizen-initiated, mobile response) by quarter, 2019-2023

Initial call types requiring the most effort in Q4 included paramedic assistance, disturbance, mental health, partner disputes, and accidents.

Number of Criminal Code Offences Handled per Police Officer

The number of reported Criminal Code of Canada (CCC) incidents handled per officer is one measure of workload volume. It does not capture the entire scope of police operations, including proactive initiatives, assistance to victims of crime, traffic enforcement/ Highway Traffic Act violations, and other community and public safety activities.

In 2023, the volume of crime in Ottawa increased by 8 percent compared to 2022. There were over 46,800 Criminal Code offences. On average, every police officer dealt with 31 Criminal Code offences during 2023, this is a 6 percent increase from 2022 (29) and is 12% higher than the five-year average of 28.

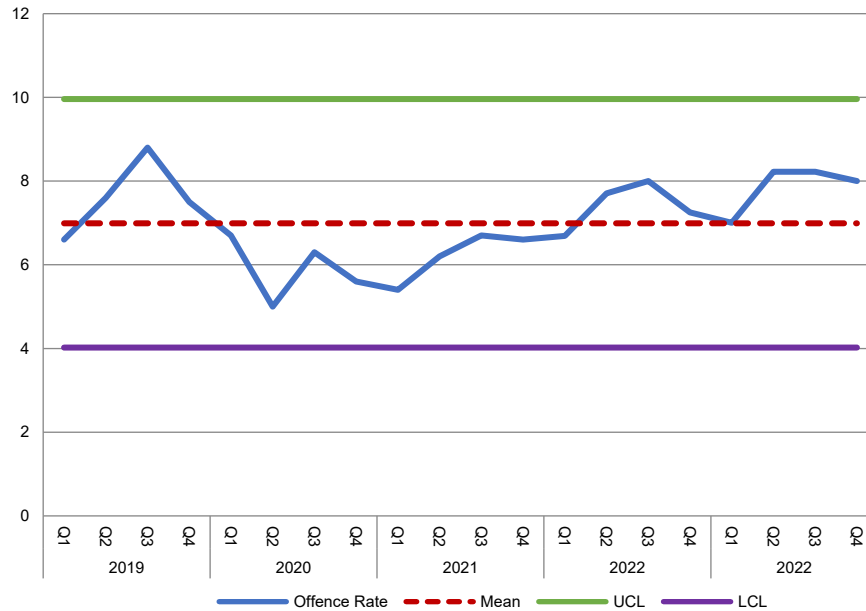


Figure 5: Number of Criminal Code offences per officer by quarter, 2019-2022

Figure 5 above illustrates that during the fourth quarter of 2023, each sworn member dealt with an average of eight Criminal Code of Canada offences, which is a 10 percent increase from the same period in 2022, and a 14 percent increase from the five-year, fourth-quarter average.

Following a decline at the onset of the pandemic, the number of offences handled by police officers has been steadily rising. This trend has outpaced the growth in sworn membership, resulting in more crimes per member.

CONCLUSION

The results in this report indicate that the volume of calls received for service has decreased in recent months, remaining in line with the five-year fourth-quarter average. However, the overall demand for service has gradually increased over the past five years, with 2023 having the highest demand for service of the past 10 years.

In concert with other reports submitted to the Board, these results illustrate the growing pressures affecting service delivery. Service time has remained relatively stable in its highest levels since Q2 2023, and overall, 2023 had the highest service time of the past 10 years. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that OPS still met its target of responding to Priority 1 calls for service within 15 minutes 95 percent of the time.

Since 2005, the OPS has been reporting to the Police Services Board quarterly on selected measures of police performance which were identified in collaboration with a Citizen's Advisory Panel. These reports support ongoing discussions aimed at service

improvement and transparency of police performance measures. The Board will continue to receive quarterly performance updates as part of the OPS performance monitoring activities.