

## Attachment 1

### *NWPD Non-Emergency Line Issues and Potential Alternatives*



# New Westminster Police Department

## REPORT

**To:** Mayor Jonathan Coté and Members of the New Westminster Police Board  
**Date:** July 19, 2022

**From:** Inspector Andrew Perry  
**Item #:** 2.3

**Subject:** NWPD Non-Emergency Line Issues and Potential Alternatives

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### **RECOMMENDATION**

*That the NWPD assume some non-emergency line call responsibilities from E-Comm in 2023 and that the NWPD continue to work with E-Comm to see if non-emergency line service performance can be improved.*

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### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this report is to inform the members of the New Westminster Municipal Police Board (NWPB) about the service deficiencies that the NWPD is and has been experiencing with its non-emergency line service that is being managed by E-Comm, and to provide a potential alternative to having E-Comm manage the NWPD's non-emergency line service.

### **BACKGROUND**

In May 2021, E-Comm disclosed to the NWPD that their non-emergency line service performance had been steadily declining and was not meeting their performance targets across the lower mainland region, and they expected that this would not improve in the near future. The main issues that were causing this decline in service were identified as longer transfer times to BCEHS during peak 911 times, inadequate funding to achieve non-emergency line targets, and short staffed due to attrition.

The NWPD then began to steadily receive ongoing complaints about excessive non-emergency line wait times from residents, business owners and institutions such as the Royal Columbian Hospital. Members of the public recognize the importance of reporting their incidents to the NWPD and began to report incidents through social media and online reporting, which were not designed to receive most of the types of complaints that were being submitted, rather than

abandoning their complaints altogether. Reporting incidents through social media or online reporting led to further delays in responding to these complaints, as these mediums were not intended or monitored for non-emergency incidents such as those that were being submitted.

In November 2021, staff were requested to start exploring the potential alternatives to having E-Comm manage the NWPD's non-emergency line, specifically:

- 1) Whether the NWPD could assume this responsibility internally or
- 2) Whether the NWPD could partner with another Police Department to provide non-emergency line service.

The non-emergency line service level performance continues to significantly not meet the NWPD's expectations, the City of New Westminster's residents and business owner's expectations and E-Comm's own performance targets.

### **Non-Emergency Line Service Performance Metrics**

Based on non-emergency line data from E-Comm, the following tables show the declining service level of performance achieved for NWPD calls and the high level of call abandon rate.

**Table 1 – Total Calls Answered/Abandoned**

The following table demonstrates how many calls were made to the NWPD non-emergency line, how many were answered (% and total calls) and how many were abandoned (% and total calls):

<b>Metric</b>	<b>2022–Jan</b>	<b>2022–Feb</b>	<b>2022–Mar</b>	<b>2022–Apr</b>	<b>2022–May</b>	<b>2022–Jun</b>
Total Calls Offered	1989	1615	1930	1873	2006	1892
Total Calls Answered	53% (1055)	58% (938)	51% (976)	34% (632)	37% (733)	36% (672)
Total Calls Abandoned	47% (934)	42% (677)	49% (954)	66% (1241)	63% (1273)	64% (1220)

**Tables 2 and 3 - Service Performance Target**

The E-Comm non-emergency line service performance target is to respond to non-emergency line calls 80% of the time in 180 seconds. The two tables below demonstrate the percentage of time that E-Comm was able to achieve the performance target, and how many calls were abandoned before 180 seconds.

**Table 2**

<b>Metric</b>	<b>2021-Q1</b>	<b>2021-Q2</b>	<b>2021-Q3</b>	<b>2021-Q4</b>	<b>2022-Q1</b>	<b>2022-Q2</b>
Target Achieved (80% in 180s)	64.7%	54.8%	48.8%	41.7%	48%	38%
Calls Abandoned	29.3%	39.1%	50.7%	57.9%	47%	45%

**Table 3**

<b>Metric</b>	<b>2022-Jan</b>	<b>2022-Feb</b>	<b>2022-Mar</b>	<b>2022-Apr</b>	<b>2022-May</b>	<b>2022-Jun</b>
Target Achieved (80% in 180s)	48%	55%	41%	17%	25%	24%
Calls Abandoned	46%	53%	45%	38%	45%	47%

**SUMMARY OF 2021 NON-EMERGENCY LINE CALL LOAD DATA ANALYSIS**

Note: Data ranges from January 1-November 24, 2021

Calls Offered: 24,821

Calls Offered – Weekend: 6,342 (25.55%)

Calls Offered – Weekday: 18,479 (74.45%)

Calls Offered – Average Per Day – Weekend: 67.47

Calls Offered – Average Per Day – Weekday: 78.97

Peak weekday time periods:

- 0700-1500 = 45.15% of daily calls
- 0800-1600 = 48.44% of daily calls
- 0900-1700 = 51.38% of daily calls
- 1000-1800 = 51.56% of daily calls
- 1600-2000 = 24.78% of daily calls

Peak weekend time periods:

- 0700-1500 = 44.21% of daily calls
- 0800-1600 = 48.88% of daily calls
- 0900-1700 = 50.69% of daily calls
- 1000-1800 = 49.95% of daily calls

**POTENTIAL NON-EMERGENCY LINE SERVICE ALTERNATIVES**

The potential alternatives considered at this time to having the NWPD non-emergency line managed by E-Comm are:

1. The NWPD assumes some of this responsibility from E-Comm;
2. The NWPD assumes all of this responsibility (24/7) from E-Comm; or
3. The NWPD partners with another Police Department and outsources this responsibility.

Staff have communicated with other Police Departments which were seen to be a potential to partner with and to outsource this responsibility to.

Unfortunately, these Police Departments have stated they were not in a position to consider our request at this time and there is no indication that this will change in a reasonable timeframe (less than 12 months).

***NWPD ASSUMES RESPONSIBILITY FOR SOME NON-EMERGENCY LINE CALLS***

If the NWPD were to assume responsibility for any non-emergency line service from E-Comm, it is recommended that the NWPD should assume only some of this responsibility to start with, and that the implementation should be done in a gradual, phased approach for the following reasons:

- The need to hire and train new employees or retrain current employees would be more achievable to do in a reasonable time period;
- It would allow for time to evaluate the first solution implemented before increasing the scope of the solution (i.e. Take on daytime hours only vs 24/7 service), and to make any adjustments necessary to increase the likelihood of a successful outcome;
- The NWPD would need to work with E-Comm to design and implement a transition plan; and
- The approach will minimize the potential costs by only taking on what is anticipated to make the most significant positive impact on non-emergency line service, which is to target daytime hours where calls offered and abandoned are highest.

Since partnering with another Police Department and outsourcing the NWPD non-emergency line workload is not an option at this time, or anytime in the foreseeable future, Inspector Perry will present some options to consider if the NWPD were to assume some non-emergency line service from E-Comm.

**CURRENT STRUCTURE FOR NWPD PUBLIC SERVICE COUNTER**

- Three Positions - Police Clerical Assistant 2.
- Work Schedule – Standard Work Week – Monday to Friday – 0800-1600, 35 hour work week (work hours are defined in a letter of agreement which forms part of the CUPE 387 Collective Agreement).
- Supervised by the Quality Control Unit Supervisor who also supervises four File Quality Reviewers plus auxiliary staff.

## PLAN OVERVIEW

The general plan would be to:

- 1) Reallocate the current three Public Information Counter staff to be two Communication Operators and one Communication Operator Supervisor, to able to respond to the non-emergency line workload;
- 2) Create and hire a new Police Information Check Clerk and reallocate Police Information Check workload from the Communication Operators to this position and auxiliary staff so that the Communications Operators can focus on non-emergency line work;
- 3) Work with E-Comm to design and implement a transition plan;
- 4) Design a communications strategy to promote the public to submit non-emergency calls during scheduled daytime hours since they can expect to receive a quicker response during these times; and
- 5) Review online reporting procedures to see if more incident types can be made available for the public to submit to the NWPD since the new non-emergency Communication Operators would be a position to review the submissions earlier.

## SCENARIO ANALYSIS

In order to assist in analyzing how NWPD resources could be allocated to have the NWPD assume some of the non-emergency line workload from E-Comm, below are different scenario options that demonstrate the cause-and-effect relationships between inputs and outcomes and the potential value that each scenario generates.

### SCENARIO #1

#### **Summary of Proposed Staffing Structure:**

- Communications Operator 1 – 2 full-time positions
- Supervisor – Communication Operator 3 – 1 full-time position
- Police Information Check Clerk – 1 full-time position
- Auxiliary Police Information Check Clerk's as needed

#### **Intended Outcomes on Non-Emergency Call Taking Workload:**

- The anticipated non-emergency line coverage would be Monday to Friday 0800-1600.
- The anticipated work hours would be Monday to Friday – 0800-1600 hours.
- Would be expected to handle approximately 48.44% of all weekday non-emergency calls.
- Would be expected to handle approximately 38 non-emergency calls per day.
- Would be expected to handle approximately 190 non-emergency calls per week.

**SCENARIO #2****Summary of Proposed Staffing Structure:**

- Communications Operator 1 – 2 full-time positions (weekday)
- Communications Operator 1 – 1 part-time position (16 hours - weekends)
- Supervisor – Communication Operator 3 – 1 full-time position
- Police Information Check Clerk – 1 full-time position
- Auxiliary Police Information Check Clerk's as needed

**Intended Outcomes on Non-Emergency Call Taking Workload:**

- The anticipated non-emergency line coverage would be Monday to Sunday 0800-1600.
- The anticipated work hours would be for full-time staff Monday to Friday – 0800-1600 hours.
- The anticipated work hours would be for part-time staff Saturday and Sunday – 0800-1600 hours.
- Would be expected to handle approximately 48% of all non-emergency calls.
- Would be expected to handle approximately 38 non-emergency calls per day.
- Would be expected to handle approximately 266 non-emergency calls per week

**SCENARIO #3****Summary of Proposed Staffing Structure:**

- Communications Operator 1 – 2 full-time positions
- Communications Operator 1 – 2 part-time positions
- Supervisor – Communication Operator 3 – 1 full-time position
- Police Information Check Clerk – 1 full-time position
- Auxiliary Police Information Check Clerk's as needed

**Intended Outcomes on Non-Emergency Call Taking Workload:**

- The anticipated non-emergency line coverage Monday to Friday 0800-2000 hours, Saturday and Sunday – 0800-1600 hours.
- The anticipated work hours would be for full-time staff Monday to Friday – 0800-1600 hours.
- The anticipated work hours would be for part-time staff Monday to Friday –1600-2000 hours and Saturday and Sunday – 0800-1600 hours.
- Would be expected to handle approximately 73.22% of all weekday non-emergency calls and approximately 58 non-emergency calls per weekday
- Would be expected to handle approximately 48% of all weekend non-emergency calls and approximately 38 non-emergency calls per weekend day
- Would be expected to handle approximately 366 non-emergency calls per week

**TABLE – SCENARIO SUMMARY:**

	<b>SCENARIO 1</b>	<b>SCENARIO 2</b>	<b>SCENARIO 3</b>
Comm Ops 1 - FT	2	2	2
Comm Ops 1 - PT	0	1	2
Supervisor	1	1	1
PIC Clerk	1	1	1
% of calls	48% (weekday calls)	48% (all calls)	73.22% (weekday) + 48% (weekend)
Expected Calls Per Day Taken	38	38	58 (weekday) + 38 (weekend)
Expected Calls Per Week Taken	190	266	366
Coverage	Mon-Fri 0800-1600	Mon-Sun 0800-1600	Mon-Fri 0800-2000 + Sat-Sun 0800-1600

**OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:****Online Reporting**

The Communication Operators and Supervisor will be responsible for reviewing online reports to see if the file needs to have a Constable dispatched to investigate or not during the times that they are working.

If the NWPD implemented Scenario 2, it would provide the opportunity for Online Reporting files to be reviewed within 24 hours.

A review of Online Reporting incident types could then be conducted to see if more incident types could be permitted to be received via Online Reporting. The Online Reporting system is capable of being expanded to include more incident types.

**Performance Management**

E-Comm is able to provide the NWPD with detailed service performance metrics.

The NWPD will need to be able to produce similar service performance metrics and analyze them on a monthly basis to ensure we are meeting our expected performance metrics and improving our non-emergency line service compared to E-Comm. In order to be able to produce these metrics, we will need to upgrade our phone system software.

**Phone System Software Upgrade**

In order to upgrade our phone system, we will need to install Call Reporting Software. This software allows between 1-100 callers, and provides reporting and tracking metrics with over 50 standard reports (including abandoned calls) and allows for custom reports.



The software allows call recording, to allow for review and evaluation of specific calls, and provides metrics for managing employees such as how many calls have they taken, missed, and how many on hold.

### **FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

The NWPDP is currently paying for full non-emergency line service with E-Comm and the cost implication of assuming this service from E-Comm would need to be reviewed and discussed further.

### **OPTIONS**

- 1) That the NWPDP assume some non-emergency line call responsibilities from E-Comm and implement scenario 1 in 2023.
- 2) That the NWPDP assume some non-emergency line call responsibilities from E-Comm and implement scenarios 1 and 2 in 2023.
- 3) That the NWPDP assume some non-emergency line call responsibilities from E-Comm and implement scenarios 1, 2, and 3 in 2023.
- 4) That the NWPDP does not assume any non-emergency line call responsibilities from E-Comm.
- 5) That the NWPDP continue to work with E-Comm to see if non-emergency line service performance can be improved.
- 6) That the Board provide an alternate direction to the NWPDP.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

*That the NWPDP assume some non-emergency line call responsibilities from E-Comm in 2023 and that the NWPDP continue to work with E-Comm to see if non-emergency line service performance can be improved (options 1 and 5).*

This report has been prepared by:



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Inspector Andrew Perry

Approved for Presentation



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David Jansen  
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