

GREATER VICTORIA POLICE INTEGRATED UNITS

ANNUAL REPORT

2024



A MESSAGE FROM THE GREATER VICTORIA POLICE CHIEFS AND DETACHMENT COMMANDERS

The Greater Victoria Police Chiefs and Detachment Commanders are pleased to present the integrated police units' annual report for 2024. This report represents a summary of the work of many of the integrated units that our collective police agencies, and in some cases our community partners, participate in together while delivering quality services to our communities in an efficient, effective and fiscally responsible manner.

In the coming years, our collective commitment is to continue to look for opportunities to work collaboratively and creatively to expand integration opportunities wherever it benefits our communities and our respective organizations.

Please take a moment to read the report which highlights each individual unit's mandate and structure, new initiatives intended to create efficiencies or improvements in service delivery, notable accomplishments from the past year, and unit priorities for 2025.

We wish to thank everyone working in our integrated units for their hard work, dedication and professionalism. It is their collective skill and tenacity that is the key to their success. We are proud of each one of them.

Proudly,

The Greater Victoria Police Chiefs and Detachment Commanders:

- » Chief Del Manak – Victoria Police
- » Chief Dean Duthie – Saanich Police
- » Chief Ian Lawson – Central Saanich Police
- » Chief Julie Chanin – Oak Bay Police
- » Superintendent Todd Preston – Westshore Detachment
- » S/Sgt Wayne Conley – Sidney/North Saanich Detachment
- » S/Sgt Greg Willcocks – Sooke Detachment

Table of Contents

01.	Greater Victoria Emergency Response Team	p.03
02.	Greater Victoria Public Safety Unit	p.04
03.	Integrated Mobile Crisis Response Team.....	p.05
04.	Integrated Canine Service	p.06
05.	Mobile Youth Services Team.....	p.07
06.	Regional Domestic Violence Unit.....	p.08
07.	Greater Victoria Crime Stoppers.....	p.09
08.	Greater Victoria Police Diversity Advisory Committee.....	p.10
09.	Vancouver Island Integrated Major Crime Unit	p.11
10.	Combined Forces Special Enforcement Unit	p.12
11.	Capital Regional District Integrated Road Safety Unit	p.12
12.	Integrated National Security Enforcement Team	p.13



01. Greater Victoria Emergency Response Team

The Greater Victoria Emergency Response Team (GVERT) was established in 1976 to support the resolution of high-risk critical incidents in the Capital Region. Members of the GVERT report to an Officer in Charge (OIC) who oversees the administration of the team. The OIC chairs and reports to the Joint Management Team (JMT) which is comprised of Senior Officers from each contributing agency.

Made up of Incident Commanders, Crisis Negotiators, Tactical Officers and Explosives Technicians, the GVERT is trained and equipped to manage critical incidents, major public event security, and explosive disposal. These incidents can require specialized tactics and equipment, including collaboration with mental health professionals, to achieve successful resolutions to complex and high-risk situations.



EFFICIENCIES

- Implementation of a new deployment model to achieve targets for frontline support and mandatory training
- Achieved approved strength in the Tactical Unit through training and qualification completed for three new Crisis Negotiators
- Delivery of a variety of training packages for police agencies and other partners
- Acquired new technology to improve capabilities and safety

HIGHLIGHTS

- Return to duty of two more of the Tactical Unit officers seriously injured in the Bank of Montreal (BMO) incident
- Acquired new personal protective equipment for Tactical Unit officers
- Increase in the amount of annual training for Crisis Negotiators
- Improvements in the integration of Integrated Canine Service teams with GVERT operations
- Increased focus on trauma resilience through culture, training and support
- Enhanced interoperability with the RCMP Critical Incident Program

PRIORITIES

- Conduct a review of Tactical Unit operations to assess the effectiveness of the new deployment model
- Continue to seek opportunities to partner with other government or private organizations in a dedicated training facility
- Evolve regional interoperability in kidnapping cases with improvements to procedures and training
- Implement a new deployment model for the Scribe program

02.

Greater Victoria Public Safety Unit

The Greater Victoria Public Safety Unit (PSU) is an integrated unit consisting of members from all municipal police agencies in the Capital Regional District (CRD). PSU also consists of an integrated fire medic program supported by Saanich, Esquimalt, Central Saanich and Oak Bay Fire Departments. PSU provides specialized services, advice, equipment, training and emergency response to ensure public safety, public order, and investigative assistance. This includes attendance at public gatherings in support of the right to peaceful protest and to mitigate the potential for violence.



EFFICIENCIES

- Utilizing the cube truck for both the PSU Search Team and Tactical Team for increased mobility and versatility
- Continuation of succession planning with Squad Leader competition and training of Silver Commanders
- Budgetary approval to increase PSU by 10 additional members
- Formulation of training cadre within PSU to assist with spring/fall training
- Effective utilization of the Police Liaison Team (PLT's) to build relationships in the community with event organizers

HIGHLIGHTS

- Successful deployment of PSU resources for 67 consecutive weeks for the Pro-Palestine rallies
- Approval of the PSU budget which saw a significant increase to meet the ongoing demands of resources, training and equipment
- Numerous successful operations related to Canada Day Celebrations, SOGI, UVic, Prime Minister's visits and many other deployments on the BC Legislature
- Implementation of a fair, transparent and defensible selection process for new members

PRIORITIES

- Training and qualifications of Gold and Bronze Commanders, Gold Commanders to participate in on call rotation for the CRD
- Selection and training of members for the Evidence Gathering Team in spring of 2025
- Completion and approval of Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) by the JMT in 2025
- Purchase and issue all PSU members with new soft body armour
- Creating a pool of actors for training days
- Cross training with other PSU teams (Vancouver PD)



03.

Integrated Mobile Crisis Response Team

The Integrated Mobile Crisis Response Team (IMCRT) is a mobile multi-discipline team composed of Psychiatric Social Workers, Psychiatric Nurses, Child and Youth Workers and Police. This team collaborates with mental health workers in order to provide high quality service to clients, improve the front-line response, and conduct follow-up with persons in crisis. This position is integrated and serves the municipalities throughout the Capital Region. IMCRT manages complex clients with multiple needs over extended periods of time.



EFFICIENCIES

- Successful cross-training for members in the partnering departments, in order to backfill IMCRT shifts
- Review process established to ensure consistency with IMCRT response
- Creation of police only phone line direct to IMCRT team, reducing wait times for service
- Focus on instruction via phone to increase response times

HIGHLIGHTS

- Provided timely integrated support to vulnerable persons and their families in the Capital Region
- Information sessions delivered to Patrol Divisions to educate on IMCRT services
- Continued focus on complex clients reducing call load on police resources

PRIORITIES

- Analyze and update service delivery objectives and memorandum of agreement for IMCRT
- Update and review current equipment for IMCRT officers looking for efficiencies
- Improve communication to increase prompt response to partnering police agencies regarding mental health components and assessments
- Improve file documentation to assist with overall analysis of benefits of IMCRT
- Community outreach with institutions such as schools to provide awareness of the team and its purpose
- Direct response to check wellbeing calls to free up policing resources
- Central Saanich Police Service is no longer a part of IMCRT effective January 1, 2025
- The Westshore RCMP will no longer be part of IMCRT as of December 31, 2025

04. Integrated Canine Service

The Integrated Canine Services (ICS) is made up of six members, one NCO (Non-Commissioned Officer) and five Constables, from both the Saanich Police Department (SPD) and the Victoria Police Department (VicPD). ICS has eight canines providing our stakeholders with variety of canine profiles which include tracking, evidence searching, and building/compound searching. In addition, five of our canine teams also specialize in drug/firearm detection. ICS has two single purpose explosive detection canines. These canines support our explosive technicians attached to the Greater Victoria Emergency Response Team and are utilized at major events across the Region.



EFFICIENCIES

- Providing 365-day, 24/7 canine coverage, either through on duty resources or through our on-call program
- Providing support to our stakeholder's front line by attending over 2600 non-canine calls
- Continued support to GVERT with canine resourcing

HIGHLIGHTS

- Purchase of three new canines in 2024 as part of the ICS succession plan
- Completed two Dog Masters Training Courses, validation all three canines purchased in 2024
- Attended several canine courses including an advanced K9/ERT integration
- Hosted a four-day tracking seminar for the ICS Team
- Engaged in a selection process that identified two new canine handlers, one from VicPD, and one from SPD
- Engage in a selection process that identified a new trainer and explosive dog handler within ICS
- Oak Bay Police Department has joined ICS

PRIORITIES

- Purchase and train a new explosive detection canine and a general duty canine as part of the 2025 ICS succession plan
- Continued training with GVERT to enhance our effectiveness and interoperability
- Train two of our newest canine teams in drug/firearm detection



05. Mobile Youth Services Team

Exploitation knows no bounds and has the potential to impact youth across our region, regardless of class or background. The Mobile Youth Services Team (MYST) is a critical multi-disciplinary unit that has served the Capital Region for more than 20 years. Consisting of a partnership between a police officer and a youth & family counselor, MYST aims to reduce trauma and the scope of the sexual exploitation of youth in our community. MYST pro-actively engages with youth and their families to provide guidance, support, expertise, and key referrals. MYST also works closely with other front-line and investigative police units in the region to identify and target offenders.



EFFICIENCIES

- Continuing to bridge the gap created by lack of School Liaison Officers (SLO's) and assisting local schools with prevention and education
- Ongoing relationship-building with external partners like Youth Empowerment, School Districts, Sanctuary and Victoria General Hospital
- Partnership with Patrol Division to collaborate on community presentations
- Transfer of finances and supervision of MYST portfolio to SPD to accommodate incoming MYST officer

HIGHLIGHTS

- Extensive work with school districts to curb the increase in regional gang activity and recruitment
- Attendee and presenter at National Gang Crime Research Conference in Chicago Illinois
- Recipient of the International Fredrick Milton Thrasher Award for the year 2024 for superior accomplishments in Gang Intervention
- Presentations to School and Police Boards regarding the importance of SLO's in relation to keeping our children safe

PRIORITIES

- Documentation of statistical data that outlines the overall effectiveness of the team
- Continuation of establishing community partners
- Create strong partnership with Saanich Police Department's Youth Detective Division to enhance communications and information-sharing
- Continuation of community presentations to highlight the prevention and risk relating to sexual exploitation of young people
- Central Saanich Police Service no longer participates in MYST effective January 1, 2025
- Westshore RCMP will no longer be part of MYST as of December 31, 2025

06.

Regional Domestic Violence Unit

The Regional Domestic Violence Unit (RDVU) had an exceptionally busy and successful year, managing some of the region’s highest-risk offenders, as well as providing critical support to their victims and families. Despite significant staffing changes—including the addition of a new Ministry of Children and Family Development Social Worker, new Administrative Support, and transitioning investigators—the team has remained resilient and effective in its mission.

This year, the RDVU has once again earned recognition from our community partners as a vital resource in the region. We have continued to strengthen existing relationships while also expanding our network of collaborations, further solidifying the Unit’s role as a key player in community safety and support

QUICK FACTS ABOUT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

- Rates of domestic abuse related homicide are **4.5** times greater for women than men.
- 70%** of relationship violence is not reported to the police.
- Children **under the age of five** are more likely to live in a home where **domestic violence occurs**.⁷
- Children who are **exposed to domestic violence** are more likely to experience child abuse and neglect. In Canada, **almost one third** of confirmed child abuses cases involve exposure to domestic violence.⁸
- Relationship violence accounts for **over 1/4** of all violent offences reported to the police.
- In 2015, approximately **18,000** women and children accessed transition houses and safe homes to escape violence or abuse in BC.⁹
- Every 4 days** a woman is killed by a family member in Canada.¹⁰
- Pregnancy** increases a woman's risk of experiencing domestic violence.¹¹

EFFICIENCIES

- Leveraging technology to ensure offender accountability while removing the burden from victims to report violations of release orders
- Regular training to partners on best practices in domestic violence response, ensuring a more efficient and consistent approach to case handling
- Strengthening partnerships with local agencies, social services, and community organizations to improve resource allocation and information sharing

HIGHLIGHTS

- Hosted 150 attendees for valuable training presented by experts in the field of Strangulation Investigations and support for the victims. RDVU was an attendee and presenter at National Gang Crime Research Conference in Chicago Illinois
- Collaboration of multi-agency information from across the country which led to an accused being detained due to the level of risk to the victim
- Assisted the Halifax Regional RCMP in establishing a Domestic Violence Unit in their jurisdiction, the first of its kind in the province
- Shared insights on information sharing and collaboration with community partners, featured in an international risk assessment newsletter

PRIORITIES

- Expanding the training for RDVU team members to include newest techniques from around North America
- Building upon successes with the use of technology to support managing highest risk offenders while in the community
- Developing succession plans for future staffing changes to prevent service gaps and ensure the transfer of institutional knowledge
- Central Saanich Police Service no longer participates as of January 1, 2025 and the Westshore RCMP will withdraw as of December 31, 2026

07.

Greater Victoria Crime Stoppers

Crime Stoppers is a cooperative program comprised of representatives from community, media and police. The program involves the public in the fight against crime. It provides citizens with a vehicle to anonymously supply local law enforcement with information about a crime or potential crime of which they may have knowledge. Cash rewards are offered to people who call the program with information that leads to a person being arrested and charged with a crime, enables the recovery of stolen property or drugs, or solves a crime.

Greater Victoria Crime Stoppers is a registered not for profit organization overseen by a volunteer Board of Directors who are responsible for fundraising, public awareness, and the distribution of awards. They also ensure that the program is being run in accordance with established Crime Stoppers protocols. Greater Victoria Crime Stoppers services all areas within the Capital Regional District. Tips received relating to crime outside of this jurisdiction are forwarded on to the appropriate Crime Stoppers program.



The day-to-day operations are the responsibility of two civilian coordinators whose positions and operational expenses are funded jointly by our partner police agencies – Victoria Police Department, Saanich Police Department, Westshore RCMP, Oak Bay Police Department, Central Saanich Police Service, Sidney/North Saanich RCMP, and Sooke RCMP. The program is housed in the Saanich Police Department and organizationally included in the Intelligence Section under the Detective Division. The two coordinators are members of the Saanich Police Department and are employed part-time (32 hours per week), working either Monday to Thursday, or Tuesday to Friday during business hours.

08.

Greater Victoria Police Diversity Advisory Committee

The Greater Victoria Police Advisory Diversity Committee (GVPDAC) comprised of members of police and community organizations who come together to build trust and improve communication and understanding around issues of mutual concern. All local municipal police agencies and the RCMP detachments are represented on the GVPDAC. The GVPDAC seeks to develop positive relationships within diverse communities and share information about the many cultures within Greater Victoria. We develop our own events and attend community events to promote engagement. We act as a consultive and advisory body to the Chiefs of Greater Victoria's police agencies. The GVPDAC is co-chaired collaboratively by a community representative and a police officer.



HIGHLIGHTS

- GVPDAC hosted 300 people at Saanich Commonwealth Place for their 2024 DAC Dance-Along where guest dancers shared their cultural dances. Community members, police officers (including Chiefs Manak, Duthie, and Supt. Carfantin) and community members drummed, danced, and laughed together.
- The GVPDAC was honoured to participate in the 2024 Victoria Native Friendship Centre 2slgbtqia+ Youth Gathering
- We proudly marched with the Changemaker contingent in this year's Victoria Pride Society Parade
- We were once again a part of the very well attended newcomers' fair at Welcome Day - this year at Saanich Commonwealth Place
- The GVPDAC was very pleased to be invited to Black Grad, hosted by the African Heritage Association of Vancouver Island
- With the Area Chiefs approval for a regional civilian Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) coordinator, a hiring subcommittee was struck in early 2024.
- An appropriate candidate for the above role has been identified and is in the process of being on-boarded

PRIORITIES 2025

- The top priority will be onboarding and working with the new regional EDI Coordinator as they acclimate to their new role
- Increase our visibility and awareness of the work we do within the community
- Take part in community outreach, attending community events and seeking out new partnerships
- Seek out new speakers to engage with GVPDAC for discussion and education
- We are currently working on what our next community event will be
- We are exploring ways to expand our reach within communities and build new relationships

09.

Vancouver Island Integrated Major Crime Unit

VIIMCU is an integrated unit consisting of police officers and civilian support staff from the RCMP, Victoria Police and Saanich Police. The primary investigational responsibilities of VIIMCU are homicide and missing persons where foul play is suspected. The unit manages and investigates major crime files within in the greater Victoria capital region and Provincial areas of the RCMP Island District using investigative techniques guided by the principles of Major Case Management. In fulfilling this mandate, VIIMCU provides assistance to other police agencies and investigative units throughout Vancouver Island, the Province and if necessary, across the country.



EFFICIENCIES

- VIIMCU had seen a significant turnover in personnel in 2024. All but one VicPD vacancy has been filled
- The Provincial Government has engaged the municipalities of Vancouver Island regarding the modernization and expansion of VIIMCU

HIGHLIGHTS

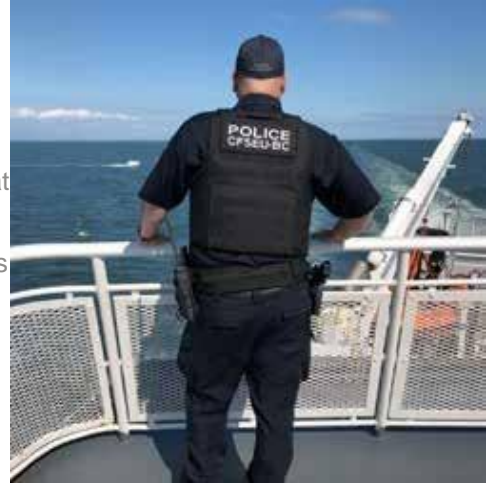
- VIIMCU had a quiet year in 2024, engaging in 13 investigations throughout Vancouver Island. Four of which were in Victoria.
- VIIMCU obtained charge approval on seven homicides and one aggravated assault in 2024. Files date from 2022, 2023 and 2024.
- VIIMCU obtained guilty convictions on three homicide investigations in 2024: a 1st Degree, a 2nd degree and manslaughter conviction
- The 1st Degree murder conviction was as a result of a year-long project utilizing sophisticated techniques including a Part VI (wiretap) approach

PRIORITIES

- VIIMCU modernization and expansion
- The development of a recruiting strategy to attract appropriate secondments
- Developing an Ad Hoc Team and mentorship program throughout Vancouver Island

10. Combined Forces Special Enforcement Unit

The Combined Forces Special Enforcement Unit (CFSEU) is an independent law enforcement agency in BC staffed primarily by seconded police officers from municipal police agencies and the RCMP from throughout the province. CFSEU has a broad mandate that includes contributing to and sharing crime research and intelligence, coordinating long-term crime reduction strategies at the provincial, national and international levels, reducing gang and organized crime violence, and deterring organized crime and related violence. CFSEU uses both uniform and covert investigative techniques and policing units during the pursuit of their mandate



Currently, the Victoria, Saanich, Central Saanich, and Oak Bay police departments, as well as the RCMP are eligible to second members to the local CFSEU team.

CFSEU supports local agencies related to outlaw motorcycle gang monitoring and enforcement, and conducts investigations related to CFSEU's mandate. More information can be found at www.cfseu.bc.ca.

11. Capital Regional District Integrated Road Safety Unit

The Integrated Road Safety Unit (CRD-IRSU) is comprised of seconded police officers from each of the local municipal police agencies and the RCMP. CRD-IRSU's mandate includes harm reduction on BC roadways, strategic traffic enforcement related to high-risk locations and activities, commercial vehicle enforcement, criminal interdictions, and assisting and enhancing local traffic enforcement units with strategic enforcement projects and operations.



CRD-IRSU is operated by the RCMP through funding provided by the Insurance Corporation of British Columbia (ICBC) to the BC Provincial Government's Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General. CRD-IRSU receives local input from a Joint Management Team comprised of Senior Leadership Team representatives from the local police agencies and the RCMP.



12.

Integrated National Security Enforcement Team

Integrated National Security Enforcement Teams (E-INSET) exist throughout Canada under the management of the RCMP. INSETs are intended to increase the capacity for the collection, sharing and analysis of intelligence among partners with respect to individuals or groups that pose a threat to national security in addition to conducting investigations related to these individuals and groups. INSETs include representatives from the RCMP, federal partners such as the Canadian Border Services Agency, and local police agencies.

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