



Crime Analysis

Taber Police Service

2021

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and

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INTRODUCTION

As a means of providing the context for this crime analyses, a brief overview of the Town of Taber and the Taber Police is provided below. As Taber is growing slowly, the context and makeup of the community does not frequently change and, as a result, provides an excellent base from which to conduct crime analysis.

The Taber Police Service has served the Town of Taber as its police service since 1904. The Town of Taber is situated geographically 52 kilometers east of Lethbridge, Alberta and 100 kilometers north of the Montana Alberta border. Taber acts as a regional hub for the residents within the M.D. of Taber, however, Taber itself has a population of 8711 people according to the 2020 Town of Taber Census.

The Taber Police Service is an organization which is governed by the Taber Municipal Police Commission. The Police Act (2000) states that a police commission shall,

“Oversee the police service and for that purpose shall do the following:

- A) allocate funds that are provided by the council;
- B) establish policies providing for the efficient and effective policing;
- C) issue instructions, as necessary, to the chief of police in respect to the policies referred to in clause (b);
- D) ensure that sufficient persons are employed for the police service for the purpose of carrying out the functions of the police service.” (p.22)

The Taber Police has three core functions: the provision of Policing Services, Public Safety Dispatch and Support, and Community Support. In the Public Safety Dispatch area, our regional E911 communications center receives calls for service from the citizens of the Town of Taber and the M.D of Taber, they dispatch the Taber Police and local and regional fire services, and they forward ambulance calls to the Alberta Health Services Southern Communication Centre based out of Calgary. They also forward police calls for service to the RCMP when the incident is not within the Town of Taber. Communication Operators are also responsible for the monitoring of 6 Community Peace Officer organizations as well as call taking/monitoring for a private security company. Taber Police Service Communications Operators' responsibilities do not end with the dispatch function. Their responsibilities also include administrative support of Taber Police members through file creation, court/release document preparation and data information gathering to name a few.

As part of the policing service's function, we provide 24/7 policing to the Town of Taber. Included in that is the Community Standards Unit (CSU), which services the bylaw enforcement needs of the community. The unit is made up of one full-time Police Constable and two full-time summer students.

As of 2021, the authorized strength of the Taber Police Service is 18 police officers. The Province of Alberta funds one of these police officer positions; one member is funded through and seconded to ALERT. There are currently 3 Auxiliary Police officers, 4 full-time and 3 part-time (Casual) Communication Operators, 1 Public Security Communication Manager, 1 administrative support position, 4 part-time casual prisoner guards and a large volunteer complement.

In terms of the community support function, the Taber Police Service works with various community agencies and volunteers to support the community as a whole.

Osborne (2001) wrote, “analysis is necessary to understand the scope of a problem and to be certain the problem is actually a problem. Sometimes crime and public disorder issues are public perception or a misinterpretation or under-analysis of statistics and do not exist in reality. Some problems, which are not so noticeable, are actually severe and have a strong negative impact on the community.” (p. 23). This quote speaks to the importance of conducting regular statistical analysis of crime in order to confirm or refute whether issues exist concerning crime in a particular area. The Alberta police standards require that each police service conduct a yearly crime analysis.

2021 marks the fifteenth year that the Taber Police Service is conducting a yearly crime analysis. This exercise will allow us to advise our stakeholders of current crime trends observed within the Town of Taber and it allows us to intelligently deploy our resources. It should also be noted that the Taber Police Service executive closely watches for trends of criminal activity that may be occurring within our community. These trends are examined in our police reports to the Commission. Our small size allows us to be fluid and adaptable to community concerns and, as such, the utilization of crime analyses, from a purely statistical and academic point of view, has less efficacy than crime analyses within a larger police service that have more resources available to be deployed to address any identified issues.

RESEARCH METHODS

In order to gather the data used in this analysis an anecdotal review of the crime stats reported to Statistics Canada through the Police Reporting and Occurrence System (PROS) was conducted. In each case, the reports of crime were tallied and have been displayed both numerically and by chart. We utilized a 5-year window and gathered the data through manual searches of the databases. The date range for the data commenced January 1 of the given year and was terminated December 31 of that same year. The total reports of crime were tabulated and were compared against the previous years' numbers. As with all data, there is much speculation as to whether or not reports of crime are a determinant of actual crime within a given community. Although not infallible, we believe that given the time period specified and the scrutiny that is involved with inputting the data into our records management systems that, although we can't ensure accuracy, we believe the results are an actual reflection of the occurrences of reported crime within our community and, as such, can be used as a means of making educated guesses to help improve upon policing practices within our community.

RESULTS

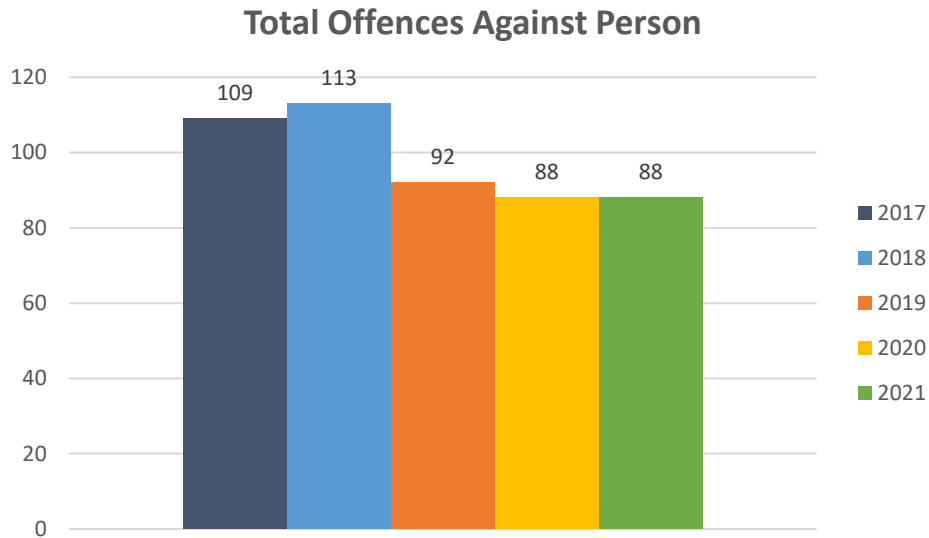
The reports of crime can be broken down into five categories; offences against the person, property offences, other criminal code offences, drug offences and provincial Acts. All information gathered from this report can be found in the data obtained from the following table:

	<u>2017</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>% Of Difference 2020 to 2021</u>
OFFENCES AGAINST PERSONS						
HOMICIDE						
Attempted Murder	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Murder	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Other	0	0	0	1	0	-100%
<i>TOTAL HOMICIDE</i>	0	0	0	1	0	-100%
ROBBERY	0	3	1	0	2	200%
ASSAULTS						
Sexual Assault	13	10	12	8	9	13%
Assault (Level 1)	71	70	58	60	48	-20%
Assault Weap/Bodyhrm	9	20	16	6	20	233%
Aggravated Assault	5	3	1	3	3	0%
Assault on Police	7	8	0	6	5	-17%
<i>TOTAL ASSAULTS</i>	105	107	87	83	85	2%
KIDNAPPING / HOSTAGE / ABDUCTIONS	4	3	4	4	1	-75%
<i>TOTAL OFFENCES AGAINST PERSONS</i>	109	113	92	88	88	0%
PROPERTY OFFENCES						
BREAK AND ENTER	49	32	49	33	23	-30%
THEFTS OF MOTOR VEHICLES	23	24	26	19	24	26%
THEFTS OVER \$5000	8	9	10	7	4	-43%
THEFTS UNDER \$5000	222	185	242	156	97	-38%
POSSESSION OF STOLEN PROPERTY	33	22	31	26	12	-54%
FRAUDS	49	37	72	53	68	28%
<i>TOTAL PROPERTY OFFENCES</i>	384	309	430	294	227	-23%

	<u>2017</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>% Of Difference 2020 to 2021</u>
OTHER CRIMINAL CODE						
PROPERTY DAMAGE	129	133	156	125	94	-25%
DISTURB THE PEACE	123	157	149	107	124	16%
CRIMINAL HARASSMENT	10	25	11	10	15	50%
UTTERING THREATS	69	65	44	40	40	0%
BREACH OF PROBATION/BAIL VIOLATION	138	165	202	13	15	15%
IMPAIRED OPERATION	48	51	54	34	30	-12%
TOTAL OTHER CRIMINAL CODE OFFENCES	517	606	616	329	318	-3%
DRUG OFFENCES						
COCAINE POSSESSION	1	10	5	2	2	0%
COCAINE TRAFFICKING	3	5	5	7	4	-43%
METHAMPHETAMINE POSSESSION	1	11	17	10	8	-20%
METHAMPHETAMINE TRAFFICKING	0	1	7	1	3	200%
OPIOD POSSESSION	0	1	1	2	0	-100%
OPIOD OPIOD TRAFFICKING	0	0	5	2	0	-100%
OTHER	5	8	6	4	5	25%
TOTAL DRUG OFFENCES (Including Marihuana)	25	65	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
TOTAL DRUG OFFENCES (Excluding Marihuana)	n/a	36	46	28	22	-21%
PROVINCIAL ACTS						
CANNABIS POSSESSION UNDER 30g	n/a	n/a	30	17	6	-65%
CHILD WELFARE	14	15	14	22	6	-73%
LIQUOR ACT	122	134	128	79	73	-8%
MENTAL HEALTH ACT	73	111	92	103	112	9%
OTHER PROVINCIAL STATS	2155	2007	1916	1567	1816	16%
COLLISIONS	143	148	135	100	127	27%
MUNICIPAL BYLAWS	532	501	495	467	381	-18%
TOTAL PROVINCIAL ACTS (Including Marihuana)	3039	2916	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
TOTAL PROVINCIAL ACTS (Excluding Marihuana)	n/a	2940	2810	2355	2521	7%

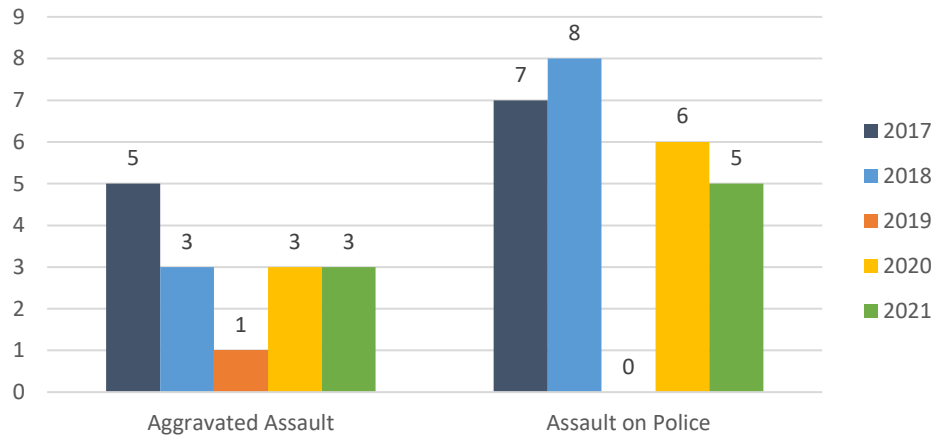
OFFENCES AGAINST PERSON

The Offences Against Persons category of crime relates to all reported incidents of crime that directly involve a person as a victim of the crime. Some examples are, but not limited to, assaults on police, assaults, sexual assault, abductions, etc.



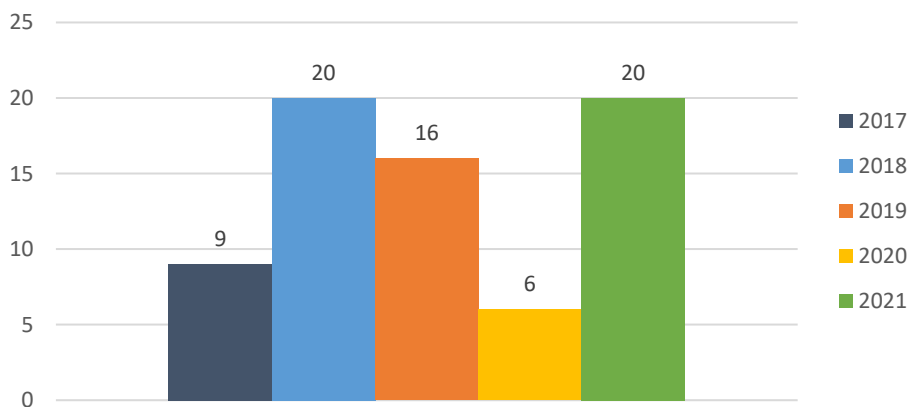
Overall, the 2021 crime analysis determined there was no change in the total combined Offences Against Persons crime rate. This means that if you lived in Taber in 2020, there was a 0.01 % chance of you being the victim of an offence against person. These numbers are based off of the 2020 census where it was reported that the Town of Taber had a population of 8711.

Offences Against Person



The number of reported offences that are included in the Offences Against Person category increased in 2 of the 10 offence types. The 2 offences with increases were Sexual Assault (13%) and Assault with a Weapon (233%). The Assault with a Weapon category reported 20 occurrences in 2021, compared to 6 in 2020. Of those 20 occurrences 18 were cleared by charge. The 2020 statistics were effected by the COVID-19 pandemic and were, therefore, lower than previous years. The numbers in 2021 when compared to pre-pandemic years show a slighter increase and are more in line with the national increase (7%) in assault with a weapon/bodily harm offences.

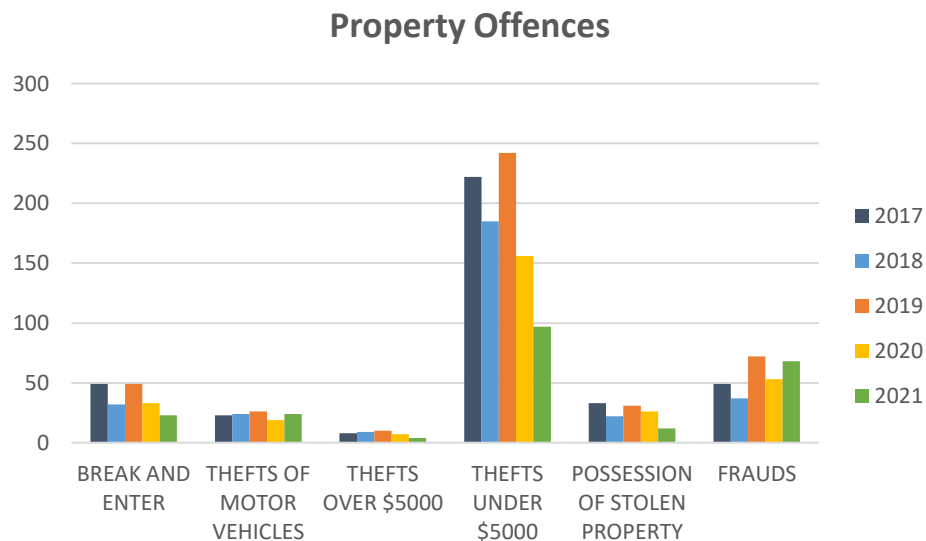
Assault with Weapon/Bodily Harm



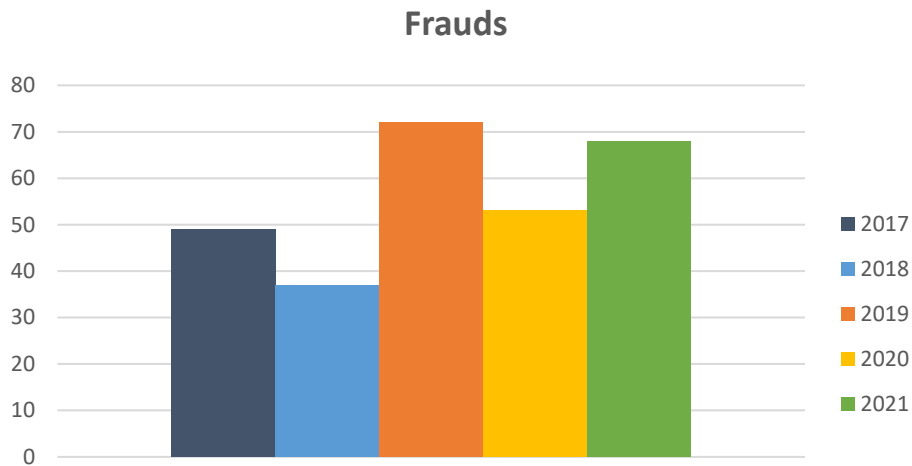
In 2021, the number of reports that the Taber Police Service received regarding sexual offences did increase by 13%. However, it should be noted that there was only one more occurrence in 2021 as compared to 2020. There was 9 occurrences being reported in 2021 compared to 8 in 2020. Of those 9 occurrences, 2 resulted in formal charges being laid, 1 was determined to be unfounded, 2 reported insufficient evidence to proceed, 3 incidents where the victim declined to proceed, and one is still under investigation. These numbers are still lower when compared to 2016 when the Taber Police Service recorded its highest sexual offence report levels (19) since the inception of yearly crime analysis.

PROPERTY OFFENCES

Property Offences are crime types where an item belonging to someone else is the subject of an offence. Examples of property offences include theft, possession of stolen property, break and enter, frauds, etc.

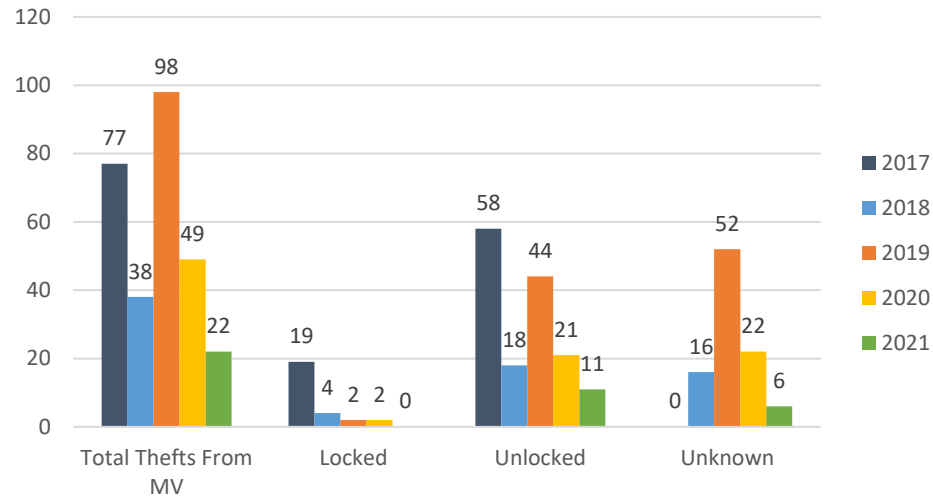


There was an overall 23% decrease in Property Offences in 2021, which followed a 32% decrease in 2020. There were 430 property related offences reported in 2019, 294 reports in 2020, and 227 in 2021. The large increase in 2019 was forecasted in our 2018 crime analysis, however, a global pandemic was not forecast for 2020. It seems like the effects of the pandemic had continued into 2021.



The Taber Police Service observed decreases in 4 of the 6 Property Offence categories. The two categories where increases occurred were regarding theft of motor vehicles (26%) and frauds (28%). In the Fraud category 68 occurrences were reported in 2021, compared to 53 in 2020. This is consistent with the large volume of reports across the country of fraudulent activity via phone or online. The Canada Anti-Fraud Center (2021) shows that there were 106,770 reports of fraud and 67,815 victims of fraud in Canada.

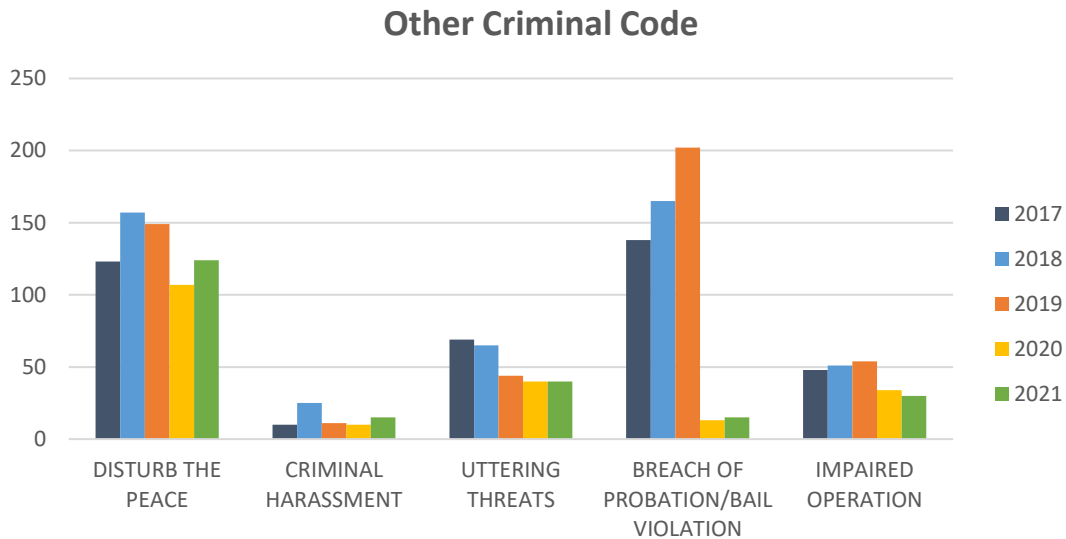
Thefts From Motor Vehicle



Thefts from motor vehicles accounted for 23% (22 out of 97) of all reports of thefts under \$5,000. Of the 22 reports of thefts from motor vehicles, 15 occurrences involved items being stolen from the interior of unattended vehicles, 5 involved licence plates being stolen, and 2 were unfounded complaints. The interior thefts showed that all 15 of the vehicles were determined to have been unlocked. In 11 other instances, it was undetermined if the vehicle was locked and/or items were stolen from the exterior of the vehicle. These statistics confirm that ensuring that doors are locked when vehicles are left unattended would likely decrease the number of reportable thefts within these categories.

OTHER CRIMINAL CODE

Although not all encompassing, the offence description of other criminal code refers to offences that do not fall into the categories of offences against person, drug or property offences. Examples of these types of offences are disturbing the peace, criminal harassment, uttering threats, breach of probation, impaired driving, etc.



2021 saw a 3% decrease in this crime category, resulting in 318 reports in 2021 compared to 329 reports in 2020. An increase of 50% was noted in the Criminal Harassment statistics, with 15 occurrences in 2021 as compared to 10 in 2020. This is consistent with national increases (+4 %) in criminally harassing and threatening behaviours.

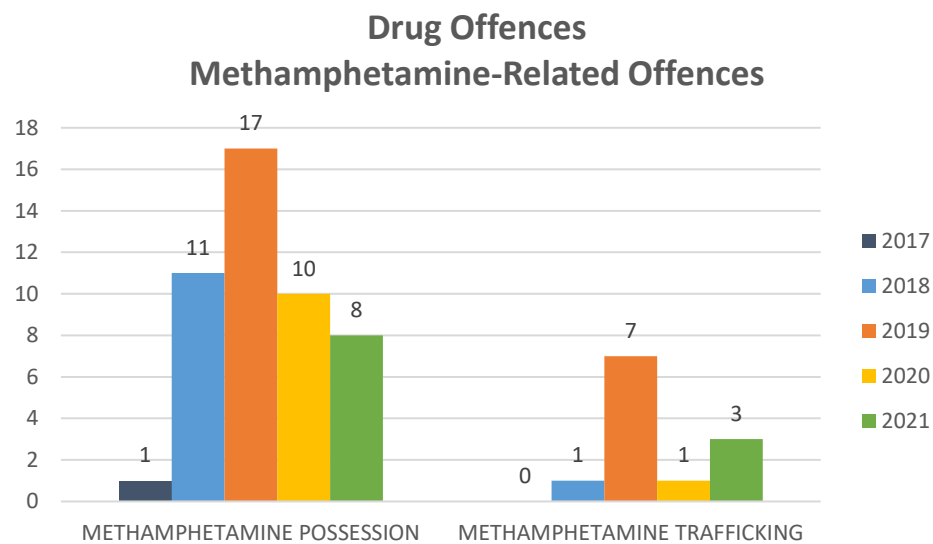
Impaired driving statistics presented a 12% decrease with 30 occurrences reported in 2021 compared to 33 in 2020. Out of the 30, 24 were actual and 6 were unfounded. Of those 24, a total of 2 resulted in criminal charges (repeat offenders), 19 resulted in IRS

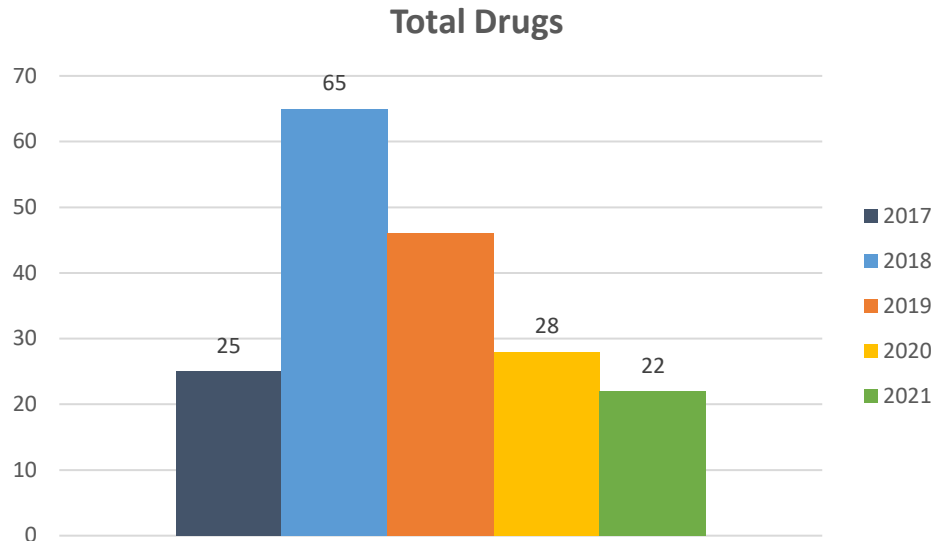
suspensions being issued and 5 occurrences were scored as insufficient evidence to proceed.

On December 1, 2020, Alberta introduced Bill 21 - new Impaired Driving Legislation. First time offenders are now dealt with by Immediate Roadside Suspensions (IRS) and administrative penalties. Repeat offenders and impaired driving causing harm will also face criminal charges.

DRUG OFFENCES

Drug offences are those crimes reported that involve contraventions of the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act. Examples of crimes that are included within this category are possession and trafficking of all illegal drugs and production of illegal drugs. Cannabis related offence types have been removed from this section and placed in the Provincial Act crime type due to the changes in federal law.



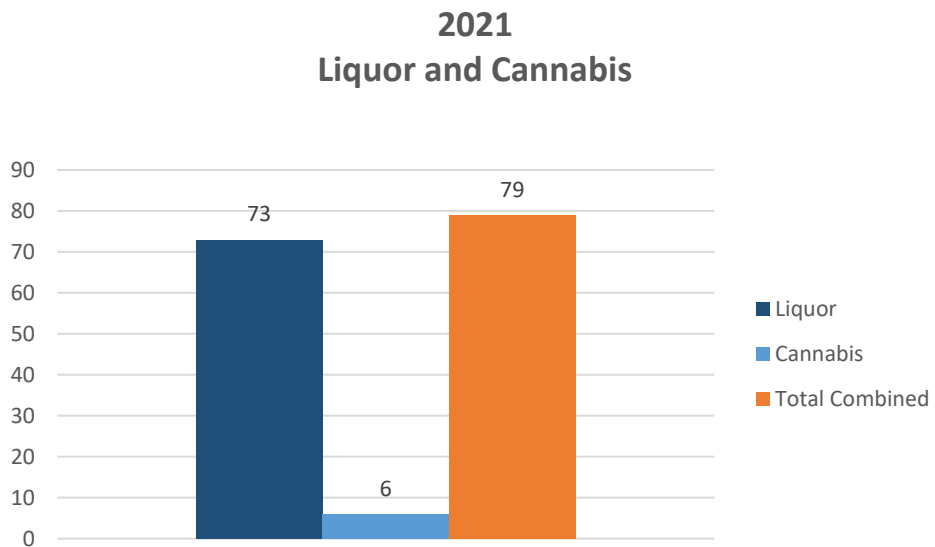
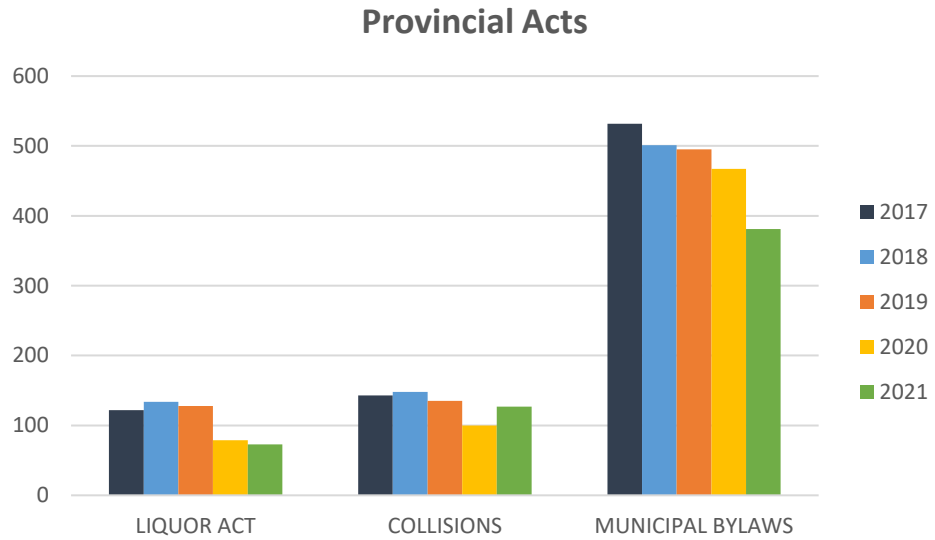


In 2021 there was a total category decrease of 21%. Only two categories showed an increase. This was in the categories of Methamphetamine trafficking, (3 occurrences) and Opioid Trafficking, (5 occurrences). An increase in the trafficking can be correlated with the work of the Intelligence officer and the investigations regarding drug targets in our community. Once we are able to focus direction in this area with a dedicated General Investigative position in 2022, we should see a further increase in these categories.

PROVINCIAL ACTS

Provincial Acts are the numerous laws enforced by police that are enacted through an Act of the Provincial Legislature of Alberta. Although there are hundreds of these Acts, this report will deal with reports of crime under The Child Youth Enhancement Act, The Gaming and Liquor Act, The Cannabis, Gaming and Liquor Act, and The Mental Health Act. Other Provincial Statutes, Traffic Collisions and Municipal Bylaws are also measured in this section. Although not criminal complaints, a large proportion of police

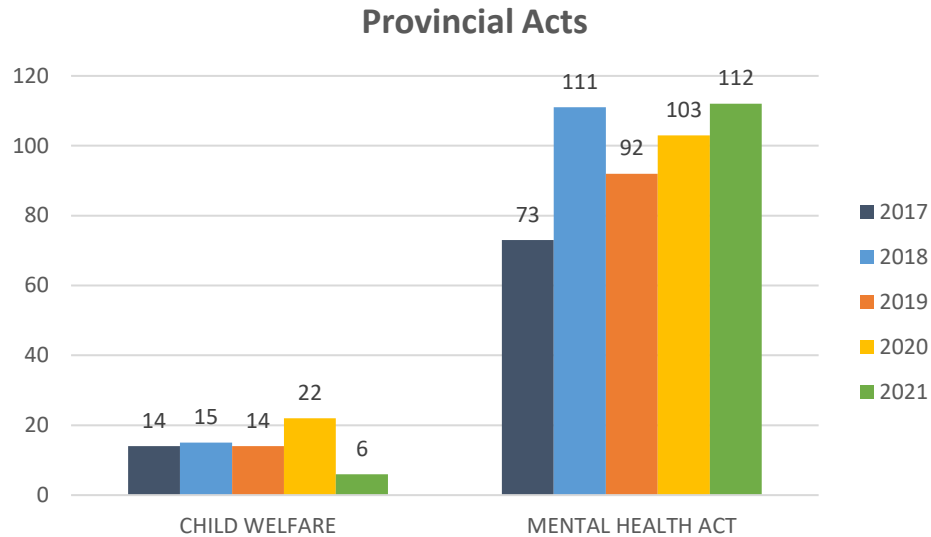
resources are dedicated to the enforcement and investigation of Provincial Acts. 2021 is the third year since cannabis was added to the Gaming and Liquor Act.



The 2021 numbers revealed a total increase, from 2020, of 7% in the number of reports to the Taber Police Service concerning Provincial Acts. The largest decrease was reported in Child Welfare occurrences, down by 73 %, from 22 reports in 2020 to 6 reports in 2021. Each report made to the Taber Police Service of a child welfare nature is shared with the Taber CFS office to ensure each organization involved can fulfill their mandates and responsibilities. South Country Child and Family Services continues to be an important stakeholder/partner of the Taber Police Service in ensuring the safety of the children within our community. Further to this our partnership with the Chinook Child and Youth Advocacy Center will foster a multidisciplinary team approach to these types of calls to service.

An increase was seen in other provincial stats which would include traffic violations. This category is made up of 14 offences listed under the Traffic Safety Act. Some of these offences are moving traffic violations, fail to stop or remain at an accident scene, and motor vehicle insurance coverage violations, to name a few. Of the 1816 reports of offences included in the Other Provincial Stats section, 1580 resulted in charges being laid; an increase of 226 charges from 2020. Collisions saw an increase between 2020 and 2021 as they rose from 100 reports to 127 (27%).

The numbers for the municipal bylaw occurrences dropped in 2021 to 381 occurrences as compared to 467 in 2020. This is a decrease of 6%.



Mental Health calls to service increased 9%, from 103 to 112 reports. This is consistent with numbers across the country as this continues to be an important area of police focus.

CONCLUSION

In an ever-changing climate the Taber Police Service can use crime analysis statistics to assist in an educated response to various criminal concerns within our community. A snapshot of the issues of concern are reviewed so we can direct a focused response. The 2020 Crime Analysis is an anomaly unlike anything seen in many decades. As has already been mentioned in this report, decreases were observed in all five crime categories. Three of the categories saw decreases of over 30%. The obvious reason to attribute to this anomaly is the Covid 19 pandemic and the effects it created, starting in March of 2020. As mentioned in last year's report a true comparison will be between 2020 and 2021 crime statistics as the pandemic continued into 2021.

The Offences Against Persons category revealed a 0% change in reports. This can lead to an inference that Taber is a safe community. Property Offences decreased a significant 23% (after a significant decrease in 2020).

Until late 2017, meth usage in Taber had been relatively non-existent. This increasing meth use in Taber can be explained as this same trend has been observed across the province, as Meth has become the drug of choice among illicit drug users within communities. While our total Drug Offences decreased by 21%, a continued focus on drug education, community partnerships, particularly the work of the school resource officer, and building resiliency in youth, will be an important tool to assist in this issue.

Mental Health Act occurrences have increased, and it appears this trend will continue as the Covid 19 pandemic stretched into 2021. According to the Statistics Canada Community Health Survey (2019), since COVID-19, fewer Canadians report having excellent or very good mental health – 55% (July 2020) down from 68%. Regardless, the continued ability of the Taber Police Service to foster and grow our community partnerships is imperative to ensure effective response to this societal issue. The current Hub and Spoke model within our community regarding mental health is an example of an effective response.

The Police Executive Research Forum (2014), advised, “At the most fundamental level, police have expanded their mission, taking on the goal of preventing crime and reducing crime rates, rather than merely responding after crimes are committed. Today’s best police departments are always looking for ways to be proactive rather than reactive.” (p.42). This consistently has been a way of doing business for the Taber Police Service and it is crucial that it continues to ensure effective community response. As drug use

continues, the need for social supports will continue. This involves continued partnerships with addictions, mental health and victim services workers and advocates. From a policing perspective, it is important to continue enforcement and investigations regarding these individuals. The continuation of intelligence gathering, source cultivation and aggressive police work will be a vital part of the entire body of work that will be required to help combat this issue.

The Taber Police Service, through strategic planning and proper resource allocation is prepared to respond effectively. This crime analysis can be utilized as research to further promote and ensure the mission statement of the Taber Police Service is fulfilled.

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