

Review of Sexual Assault Investigations



January 23, 2019

Index

Page 2	Index
Page 3	Objectives of the Review and Method
Page 4	Current Policies and Procedures Relating to Sexual Assault Investigations
Page 5-6	Objective Findings and Recommendations
Page 6	Training
Page 7	Conclusion

Objectives of the Review

In February of 2017 the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services made a request of all Police Services in Ontario to consider conducting a review of sexual assault investigations. This review will focus on incidents of sexual assault, domestic sexual assault and sexual offences against children, reported to the St. Thomas Police Service in 2018. The following objectives have been identified.

- Review the current policies governing the investigations of sexual assaults, domestic related sexual assaults and sexual offences against children
- Recognize the mechanisms used to track these offences
- Identify those incidents that have been cleared as “unfounded”
- Review “unfounded” investigations to determine what factors facilitated the outcome

Method

This review of sexual assault investigations was conducted by the supervisor of Criminal Investigations was commenced in January 2019.

A review of sexual assault investigations takes place daily, monthly and yearly.

These statistics are garnished from the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) within the Niche Records Management System (RMS).

- In 2018 the St. Thomas Police recorded fifty (50) complaints of sexual assault. These incidents include all alleged reported incidents of a sexual nature. Forty-two (42) of these complaints resulted in the submission of a Viclas
- There were 8 sexual assault charges laid in 2018

Current Policies and Procedures Relating to Sexual Assault Investigations

The following policies and procedures have been implemented by the St. Thomas Police Service for reports of sexual assault, domestic sexual assaults and sexual offences against children.

- LE-034 Sexual Assault Investigations
- LE-046 Sexual Offender Registry
- LE-024 Domestic Violence Occurrences
- LE-027 Child Abuse and Neglect
- LE-006 Criminal Investigation Management Plan
- LE-020 Collection of Evidence
- LE-021 Elder and Vulnerable Adult Abuse
- LE-036 Child Pornography
- PR-11 DNA
- PR-48 Victim's Rights
- PR-49 Viclas
- VA-001 Witness Assistance

Objective Findings and Recommendations

Objective

To review the related policies and procedures

Findings

The policies and procedures relating to sexual assault investigations remain relevant and are consistently adhered to by all members of the Service. Policy LE-034 needs to be updated to reflect the way victims of trauma remember events and trauma informed response to victims to adhere to best practices and to align with the training provided by the Ontario Police College.

The Service continues to work closely with community partners involved in victim's rights and resources.

Recommendations

Update the policy to reflect the trauma informed response to victims.

Update the recruit manual to include available video training for trauma informed response to victims.

Objective Findings and Recommendations

Objective

Tracking Mechanisms

Findings

Reported Sexual Assaults are tracked through the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) within the Niche Records Management System (RMS).

Recommendations

All reported incidents were analyzed and found to be categorized correctly. No recommendations required.

Objective Findings and Recommendations

Objective

Review all “unfounded” incidents.

Findings

- There were no unfounded incidents in 2018

Recommendations

There are no recommendations identified.

Training

Sexual assault investigation training is incorporated at the recruit level. Adequacy levels are tracked by coach officers and approved by the recruit’s direct supervisor. A stand- alone component of a recruit’s training is designated for sexual assault investigations.

All threshold offences are reassigned to the Criminal Investigations Unit. All members of the unit have not been trained in Sexual Assault Investigations and Sexual Assault Investigations Involving Children at The Ontario Police College.

These officers are members of the Sexual Assault Investigators Association of Ontario (SAIAO).

All members of the unit are provided with additional training provided by local and regional Crown Attorneys who specialize in sexual assault prosecutions.

Designated members of the unit participate in “community partner” committees created and designed to address the sensitive nature and issues confronting victims of sexual assault.

Conclusion

An area that needs to be addressed in 2019 is the Sexual Assault Protocol that was created in December 1998. The recommendation is to have the supervisor of criminal investigations contact the other contributing members of the protocol and ascertain if they too believe it is time to update the document to reflect current practices.