

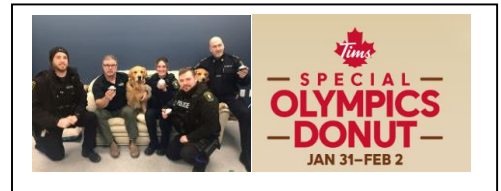
Chief's Report
Amherst Board of Police Commissioners
February 25th, 2025

This report covers the month of January 2025



TRAINING

DRE Training – Our 4 Drug Recognition Experts all attended DRE training in Halifax on the 7th of January. This is part of their regular training to keep their qualifications up to date. DRE education often covers recent case law on drug impaired driving and serves as a refresher for our departmental experts who conduct testing for our drug-impaired files. Such training is required annually, as well as a minimum number of evaluations each year to ensure that they are always well-versed in this area.



PROS Training: Our newest part-time dispatcher Scott MacKay attended PROS training from January 6th to the 10th in Dartmouth. PROS is the file management system used by many police agencies in Canada, including the RCMP, and is required so that members/staff can access and use PROS. Dispatchers spend the majority of their time on PROS, creating and inputting details into the occurrences.

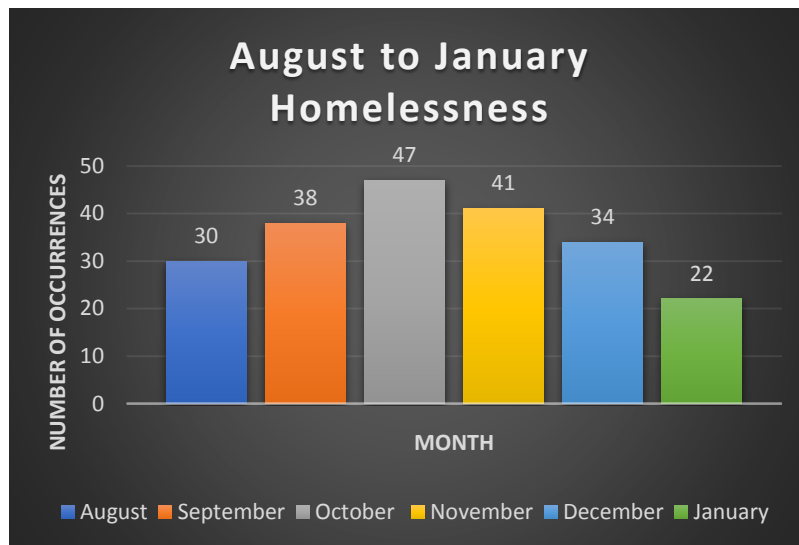
Strategic Resilience: Constable Michelle Harrison attended the first portion of a 3-part training course on Extensive Resilience training for Active First Responders hosted by the Nova Scotia Community college. On January 23rd and 24th she attended the course which was held in Debert. This training is about developing strategic, effective, resilience-based protocols to deal with cumulative stress and trauma and the continuous evaluation of the effectiveness of self-care and coping strategies in response to stress.

GENERAL OPERATIONAL UPDATES:

Police Pursuits/Failing to Stop: During the month of January, APD generated 4 occurrences in relation to vehicles failing to stop for police. On January 24th, at approx. 9:20pm, 2 ATVs were spotted by Police driving on Prince Arthur Street. They were observed pulling into a yard on East Victoria Street and when Police activated their emergency lights, both subjects took off. One of the subjects was later located in the Laplanche Street area and is facing charges of dangerous driving and flight from police. The ATV was also towed by Police. Shortly after this incident, an ATV was observed on Palmer Street, but fled out onto Eddy Street and across the marsh. This incident was likely related to the first matter. On January 31st, at approximately 5:00am, a vehicle (a KIA Forte) ran a red light and fled from police when the emergency lights were activated. The matter remains under investigation. A few hours later, at 10:00am, police attempted to stop a Ford Fusion with an obscured rear plate that had been travelling at a high rate of speed. The vehicle fled at a high rate of speed and was last seen on the 104 high way. All pursuits were discontinued as per policy and risk assessments. There were no incidents of police pursuits in December, however there were 5 in November and 3 so far in February. All pursuit files are subject to a review to ensure that members are following policy.

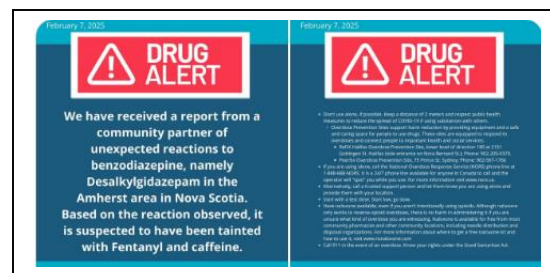
Shoplifting Complaints: Shoplifting complaints during January dropped to 7 occurrences, down from 13 in December and 17 in November. Outside of shoplifting complaints, APD also received 20 complaints of theft in January, as compared to 22 in December and 27 in November. Of the 20 complaints in January, 6 were reports of 'gas drive offs'. Two additional complaints were received in January concerning thefts from a motor vehicle.

Homelessness: We have been tracking complaints that have a nexus to homelessness. Often these may also have an element of mental health, and usually involve trespassing, noise complaints, and disturbances. Such files usually involve 2-3 of the same people over and over again, with the majority of people who are homeless rarely having such an interaction with Police. During the month of January, our occurrences dropped to 22 complaints, which is down from 34 in December, and lower than the numbers observed during the last few months. The majority of homelessness issues are likely being dealt with and handled by other agencies and the homeless shelter instead of the Police Department.



OPERATIONAL

Drug Alert: On February 7th, 2025, Nova Scotia Health sent out a Community Alert concerning a new drug showing up in the drug supply. It is very common for illicit drugs to be mixed with other drugs unbeknownst to the users. Often when people purchase and use illicit drugs, they think they are purchasing one kind, when in fact, they often are being exposed to something completely different. In this case, one of our members, as a result of an arrest on November of 2024, seized an amount of what appeared to be crystal meth. The subject also believed that the substance was crystal meth. Lab testing however indicated that the substance was *Desalkylgizadepam*, a form of benzodiazepine mixed with fentanyl. This is significant because this is the first instance of *Desalkylgizadepam* being detected in the drug supply. Benzodiazepines are central nervous system depressants or sedative-hypnotics. They slow down the nervous system, giving them calming, sleep-inducing properties, which significantly increases risk and danger of drug poisoning.



Drug Charges: A 54-year-old Springhill man is facing charges following an early morning traffic stop on Church Street. John Warner, of Springhill was stopped on Church Street on January 25th at 2:40 in the morning. The vehicle he was driving was damaged and had part of the front bumper missing and there were issues with the registration. During the stop, the officer noted what appeared to be a baggie of crystal meth. The subject was arrested and a further search resulted in the seizure of more crystal meth as well as baggies with fentanyl. Police have laid charges in relation to possession of methamphetamine for the purpose of trafficking as well as possession of fentanyl for the purpose of trafficking. Warner was held remanded into custody as a result of the charges but was later released by the courts and is scheduled to appear on the charges at a later date.

Fraud Charges: After a 13-month investigation, the Amherst Police Major Crime Unit has laid charges of fraud over \$5,000 against three individuals. In November of 2023, a female victim who suffers from Lou Gehrig's disease, reported that a large amount of money was missing from her bank account. The victim, who cannot move, requires several hours of care each day from a variety of care workers. The victim was provided with government funding to allow her to stay in her home. Investigation into the matter revealed that three staff members assigned to provide care for the victim had removed large sums of money from the victim's bank account, allegedly to cover hours they had worked. The investigation indicated there were discrepancies between the hours of work reported and the actual hours that had been worked. Clara Harvey, age 29 years, Stacy Leblanc, age 41 years and Gracie Meisner, age 20 years have all been charged with fraud over \$5,000. Harvey, Leblanc and Meisner were arrested in December 2024 and appeared in court on February 3rd, 2025. All three adjourned their pleas and will next appear in Amherst Provincial Court on March 17th, 2025.

Multiple Charges: A 21-year-old Amherst man is facing numerous charges in relation to several incidents in January that include break and enter, theft, possession of property obtained by crime, resisting/obstructing police, breach of probation, shoplifting, and mischief. For January, there have been 14 new charges laid with several pending charges from the fall of 2024. These recent incidents started with a complaint of a theft from the First Baptist Church, followed by a break and enter into the Town Hall where various items were stolen. The subject, Justice Pettigrew, was arrested On January 17th, but was released on conditions. On January 25th, he was arrested again in relation to a break and enter at a local hotel where several items were stolen. He allegedly then attended a local business and shoplifted items there before Police arrested him. He is currently in custody.

OPERATIONAL STATS – DECEMBER 2024

Occurrences:	405	Criminal Code Charges:	69
Impaired by Alcohol:	1	CDSA:	3
Impaired by Drug:	0	CBCA:	0
Traffic Tickets:	33	PPA:	3
Traffic Written Warnings:	0	Vehicle Checks:	121
LCA:	1	Foot Patrol Hours:	31 hrs 39 min
Parking Tickets:	0	Parking Warnings:	1