



PUBLIC REPORT

January 16, 2023

To: Chair and Members
Toronto Police Services Board

From: Myron Demkiw
Chief of Police

Subject: Report on Impaired Driving – Ref: 22-MM47.36

Purpose: Information Purposes Only Seeking Decision

Recommendations:

It is recommended that the Toronto Police Services Board (the Board):

- 1) Receive this report for information, and;
- 2) Forward a copy to the General Manager, Transportation Services, City of Toronto

Summary:

On July 19 – 22, 2022, Toronto City Council adopted Item 47.36, Taking Action on Impaired Driving in Toronto (Ward All) and in doing so, directed the General Manager of Transportation Services, in consultation with the Toronto Police Service, to report back to City Council in the first quarter of 2023 on impaired driving in the City of Toronto. It was identified that the report should include:

1. Statistics on traffic collisions involving impaired drivers from 2018-2022 – including trends observed since the onset of the pandemic;
2. An update on efforts underway to address this issue as well as additional measures that can be taken, including a jurisdictional scan for best practices in other municipalities; and
3. Details on actions taken to-date following City Council's 2019 direction to develop a campaign to stop impaired driving in collaboration with Mothers Against Drunk Driving (M.A.D.D.) Canada, Arrive Alive Drive Sober (Arrive Alive) and other relevant stakeholders with the funding allocated for the Vision Zero Road Safety plan (Vision Zero) education and engagement programming.

In addition, City Council directed the General Manager, Transportation Services, in consultation with the Toronto Police Service, to review and enhance public education and enforcement strategies pertaining to impaired driving.

Discussion:

Background

1. Statistics on traffic collision involving impaired drivers (alcohol and drugs) from 2018 – 2022, including trends observed since the onset of the pandemic.

Between 2018 and 2022, there was a total of 788 reported collisions in the City of Toronto where drug or alcohol impairment was a contributing factor.

In 2022, 71 impaired related collisions occurred, which represents a decrease of 52% when compared to 2021 (149) (Table 1 refers).

Table 1	
2018	229
2019	193
2020	146
2021	149
2022	71
Grand Total	788

The trend for impaired driving shows that collisions have seen an overall decrease since 2018. This trend is in part due to the COVID-19 pandemic which involved several waves of lockdowns and more work-from-home policies. In 2022, the level of activity out of the home did not return to levels recognized before the pandemic. As the City recovers from the pandemic, it is expected that there will be an increase in the number of road-users.

2. An update on efforts underway to address this issue, as well as additional measures that can be taken, including jurisdictional scan for best practices in other municipalities.

Impaired driving continues to be the leading cause of criminal death in Canada. In the last 5 years, the Toronto Police has arrested and charged over 6000 drivers for impaired driving related offences.

The Toronto Police Service has several external partnerships, including M.A.D.D., Arrive Alive, and Traffic Injury Research Foundation (T.I.R.F.), all working together sharing key

messaging. Traffic Services (TSV) officers represent the Toronto Police Service as a board member for MADD. Officers also provide presentations at conferences and in educational institutions alongside TIRF and Arrive Alive.

Traffic Services has a unique social media program which educates the community on traffic laws, including impaired driving and the associated consequences. Every day, TSV hosts a live show “Ask a Traffic Cop”, which airs on various social media platforms including TikTok, Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, YouTube and LinkedIn. This is an interactive show that allows the public to ask questions that are then answered live by the host officer. These questions, and resulting discussions, focus on traffic safety, including topics such as impaired driving, stunt driving, vehicle modifications, as well as general traffic and policing questions.

During 2022, there were a total of 129 Drug Recognition Evaluations completed by the Toronto Police Service.

During 2022, there were a total of 4,829 Mandatory Alcohol Screening (MAS) tests completed, resulting in 4,718 passes, 92 warnings, and 19 fails. 85% of all MAS tests were conducted as a Reduce Impaired Driving Everywhere (R.I.D.E.) Deployment (Table 2 refers).

Table 2: Mandatory Alcohol Screening Tests 2020 - 2022

MAS Results	2020	2020	%	2021	2021	%	2022	2022	%
	All MAS Test	R.I.D.E. MAS Tests	R.I.D.E. of All MAS	All MAS Test	R.I.D.E. MAS Tests	R.I.D.E. of All MAS	All MAS Test	R.I.D.E. MAS Tests	R.I.D.E. of All MAS
Warning	87	60	69%	152	115	76%	92	64	70%
Fail	35	23	66%	71	35	49%	19	10	53%
Pass	3541	3326	94%	9840	8768	89%	4718	4052	86%
Grand Total	3663	3409	93%	10063	8918	89%	4829	4126	85%

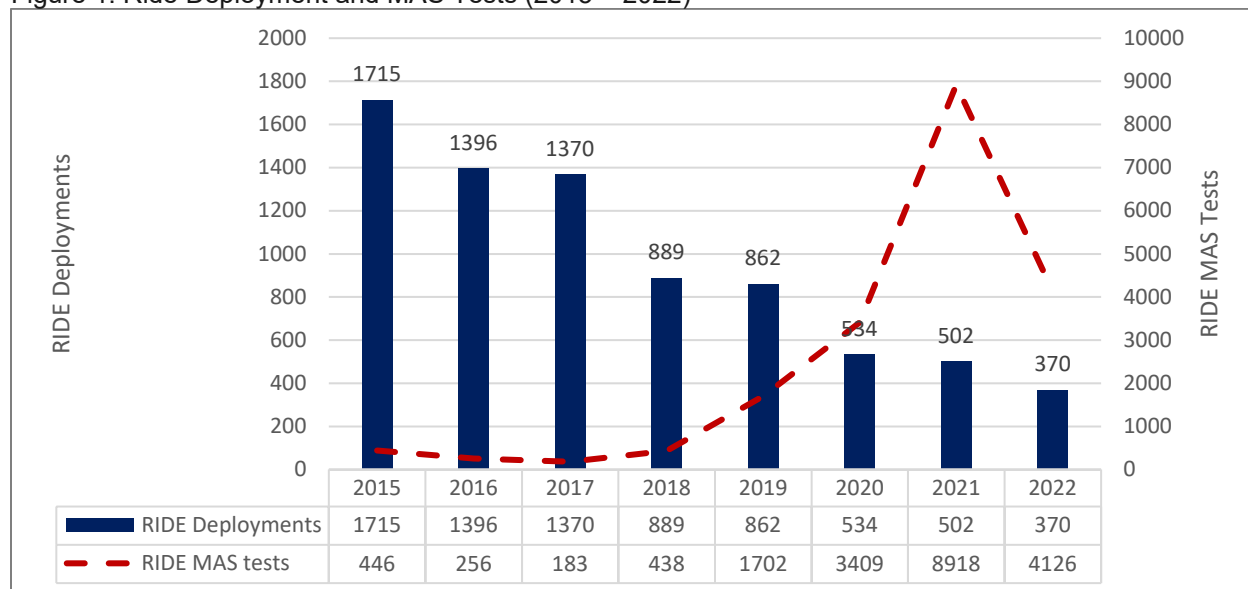
R.I.D.E. programs are implemented throughout the year. Over the holiday season, additional time and resources are allocated to R.I.D.E. enforcement initiatives which are deployed throughout the City.

The COVID-19 global pandemic has forced the Toronto Police Service to make fundamental changes in the way we conduct our spot checks. The safety of our members and the public continue to be our top priority. Officers were provided a training video during the pandemic, which highlighted safe practices while conducting vehicle stops. Emphasis was placed on using laws that support MAS (through the use of the Approved Screening Device (ASD)). This has ultimately become a valuable tool during R.I.D.E. deployments.

During the pandemic, a decrease in R.I.D.E. deployments resulted in an increased reliance on MAS testing to assist in impaired related enforcement. Since its inception in 2018, officers have used MAS as a proactive measure to screen for impairment by

alcohol. In 2022, 4,126 tests were used over the course of 370 R.I.D.E. deployments (Figure 1 refers).

Figure 1: Ride Deployment and MAS Tests (2015 – 2022)



Several of our policing partners in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), including Halton Regional Police, York Regional Police, and Durham Regional Police, were consulted regarding the approaches and tactics used to address impaired driving. Each Region, as well as the Toronto Police Service, appear to have fundamentally similar approaches.

Each police service works in partnership with M.A.D.D., and has representation on the board. There was a joint R.I.D.E. launch hosted by the Ontario Provincial Police (O.P.P.) in November, which several GTA Police Services attended. Also in attendance for the launch were various stakeholders including Go Transit, the Ministry of Transportation, Taxi services, funeral home services, and representatives from M.A.D.D. Various media outlets were present at the R.I.D.E. launch and the event was broadcasted on mainstream television which ultimately brought awareness to the program and the Red Ribbon Campaign.

The Toronto Police Service, along with our other GTA police agencies, use traditional media and social media platforms to provide impaired driving education and awareness.

Each police service confirmed that R.I.D.E. campaigns are not only implemented during the holiday season, but rather are deployed on an ongoing basis throughout the year. York Regional Police started a unique approach this year setting up R.I.D.E. programs in LCBO parking lots where they engage with those entering the premises from the roadway. This has resulted in a number of impaired arrests, and a new approach to where R.I.D.E. is held. They also started inviting crown attorneys to their R.I.D.E. spot checks to give them an opportunity to see first-hand how an impaired investigation works, start to finish, as opposed to merely hearing about it in the courtroom.

Another tactic that has been used by other police services is releasing body worn camera or in-car camera video footage to the public as it relates to impaired driving. This is generally made public on social media platforms showing first-hand accounts to bring awareness. The Toronto Police Service currently does not post internally collected video as this is not an authorized practice.

In 2021, the Toronto Police Traffic Services Unit partnered with the Toronto Police Marine Unit. Officers were part of a joint operation named “Project SOS (Summer of Safety)”. This joint operation included GTA police services, RCMP, United States Coast Guard and U.S. Department of Homeland Security. One component of this operation was to check vessel operators for sobriety. A video was created and shared within the Toronto Police Service, and externally on social media platforms, about impaired operation on the water. Both Durham and York Regional Police Services also do regular enforcement on the water which include R.I.D.E. spot checks. Both of those services also have snowmobile and ATV patrols as part of their enforcement as it relates to impaired operations, however due to being in an urban setting, Toronto does not engage in that capacity.

As a whole, the Toronto Police Service, and our surrounding policing partners, all appear to have very similar approaches to education, awareness, and prevention tactics as it relates to impaired driving. Funding that is received through the City, and Ministry grants, are used year round to deploy R.I.D.E. programs with the ultimate goal of taking impaired drivers off our roads and lake. The Toronto Police Service will continue to work in with our partnering agencies and community groups, bringing awareness and education to impaired driving, as well as looking at new ways to deliver effective enforcement.

The Toronto Police Service has liaised with Transportation Services. Transportation Services intends to cover this motion in an upcoming Vision Zero omnibus report with the Infrastructure and Environment Committee in June 2023. Transportation Service’s Vision Zero Projects, Strategic Communications and Data & Analytics will review the data and trends and report on this further.

3. Details on actions taken to date following City Council’s 2019 direction to develop a campaign to stop impaired driving in collaboration with Mothers Against Drunk Driving Canada, Arrive Alive and other relevant stakeholders using the funding allocated for Vision Zero education and engagement programming.

Since 2021, the Toronto Police has partnered with the O.P.P., M.A.D.D., the Ministry of Transportation (MTO), and other regional policing partners, in a joint R.I.D.E. launch. This promotes the start of the campaign and allows each service to work in partnership, stopping impaired drivers and holding those that choose to drive impaired accountable for their actions. The R.I.D.E. program is not specific to the holiday season, but rather continues throughout the year.

Traffic Services will continue to engage with the public to bring awareness and education on impaired driving and Vision Zero. This will be accomplished through social media,

mainstream media, and during various other traffic campaigns. In 2022, The Toronto Police engaged in eight traffic related campaigns, which focused on an educational component, but also on a zero-tolerance approach. Our Vision Zero enforcement team (which is comprised of 16 constables and two sergeants), will continue to focus on the “Big 4” offences known to contribute to KSI collisions: Impaired driving, aggressive driving, speeding and distracted driving. In addition, in 2022, another 6 officers were added from the motor squad, whom act as support to the Vision Zero Enforcement Team (VZET). Funding from the City was allocated to the creation of this team, and the on-going cost to operate it.

Officers from Traffic Services collaborated with Arrive Alive and provided a presentation relating to impaired driving at their 2022 annual conference. There were also presentations made to the Canadian Armed Forces pertaining to new drivers, general traffic related topics, and impaired operation. In 2022, Traffic Services worked with TIRF providing presentations to high school students focusing on both impaired and distracted driving. Partnerships and engagement with these agencies will continue to develop and grow in the coming years.

The Toronto Police Service continues to coordinate and collaborate with Vision Zero Projects and Transportation Services in an on-going effort to engage with strategic communications, and data and analytics.

Conclusion:

The Toronto Police Service will continue their enhanced public education, through existing and new mediums, to ensure that information on the dangers and consequences of impaired driving are known. The Toronto Police will continue to use the enhanced legislated authority of Mandatory Alcohol Screening during organized R.I.D.E. programs and during regular investigations of persons operating vehicles.

The Toronto Police Service will continue to foster relationships with organizations such as M.A.D.D., T.I.R.F., Arrive Alive, Ministry of Transportation, CAA (the Canadian Automobile Association), and our other policing partners in the fight against impaired driving. The importance of continuing to pro-actively deter and prevent impaired driving cannot be overstated. The Toronto Police Service is committed to working in collaboration with our partners towards a safer Toronto.

Acting Deputy Chief Lauren Pogue, Community Safety Command, will be in attendance to answer any questions the Board may have concerning this report.

Financial Implications:

There are no financial implications arising from the recommendation(s) contained in this report.

Respectfully submitted,

Myron Demkiw

Chief of Police

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