

Spotlight on Public Safety

Monthly report to the HRM Board of Police Commissioners - November 2013



Staff Sgt. Scott MacDonald HRM's Public Safety Officer



Robert Peel is credited with first declaring that the true test of policing performance is in the prevention of crime from happening, not the response to crimes that have occurred. Nearly 200 years later, the observation is as valid as ever.

November is a very busy month on the prevention front. In addition to being National Community Safety and Crime Prevention Month, it also encompasses National Senior Safety Week (November 6-12) and National Bullying Awareness Week (November 17-23). Staff in the Public Safety Office are engaging in a variety of information sharing endeavours; taking to the airways and the internet and conducting community visits to share their best prevention advice.

The focus for National Senior Safety Week this year is fraud prevention. This issue struck a chord for me a couple weeks ago when a very well-educated family acquaintance who is getting older, nearly became a victim of internet fraudsters. There is no shortage of trickery that can occur in our digital world. In his case, a business related request came to him via a social media site. Online the business appeared to be legitimate and he engaged the fraudsters with an initial email. Fortunately, he felt something wasn't quite right with the replies he received, and he sought further advice before revealing personal information or engaging in a financial transaction. His experience speaks to one of our tips: no matter what offer or opportunity comes your way online or over the phone, trust your instincts. If something seems a little too easy or too good to be true, it probably is! And don't forget to report even attempted scams or frauds to police, this information can help prevent others from becoming victims.

Check out [twitter@HRMPublicSafety](https://twitter.com/HRMPublicSafety) and www.halifax.ca/police/PublicSafety for more crime prevention tips throughout the month.

Community Engagement

Engage citizens and community groups in playing an active role in public safety in HRM.

- Halifax Connects, an annual one-day event that aims to address the gaps between those experiencing homelessness and organizations that can help them, was held on October 20. The HRM Public Safety Officer joined over 30 organizations and 100 volunteers who provide a variety of services for the 798 participants, including a hot lunch, haircuts, personal care kits, clothing, foot care and blood sugar testing.

Partnerships

Align with all levels of government, social agencies and community partners to realize efficiencies and improve public safety programs and services in HRM.

- The provincial Cyberscan Unit provided a presentation outlining its role in addressing cyberbullying to HRP and RCMP school officers. This new unit is dedicated to assisting victims, investigating complaints and resolving cyberbullying situations through a variety of informal and formal legal means.

Sustainability Initiatives

HRM as an organization must undertake a variety of initiatives to improve public safety.

- The HRM Community Response Team conducted a three-day Crime Prevention Through Environment Design (CPTED) training session for 19 people, including a number of HRM staff members and police officers from HRP, RCMP and Cape Breton Regional Police. In addition to classroom time, participants visited the Metro Transit Bridge Terminal where the manager for the project led them through the application of CPTED principles from design to construction of the terminal.



CPTED certified - after a three day workshop, participants are ready to apply what they've learned to enhance safety in their communities.

Police Community Response

Halifax Regional Police (HRP) and Halifax District RCMP must continue to implement policing strategies which reduce crime and enhance public safety.

- As part of the implementation of the Youth Intervention and Diversion Model, Halifax District RCMP has been delivering workshops on the program for key community partners. This collaborative approach will enhance the ability of service providers to intervene with youth at the earliest possible opportunity, which is a key factor in steering youth away from criminal activity and onto a path of positive change.

Diversity

Strengthen HRM's connection with our diverse communities while at the same time addressing quality-of-life issues within those communities.

- On October 17 and 18, the Multicultural Association of Nova Scotia hosted a Spiritual Diversity Conference in Halifax. The event examined the challenges of religious diversity in Canada, and focussed on how interfaith dialogue can be a catalyst for peaceful coexistence and inform social and security policy development. The HRM Public Safety Officer joined other panelists on the topic of best practices for interfaith dialogue in prisons and police departments.
- On October 1, Halifax District RCMP members took part in several ceremonies throughout HRM to mark Treaty Day 2013. Treaty Day celebrates the importance of Mi'kmaq culture and heritage in Nova Scotia, and recognizes the important role and tremendous contributions of Mi'kmaq elders and youth to our community.

16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence November 25 to December 10

November 25 is the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women. It marks the first day of the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence, and December 10 – International Human Rights Day – is the final day.

These 16 days of activism encompass the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women in Canada, which is marked on December 6. Established in 1991, this day marks the anniversary of the murders in 1989 of 14 young women at l'École Polytechnique de Montréal. They died because they were women.



Communications Corner

Communication underpins the success of the HRM Public Safety Strategy. Below is an overview of communication activities for October.

HRP

Media relations

- Issued 50 media releases, 38 were about crimes/crime trends and public safety issues, and 12 were proactive/educational.
- Responded to 323 media requests.

Social media

- The HRP Twitter account has 14,240 followers and 8,300 people like HRP on Facebook.
- The HRP YouTube channel has garnered 150,090 views.
- The HRP Traffic Cop Twitter account has 804 followers and 981 people like HRP Traffic Cop on Facebook.

Community outreach/education

- Produced a community newspaper column on bullying awareness.

RCMP

Media relations

- Issued 19 media releases, 12 were about crimes/crime trends and public safety issues, and seven were proactive/educational.
- Responded to 105 media requests.

Community outreach/education

- Produced two community newspaper columns, one on school bus safety and the other featuring six questions with Chief Superintendent Roland Wells.

Social media

- There are 9,775 people who like RCMP on the English-language Facebook page and 64 on the French-language Facebook page. The RCMP Twitter account currently has 10,058 followers in English and 467 in French.