



MEMORANDUM



DATE: 2004-10-27
TO: Chief of Police P.D. Cook
FROM: Sergeant R.C.J. Seguin
SUBJECT: Canadian Crime Statistics 2003

Introduction

In August of 2004, the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics released Crime Statistics in Canada, 2003. Recently, they also released Canadian Crime Statistics 2003. Both publications cover a wide range of topics and provide an avenue for comparing crime rates at the local level to the national level.

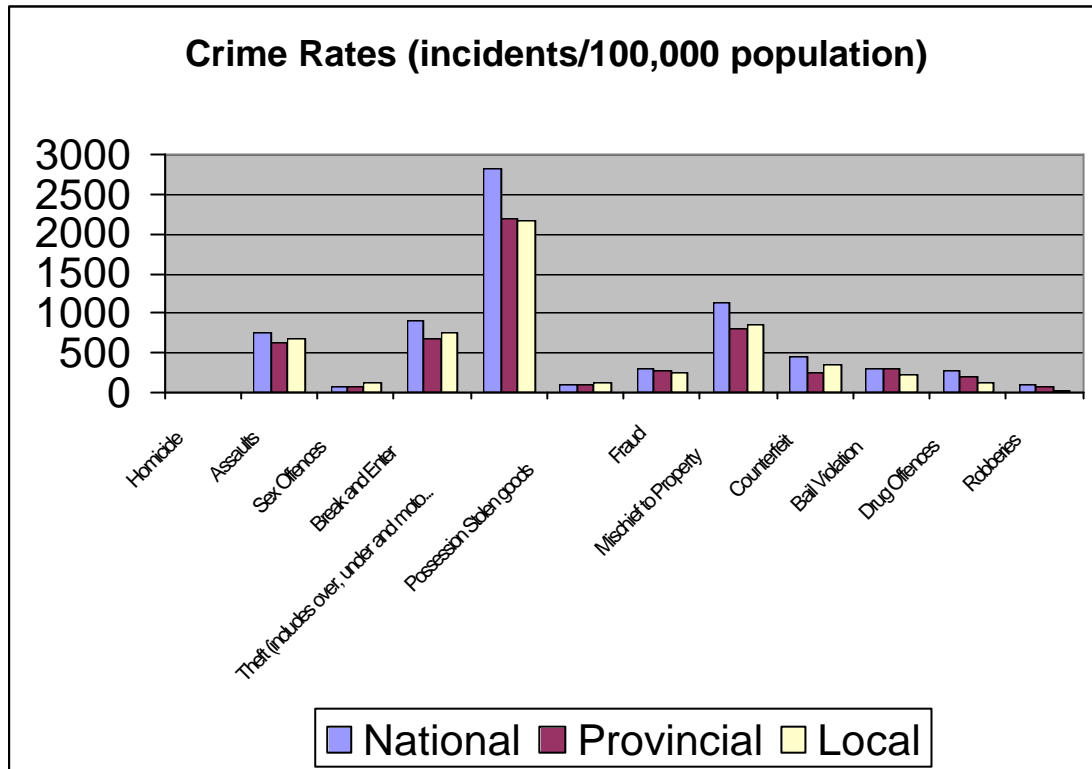
Table 1 below provides a quick look at comparisons of the National, Provincial and Local crime rates, based on incidents per 100,000 population. Although not an exhaustive list, these major crime categories provide a good overview of reported crime and our investigative results.

Table 1

CATEGORY	NATIONAL CRIME RATE (incidents per 100,000 population)	NORTH BAY POLICE SERVICE CRIME RATE (incidents per 100,000 population)	PROVINCIAL CRIME RATE (incidents per 100,000 population)
Homicide	2	2*	1
Assaults	746	681	634
Sex Offences	74	112	63
Break and Enter	899	751	667
Theft (includes over, under and motor vehicle)	2825	2178	2207
Possession Stolen goods	104	123	96
Fraud	294	243	270
Mischief to Property	1126	861	810
Counterfeit	438	355	254
Bail Violation	310	217	290
Drug Offences	272	118	184
Robberies	90	23	78

* Only one (1) incident in 2003

Table 2



Violent Crime

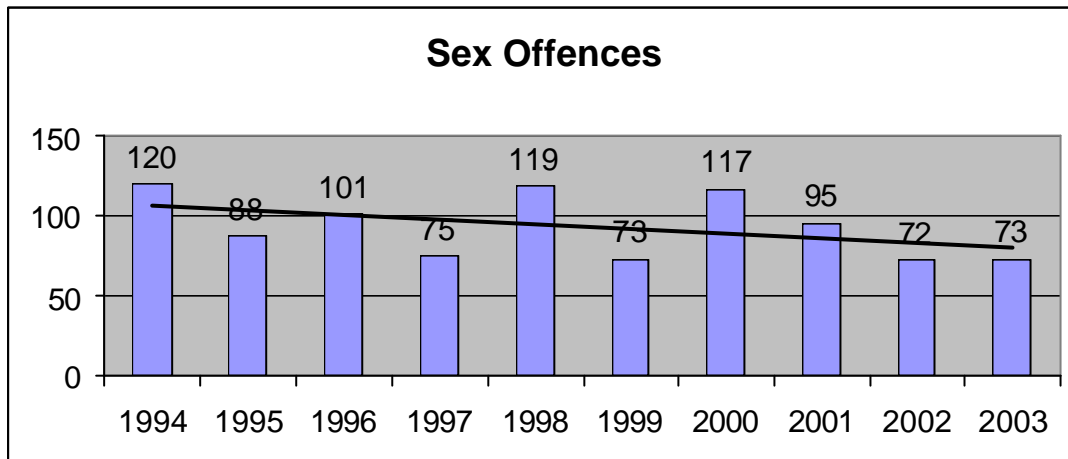
Table 2 above provides for easier comparisons. In the first category, the data set for Homicide is so small that any comparisons would be inaccurate. There was only one such reported incident in our jurisdiction in 2003. In relation to Assaults, it is noted that the local figure is slightly lower (8.7%) than the national level but higher (7.4%) than the provincial level. Factors that may be affecting this is the strong position taken by this Service in the area of Domestic Violence as well as the close working relationship we have with School Boards and the protocols in place for the reporting of violent crime in our schools.

This close working relationship with community partners may also be a contributing factor to the level of reported sex offences. Local figures are higher than both the provincial and national levels. It is noteworthy to look at clearance rates in this area. Locally, 80.8% of sex crime incidents are cleared with the offender identified and, where appropriate, charged. The national clearance rate is 61.1%, with the provincial level slightly higher at 69.1%. The major contributor to this is that this community is fortunate that stranger on stranger assaults of this nature are rare. Quality of investigations, public confidence and a good working

relationship with victims' assistance agencies also contribute to higher levels of reporting.

In looking at the long-term trend of reported sex offences, they have been on a steady decline over the past decade, with peaks and valleys appearing over time. Figure 3 below provides a 10-year look at sex offence reporting locally. The national trend has also followed the same trend, with a peak in the early 1990's and an overall decline of 39% over the past decade. This coincides with changes in legislation during that same period and police services across the country receiving and clearing "historic" sexual offences. From 120 reported incidents reported in 1994 to 73 in 2003, we have also seen a reduction of 39% over the past 10 years.

Table 3



Property Crime

The next crime category involves property offences. The level of reported break and enter offences locally is 16.5% lower than the national level and 12.6% higher than the provincial figure. The level of thefts locally is lower than both the national and provincial figures. Of significance is the Possession Stolen Property numbers where our local level is 18.3% higher than the national level and 22.0% higher than the provincial numbers. This relates directly to the table below, which clearly shows that our clearance levels in the areas of property crimes are at par or higher than the national and provincial clearance rates.

Table 4

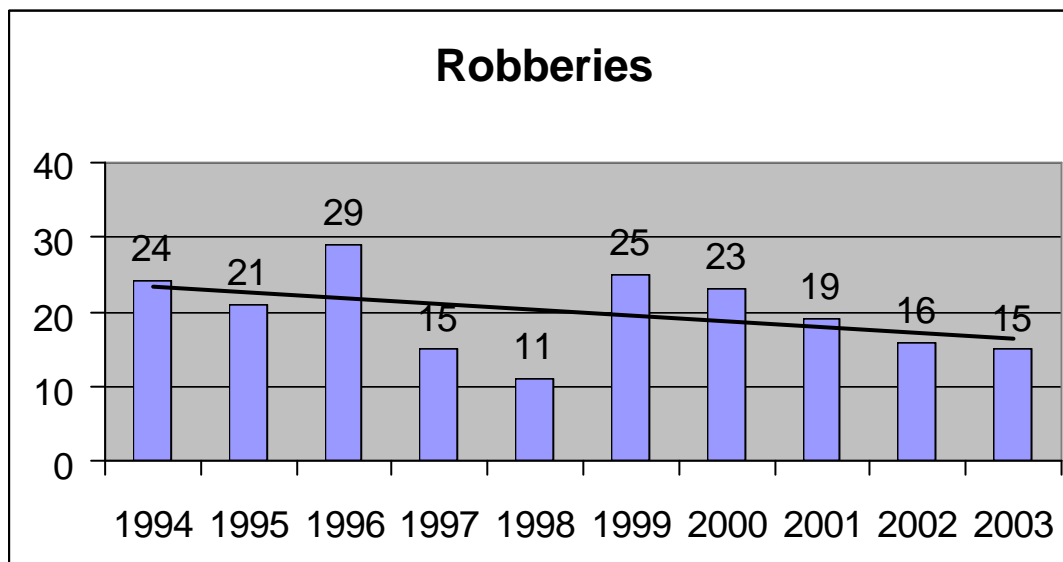
CLEARANCE RATES		
	Break and Enter	Theft
National	15.1%	15.2%
Provincial	17.9%	16.0%
Local	27.3%	16.7%

Therefore, we can conclude that the higher rate of Possession Stolen Property Incidents is directly related to higher clearance rates of property crimes. More of these crimes are solved, with close to 50% of the property stolen being recovered. This again speaks to the quality of investigations and officers conducting thorough inquiries into reported property crimes.

Other Offences

The next four categories, Mischief, Counterfeit, Bail Violations and Drugs show no anomalies in that they are in the range of the national and provincial levels or below. The last category however shows a significant difference between national and provincial levels. Robberies locally are 74.4% lower than the national level and 70.5% lower than the provincial figures.

Table 5



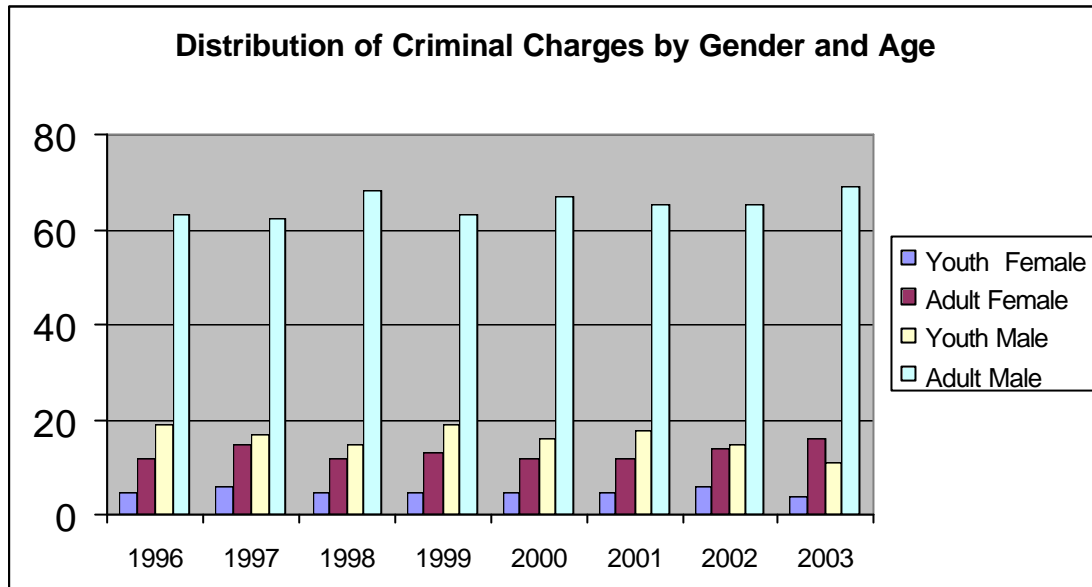
The above table shows a steady decline in the number of robberies reported over the past ten years. Nationally, the rate of robberies has been declining since 1991 but saw a 5% increase in 2003. We continue to benefit from good crime prevention strategies and close ties to community partners like the taxi industry that vigilantly keep watch over vulnerable targets like convenience stores. Our size and location contribute greatly to being a safe community and anonymity in a City of our size is difficult to achieve.

Youth Crime

National figures show an increase in the Youth Crime Rate, with a slight increase in violent crime and a 4% increase in property crimes. Locally, table 6 below

displays the distribution of criminal charges by age and gender over the past decade.

Table 6



Youth females dropped 2% from 2002 to 2003 and youth males decreased 4%. This may be attributable to new legislation with the Youth Criminal Justice Act proclaimed in April of 2003. A new approach to youth crime and the laying of charges was introduced, with informal police warnings referrals to community programs, formal police cautions, Crown cautions and extrajudicial sanctions programs being introduced.

Further analysis of local figures indicates that the distribution between youth and adult from 1996 to 2002 has varied between 75% to 80% attributed to adult offenders and 20% to 25% to youths. Using 2003 data and including those youths not charged, the distribution is well within those ranges. Adults were charged in 78% of criminal cases, with youths being charged or identified as responsible and not charged in 22% of the cases. Therefore, there is no significant movement in the distribution of crime between youths and adults noted.

Trends in North Bay Crime

The first part of this report dealt with comparisons of crime categories to national and provincial levels. They cannot be examined with looking at local trends in crime. Although we have looked at Sex Offenses and Robberies, other types of crime should be looked at. It is widely felt that our northern Ontario community is somewhat behind southern Ontario trends and that, over time, we can expect to see some of the same issues that our southern neighbours have to deal with.

Firstly, in the area of violent crime, assaults have been increasing over the past decade. Although somewhat attributable to changes in legislation like the Safe Schools Act, the anticipated impact of these changes should level off over time. The legislative change dates back to the year 2000 with implementation of the Police/School Protocol following shortly afterward. As seen in Figure 7, there was a sharp increase in reported assaults from 2001 to 2002, and only a marginal decrease from 2002 to 2003. The revised August statistics show that reported assaults have increased by 46% in the first eight months of 2004 over the same period in 2003. Robberies have increased from 9 to 13. Break and Enters increased 17% from 204 to 238. Thefts have increased 14% and Mischief to Property is up 15%.

Table 7

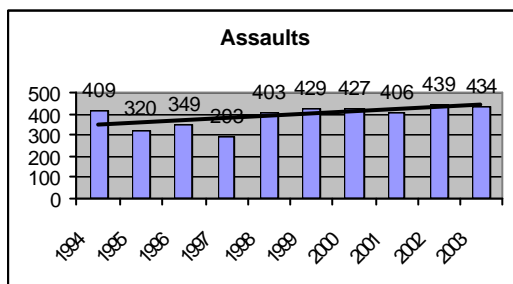


Table 8

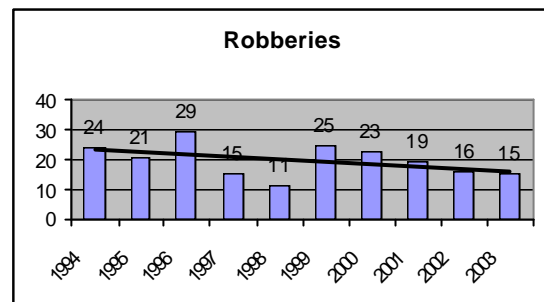


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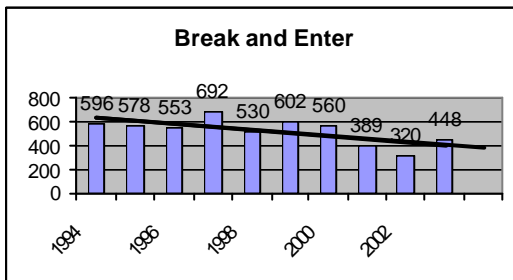


Table 10

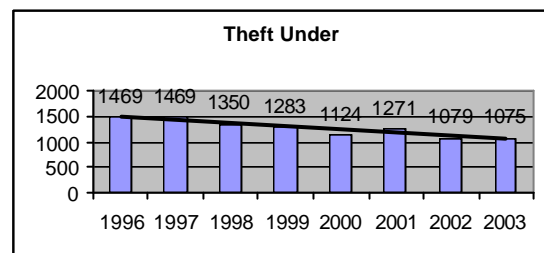


Table 11

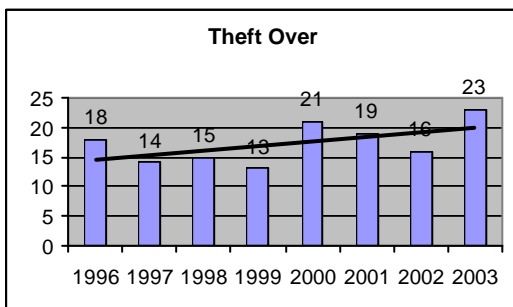
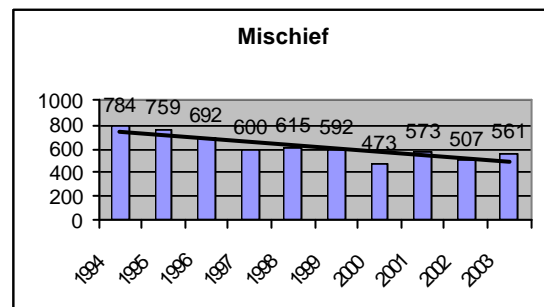


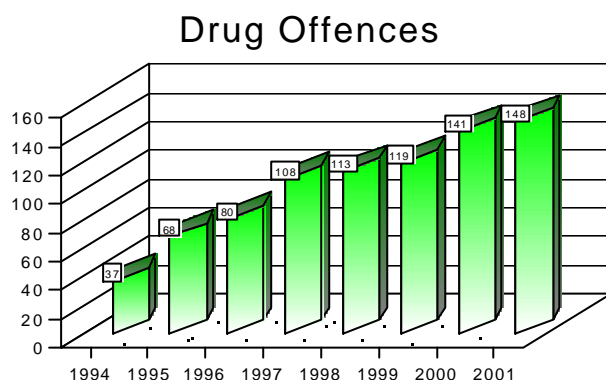
Table 12



National trends indicate that 2003 saw its first substantial increase in property crime since 1991; driven by an increase in the rate of thefts under \$5000, motor vehicle thefts and break-ins. Apparent increases locally as indicated in the first eight months of 2004 may be following that trend, only one year later.

Although the national figures indicate a decrease in drug crimes, enforcement locally has revealed an ever-increasing number of drug charges. In August of this year, 63 offences were noted, three times greater than the same period a year earlier. This is no doubt due to uncertainty in enforcement options due to Court of Appeal decisions in 2002. However, from 1994 to 2001, we see a steady increase in the number of drug offences as shown in Table 13. Further, the increasing number of large-scale drug grow operations being discovered in the region is indicative of organized criminal activity making its way into the area.

Table 13



Conclusion

Although statistically there are a number of positive comments to be made in relation to the activities of the Service in 2003, they must be made with caution and a vision of the future. Using past data as a predictor of the future along with national and provincial trends, it is clear that there are increases in particular crime categories locally that must be considered in relation to the allocation of resources and deployment.

Current-year youth crime figures were not available at the time of this report. However, looking at the types of crimes – thefts, break-ins, and mischief – combined with what may be a more prevalent availability of drugs, recent criminal activity identifying the apparent organizing of youth gangs, increases in violent crimes like assaults and robberies, it is apparent that there are underlying issues that we must examine that may be youth related. This will require the appropriate resources being put into intelligence gathering and analysis, street level investigation and enforcement.

Recent more sophisticated criminal activity in the areas of computer crime, bankcard scanning, complex frauds and scams, and provincial scale property crime rings will also require evaluating available resources and providing increased personnel, training and support to these investigations.

We should not only rely on national and provincial trends and crime levels for comparisons to our own but use them to identify threats to our community and ensure that we are prepared to effectively and efficiently deal with the issues.

We continue to have high clearance levels in most crime categories. However, indications are that there may be an increase in criminal activity that will place greater demands on our resources.

Respectfully submitted;

(R.C.J. Seguin) Sgt.
Quality Assurance