

Regina Auto Theft Strategy

Regina Police Service, 2004

The Problem

In 2001, auto thefts in Regina, Saskatchewan reached unprecedented levels, leaving the city with the reputation of being Canada's "Auto Theft Capital". The drivers of stolen vehicles adopted dangerous driving behaviours, risking the lives of themselves and members of the public, and attempted to injure responding police officers.

Analysis

Data analysis indicated incidents of vehicle theft rose steadily from 1,471 in 1994 to 3,844 in 2001. Further analysis of criminal charges provided data supporting the conclusion that a relatively small number of repeat juvenile offenders were responsible for a disproportionately high number of offences. Enforcement alone did not appear to be sufficient to reduce the numbers of offences or change the behaviours of the repeat offenders. Public and media attention to this issue identified a high level of concern within the community.

Response

The Regina Police Service coordinated an initiative involving representatives from prosecution and corrections agencies, the automobile insurance industry, the school divisions, the media, and members of the public. This response focussed on four key areas:

- Education and information directed toward the general public and young auto theft offenders.
- Early intervention with first time auto theft offenders.
- Coordinated supervision of repeat offenders.
- Integrated and intensive supervision and case management of chronic repeat offenders.

The Regina Police Service initiated a three-tiered enforcement strategy to complement this effort:

- Standard enforcement during periods of low activity.
- Increased staffing levels and enhanced enforcement techniques when vehicle thefts increased.
- Maximized staffing directed toward vehicle thefts combined with enforcement techniques designed to stop dangerous driving behaviour immediately during periods of peak activity.

Community partners created and distributed auto theft prevention information and provided anti-theft devices at no cost to vehicle owners. Insurers waived deductibles when anti-theft devices were used.

Assessment

The Regina Auto Theft Strategy achieved significant, sustainable results. In 2002, the first full year of implementation, 1,090 fewer vehicles were stolen than in 2001—a 28.4% reduction. A further 5.9% reduction occurred in 2003, when 162 fewer vehicles were stolen than in 2002. 1,252 fewer vehicles were stolen in 2003 than in 2001, marking an overall reduction of 32.6%

Scanning

During the mid 1990's there was a substantial increase in reported cases of auto theft in the city of Regina and the immediate surrounding area. The auto theft rate stabilized during the latter half of the 1990's and into 2000, then again started to rise. By 2001 Regina was firmly established as the "Auto Theft Capital" of Canada, having had the highest annual rate of reported vehicle thefts in Canada for more than five years.

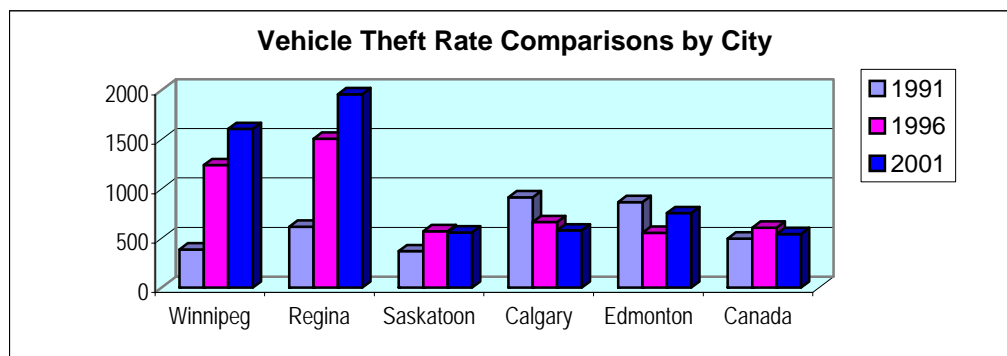
In 1992 Regina had a reported auto theft rate¹ of 490. This was below the Canadian national rate of 517 and placed Regina slightly above the median rate when compared to all major municipalities in Canada. By 1996 Regina's rate increased 307% and was the highest rate in Canada. The national rate increased by only 17% during the same period.

The rate of increase levelled off during the rest of the 1990's; however, each year Regina was still able to make the "claim" of having the highest auto theft rate in Canada. This issue raised a fairly high level of interest in the local media and stories on this subject were often broadcast and printed. The Regina Police Service, the main agency policing the Regina CMA, was reasonably successful in recovering most of the automobiles stolen from the area² and many offenders were arrested and charged. During this same time period the Regina Police Service deployed additional resources to the investigation of stolen automobiles and started to interact more often and effectively with other agencies in the community interested in, or involved with, the stolen auto "problem".

¹ Rates are calculated using a formula of reported incidents per 100,000 population. This is the standard used by Statistics Canada to measure and compare reported crime. In this submission, rates used are for the Census Metropolitan Area (CMA), which includes the major municipality in an area and all smaller surrounding communities.

² In 2000 only 2.8% of vehicles stolen in Regina were not recovered. The Canadian rate for non-recovered vehicles during the same time period was 30%.

In 2001 the rate of auto theft showed a dramatic increase of 24%. The rate of 1959 thefts per 100,000 population was 361% above the national rate of 542 and 22% higher than the rate of the second highest municipality, Winnipeg, Manitoba.³ The media started paying even more attention to the situation and citizens started to vigorously voice their concerns to municipal and provincial officials. Comparisons were made between Regina’s rate of auto theft to that of Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, a similar sized city situated approximately 250 kilometres (155 miles) north-west of Regina. Regina’s rate was 350% the rate of Saskatoon. Regina’s vehicle theft rate was also much higher than the rate in other large municipalities in same general geographic area in Canada.



In addition to the increase in numbers of vehicles being stolen, the driving behaviour of many of the operators of stolen vehicles escalated to the point where the safety of other users of the roadways was being placed at much greater risk. There were incidents of drivers of stolen vehicles searching out police officers and attempting to instigate high-speed pursuits, or in extreme cases, actually targeting police officers and attempting to injure them. Regina Police Service management developed an even more aggressive enforcement strategy to deal with the increase in reported crime and several community partners increased their level of participation to help address the stolen auto situation. The new strategy had the desired effect of

³ Winnipeg, Manitoba had a rate of 1608 automobiles stolen per 100,000 population in 2001.

apprehending a greater number of offenders; however, the numbers of vehicles being stolen did not decrease and it was becoming common to arrest the same individuals over and over again. Many of those arrested were young people, often in their early teens, and frequently facing charges related to dozens of stolen vehicles. The new strategy alone was not reducing the incidence of stolen vehicles. The streets of Regina were becoming more and more dangerous, both for police officers and the general public. Except for the city of Winnipeg, where the stolen vehicle rate increase mirrored that found in Regina, the dramatic increase in the number of stolen vehicles was not being experienced in other cities or regions in Canada.

Analysis

During the second half of 2001, managers and administrative support personnel at the Regina Police Service conducted an extensive statistical review in order to more completely understand the scope and particulars surrounding the stolen vehicle problem. Information learned was used to further refine the auto theft strategy, as it was clear the strategy, as it then was, did not produce the desired results of reducing crime.

The analysis showed most stolen vehicles were recovered, often the same day, or at least within the following few days. Additionally, charges against young offenders (12-17 years) comprised 83% of all vehicle theft related charges laid by the Regina Police Service. These statistics were in sharp contrast to the experience of other Canadian police agencies and indicated young people were responsible for stealing a major proportion of automobiles and that these thefts were not being committed for profit, but rather for “fun”. An analysis of all persons charged during a seven-month period in 2001 indicated 20% of those arrested for stolen vehicle related offences had been arrested previously for similar offences during the same period. Many

of those arrested were charged with offences related to multiple incidents of vehicle theft. Investigating officers noted a significant number of offenders lived in disadvantaged social and economic conditions. The arrest statistics also showed a highly disproportionate number of persons of aboriginal decent were coming to the attention of police authorities. During interviews with accused young persons, police investigators learned groups were often playing games and having contests with each other in an attempt to steal a greater number of vehicles over a given time period than another group.

In June 2001, the Regina Police Service Crime Prevention Strategist facilitated a group session with several youth, either at-risk to commit and/or charged with stolen vehicle related offences. The session was conducted with the assistance of a local youth group. Community partners helped sponsor the event. Pointed questions about the young peoples' motivation for stealing vehicles were asked and candid responses were given. Following is a representation of some of the often-heard comments:

- It's easy to steal cars.
- The police won't chase when a stolen car is being driven in a dangerous manner.
- They are bored and there's nothing better to do.
- It's fun to steal cars.
- They receive status from their peers when they're stealing cars and driving in a dangerous manner.

The young people were also asked; "What would stop you from ever stealing a car." The responses to this question included:

- Being able to get a job, my own driver's licence and my own car.
- Having a better role model.

- Staying away from drugs, cigarettes and alcohol.
- A different peer group.

On November 30, 2001, a “task force” comprised of representatives of agencies responsible for enforcement, prosecution, community corrections and detention was brought together to review the information gathered by the police and to discuss options for reducing vehicles thefts in Regina. This group also conducted a literature review that indicated recidivism rates in young people could be reduced by as much as 50% through the use of appropriate intervention strategies. It was also found the use of inappropriate strategies had no impact on recidivism rates. A “best practice” review suggested the following elements be included in any strategy to deal with young offenders:

- Conduct a thorough risk assessment of the young offender. This assessment should identify dynamic risk factors.
- Develop a case plan to systematically address the identified risk factors.
- Choose the types of services that are capable of meeting the needs of an individual youth.

After conducting this review the task force developed the Regina Auto Theft Strategy.

Response

Prior to implementing the new strategy, the Regina Police Service, the Department of Corrections and Public Safety, and the Department of Justice held a joint news conference announcing the strategy and its desired effect. The news conference was attended by all media outlets and received wide coverage. A new assessment tool was also developed for use when evaluating the level of service a young offender would need to receive to address family,

behavioural and other issues related to their criminal actions. The tool was named the Level of Service Inventory – Saskatchewan Youth Edition (LSI – Sask.) and was adapted from a similar tool used by justice workers in Ontario.

The initial announcement of the strategy was greeted with a significant amount of criticism and scepticism and emanated from both political and media sources. The efficacy of the intervention strategies was questioned and a significant voice was raised in support of fewer programs and greater punishments, particularly in the form of strict-discipline boot camps.

Before describing the implementation of the Stolen Auto Strategy it is important to understand this strategy was designed after previous tactics and strategies had been designed, applied, evaluated and redesigned in accordance with information learned during the evaluation.

The Regina Police Service had been assigning significant resources to respond to vehicle thefts. Enforcement alone; however, was not sufficient to reduce the numbers of thefts. With the community expecting a meaningful response, and the police service doing everything in its lawful authority to respond, the only alternative lawfully seemed to require multi-agency participation. Because the analysis indicated repeat offenders were responsible for a significant number of vehicle thefts, prosecution and corrections practices needed to change in order for the youths' behavioural patterns to change. Following is a list of some of the approaches used and expanded upon while attempting to control the increasing incidence of stolen vehicles:

- Enforcement strategies were conducted in an aggressive manner. The Stolen Auto Unit was given additional financial, human and equipment to help address the problem. Community partners provided some of these additional resources. A specialized team, known as Carwash, was established and given specialized training and equipment. The team was quite successful in arresting offenders;

however, many of those arrested continued with their unlawful behaviour when released from custody. The police alone could not control the problem.

- Investigators approached prosecutors assigned to docket court and requested that habitual offenders be held in custody, or at least be subjected to restrictive release conditions. Prosecutors were provided additional information to give them “ammunition” when making these requests of the Court.
- Free anti-theft devices were provided by Saskatchewan Government Insurance and distributed to members of the public by police and community partners during highly publicized events. When police investigators noticed unused devices in recovered stolen vehicles the insurance company implemented a policy of waiving the deductible when a vehicle was stolen in spite of using an anti-theft device.
- Investigating police officers did not send any persons charged with a stolen vehicle related offence to pre-charge diversion programs, even first offenders.
- “Curfew checks” were done in a regular and coordinated manner with youth workers and corrections officials. These checks were part of an initiative to enforce and supervise the release and probation conditions of youth charged with offences
- The assistance of aboriginal communities was sought to help design and carry out “cultural camps” where young offenders could develop skills, identify with role models and be instructed on the destructive nature of their behaviour.

The strength of the Auto Theft Strategy is that it was simply the end result of a continual problem solving exercise where issues were identified, solutions sought, activities implemented,

evaluation conducted and then the whole exercise being done over again until desirable results were obtained.

This continuing process of analysis, response and assessment led to the Regina Police Service initiating a multifaceted, multi-agency response to vehicle theft. Identifying the prevalence of young offender involvement steered the response toward a four-tiered strategy designed to prevent youth involvement in these acts and, in cases involving youth already involved, implementing an incremental correctional process. The Regina Auto Theft Strategy was implemented in January of 2002 and is built upon the following four pillars:

1. Public education targeting vehicle owners and at-risk youth not yet involved in vehicle thefts.

The John Howard Society was contracted to develop and deliver a module in the city's elementary schools designed to educate and encourage children to avoid criminal involvement. The Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police, through Project 6116, coordinated a project where youth created messages discouraging vehicle thefts. The Saskatchewan Association of Chiefs of Police Crime Prevention Practitioners sub-committee developed "Driving Down Auto Theft", an awareness program that distributes vehicle theft prevention information to residents, and supplies information to visitors through the Regina Hotels Association. Saskatchewan Government Insurance created the "Join the Club" program, distributing vehicle theft prevention information and free steering wheel locking devices to vehicle owners. Insurance deductibles were waived for persons who had their vehicles stolen while an anti-theft device was in active use at the time of the theft.

2. Early intervention with first-time offenders.

Research conducted by the Saskatchewan Department of Social Services identified the importance of early, meaningful intervention to successfully reduce recidivism. This research

led to the development of the “Help Eliminate Auto Theft” (HEAT) program. Prosecutors refer first-time offenders to this program within 48 hours of their arrest. Offenders are rated using the Level of Service Inventory - Saskatchewan Youth Edition (LSI) assessment tool, which provides information to assist the HEAT Coordinator in developing a specific intervention program for each offender.

3. Targeting repeat offenders through coordinated services.

Individuals identified as repeat offenders are assessed and monitored. Auto theft offenders are held in custody pending a court appearance. Prosecutors request “curfews” as part of any Judicial Interim Release. Once released from custody a team of officers from the Regina Police Service and the Department of Corrections and Public Safety monitors offenders to ensure court mandated conditions are being adhered to. “Curfew checks” that cannot be conducted by this team are forwarded to patrol officers, entered as a call for service, and conducted throughout the night. Individuals violating release or probation conditions are charged and immediately placed before the Court for further sanction.

4. Targeting Chronic Repeat Offenders through intensive supervision and management.

A joint committee of Department of Justice, Corrections and Public Safety, and police officials identify individuals who pose a significant risk to public safety as chronic repeat offenders. The majority of these individuals have experienced significant periods of incarceration and continue to offend upon release from custody. A database of chronic repeat offenders, including photographs, is maintained by the Regina Police Service, and is regularly disseminated to partner agencies and operational police officers to assist in identification of target offenders. When chronic repeat offenders are apprehended, they are charged with the maximum applicable offence and are held in custody pending a court appearance, at which time

prosecutors request they be held in custody pending the resolution of the charges. Upon conviction, corrections officials, using the LSI, implement a variety of programming interventions while these youths are in custody. Intensive supervision probation is instituted once they are released into the community. This supervision entails consistent efforts to ensure offenders abide by Court-imposed conditions including curfews and non-association orders. To that end the Department of Community Resources and Employment assigned two staff members to check “curfews” on a daily basis, with police officers assigned to the Stolen Auto Unit and patrol officers also conducting checks. Offenders found in violation of “curfews”, or other conditions, are located, charged, and held in custody.

This four-tiered strategy is complemented by a three-tiered enforcement strategy.

1. Standard enforcement.

During periods of minimal vehicle theft activity, standard enforcement practices continue, with officers assigned to the Stolen Auto Unit conducting investigations and patrol officers responding to initial complaints. "Curfew checks" are conducted daily throughout all levels of enforcement.

2. Enhanced Enforcement

When incidents of vehicle theft rise, enforcement is enhanced both quantitatively and qualitatively. Additional members are assigned to the Stolen Auto Unit and members of the Canine Unit are redeployed to assist the Unit. Saskatchewan Government Insurance provides additional vehicles to the Unit as needed.

The officers assigned to the Stolen Auto Unit and all Regina Police Service supervisors receive training in techniques aimed at stopping vehicles safely. These techniques incorporate the use of stop sticks and spike belts. Known as the Carwash Team, members conduct

surveillance in unmarked vehicles. When encountering a stolen vehicle in operation, strategies to stop it safely, including boxing-in and pinning, are employed allowing apprehension of the offenders without risking a high-speed pursuit. Apprehended offenders are held in custody as specified in the four-point strategy.

3. Maximized enforcement

When vehicle theft activity reaches sustained high levels, the Stolen Auto Unit is augmented by the majority of members in the Criminal Investigation Division. These members work in support of the Carwash Team. Canine Unit involvement is maintained. A bait vehicle, with the ability to be deactivated remotely and equipped with a global positioning device is deployed.

To ensure sufficient information is presented by prosecutors to enable the Court to choose incarceration or intensive supervision as appropriate alternatives, police officers investigating vehicle thefts or recovering stolen vehicles are required to:

1. Photograph damage to recovered vehicles when arrests are made.
2. Attach a stolen vehicle statistical graph to each court report.
3. Record the cost to victims—including vehicle cost, repair cost, and lost wages—in each court report.

Informing the Court of the impact of vehicle theft on victims increases the likelihood of decisions favouring incarceration or intensive supervision.

Throughout all phases of the enforcement strategy, police and Corrections and Public Safety personnel continue with intensive supervision and monitoring of repeat offenders, conducting curfew checks and charging non-compliant offenders where appropriate.

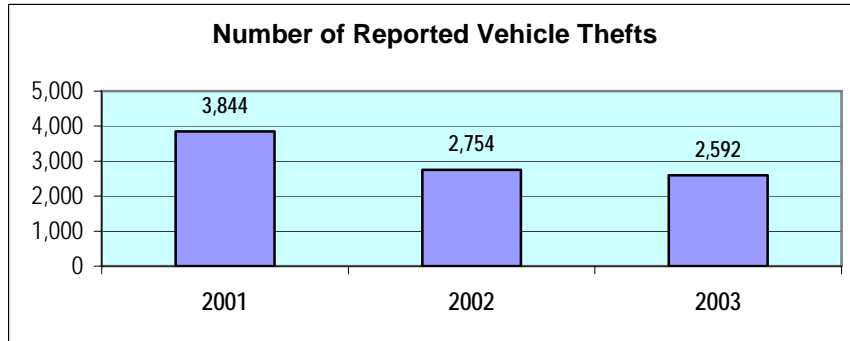
As it developed its 2002 Strategic Plan, the Regina Police Service established a goal to reduce by 25% the incidence of vehicle theft compared to 2001 levels. This target also became the target for the other members of the Auto Theft Task Force.

Members of the Regina Police Service received training in pursuit tactics and spike belt deployment, and were given detailed information on their roles and the strategy of the varying levels of enforcement. A management committee on vehicle thefts was created and began daily briefings on the extent of the problem and the enforcement efforts of the previous twenty-four hour period. This was designed to facilitate a forum for the rapid exchange of the information necessary when evaluating whether the current enforcement level is adequate or if an immediate change in response is necessary, in accordance with the three-tiered enforcement plan.

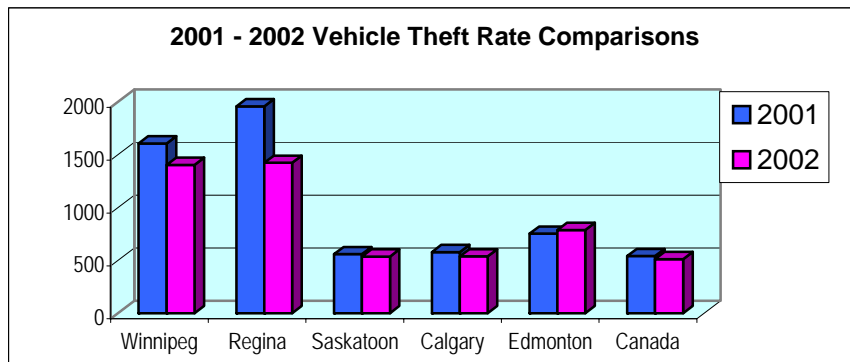
Assessment

Regina's Auto Theft Strategy has produced significant results since its inception in January of 2002. The response is evaluated on a daily basis, with managers receiving data on the number of vehicle thefts and persons charged. Monthly, this data is compared to the respective month from previous years, as well as earlier months in the same year. Annually, data is aggregated and compared not only to Regina figures, but also to other Canadian municipalities.

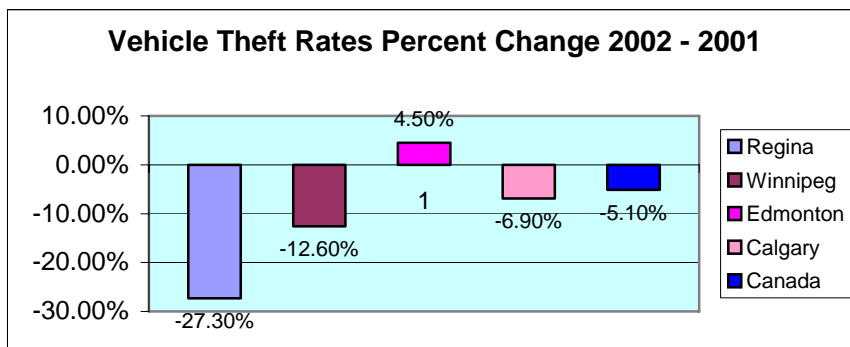
Reported incidents of stolen vehicles declined by 28.4% in 2002, from 3,844 in 2001 to 2,754 in 2002, exceeding the targeted reduction of 25%. The decline continued in 2003 with a further 5.9% reduction to 2,592 reported vehicle thefts. From the program's inception in 2002 until the end of 2003, annual incidents of vehicle theft declined from 3,844 to 2,592—a total reduction of 32.6%. At the same time, patrol officers reported a reduction in dangerous driving behaviours.



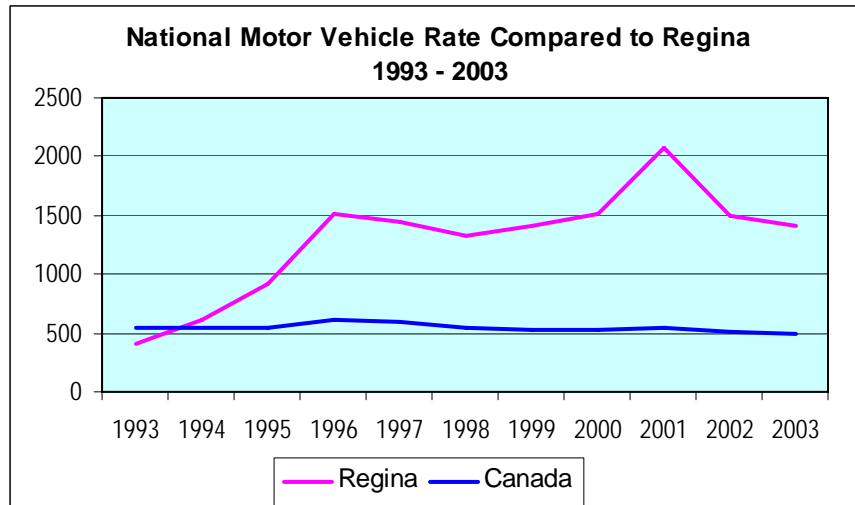
Annual national comparisons indicate Regina's vehicle theft rate, although still above the national average, has dropped significantly from its peak of 1,959 per 100,000 population in 2001, to 1,404 per 100,000 population in 2003.



Regina showed a significantly greater reduction in the vehicle theft rate (-28.1%) than other Canadian cities. The Canadian rate fell by 5.1%.



This reduction counters the trend of the previous ten years.



The Canadian Institute for Peace, Justice and Security, housed at the University of Regina, conducted an intensive evaluation of Regina's Auto Theft Strategy in 2002. In its conclusion Dr. Jeff Pfeifer noted:

Overall, it is clear that the Regina Auto Theft Strategy has been effective in implementing a number of innovative approaches and techniques to address the issue of young offender auto theft. In addition, it is also abundantly evident that the Regina Auto Theft Strategy was developed in an attempt to respond to the specific needs of the community, at-risk youth and young offenders in Regina. A review of the Strategy indicates a number of specific positive elements, including:

- *Demographic Applicability – Although it is clear that the strategy has been designed to meet the demographic, cultural and geographic specifications related to young offender auto theft in Regina, it is also clear that the strategy represents a base model for the development of similar strategies in other locales.*
- *Risk Assessment – The inclusion of a risk assessment component in a number of phases of the strategy indicates a keen awareness of the importance of gaining information on the needs of young offenders with respect to effective rehabilitation. The importance of risk assessment as a rehabilitative tool has been clearly defined by the research yet seldom is employed in non-custodial youth programs.*
- *Grass Roots Development & Ownership – A review of the strategy indicates that it was clearly developed through the collaborative efforts of a number of frontline workers. There is a clear indication that this approach to development has resulted in a program that: (a) addresses the needs of young offenders in a practical fashion, and (b) reflects a high degree of ownership from frontline workers.*
- *Multi-Agency Cooperation – The current strategy is also to be commended on the successful development and implementation of an initiative that combines a number of agencies. Although it is widely understood that effective responses to issues such as youth crime call for an integrated response involving a number of agencies, seldom does this occur due to administrative and other difficulties.*

Conclusion

In 2001 stolen vehicles were a large and growing concern in Regina. The driving behaviour of offenders was dangerous and put members of the police service and the general public at risk. A comprehensive and on-going problem-solving model was used to develop and implement the Regina Auto Theft Strategy. In one year the incidence of vehicle thefts fell 28.4%. The strategy continues to be used as a regular course of business and continues to show great success.

Agency and Officer Information

The Regina Auto Theft Strategy was developed in the Criminal Investigation Division of the Regina Police Service. Senior administrative personnel, including the Chief and Deputy Chief of Police were actively involved in providing direction and in working with senior officers from our community partners. All operational personnel, and some administrative officers are continually involved in the strategy in some form.

The Regina Police Service has adopted the problem solving philosophy as a key component to our community-policing model. The majority of operational personnel have received formal training in problem solving from recognized experts in the field.

No additional incentives were offered to members who participated in this strategy. There was an opportunity for Stolen Auto Unit members to earn overtime pay and all members received the intangible benefit of living and working in a safer community.

Problem solving exercises have been documented, stored and catalogued in Central Records for several years. These examples, along with materials received during training courses and information learned during independent research activities were all used.

No issues or problems were identified with the problem oriented policing model. Its application in the development and implementation of this strategy was very successful.

Most of the operational resources of the Regina Police Service were committed to this strategy at some point of time. The initiative was wide in its scope and intense in its application. Saskatchewan Government Insurance committed a number of vehicles to the Carwash initiative. The provincial government provided funding to hire three police officers that were assigned to the Auto Theft Strategy. Three additional officers were also redeployed to the Stolen Auto Unit from inside the organization. Two youth workers were hired to monitor offenders released from custody.

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List of Attachments

Regina Leader Post Newspaper Article – October 6, 2001

Regina Leader Post Newspaper Article – December 1, 2001 (2 pages)

Letter to the Minister of Justice for Saskatchewan

Regina Police Service News Release – May 3, 2001 (2 pages)

Regina Police Service Departmental Notice – April 25, 2001 (2 pages)

Level of Service Inventory – Saskatchewan Youth Edition (2 pages)

206/07

Car owners: Do you know where your car is?

The Naked City has 60 stories. They are frightening stories and they are scaring people and they are stories that are alarming the police. The 60 stories in the Naked City are the number of vehicles that have been stolen over a five-day period this week in Regina.

That total, which no doubt grew last night and has been the nation's leader for far too long now, is into the hundreds and hundreds for this year alone. It is costing the owners of the stolen vehicles money, even if they have insurance. It is costing the police money to try to either catch them or stop them. It is costing everybody a sense of security. The only places getting anything out of this are the auto-body shops that have to try to put the cars back together again.

The citizens are worried about this, and want something done. You can hear their voices growing louder. The cops are worried about this, and want something done. The only people who don't act as if they are worried about this are those people who decide what kind of justice is handed out to criminals in our society.

There is not a policeman in this city who will tell you that their efforts in catching the car thieves are being supported by the justice system. Most of the car thieves are young offenders, and once they get to court it becomes a giggle for them. It is like a detention at school.

The justice system slaps them on the wrist, lectures them, puts a curfew on them, and sends them home. At night, when it is dark outside, the police have spent hours going to the homes of these thieves to see if they are home, if they are adhering to their curfews.

Not only do the police find out that the kids aren't home, they often get met at the front door by an angry parent, or two. The parents are not angry that their kids got into trouble with the law. Or are out breaking curfew. The parents are angry at the police for disturbing them late at night when they could be watching television, or drinking. Sometimes, these parents get quite verbally abusive with the police.

This Monday, which was the first day of October, which was just five days ago, there were 20 auto thefts in the city. Last weekend, from Friday to Tuesday, there were 66 auto thefts. This is not a passing fad. This is a hobby completely out of control.

The police have been catching the thieves of this week's carnage on cars. And it is the same old story. "... it looks like we're dealing with a small number of people repeatedly committing a large number of offences." That is what the police said this week. That is what the police have been saying since Regina became the auto-theft crime capital of Canada, and blew away any other city competing for such a coveted title.

When criminals are openly laughing at the justice system that is dealing with them, when they are openly contemptuous of the sentences they receive, when they are spitting in the law's face, it is time to come down hard. It is time to change the way car thieves are dealt with.

Maybe, what it will take before something serious is done is for a cop or an innocent bystander to get killed by one of these joyriding thieves. It is actually a miracle that it hasn't already happened because there have been more than a few instances when stolen cars have been in collisions. Even this week, the driver of a stolen vehicle drove it right into a police vehicle.

One of these days, something far more terrible is going to happen when one of these car thieves and the cops find themselves at a point of no return. And somebody will get killed, or seriously injured, or just injured. And if it isn't a cop who gets run down, it will be a car thief who ends up getting shot or pepper sprayed or smacked. And if that happens, then there will be an outcry about police brutality and calls for inquiries.

The police are in a "no-win" situation here. They are paid to uphold the law. They are there because society has given them an enormous trust that they will uphold the law and protect us.

But it becomes very frustrating for the police when they go out and catch these car thieves and pass them over to the justice system only to see them back on the street stealing more vehicles.

The message has to be sent out there that it is not OK to go out and steal something — anything! The message has to be sent that being a young offender, or coming from a difficult background, or whatever, is no longer an automatic pass back onto the streets from the courts.

The law is not tough enough on the repeat offenders, and that is obvious to anyone who has watched it happen over and over again.

This city is fighting a battle to grow, to regain strength, to keep people from moving elsewhere. It is fighting to get people to move here, work here, raise their families here.

When you are slowly becoming the car-theft capital of all time, then it is hardly a strong selling point.

And the people who do live here deserve far more from the justice system than they are now getting. People should not have to worry, 24 hours a day, whether or not their vehicle will be where they left it.

■ Hughes is the Executive Editor of the Leader-Post.



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Easy solutions are not easy to come by

As Regina's car theft numbers continue to pile up, the public's cry for action is growing louder.

Easy solutions, however, are elusive.

"What next?" asked Coun. Mike Badham, echoing the thoughts of many attending a meeting of the Regina Board of Police Commissioners earlier this week.

Badham was responding to a <Regina> <Police> Service report showing that a major campaign against car thefts launched in the spring had barely made a dent in a problem that has grown worse year by year.

According to the police service's Stolen Auto Activity Report, there were 2,487 incidents of reported auto thefts between April 1 and Oct. 31, a 25-per-cent increase over the same period in 2000.

Police Chief Cal Johnston and Mayor Pat Fiacco expressed

frustration that thieves continue to steal cars at a rate of about a dozen a day.

Both men say they want the courts to impose more custodial sentences on car thieves (currently, about 11 per cent of charges result in thieves being sent to jail or youth detention centres).

And both say society needs to pay more attention to the underlying problems that lead young people into a lifestyle of stealing cars and joyriding.

Since April, the <Regina> <Police> Service has put more officers on auto theft duty. They've also made use of decoy cars and special tactics and have stepped up curfew checks on young offenders.

So what should be done next?

While there's no consensus among police, government officials and the public, there's no shortage of suggestions, including:

A major push on anti-theft devices: In the spring, Saskatchewan Government Insurance gave out 1,800 anti-theft steering wheel clubs for free to owners of high-risk vehicles.

Johnston is convinced clubs, which typically cost around \$25, are effective. The problem is that not enough people have them and many who do neglect to put them on. "We're finding many cars that are stolen with a club in the back seat."

More electronic monitoring: For years, the court system has made use of electronic ankle bracelets to track adult offenders sentenced to house arrest.

Greater use of electronic monitoring of young car thieves was one of the proposals raised by Johnston that will be discussed further with Justice Department and Social Services Department officials.

Senior Crown prosecutor Steve Connelly cautioned that electronic monitoring isn't always appropriate.

"You need a fairly stable residence with a phone line installed. As well, electronic monitoring may not be effective for those who are prone to impulsive behaviour." Still, the concept is worth further study, he said.

Involving the parents: More than 63 per cent of those facing auto-theft related offences are minors.

Parents have "a tremendous role to play" in keeping their children away from car theft activity, Fiacco said.

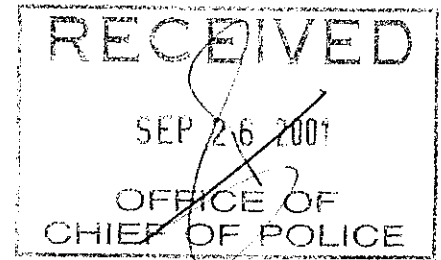
"There's no question about it," he said. "I think most parents are role models for their children and they need to take responsibility as well."

Johnston said Regina must solve its car theft problem, one way or another.

"We've been fortunate there have not been any deaths and there have not been any serious injuries," he said. "Can this go on? I don't believe so. It's just a matter of time before a 14-year-old driver takes one of these cars and hurts either themselves, their passengers or somebody else using the streets."

[Click here to find the last hit](#) [Click here to find the beginning of the document](#)

September 24, 2001



Hon. Chris Axworthy
Minister of Justice
Legislative Building
Regina, Sask.
S4S 0B3

Dear Mr. Axworthy,

The Regina City Board of Police Commissioners statistics revealed an increase in the rate of auto thefts by a huge 20% in the first half of this year. It further revealed that there is 1 person responsible for 60 thefts, another 4 for 50 offences and one other for 49 offences. These statistics were published in the Leader Post on September 20, 2001.

I can understand giving offenders 1 or 2 or 3 or even 4 or 5 chances in an effort to promote rehabilitation; but **SIXTY OFFENCES?????** Why are these particular six offenders allowed to continue their crime spree? When is it time to protect society from them with more secure custody?

The amount of lost money, time, frustration, police time, the potential for loss of life, and loss of confidence in the justice system makes this rate of recidivism an affront to society.

The inability of the justice system to prevent this ridiculous, predictable pattern of recurrence is a second affront to society. Get on it already.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Cathy Cuddington".

Cathy Cuddington
2630 Cochrane bay
Regina, Sask.
S4V 2C1

cc. Cal Johnston, Regina City Police Chief



Regina Police Service News Release

For Immediate Release

Release Authorized: Sgt. R. Bourassa

Date: May 3, 2001

Contact Source: Sgt. R. Bourassa

Time: 1130 hrs

Phone: 777-6381

AUTO THEFT AND RELATED CHARGES

TOTAL HUNDREDS

Since Wednesday, April 25, 2001, the Regina Police Service and the RCMP have charged twenty-two individuals with over 500 offences relating to auto theft, dangerous driving and failing to stop for police.

Statistics gathered by the Regina Police Service indicate ⁴⁸⁹~~473~~ vehicles were reported stolen in Regina during April, 2001. This compares to ²⁸¹~~252~~ vehicles reported stolen during the same month in 2000. These numbers include both attempted and completed thefts. Ongoing investigation and special project work led police to believe that a small number of individuals was responsible for a large number of these thefts. Of equal concern was the increasing recklessness and aggressive driving of the offenders, posing a significant danger to the public, the police and the suspects themselves. Incidents included three motor vehicle collisions and a number of situations in which the offenders took runs at police vehicles and police officers, and forced other motorists off the road or into other evasive actions. The Regina Police Service reassigned resources and employed enforcement strategies to address the danger posed by these individuals and their driving behaviours. The resulting arrests and ongoing investigations have led

(more)

to over 500 charges against twenty-two individuals, since April 25, 2001. The charges include theft of auto, possession of stolen auto, dangerous driving, failing to stop for police and numerous violations of court-ordered conditions.

Of the persons charged, nine youths will appear in Youth Court on Friday, May 4, 2001, at 9:30 a.m. to face over 200 charges. Another youth will appear in Youth Court on Friday, May 11, 2001, charged with over 50 offences. Another youth, originally charged with nine offences in relation to a four-vehicle collision at Victoria Avenue and Glencairn Road on April 25, 2001, will be in Youth Court again on May 15th to face in excess of 40 additional charges. Court appearances for eleven other individuals are pending. Since the arrests of these youths, the number of reported auto thefts in Regina has fallen off drastically; however, investigations into these matters are continuing and further charges and arrests are anticipated.

Sgt. Rick Bourassa will be available for interviews pertaining to this news release at 1:30 p.m. at Regina Police Service Headquarters, 1717 Osler Street.

Distribution:

01-05-03-

RPS 268 94/09

Chief of Police
Community Services Section
Watch Commander

Communications Center
Criminal Investigation Division
Central Operations Section

File No.:

Date Issued: April 25, 2001

DEPARTMENTAL NOTICE

Subject: Regina Police Service Auto Theft Strategy

1. During the past two weeks the management group within the Police Service has formulated a strategy directed to the problem of stolen vehicles. The initiative has some short, medium and long-term strategies involving three elements: an informational media program, court and bail alterations, and enforcement. This initiative involves most areas within our Service inclusive of Community Services, CID, Records Management, Planning and Research, Detention, Information Services, and Court Services. This Notice will explain the strategy and then outline an operational plan.

2. The media portion is part of a Provincial initiative aimed at reducing the number of stolen vehicles. It contains radio public service announcements and informational pamphlets to inform the community on methods to prevent thefts. The funding for this will be forthcoming from the Provincial Proceeds Of Crime Fund and is expected to begin in mid-May.

3. Effective Wednesday April 25, 2001, the following portions will come into effect.

4. Regina Police Service policy and reporting, as well bail applications will require deviation from normal practice, in the following manner:

- Opposing release of anyone arrested in connection with stolen vehicles.
- Charging all occupants found within a stolen vehicle and having conditions placed upon them.
- No pre-charge diversion to RAMP in connection with stolen vehicles.
- All case summaries will now include the following details:
 - A statistical recap illustrating the stolen vehicle problem in Regina.
 - A photograph of any damage done to the victim's car.
 - A copy of the Watch Commander's Incident Log relating to stolen vehicles.
 - Any available information to advise the Crown regarding the loss inflicted to the victim (loss of wages, damage, inconvenience etc.)
- In every occurrence where the operator of a vehicle is intentionally refusing to stop for the police with intent to escape, a general occurrence report will be submitted under the caption of Dangerous Operation of Motor Vehicle-Evading Police section of the Criminal Code. If the vehicle can be identified as a stolen vehicle or as having been involved in any other previously reported incident, the case number from the original Stolen Auto or other incident should appear in the report. Records Management will cross reference the related incidents.

5. Enforcement will come primarily from the CID, Street Crimes Unit, which will utilize specific tactics to aid in the arrest and detention of individuals in stolen vehicles. CSS members will assist as requested by CID.

6. Long-term strategies involve research into profile histories of offenders, trends, and creating partnerships with government and non-government agencies.

Operational Plan Enforcement

In accordance with Section L29.5 (5)(c), of the Procedure Manual (Pursuit Policy) the Criminal Investigation Division, Street Crimes Unit, has been authorized by the Executive Committee to proceed with a selected targeting of suspects utilizing such techniques as "boxing in" and "stop sticks". A Project Sergeant will manage this operation at all times. Any report requirements stemming from the Unit's tactics i.e., Use of Force, Pursuit, or Motor Vehicle Accident, will be submitted by the Project Sergeant and forwarded through the Watch Commander.

When requested by the Project Sergeant, members from Community Services Division are requested to assist the CID initiative in the following circumstances:

- When commencing their shift ensure they have an up to date "hot-sheet" and advise the Project Sergeant of any stolen vehicles they view.
- Form an outside perimeter as requested.
- Assist with the seizure of vehicles.
- Assist with the transportation of prisoners.
- Field Sergeants will be supplied with cameras to photograph any damage to the victim's auto for the case summary.
- Watch Commanders will keep a Stolen Vehicle Incident Log to document any occurrences where our members or the public have been put in danger or harassed by drivers of stolen vehicles. The log will be completed daily and a cumulative account will be forwarded to Records Management for inclusion with the case summary for all charged persons in connection with stolen vehicles.

As per policy, unless authorized by the Watch Commander, members from Community Services will not utilize the tactics previously authorized for the CID operation.

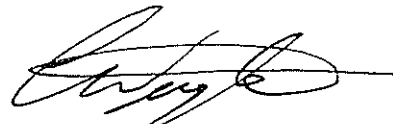
Justice Initiatives and Reporting

To assist with the new case summary requirements, Planning and Research will provide the statistical overview to be placed on each case summary. Records Management will ensure the statistical overview, photographs of vehicle damage, and the Watch Commander's Incident Log will be affixed to every case summary in relation to stolen vehicle offences.

Section L29.7 (2) of the Procedure Manual regarding immediate decision not to pursue has been amended. A general occurrence report captioned Dangerous Operation of Motor Vehicle-Evading Police Section 249.1 of the Criminal Code must now be submitted in all cases where the operator of a motor vehicle attempts to escape and will not stop for police. If it can be identified the vehicle is stolen, the original Stolen Auto report number should be imbedded within the "Flight" report. The utilization of CAD for capturing this information will be discontinued.

Investigators are requested to gather any pertinent information in order to assist the Detention personnel with grounds to oppose release and the remand of prisoners.

An operational meeting chaired by the Deputy Chief will be held daily to specifically discuss the previous 24-hour period and any developments or concerns in connection to stolen vehicles.



Clive Weighill,
Deputy Chief of Police.

Level of Service Inventory - Saskatchewan Youth Edition *

Saskatchewan Corrections and Public Safety
Youth Justice Services

(LSI-SK Youth)

Face Sheet (Revised) - October 7, 200

Surname	Given Names	Sask Health Client Registration Number	Status <input type="checkbox"/> Adult <input type="checkbox"/> Youth
Age	Sources of Information	Birthdate DD MM YY	Gender <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female
Context: Community <input type="checkbox"/> PSR/PDR <input type="checkbox"/> Alternate Measures <input type="checkbox"/> Probation Intake <input type="checkbox"/> Reassessment		Institution <input type="checkbox"/> Classification <input type="checkbox"/> Internal/Program <input type="checkbox"/> Community Release <input type="checkbox"/> Reclassification <input type="checkbox"/> ICM (Intensive Case Management Program)	
		Youth Placement <input type="checkbox"/> Secure Custody <input type="checkbox"/> Open Custody	

A. GENERAL RISK/NEED FACTORS	B. SPECIFIC RISK/NEED FACTORS
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<p>1. CRIMINAL HISTORY</p> <p>___ 1. Any prior dispositions (number = ___)</p> <p>___ 2. Two or more prior dispositions</p> <p>___ 3. Three or more prior dispositions</p> <p>___ 4. Three or more present offences (number = ___)</p> <p>___ 5. Arrested or charged under age 16</p> <p>___ 6. Ever incarcerated upon adjudication</p> <p>___ 7. Ever consequenced in a Y.O. facility for behaviour that resulted in an official incident report. (n = ___)</p> <p>___ 8. Charge laid, probation breached or conditional supervision suspended during a prior community supervision.</p> <p>___ Subtotal (8 items)</p> <p>2. EDUCATION/EMPLOYMENT</p> <p>___ 9. Not in school/currently unemployed</p> <p>___ 10. Frequently not in school/unemployed</p> <p>___ 11. Not in school and never employed for a full year</p> <p>___ 12. Less than grade 10 or equivalent (16 years +)</p> <p>___ 13. More than two years behind age appropriate grade</p> <p>___ 14. Suspended or expelled at least once</p> <p>___ 15. Participation/Performance (___)</p> <p>___ 16. Peer interactions (___)</p> <p>___ 17. Authority interactions (___)</p> <p>___ Subtotal (9 items) Strength ___</p> <p>3. FAMILY CIRCUMSTANCES & PARENTING</p> <p>___ 18. Youth is dissatisfied with family or equivalent relationships (___)</p> <p>___ 19. Lack of prosocial support - parental (___)</p> <p>___ 20. Lack of prosocial support - other relatives (___)</p> <p>___ 21. Criminal - Family/Socuse</p> <p>___ Subtotal (4 items) Strength ___</p> <p>4. LEISURE/RECREATION</p> <p>___ 22. No recent participation in an organized activity</p> <p>___ 23. Could make better use of time (___)</p> <p>___ 24. No personal interests (___)</p> <p>___ Subtotal (3 items) Strength ___</p>	<p>5. COMPANIONS</p> <p>___ 25. Some delinquent acquaintances</p> <p>___ 26. Some delinquent friends</p> <p>___ 27. No prosocial acquaintances</p> <p>___ 28. No prosocial friends (___)</p> <p>___ Subtotal (4 items) Strength ___</p> <p>6. PROCRIMINAL ATTITUDE/ORIENTATION</p> <p>___ 29. Supportive of crime (___)</p> <p>___ 30. Unfavourable toward prosocial convention (___)</p> <p>___ 31. Poor, toward sentence/offence</p> <p>___ 32. Poor, toward supervision/treatment</p> <p>___ Subtotal (4 items) Strength ___</p> <p>7. SUBSTANCE ABUSE</p> <p>___ 33. Alcohol problem, ever</p> <p>___ 34. Drug problem, ever</p> <p>___ 35. Alcohol problem, currently (___)</p> <p>___ 36. Drug problem, currently (___)</p> <p>___ 37. Law violations</p> <p>___ 38. Family/Other relationships</p> <p>___ 39. School/Work</p> <p>___ 40. Medical or other clinical indicators</p> <p>___ Subtotal (8 items) Strength ___</p> <p>8. ANTISOCIAL PATTERN</p> <p>___ 41. Previous assessment for antisocial pattern</p> <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <p>___ 42. Indicators of antisocial pattern</p> <p>___ 43. Early and diverse antisocial behaviour: arrested/charged under age 16 (Item 5 ___), plus at least one of: a.) any formal or official record of assault/violence (___) (i.e., police, school, institutional) b.) escape history (___) c.) charge laid, probation breached or conditional supervision suspended during a prior community supervision (Item 1.8 ___)</p> <p>___ 44. Criminal attitude. At least one of: (Item 29 ___), (Item 30 ___), (Item 32 ___)</p> <p>___ 45. A pattern of generalized trouble. At least four of: (Item 11 ___), (Item 12 ___), (Item 14 ___), (Item 19 ___), (Item 23 ___), (Item 28 ___), (Item 32 ___), (Item 33 ___).</p> <p>___ Subtotal (4 items)</p>
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<p>1. PERSONAL PROBLEMS WITH CRIMINOGENIC POTENTIAL</p> <p>___ 1. Clear problems of compliance (specific conditions)</p> <p>___ 2. Diagnosis of "psychopathy" (adults only)</p> <p>___ 3. Diagnosis of other personality disorder</p> <p>___ 4. Threat from third party</p> <p>___ 5. Problem-solving/self-management skill deficits</p> <p>___ 6. Anger management deficits</p> <p>___ 7. Intimidating/Controlling</p> <p>___ 8. Inappropriate sexual activity</p> <p>___ 9. Poor social skills</p> <p>___ 10. Peers outside age range</p> <p>___ 11. Racist/sexist behaviour</p> <p>___ 12. Underachievement</p> <p>___ 13. Outstanding charges</p> <p>___ 14. Other (specify) _____</p> <p>2. HISTORY OF PERPETRATION</p> <p>___ 1. Sexual assault (extrafamilial)</p> <p>___ 2. Sexual assault (intrafamilial)</p> <p>___ 3. Physical assault (extrafamilial)</p> <p>___ 4. Physical assault ((intrafamilial)</p> <p>___ 5. Assault on an authority figure</p> <p>___ 6. Weapon use</p> <p>___ 7. Fire setting</p> <p>___ 8. Escapes/U.A.L.</p> <p>___ 9. Impaired Driving</p> <p>___ 10. gang involvement</p>	<p>C. CUSTODY EXPERIENCE/ INSTITUTIONAL FACTORS:</p>
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C. CUSTODY EXPERIENCE/ INSTITUTIONAL FACTORS:

* Revised and adapted from the Level of Service Inventory - Ontario Revision (LSI-OR), rights holder: Ontario Ministry of The Solicitor General and Ontario Ministry of Correctional Services. Copyright holders: D.A. Andrews, J. Bonta and MultiHealth Systems, Inc. (Permission pending)

D. RISK/NEED SUMMARY

Total LSI-Score _____
(from Section A)

Total Strengths _____
(from Section A)

Specific risk/need factors _____
(From Section B)

Summary of strengths (Positives: reasons for lowering security/supervision or recommendation for community conditions, from Section A.

Summary of added concerns (Negatives: reasons for increasing security/supervision or not releasing clients as per legislation; from Sections A & B)

E. RISK/NEED PROFILE

Very high	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	30+	Very high
High	7-8	-	-	-	4	4	-	4	20-29	High
Medium	5-6	8-9	3-4	2	3	3	6-8	2-3	11-19	Medium
Low	3-4	3-7	1-2	1	1-2	1-2	2-5	1	5-10	Low
Very Low	0-2	0-2	0	0	0	0	0-1	0	0-4	Very Low
Risk Category	Crim. Hist.	Employ. Educ.	Fam. Mar.	Leis. Rec.	Comp.	Procr. Attit.	Subs. Abuse	Antisoc. Pattern	Total (section a)	

F. OTHER CLIENT ISSUES

1. SOCIAL, HEALTH, AND MENTAL HEALTH

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Financial problems | <input type="checkbox"/> 14 Immigration issues |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Homeless or transient | <input type="checkbox"/> 15 Victim: family violence |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3 Accommodation problems | <input type="checkbox"/> 16 Victim: physical violence |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4 Health problems | <input type="checkbox"/> 17 Victim: sexual assault |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5 Depressed | <input type="checkbox"/> 18 Victim: severe emotional abuse documented |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 6 Physical disability | <input type="checkbox"/> 19 Victim of severe neglect documented |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 7 Low self-esteem | <input type="checkbox"/> 20 Other _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 8 Shy/withdrawn | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 9 Diagnosis of psychosis | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 10 Suicide attempts/threat | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 11 Other (self harm) | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 12 Learning disability | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 13 Other evidence of emotional distress (specify) _____ | |

G. SPECIAL RESPONSIVE CONSIDERATIONS

e.g. developmental delays
Comments: _____

Comments: _____

Assessor's Name _____

Assessor's Position _____

Assessor's Signature _____

DD MM YY
_____|_____|_____