# CITY OF WEST DES MOINES
# CITY COUNCIL MEETING COMMUNICATION

**ITEM:** Accept Comprehensive Analysis Report on WDM Police Department Completed by the Center for Public Safety Management LLC (CPSM) **DATE:** February 19, 2024

**FINANCIAL IMPACT:** The base cost of the study was $73,334 and the agreement allowed for additional travel expenditures of CPSM staff. Ending actual invoiced cost of $77,341 will be paid from General Fund Account 100.670.670.5250.460 – Human Resources Contracted Services.

**BACKGROUND:** On February 20, 2023, the City Council approved a Professional Services Agreement with the Center for Public Safety Management, LLC (CPSM) to provide a comprehensive review of the organizational structure, current workload, and staffing needs of the WDM Police Department.

This report has now been completed and through this action the Council is being asked to approve and accept the attached final report.

**OUTSTANDING ISSUES** (if any): None

**RECOMMENDATION:** Adopt Resolution for approval and acceptance of the Comprehensive Analysis Report completed by CPSM LLC of the City of West Des Moines Police Services

**Lead Staff Member:** Todd Sadler, Human Resources Director

**STAFF REVIEWS**

| | |
|---|---|
| Department Director | Todd Sadler, Human Resources Director |
| Appropriations/Finance | Tim Stiles, Finance Director TS |
| Legal | |
| Agenda Acceptance | AA |

**PUBLICATION(S)** (if applicable)

| | |
|---|---|
| Published In | |
| Dates(s) Published | |

**SUBCOMMITTEE REVIEW** (if applicable)

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Committee | | | |
| Date Reviewed | | | |
| Recommendation | Yes | No | |

**RESOLUTION**

**WHEREAS,** the City Council of the City of West Des Moines approved the comprehensive analysis final report of the City of West Des Moines Police Department to be conducted by Center for Public Safety Management LLC (CPSM). The comprehensive analysis included the review of the organizational structure, workload, and staffing needs. CPSM utilized a standardized approach for conducting the analysis of how effectively, efficiently, and safely we're utilizing our resources in the department.

**WHEREAS,** the Human Resources Director and Chief of the Police Department reviewed and approved the report.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOVLED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WEST DES MOINES, IOWA,** that the attached Police Operations and Data Analysis Report for the City of West Des Moines is hereby approved and accepted.

**PASSED AND APPROVED this 19th day of February 2024.**

_____
Russ Trimble, Mayor

**ATTEST:**

_____
Ryan T. Jacobson, CMC, City Clerk

CENTER FOR PUBLIC SAFETY MANAGEMENT, LLC

# POLICE OPERATIONS AND DATA ANALYSIS REPORT

## CITY OF WEST DES MOINES FINAL REPORT

CPSM®

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ICMA

Exclusive Provider of Public Safety Technical Services for
International City/County Management Association

# THE ASSOCIATION & THE COMPANY

## INTERNATIONAL CITY/COUNTY MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION (ICMA)

The International City/County Management Association (ICMA) is a 109-year-old, non-profit professional association of local government administrators and managers, with approximately 13,000 members located in 32 countries.

Since its inception in 1914, ICMA has been dedicated to assisting local governments and their managers in providing services to their citizens in an efficient and effective manner. ICMA advances the knowledge of local government best practices with its website, www.icma.org, publications, research, professional development, and membership.

## CENTER FOR PUBLIC SAFETY MANAGEMENT (CPSM)

The ICMA Center for Public Safety Management (ICMA/CPSM was launched by ICMA to provide support to local governments in the areas of police, fire, and Emergency Medical Services.

The Center also represents local governments at the federal level and has been involved in numerous projects with the Department of Justice and the Department of Homeland Security. In 2014, as part of a restructuring at ICMA, the Center for Public Safety Management (CPSM) spun out as a separate company and is now the exclusive provider of public safety technical assistance for ICMA. CPSM provides training and research for the Association's members and represents ICMA in its dealings with the federal government and other public safety professional associations such as CALEA, PERF, IACP, IFCA, IPMA-HR, DOJ, BJA, COPS, NFPA, etc.

The Center for Public Safety Management, LLC, maintains the same team of individuals performing the same level of service that it had for ICMA. CPSM's local government technical assistance experience includes workload and deployment analysis using our unique methodology and subject matter experts to examine department organizational structure and culture, identify workload and staffing needs, and identify industry best practices.

We have conducted more than 400 such studies in 46 states and provinces and more than 275 communities ranging in population size 3,300 (Lewes, DE) to 800,000 (Indianapolis, IN).

**Thomas Wieczorek** is the Director of the Center for Public Safety Management.
**Leonard Matarese** serves as the Managing Partner for Research and Project Development.
**Dr. Dov Chelst** is the Director of Quantitative Analysis.

# CENTER FOR PUBLIC SAFETY MANAGEMENT PROJECT CONTRIBUTORS

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# CONTENTS

**Tables** ..... vi
**Figures** ..... viii
**Section 1. Executive Summary** ..... 1
General Observations ..... 2
Key Recommendations ..... 3
**Section 2. Methodology** ..... 8
**Section 3. Community and Department Overview** ..... 9
Community ..... 9
Demographics ..... 9
Law Enforcement Services ..... 10
Uniform Crime Report / Crime Trends ..... 11
Strategic Planning ..... 15
Succession Planning ..... 15
Mission and Values Statements ..... 16
Department Policy Manual ..... 16
CALEA Accreditation ..... 16
Department Structure / Chain of Command ..... 17
Staffing ..... 18
**Section 4. Operations Division** ..... 19
Division Management / Structure / Scheduling ..... 19
Minimum Staffing ..... 20
Patrol Deployment and Workload ..... 21
Rule of 60 – Part 1 ..... 22
Rule of 60 – Part 2 ..... 23
Workload Analysis ..... 24
West Des Moines Police Territories ..... 37
Out-of-Service Activities ..... 40
Workload Mitigation Strategies ..... 41
Response to Traffic Collisions ..... 41
Use of Civilian Employees ..... 41
Vehicle Lock-Outs ..... 42
Alternative Reporting Options ..... 42
False Alarm Mitigation ..... 42
Response Times ..... 43

High-Priority Calls ... 47
West Des Moines PD – Comparative Analysis ... 48
Patrol Supervision ... 48
Patrol Staffing Recommendations ... 49
**Section 5. Support Services Division ... 52**
Criminal Investigations ... 52
Workload ... 52
Training and Policy ... 53
Clearance Rates ... 54
Crime Analysis ... 55
Administrative Services Unit ... 57
Property and Evidence ... 57
Crime Scene Investigations Unit ... 61
Records ... 61
Front Desk ... 62
Division Management ... 62
Special Operations Unit ... 62
School Resource Officers (SROs) ... 62
Traffic Unit ... 63
K9 Officers ... 69
Training and Emergency Management Unit ... 75
Community Outreach Programs and Services Unit ... 78
Crisis Intervention ... 79
Entertainment Response Unit ... 80
**Section 6. Other Aspects Of Department Operations ... 88**
Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) ... 88
Emergency Communications/Dispatch ... 90
Technology ... 91
Body-Worn Cameras and Video ... 93
Public Information ... 94
Public Safety Chaplains ... 95
Youth Justice Initiative ... 97
**Section 7. Summary ... 99**
**Section 8. Data Analysis: Operations Division ... 102**
Workload Analysis ... 102
Out-of-Service Activities ... 125
Deployment ... 130

Response Times ..... 140
All Calls ..... 141
High-Priority Calls ..... 147
Appendix A: Call Type Classification ..... 149
Appendix B: Uniform Crime Report Information ..... 154
**Section 9. Data Analysis: Special Operations Units ..... 158**
Traffic Unit ..... 158
K9 Units ..... 165
Entertainment Response Unit ..... 172

# TABLES

TABLE 3-1: Demographic and Economic Profile of the City of West Des Moines ..... 10
TABLE 3-2: Reported Crime Rates in 2021 and 2022, by City ..... 11
TABLE 3-3: West Des Moines Comparable Cities, Reported Crime Rates 2021 and 2022 ..... 12
TABLE 3-4: Employee Totals for WDMPD Selected Comparable Cities ..... 12
TABLE 3-5: Reported West Des Moines, Iowa, and National Crime Rates, by Year ..... 14
TABLE 3-6: Reported West Des Moines, Iowa, and National Crime Clearance Rates, 2021 ..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**
TABLE 3-7: Authorized and Actual Personnel, August 2023 ..... 18
TABLE 4-1: Operations Division Staffing ..... 19
TABLE 4-2: Events per Day, by Initiator ..... 33
TABLE 4-3: Events per Day, by Category ..... 33
TABLE 4-4: Calls per Day, by Category and Month ..... 35
TABLE 4-5: Primary Unit's Average Occupied Times, by Category and Initiator ..... 36
TABLE 4-6: Average Number of Responding Units, by Initiator and Category ..... 37
TABLE 4-7: Calls and Work Hours by Beat, per Day ..... 39
TABLE 4-8: Activities and Occupied Times by Description ..... 40
TABLE 4-9: Average Response Time Components, by Category ..... 45
TABLE 4-10: Average Response Time Components, by Beat ..... 46
TABLE 4-11: Average and 90th Percentile Response Times, by Priority ..... 47
TABLE 4-12: Comparative Analysis of the West Des Moines PD ..... 48
TABLE 5-1: Reported West Des Moines, Iowa, and National Crime Clearance Rates, 2021 ..... 54
TABLE 5-2: Reported West Des Moines and Iowa Crime Clearance Rates, 2022 ..... 55
TABLE 5-3: Property and Evidence Intake and Disposition, 2019–2023 YTD ..... 59
TABLE 5-4: Events, Calls, and Workload by Category, Traffic Units ..... 64
TABLE 5-5: Calls per Day by Initiator and Months, Traffic Units ..... 65
TABLE 5-6: Events, Calls, and Workload by Category, K-9 Units ..... 70
TABLE 5-7: Calls per Day by Initiator and Months, K-9 Units ..... 71
TABLE 5-8: Events, Calls, and Workload by Category, ERU ..... 82
TABLE 5-9: Calls per Day by Initiator and Months, ERU ..... 83
TABLE 8-1: Events per Day, by Initiator ..... 104
TABLE 8-2: Events per Day, by Category ..... 106
TABLE 8-3: Calls per Day, by Category ..... 108
TABLE 8-4: Calls per Day, by Initiator and Months ..... 109
TABLE 8-5: Calls per Day, by Category and Month ..... 111
TABLE 8-6: Primary Unit's Average Occupied Times, by Category and Initiator ..... 113
TABLE 8-7: Average Number of Responding Units, by Initiator and Category ..... 115
TABLE 8-8: Number of Responding Units, by Category, Community-initiated Calls ..... 117
TABLE 8-9: Calls and Work Hours by Beat, per Day ..... 119
TABLE 8-10: Calls and Work Hours per Day, by Category, Summer 2022 ..... 122
TABLE 8-11: Calls and Work Hours per Day, by Category, Winter 2023 ..... 124
TABLE 8-12: Activities and Occupied Times by Description ..... 125
TABLE 8-13: Activities and Workload per Day, by Month ..... 126
TABLE 8-14: Activities per Day, by Day of Week ..... 127
TABLE 8-15: Activities per Hour, by Hour of Day ..... 129
TABLE 8-16: Average Response Time Components, by Category ..... 143
TABLE 8-17: 90th Percentiles for Response Time Components, by Category ..... 144
TABLE 8-18: Average Response Time Components, by Beat ..... 146
TABLE 8-19: Average and 90th Percentile Response Times, by Priority ..... 147

TABLE 8-20: Call Type, by Category ..... 149
TABLE 8-21: Reported Crime Rates in 2021 and 2022, by City ..... 154
TABLE 8-22: Reported West Des Moines, Iowa, and National Crime Rates, by Year ..... 156
TABLE 8-23: Reported West Des Moines, Iowa, and National Crime Clearance Rates, 2021 ..... 157
TABLE 8-24: Reported West Des Moines, Iowa, and National Crime Clearance Rates, 2022 ..... 157
TABLE 9-1: Events, Calls, and Workload by Category, Traffic Units ..... 159
TABLE 9-2: Calls per Day by Initiator and Months, Traffic Units ..... 160
TABLE 9-3: Activities and Occupied Times by Description, Traffic Units ..... 161
TABLE 9-4: Events, Calls, and Workload by Category, K9 Units ..... 166
TABLE 9-5: Calls per Day by Initiator and Months, K-9 Units ..... 167
TABLE 9-6: Activities and Occupied Times by Description, K9 Units ..... 168
TABLE 9-7: Events, Calls, and Workload by Category, ERU ..... 173
TABLE 9-8: Calls per Day by Initiator and Months, ERU ..... 174
TABLE 9-9: Activities and Occupied Times by Description, ERU ..... 175

# FIGURES

FIGURE 3-1: Reported West Des Moines Violent and Property Crime Rates, By Year ..... 13
FIGURE 3-2: Reported West Des Moines and State Crime Rates, by Year..... 13
FIGURE 3-3: West Des Moines Police Department Organizational Chart ..... 17
FIGURE 4-1: Deployed Officers, Weekdays, Summer 2022 ..... 24
FIGURE 4-2: Deployment and All Workload, Weekdays, Summer 2022 ..... 24
FIGURE 4-3: Percentage of Workload, Weekdays, Summer 2022 ..... 25
FIGURE 4-4: Deployed Officers, Weekends, Summer 2022 ..... 26
FIGURE 4-5: Deployment and All Workload, Weekends, Summer 2022 ..... 26
FIGURE 4-6: Percentage of Workload, Weekends, Summer 2022 ..... 27
FIGURE 4-7: Deployed Officers, Weekdays, Winter 2023 ..... 28
FIGURE 4-8: Deployment and All Workload, Weekdays, Winter 2023 ..... 28
FIGURE 4-9: Percentage of Workload, Weekdays, Winter 2023..... 29
FIGURE 4-10: Deployed Officers, Weekends, Winter 2023 ..... 30
FIGURE 4-11: Deployment and All Workload, Weekends, Winter 2023 ..... 30
FIGURE 4-12: Percentage of Workload, Weekends, Winter 2023 ..... 31
FIGURE 4-13: Percentage Events per Day, by Initiator ..... 32
FIGURE 4-14: Percentage Events per Day, by Category ..... 34
FIGURE 4-15: West Des Moines Police Patrol Territories ..... 38
FIGURE 4-16: Percentage Calls and Work Hours, by Territory ..... 38
FIGURE 4-17: Average Response Time and Dispatch Processing, by Hour of Day, Winter and Summer, 2022 ..... 44
FIGURE 5-1: Calls per Day by Initiator and Months, Traffic Units ..... 65
FIGURE 5-2: Deployment and All Workload, Traffic Units ..... 66
FIGURE 5-3: Workload Percentage by Hour, Traffic Units..... 67
FIGURE 5-4: Calls per Day by Initiator and Months, K-9 Units ..... 71
FIGURE 5-5: Deployment and All Workload, K-9 Units ..... 72
FIGURE 5-6: Workload Percentage by Hour, K-9 Units..... 73
FIGURE 5-7: Calls per Day by Initiator and Months, ERU ..... 83
FIGURE 5-8: Deployment and All Workload, ERU ..... 84
FIGURE 5-9: Workload Percentage by Hour, ERU ..... 85
FIGURE 8-1: Percentage Events per Day, by Initiator ..... 104
FIGURE 8-2: Percentage Events per Day, by Category ..... 105
FIGURE 8-3: Percentage Calls per Day, by Category ..... 107
FIGURE 8-4: Calls per Day, by Initiator and Month ..... 109
FIGURE 8-5: Calls per Day, by Category and Month ..... 110
FIGURE 8-6: Primary Unit's Average Occupied Times, by Category and Initiator ..... 112
FIGURE 8-7: Number of Responding Units, by Initiator and Category..... 114
FIGURE 8-8: Number of Responding Units, by Category, Community-initiated Calls..... 116
FIGURE 8-9: Percentage Calls and Work Hours, by Territory ..... 118
FIGURE 8-10: Percentage Calls and Work Hours, by Category, Summer 2022 ..... 121
FIGURE 8-11: Percentage Calls and Work Hours, by Category, Winter 2023 ..... 123
FIGURE 8-12: Activities per Day, by Month ..... 126
FIGURE 8-13: Activities per Day, by Day of Week..... 127
FIGURE 8-14: Activities per Day, by Hour of Day..... 128
FIGURE 8-15: Deployed Officers, Weekdays, Summer 2022 ..... 131
FIGURE 8-16: Deployed Officers, Weekends, Summer 2022 ..... 131
FIGURE 8-17: Deployed Officers, Weekdays, Winter 2023 ..... 132
FIGURE 8-18: Deployed Officers, Weekends, Winter 2023 ..... 132

FIGURE 8-19: Deployment and All Workload, Weekdays, Summer 2022 ..... 134
FIGURE 8-20: Deployment and All Workload, Weekends, Summer 2022 ..... 134
FIGURE 8-21: Deployment and All Workload, Weekdays, Winter 2023 ..... 135
FIGURE 8-22: Deployment and All Workload, Weekends, Winter 2023 ..... 135
FIGURE 8-23: Percentage of Workload, Weekdays, Summer 2022 ..... 137
FIGURE 8-24: Percentage of Workload, Weekends, Summer 2022 ..... 137
FIGURE 8-25: Percentage of Workload, Weekdays, Winter 2023 ..... 138
FIGURE 8-26: Percentage of Workload, Weekends, Winter 2023 ..... 138
FIGURE 8-27: Average Response Time and Dispatch Processing, by Hour of Day, Winter and Summer 2022 ..... 141
FIGURE 8-28: Average Response Time by Category, Summer 2022 ..... 142
FIGURE 8-29: Average Response Time by Category, Winter 2023 ..... 142
FIGURE 8-30: Average Response Time Components, by Territory ..... 145
FIGURE 8-31: Average Response Times and Dispatch Processing for High-priority Calls, by Hour 148
FIGURE 8-32: Reported West Des Moines Violent and Property Crime Rates, by Year ..... 155
FIGURE 8-33: Reported City and State Crime Rates, by Year ..... 155
FIGURE 9-1: Calls per Day by Initiator and Months, Traffic Units ..... 160
FIGURE 9-2: Deployment and All Workload, Traffic Units ..... 162
FIGURE 9-3: Workload Percentage by Hour, Traffic Units ..... 163
FIGURE 9-4: Calls per Day by Initiator and Months, K9 Units ..... 167
FIGURE 9-5: Deployment and All Workload, K-9 Units ..... 169
FIGURE 9-6: Workload Percentage by Hour, K9 Units ..... 170
FIGURE 9-7: Calls per Day by Initiator and Months, ERU ..... 174
FIGURE 9-8: Deployment and All Workload, ERU ..... 176
FIGURE 9-9: Workload Percentage by Hour, ERU ..... 177

# SECTION 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Center for Public Safety Management, LLC (CPSM) was commissioned to review the operations of the West Des Moines Police Department (WDMPD). While our analysis covered all aspects of the department's operations, particular areas of focus of this study included identifying appropriate staffing of the department given the workload, community demographics, and crime levels; the effectiveness of the organizational structure; and efficiency and effectiveness of division/unit processes.

We analyzed the department workload using operations research methodology and compared that workload to staffing and deployment levels. We reviewed other performance indicators that enabled us to understand the implications of the service demand on current staffing. Our study involved data collection, interviews with key operational and administrative personnel, focus groups with line-level department personnel, on-site observations of the job environment, data analysis, comparative analysis, the development of alternatives and recommendations, and engagement with key city stakeholders.

Based upon CPSM's detailed assessment of the West Des Moines Police Department, we conclude that the department is doing an outstanding job, considering the challenges associated with the community's growth, with a staff is dedicated to the department's mission of providing quality police service. Throughout this report, we will strive to allow the reader to look inside the department to understand its strengths and challenges. We sincerely hope that all parties utilize the information and recommendations contained herein constructively to improve the operations of the West Des Moines Police Department to provide a higher level of service to the community.

As part of this Executive Summary, we offer general observations that identify some of the department's more significant issues. We also list key recommendations for consideration; we believe these recommendations will enhance organizational effectiveness. Often these types of recommendations require a substantial financial commitment. It is important to note that this report will examine specific sections of the department and offer a discussion of our observations and recommendations for each.

The list of recommendations is extensive. Should the West Des Moines Police Department choose to implement any or all recommendations, it must be recognized that this process will not take just weeks or even months to complete but perhaps years. The recommendations are intended to form the basis of a long-term improvement plan for the city and department. Though lengthy, this list of recommendations is standard in our operational assessments of agencies around the country and should not be interpreted as an indictment of the department. While all of the recommendations are important, we suggest the West Des Moines Police Department, in conjunction with the City Manager and community members, decide which recommendations should take priority for implementation.

§ § §

## GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

- The West Des Moines community is demanding of a high level of service from its police department and its public safety agencies.
- There is a commitment to providing the West Des Moines Police Department with the necessary equipment and resources to effectively do its job and deliver quality service.
- The employees of the West Des Moines Police Department appear to enjoy working for the department and feel strongly that they are fortunate to work for what they describe as a premier agency in the Des Moines Metro area. Although employees willingly shared internal challenges with CPSM consultants, there appears to be a high level of morale in the agency.
- West Des Moines enjoys a relatively low crime rate and has a general feeling of safety. However, there are policing challenges that exist within the community related to its retail, hospitality, and entertainment areas. The police department repeatedly expressed its concerns that it be positioned to effectively handle the challenges that could arise within those heavily trafficked areas of the community.
- The department is heavily invested in training. In fact, employees cited training as one of the department's greatest strengths.
- There are some anomalies in the data on workload and which should be addressed; these concerns will be addressed in the operations section of this report.
- There is a consensus that WDMPD has stretched its capacity with its efforts to satisfy community expectations for policing. The department is trying to do more with its resources than its true capacity may allow.
- The West Des Moines Police Department should evaluate its deployment of resources to better support the department patrol function.
- Overall, WDMPD is a fine organization that is performing its policing responsibilities very well.

§ § §

## KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

### Section 3. Community and Department Overview

#### *Community*

*(See p. 9.)*

1. CPSM recommends that an improved notification process for police officers be developed to outline changes to geographic boundaries of the city.

#### *Succession Planning*

*(See pp. 15-16.)*

2. CPSM recommends WDMPD clearly outline promotional expectations in policy 1002.
3. CPSM recommends that WDMPD engage in a formal succession planning process. Succession planning should heavily factor in the needs of the department as well as future leadership skills and qualities desired in its leaders.

### Section 4. Operations Division

*(See pp. 19-51.)*

4. CPSM recommends that WDMPD take steps to accurately capture officer workload within the department's CAD system.
5. CPSM recommends that CPD explore alternative workload mitigation measures as outlined in this report.
6. CPSM recommends that West Des Moines enforce its false alarm policy.
7. We recommend that WDMPD modify its patrol shift supervisor structure.
8. CPSM recommends an increase of 10 FTE sworn employees to be assigned to the patrol workforce.
9. CPSM recommends two community service officers be assigned to the patrol function to assist and augment calls for service.

### Section 5. Support Services Division

#### *Criminal Investigations*

*(See pp. 52-55.)*

10. In preparation for a future need for additional resources, we recommend that WDMPD begin planning to add civilian personnel to the Investigations Unit.
11. Enhance the new detective training manual to include an area for signing off on satisfactory performance of designated tasks.
12. CPSM recommends adding topical training courses for new detectives to the detective training manual to ensure each new detective gets minimal training in desired areas.
13. To enhance clearance rates for some crime types, CPSM recommends that WDMPD develop an internal method of tracking clearance rates per detective and crime type.

#### *Crime Analysis*

*(See pp. 55-57.)*

14. CPSM recommends that WDMPD dedicate specific meetings or additional time in regular management meetings for tactical discussions about crime trends and safety issues in the community.

15. CPSM recommends that WDMPD consider a long-term plan to remove certain duties from the crime analyst and create an additional civilian position in the Investigation Unit to handle digital evidence collection and analysis responsibilities.

### *Property and Evidence*

*(See pp. 57-60.)*

16. Convert the unit's informal procedure document into an official department Property and Evidence Manual to codify standard operating procedures into policy.
17. Add an alarm system to the property storeroom.
18. Consider adding a safe to the high-risk room to secure and separate money from drugs and other evidence.
19. Develop a formal step-by-step procedure for destroying drugs that involve the Office of Professional Standards.
20. CPSM recommends the department upgrade the climate-controlled storage (refrigerator and freezer) to commercial-grade equipment with temperature alarms to avoid loss of evidence in the event of a power or equipment failure.
21. We recommend the WDMPD develop a plan to significantly increase the annual property purge rate to avoid running out of storage space.
22. CPSM recommends the WDMPD purchase a cloud storage solution for digital evidence to reduce the substantial labor and space issues associated with copying and storing thousands of compact discs.

### *Crime Scene Investigations Unit*

*(See p. 61.)*

23. CPSM recommends that the unit track its work and prepare a yearly report identifying the number and type of crime scenes it investigates. The report should also highlight the training the unit receives.

### *Division Management*

*(See p. 62.)*

24. We recommend the department consider creating civilian supervisor and manager positions to oversee the bulk of the Administrative Services Unit.

### *School Resource Officers*

*(See pp. 62-63.)*

25. CPSM recommends establishing a School Resource Program Guidebook to solidify the program's expectations, operations, and protocols, including critical incidents.
26. CPSM recommends establishing goals and objectives for the school resource officers to define their major roles in law enforcement, mentoring/counseling, and as educators.

### *Traffic Unit*

*(See pp. 63-69.)*

27. It is recommended that the Traffic Unit use crime analysis detail traffic information to direct enforcement efforts.
28. CPSM recommends that the department consider a performance management approach to mitigating traffic and DUI collisions.
29. It is recommended that community complaints be formally tracked for proper disposition.

### *K9*

*(See pp. 69-74.)*

30. CPSM recommends establishing a canine manual to delineate handler training, expectations, and protocols.

### *Training*

*(See pp. 75-76.)*

31. CPSM recommends establishing a standard operating procedures guide to approve all discretionary training requests for the chain of command approval and equitable consideration instead of the career development sheets.
32. CPSM recommends considering working with the IOWA Police Academy to establish a required Instructor Development Course for advanced instructor training to provide a consistent and professional level of instruction.
33. It is recommended that civilian professional staff be included in the training management system and be provided with training opportunities.

### *Police Training Officer Program*

*(See pp. 76-77.)*

34. CPSM recommends that a review of the phases of the police officer training program be conducted for practical utilization of the trainee's actual needs and include an onboarding process for new trainees.
35. CPSM recommends that a chain of command review process include an audit of probationary documentation to ensure compliance with department training standards, policies, and protocols to eliminate police training officers training to their styles and methods.
36. It is recommended that a Field Training Officer Guide be developed to establish consistent standards and performance expectations.
37. It is recommended that the department find an advanced field training officer training class to send all field training officers.

### *Emergency Management*

*(See pp. 77-78.)*

38. It is recommended that the department use the Incident Command System to plan all special events and manage all emergencies.
39. CPSM recommends that all supervisors and command staff receive training in the Incident Command System.
40. It is recommended that emergency management teams be established and used on a rotating basis to handle planned and unplanned incidents.

### *Community Outreach Unit*

*(See pp. 78-79.)*

41. It is recommended that a comprehensive community policing strategic plan be created.
42. CPSM recommends that the Community Outreach Programs and Services Unit be assessed to include consolidating the three units to create one community outreach unit with clear goals and objectives.

43. CPSM recommends that all problem-solving efforts include all areas of the Department in a coordinated effort led by one point of contact responsible for developing, implementing, and following action plans for accountability.

### *Crisis Intervention*

*(See pp. 79-80.)*

44. CPSM recommends better oversight during daily operations in the unit's shifts should be considered.

45. CPSM recommends that the department develop a tracking system for all activity related to the Crisis Intervention Unit, including monthly tallies of contacts, mental evaluation holds, and acceptance of outreach services.

46. It is recommended that a regular training schedule that includes response, recognition of mental disorders, new technology, and the law should be established to ensure consistency when the Crisis Intervention Unit responds to calls for service.

### *Entertainment Response Unit*

*(See pp. 80-87.)*

47. CPSM recommends conducting a workload analysis of the Entertainment Response Unit to focus its enforcement efforts to have the highest impact on addressing the community's needs.

## Section 6. Other Aspects of Department Operations

### *SERT*

*(See pp. 88-89.)*

48. CPSM recommends the SERT's Chiefs' Executive Board review the rank structure of the team to consider more traditional roles, specifically regarding:

    - Requiring the SERT Commander position to be a lieutenant.
    - Requiring team leaders to be sergeants.
    - Eliminating sergeants and lieutenants from the operational levels of the team.

49. We recommend the SERT Executive Board consider adjusting the member contributions annually, according to inflation, or some other method to ensure the team maintains proper equipment for operational readiness.

### *Emergency Communications/Dispatch*

*(See pp. 90-91.)*

50. CPSM recommends the City of West Des Moines work with the Westcom Management Committee to conduct a comprehensive review of Westcom.

### *Technology*

*(See pp. 91-93.)*

51. CPSM recommends that the department evaluate using a secure cloud-based information storage platform.

### *Body-Worn Cameras*

*(See p. 93.)*

52. CPSM recommends that body-worn camera videos be randomly audited by supervisors for compliance with policy and professional standards.

53. It is recommended that the new body-worn camera platform have cloud-based storage capabilities.

### *Public Information*

*(See pp. 94-95.)*

54. It is recommended that a robust media plan be developed to provide guidelines and succession planning for public information officer duties.
55. It is recommended that the department follow its media relations policy and provide updated training for the position of public information officer.
56. CPSM recommends that the department evaluate the possibility of creating and staffing a civilian public information officer position.
57. CPSM recommends the development of a media guide for police officers and supervisors use in the field.

### *Chaplain*

*(See pp. 95-96.)*

58. The chaplain program should establish an onboarding training program for chaplains.
59. CPSM recommends establishing a quarterly training calendar to address subjects such as conflict resolution, police operations, etc.
60. It is recommended that department policy be followed in establishing a chaplain uniform distinct from police officers.
61. CPSM recommends establishing a standard operating guide to provide an orientation to members of the Chaplain Corps regarding duties, access, the chain of command, and department expectations.

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# SECTION 2. METHODOLOGY

## Data Analysis

CPSM used numerous sources of data to support our conclusions and recommendations for the West Des Moines Police Department. Information was obtained from the FBI Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program, Part I offenses, along with numerous sources of internal information. UCR Part I crimes are defined as murder, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, larceny-theft, and larceny of a motor vehicle. Internal sources included data from the computer-aided dispatch (CAD) system for information on calls for service (CFS).

All data, analysis, and recommendations, especially for patrol operations, are based upon CPSM's examination of 39,021 calls for service during the period of May 1, 2022, through April 30, 2023, which are those calls handled by the department's patrol officers. Of those 39,021 calls noted, 26,584 were community-initiated calls requiring service and 12,437 were calls initiated by WDMPD police officers.

## Interviews

This study relied extensively on intensive interviews with personnel. On-site and in-person interviews were conducted with people throughout the organization and the city.

## Focus Groups

A focus group is an unstructured group interview in which the moderator actively encourages discussion among participants. Group discussion permits greater exploration of topics. For the purposes of this study, focus groups were held with a representative cross-section of employees within the department.

## Document Review

CPSM consultants were furnished with numerous reports and summary documents by the West Des Moines Police Department. Information on planning, personnel staffing, deployment, monthly reports, annual reports, operations manuals, evaluations, training records, and performance statistics were all reviewed by project team staff. Follow-up emails and phone calls were used to clarify information as needed.

## Operational/Administrative Observations

Over the course of the evaluation period, numerous observations were conducted. These included observations of general patrol; investigations; support services such as records and property and evidence; and administrative functions. CPSM representatives engaged all facets of department operations from a "participant observation" perspective.

## Staffing Analysis

In virtually all CPSM studies, we are asked to identify appropriate staffing levels. That is the case in this study as well. In this report we will discuss workload, operational and safety conditions, and other factors to be considered in establishing appropriate staffing levels. Staffing recommendations are based on our comprehensive evaluation of all relevant factors. In the case of West Des Moines, we will also factor in community growth.

# SECTION 3. COMMUNITY AND DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

## COMMUNITY

West Des Moines is located in central Iowa and is part of the greater Des Moines metropolitan area. The city spans four different counties. Polk County and Dallas County split the greatest share of the city. Warren County and Madison County are located to the south and encompass a much smaller area of the overall city geography.

The community was originally incorporated in 1893 as Valley Junction; at that time, it was primarily a railroad community. In 1938, the name Valley Junction was dropped, and the name West Des Moines was adopted as the new city name.

The official land mass of West Des Moines as of the 2020 census was 47.22 square miles; the official land area in the 2010 census was 38.59 square miles. This is about 22 percent growth in area in 10 years. The new areas that were incorporated into the city slightly reduced the city's population density from 1,467 people per square mile in 2010 to 1,455 people per square mile in 2020.

We observed that knowledge by patrol officers of city boundaries to the south is a challenge at times. Patrol officers mentioned that they were occasionally dispatched to areas that they did not believe were part of West Des Moines proper. Management confirmed that this dynamic exists and said that growth is happening so quickly at times that the internal dispatch GIS lines were behind actual growth. Naturally, this can create confusion at the operational level. We encourage the city to have a more defined process regarding internal notification whenever new areas are being incorporated. Aside from notification to the regional dispatch area, there should be an internal department notification outlining additions to the city limits so employees are aware of new areas they might be responsible for patrolling.

### Community Recommendation:

- CPSM recommends that an improved notification process for patrol officers be developed to outline changes to geographic boundaries in the city. (Recommendation No. 1.)

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West Des Moines has a mayor-council form of government with an appointed city manager. The council consists of a mayor, two at-large council members, and three council members from geographic wards in the city.

### Demographics

According to the 2020 U.S. Census, the demographic and economic profile of the City of West Des Moines compared to the State of Iowa as a whole is shown in the following table.

**TABLE 3-1: Demographic and Economic Profile of the City of West Des Moines**

| Measure | West Des Moines | Iowa |
|---|---|---|
| Population | 68,723 | 3,190,369 |
| White | 83.3% | 89.9% |
| Black, African-American | 3.9% | 4.4% |
| Asian | 6.3% | 2.8% |
| Hispanic | 4.9% | 6.9% |
| Two or More Races | 5.4% | 2.2% |
| Owner-occupied Housing % | 58.5% | 71.6% |
| Medium Value of Owner-occupied Housing | $239,200 | $160,700 |
| Medium Monthly Gross Rent | $1,062 | $845 |
| Medium Household Income | $76,564 | $65,429 |
| Per Capita Income | $49,286 | $34,817 |

## LAW ENFORCEMENT SERVICES

The history of the West Des Moines Police Department dates to the late 1800s when the community was named Valley Junction. What started as a very small police department serving a population of just a few hundred people has evolved into a modern-day police agency serving a city of nearly 70,000 people.

The WDMPD is a full-service police agency that serves the citizens of West Des Moines proper and also has partnerships for service delivery and interagency cooperation with other law enforcement agencies in the metro area. There are several interagency partnerships in the area, ranging from specialized investigative task force operations to a shared dispatch center located in West Des Moines. Although the dispatch center is located in West Des Moines, it provides service to WDMPD and five other local agencies.

The WDMPD is divided into two primary divisions: the Operations Division, which manages all patrol functions, and the Support Services Division, which manages administrative matters, criminal investigations, community outreach, and special operations.

The City of West Des Moines is uniquely situated within four separate counties: Polk County, Dallas County, Warren County, and Madison County. This results in the department needing to adjust its practices and administrative processes to meet the needs and requirements of four different prosecuting attorneys, jails, and county court systems.

The greater Des Moines metro area police agencies are structured and partnered better than many areas where CPSM has performed assessments. As a whole the various police departments the metro area work closely with one another, provide backup assistance on a regular basis, have shared resources, and partner on larger grant programs to provide a high level of service to the citizens of their communities. Many of these partnerships are codified in mutual aid agreements and memorandums of understanding between departments and communities.[1]

1. Chapter 28E Agreements.

## Uniform Crime Report / Crime Trends

While communities differ from one another in population, demographics, geographical landscape, and social-economic distinctions, comparisons to other jurisdictions can be helpful in illustrating how crime rates in West Des Moines measure up against those of other Iowa communities as well as the State of Iowa and the nation overall.

The FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program assembles data on crime from police departments across the United States; the reports are utilized to measure the extent, fluctuation, and distribution of crime. For reporting purposes, criminal offenses are divided into two categories: Part 1 offenses and Part 2 offenses. For Part 1 offenses, representing the most serious crimes, the UCR index is split into two categories: violent crimes and property crimes. Violent crimes include murder, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault. Property crimes include burglary, larceny, and motor vehicle theft. Crime rates are expressed (indexed) as the number of incidents per 100,000 population to allow for comparison.

The following tables and figures include the most recent information that is publicly available at the national level. This includes crime reports for 2012 through 2021, along with clearance rates for 2021.

In comparing West Des Moines data with other Iowa jurisdictions, one can see that WDMPD reports a violent crime rate that is lower than both the state and national rates and a property crime rate that is lower than the national rate but slightly higher than the Iowa rate. West Des Moines's crime rates in both categories generally fall in the middle compared to the selected communities in Iowa.

### TABLE 3-2: Reported Crime Rates in 2021 and 2022, by City

| Municipality | State | 2021 | | | | 2022 | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Population | Crime Rates | | | Population | Crime Rates | | |
| | | | Violent | Property | Total | | Violent | Property | Total |
| Altoona | IA | 20,064 | 269 | 1,884 | 2,153 | 21,503 | 199 | 1,381 | 1,580 |
| Ames | IA | 67,886 | 181 | 1,304 | 1,485 | 66,950 | 200 | 1,277 | 1,477 |
| Ankeny | IA | 73,109 | 133 | 977 | 1,109 | 72,222 | 185 | 1,078 | 1,263 |
| Clive | IA | 17,652 | 91 | 1,280 | 1,371 | 18,908 | 283 | 1,201 | 1,484 |
| Fort Dodge | IA | 23,788 | 492 | 2,505 | 2,997 | 24,657 | 547 | 3,212 | 3,759 |
| Indianola | IA | 16,203 | 463 | 1,697 | 2,160 | 16,069 | 852 | 1,716 | 2,568 |
| Johnston | IA | 23,759 | 147 | 838 | 985 | 24,390 | 72 | 694 | 766 |
| Marshalltown | IA | 26,651 | 413 | 1,812 | 2,225 | 27,433 | 683 | 1,880 | 2,563 |
| Urbandale | IA | 45,201 | 115 | 900 | 1,015 | 46,648 | 111 | 721 | 832 |
| Waukee | IA | 27,858 | 90 | 660 | 750 | 29,167 | 140 | 757 | 897 |
| **West Des Moines** | **IA** | **70,414** | **145** | **1,740** | **1,885** | **70,741** | **251** | **1,757** | **2,008** |
| **Iowa** | | **3,193,079** | **270** | **1,462** | **1,732** | **3,200,517** | **280** | **1438** | **1,718** |
| **National** | | ***332,031,554** | **396** | **1,933** | **2,329** | **NA** | | | |

**Note**: *We used national crime rates estimated in the FBI's report *The Transition to the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS): A Comparison of 2020 and 2021 NIBRS Estimates.*

CPSM has traditionally compared jurisdictions to similar-sized jurisdictions within the same state. However, the West Des Moines PD feels strongly that is a limited number of jurisdictions within the State of Iowa that provide a good comparison. The department has traditionally benchmarked

itself against a select few cities within Iowan and a number of others in adjacent or nearby states. The department provided a list of these cities, and CPSM assembled the crime data for those cities, as shown in the following table.

### TABLE 3-3: West Des Moines Comparable Cities, Reported Crime Rates 2021 and 2022

| Municipality | State | 2021 | | | | 2022 | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Population | Crime Rates | | | Population | Crime Rates | | |
| | | | Violent | Property | Total | | Violent | Property | Total |
| Council Bluffs | IA | 62,415 | 346 | 3,490 | 3,836 | 62,405 | 415 | 3,078 | 3,493 |
| Dubuque | IA | 59,119 | 431 | 2,057 | 2,488 | 58,873 | 438 | 1,851 | 2,290 |
| Ankeny | IA | 70,287 | 137 | 1,059 | 1,195 | 72,222 | 187 | 1,091 | 1,278 |
| Brooklyn Park | MN | 79,946 | 442 | 3,217 | 3,659 | 82,682 | 370 | 3,324 | 3,694 |
| Schaumburg Village | IL | 77,082 | 77 | 1,232 | 1,309 | 76,225 | 98 | 2,133 | 2,232 |
| Evanston | IL | 77,517 | 175 | 2,135 | 2,310 | 75,544 | 177 | 2,487 | 2,665 |
| Shawnee | KS | 66,710 | 294 | 1,616 | 1,910 | 67,617 | 269 | 1,424 | 1,693 |
| Lenexa | KS | 57,012 | 200 | 1,698 | 1,898 | 59,289 | 224 | 1,553 | 1,778 |
| Blue Spring | MO | 59,430 | 195 | 2,122 | 2,317 | 59,518 | 210 | 2,196 | 2,406 |
| O'Fallon | MO | 93,644 | 104 | 802 | 906 | 93,663 | 97 | 741 | 838 |
| **West Des Moines** | **IA** | **70,414** | **145** | **1,740** | **1,885** | **70,741** | **251** | **1,757** | **2,008** |
| **Iowa** | | **3,193,079** | **270** | **1,462** | **1,732** | **3,200,517** | **280** | **1438** | **1,718** |
| **National** | | ***332,031,554** | **396** | **1,933** | **2,329** | **NA** | | | |

The WDMPD also provided benchmarking data on personnel as collected by the department. The following table denotes the number of FTE employees at each agency from the above table. While this data was not independently verified by CPSM consultants, it is included in this report at the request of WDMPD.

### TABLE 3-4: Employee Totals for WDMPD Selected Comparable Cities

| Agency | State | FT Sworn Officers | FT Civilian Employees |
|---|---|---|---|
| **West Des Moines Police Department** | **IA** | **89** | **14** |
| Council Bluffs Police Department | IA | 116 | 23 |
| Dubuque Police Department | IA | 112 | 10 |
| Ankeny Police Department | IA | 70 | Unk |
| Brooklyn Park Police Department | MN | 107 | 52 |
| Schaumburg Village Police Dept. | IL | 107 | 51 |
| Evanston Police Department | IL | 162 | Unk |
| Shawnee Police Department | KS | 97 | 22 |
| Lenexa Police Department | KS | 83 | 42 |
| Blue Spring Police Department | MO | 100 | 41 |

**FIGURE 3-1: Reported West Des Moines Violent and Property Crime Rates, By Year**

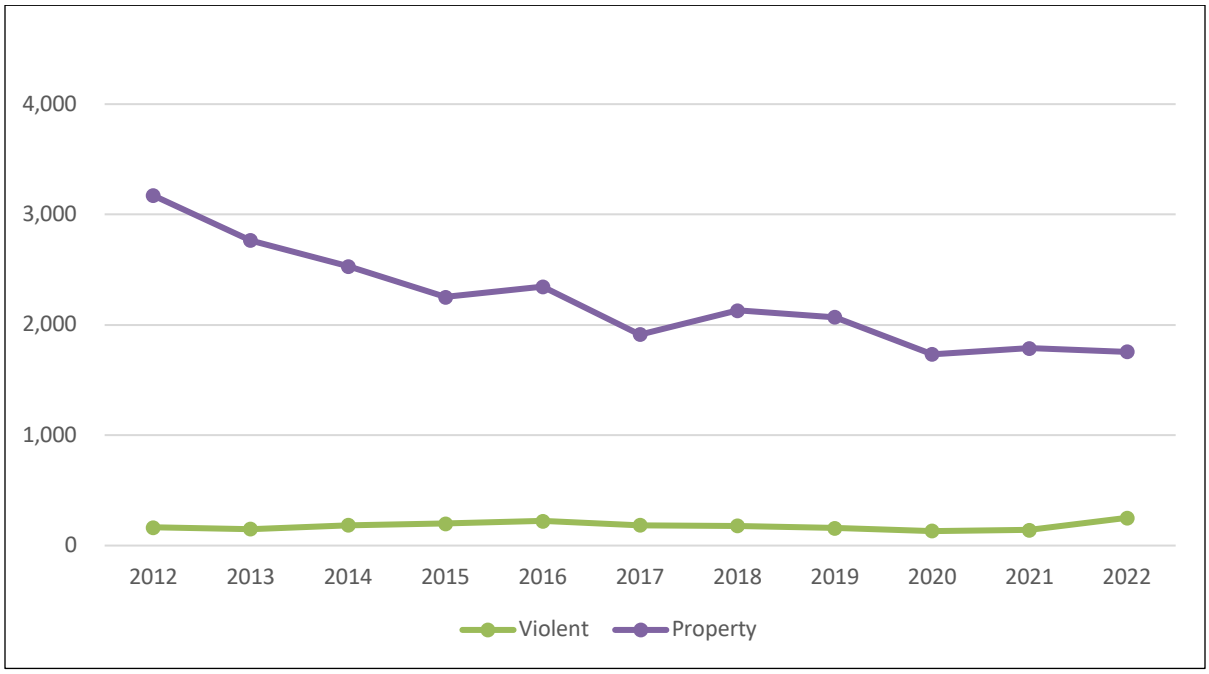
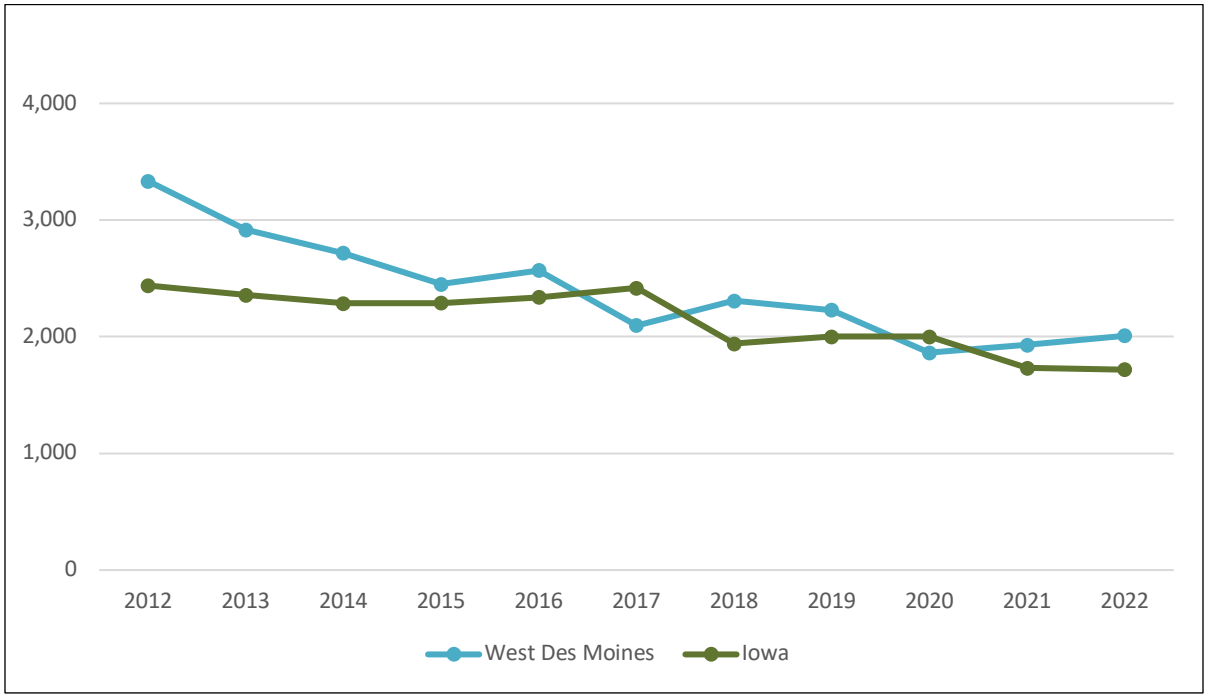



**FIGURE 3-2: Reported West Des Moines and State Crime Rates, by Year**



## TABLE 3-5: Reported West Des Moines, Iowa, and National Crime Rates, by Year

| Year | West Des Moines | | | | Iowa | | | | National | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Population | Violent | Property | Total | Population | Violent | Property | Total | Population | Violent | Property | Total |
| 2013 | 60,068 | 151 | 2,765 | 2,917 | 3,114,347 | 259 | 2,099 | 2,358 | 321,947,240 | 362 | 2,627 | 2,989 |
| 2014 | 62,359 | 186 | 2,531 | 2,717 | 3,131,021 | 263 | 2,022 | 2,285 | 324,699,246 | 357 | 2,464 | 2,821 |
| 2015 | 65,006 | 200 | 2,252 | 2,452 | 3,153,349 | 269 | 2,020 | 2,289 | 327,455,769 | 368 | 2,376 | 2,744 |
| 2016 | 65,631 | 227 | 2,305 | 2,532 | 3,165,023 | 285 | 2,054 | 2,339 | 329,308,297 | 383 | 2,353 | 2,736 |
| 2017 | 65,940 | 184 | 1,912 | 2,096 | 3,145,711 | 293 | 2,125 | 2,419 | 325,719,178 | 383 | 2,362 | 2,745 |
| 2018 | 66,966 | 178 | 2,129 | 2,307 | 3,156,145 | 250 | 1,692 | 1,942 | 327,167,434 | 369 | 2,200 | 2,568 |
| 2019 | 67,911 | 159 | 2,036 | 2,196 | 3,155,070 | 267 | 1,734 | 2,000 | 328,239,523 | 379 | 2,010 | 2,489 |
| 2020 | 69,252 | 134 | 1,646 | 1,780 | 3,163,561 | 304 | 1,698 | 2,002 | 331,449,281 | 399 | 1,958 | 2,357 |
| 2021 | 70,414 | 145 | 1,740 | 1,885 | 3,193,079 | 270 | 1,462 | 1,732 | 332,031,554 | 396 | 1,933 | 2,329 |
| 2022 | 70,741 | 141 | 1,788 | 1,929 | 3,200,517 | 280 | 1438 | 1,718 | NA | | | |

The previous figures and table show that bot the violent and property crime rates have declined over the past seven to eight years in West Des Moines. The state has seen an uptick in violent crime and a general reduction in property crime in recent years. At the national level crime is higher but has remained mostly static. The following table compares WDMPD's crime clearance rates to the state and national averages in 2021. These clearance rates are based on the department's reporting to the UCR. Clearance rates will be discussed further in the investigations unit analysis.

## TABLE 3-6: Reported West Des Moines, Iowa, and National Crime Clearance Rates, 2021

| Crime | West Des Moines | | | Iowa | | | National | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Crimes | Clearances | Rate | Crimes | Clearances | Rate | Crimes | Clearances* | Rate |
| Murder Manslaughter | 0 | 0 | NA | 95 | 61 | 64% | 22,900 | 11,500 | 50% |
| Rape | 23 | 6 | 26% | 1,012 | 283 | 28% | 144,300 | 16,500 | 11% |
| Robbery | 17 | 5 | 29% | 521 | 177 | 34% | 202,200 | 48,800 | 24% |
| Aggravated Assault | 62 | 32 | 52% | 5,614 | 3607 | 64% | 943,800 | 297,500 | 32% |
| Burglary | 151 | 13 | 9% | 7,325 | 1191 | 16% | 899,700 | 107,200 | 12% |
| Larceny | 987 | 170 | 17% | 28,248 | 5442 | 19% | 4,627,000 | 508,900 | 11% |
| Vehicle Theft | 87 | 9 | 10% | 4,503 | 1027 | 23% | 890,200 | 68,500 | 8% |

**Note**: National crimes and clearances are estimated in the FBI's report *The Transition to the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS): A Comparison of 2020 and 2021 NIBRS Estimates*.

## Strategic Planning

Strategic planning is an organizational management activity that is used to set priorities, focus energy and resources, strengthen operations, ensure that employees and other stakeholders are working toward common goals, establish agreement around intended outcomes/results, and assess and adjust the organization's direction in response to a changing environment. It is a disciplined effort that produces fundamental decisions and actions that shape and guide what an organization is, who it serves, what it does, and why it does it, with a focus on the future.

Effective strategic planning articulates not only where an organization is headed, and the actions needed to make progress, but also how it will know if it is successful.

The West Des Moines Police Department is a CALEA-accredited agency, and as part of that accreditation process, there is an expectation that a department has a strategic plan in place. WDMPD did provide documentation of the department's planning efforts. Additionally, the department provided documentation that shows how the department's plan supports overall city goals.

There are sections of this report in which we will make recommendations for specific strategic planning at the individual unit level.

## Succession Planning

For many smaller and mid-sized police departments such as the West Des Moines PD, succession planning is difficult and often informal. Oftentimes, resources can be scarce, and it can be difficult to have key management personnel away for any length of time for professional development.

West Des Moines PD does have a policy that outlines promotions and transfers (Policy 1002). This policy generically explains how promotions will be conducted but offers no specific information as to what an employee can do to best position and prepare themselves for a promotion. For instance, an employee may desire to understand what they should be doing to prepare for a future leadership role in policing. That employee should have early access to understand exactly how an advanced college degree may benefit them versus investigative experience in policing. Ironically, Policy 1002 provides greater detail on what the department seeks in a candidate for a specialized position as a police officer versus what is desired in a sergeant or a lieutenant, positions that are expected to set the leadership tone in the department.

As far as career development is concerned, the department has an informal training matrix for sergeants and managers which is designed to ensure employees in those positions have exposure to leadership and management training involving an outside influence other than WDMPD. The available training classes offered to employees in those ranks include several nationally recognized training programs. However, the department does not have this information established within a formal succession plan and documented within the department.

There is a process for police officers that takes place annually called a "career sheet." This is a computer program that allows police officers to rank their career interests and desired training annually. WDMPD compiles this information and attempts to provide its employees with their desired training each year.

Successful succession planning requires an organizational commitment dedicate time and money to developing employees for future opportunities in the organization. WDMPD appears to

be doing much of this, but we believe the department should make an effort to formalize its various processes. We also believe there should be a commitment contained within this process to not just focus on what employees want but for the department to look forward and ensure it has the people trained with the skills the department needs.

### Succession Planning Recommendations:

- CPSM recommends WDMPD clearly outline promotional expectations in Policy 1002. (Recommendation No. 2.)
- CPSM recommends that WDMPD engage in a formal succession planning process. Succession planning should heavily factor in the needs of the department as well as future leadership skills and qualities desired in its leaders. (Recommendation No. 3.)

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## Mission and Values Statements

The West Des Moines Police Department has established a mission and values statement as outlined below:

Mission Statement
*To unite, with the community, to preserve the safety of West Des Moines for all residents, businesses, and visitors.*

Values Statement
*The West Des Moines Police Department will Respect all whom we serve through collaboration and partnership, demonstrate unwavering Integrity, and deliver a distinct Quality Service to achieve the Accountability obligated to our Community.*

## Department Policy Manual

The West Des Moines Police Department subscribes to a police policy service provided by Lexipol.

Many agencies have elected to subscribe to a policy service such as Lexipol to ensure all policies meet industry best practices, are legally reviewed, and are continually updated to ensure critical policing changes are captured in policy in a timely manner. These services also provide attestation services ensure employees both know and understand policy in a practical way.

A Lexipol-style policy manual is an industry best practice, and we applaud WDMPD for investing in this platform.

## CALEA Accreditation

The West Des Moines Police Department is a CALEA-accredited police agency. CALEA (Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies) was established in 1979 to ensure that agencies meet certain compliance parameters and to verify they are practicing and operating in accordance with industry best practices as established by CALEA.

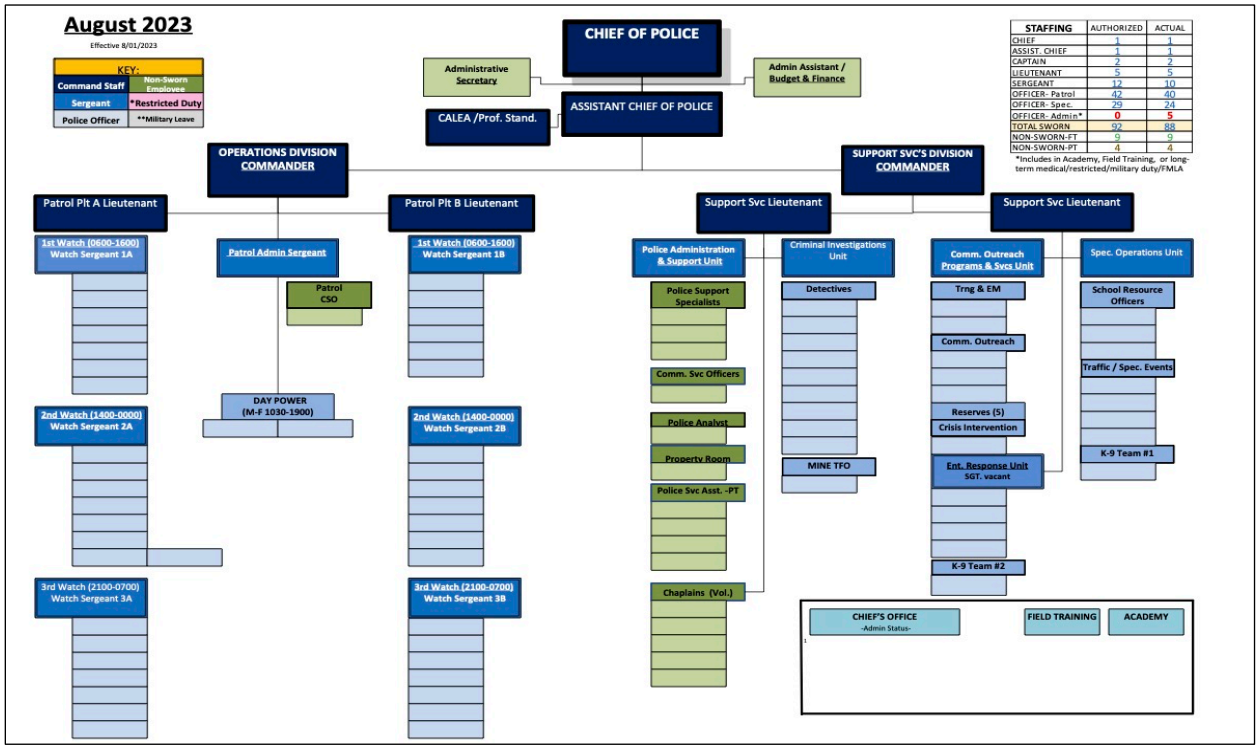
## Department Structure / Chain of Command

The West Des Moines Police Department is led by a police chief and has a second in command holding the rank of assistant police chief. There are two divisions in the department each led by a police captain. The divisions and command responsibilities are as follows:

- Operations Division (Patrol)
  - "A" Platoon.
  - "B" Platoon.
- Support Services Division
  - Police Administration and Support.
  - Criminal Investigations.
  - Community Outreach Programs.
  - Special Operations.

The following figure is the West Des Moines Police Department organizational chart as of April 2023. This chart adequately outlines the department chain of command and division responsibilities.

### FIGURE 3-3: West Des Moines Police Department Organizational Chart

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## Staffing

The following is the staffing landscape in the West Des Moines Police Department as of August 2023. At that time the department had seven vacancies in its sworn ranks.

### TABLE 3-7: Authorized and Actual Personnel, August 2023

| | Authorized | Actual |
|---|---|---|
| Chief | 1 | 1 |
| Assistant Chief | 1 | 1 |
| Captain | 2 | 2 |
| Lieutenant | 5 | 5 |
| Sergeant | 12 | 12 |
| Police Officer | 71 | 64 |
| **Total Sworn** | **92** | **85** |
| Civilian – Full Time | 9 | 9 |
| Civilian – Part Time | 4 | 4 |

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# SECTION 4. OPERATIONS DIVISION

## DIVISION MANAGEMENT / STRUCTURE / SCHEDULING

The Operations Division of the West Des Moines Police Department manages all uniformed patrol responsibilities; this is the division that handles a majority of all community calls for service that warrant a police response. The Operations Division is commanded by a WDMPD captain; there are two lieutenants who manage three patrol squads each as well as an administrative sergeant who assists the division on administrative matters. The division has one civilian CSO who provides assistance on administrative matters where needed but is rarely involved in assisting with the call workload.

Division staffing is shown in the following table.

### TABLE 4-1: Operations Division Staffing

| Position | Authorized | Actual |
|---|---|---|
| Captain | 1 | 1 |
| Lieutenant | 2 | 2 |
| Sergeant | 7 | 7 |
| Officer | 38 | 35 |
| CSO | 1 | 1 |
| **Total** | **49** | **46** |

The division lieutenants do not serve in a traditional watch commander role, they are effectively administrative lieutenants who share the management oversight of the two patrol platoons. The lieutenants work Monday to Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. In addition to management oversight of their patrol teams, including scheduling, each lieutenant carries a variety of other administrative and special projects.

The patrol platoons are divided into "A Platoon" and "B Platoon." Each platoon has three teams covering different ten-hour shifts throughout the day. The "watch" hours are as follows:

- 1st Watch: 0600-1600.
- 2nd Watch: 1400-0000 (midnight).
- 3rd Watch: 2100-0700.

The department also has an optional "Power Shift" that can be implemented if needed and if staffing permits. The power shift is set from 1030 to 1900 and can work a 5 on / 2 off schedule. Currently, and at management's discretion, this shift is not being utilized. It was created to fill a need at one time but was underutilized. However, we cover it in this report because it is part of the employee union agreement on available schedules.

There are three common schedules found in law enforcement organizations around the country, 8-,10-, and 12-hour shift schedules. The 8-hour and 12-hour schedule variations traditionally allow for the broadest and most consistent staffing levels in an organization. This is because both 8- and 12-hour schedules factor perfectly into a 24-hour day. Ten-hour schedules are popular and beneficial because they allow for schedule overlap between shifts. This is the case with WDMPD as there is a two-hour overlap between the 1st and 2nd watches, a three-hour overlap between

the 2nd watch and the 3rd watch, and finally, a one-hour overlap between the 3rd watch and the 1st watch.

Patrol teams are led by a patrol sergeant and have 6 or 7 officers assigned. They are a dedicated team that always works together. This allows for team familiarity and allows for the sergeant supervising the team to work every day with the group of officers he or she is responsible for evaluating. We believe this is a best practice and provides for better employee accountability than other schedules that have all officers working different days off throughout the week.

The schedule rotation of each watch is 5 on / 4 off, 5 on / 4 off, and 6 on / 4 off. This translates into every officer working 16 days in every 28-day cycle. This also means that officer days off are on a rotating schedule; the only consistency is the shift or hours of the day that an officer is normally assigned to work. WDMPD has had a variation of rotating days off scheduling for many years and the agency reports that it works for the culture of the department. The above patrol schedule is also codified in the MOU with the employees' representative group (Police Teamsters, Local 238).

There is a unique aspect of this schedule in that it allows for operational overlap of all patrol teams on Fridays. That means that two times per month, per team, there is an opportunity to have the team available for other needs. WDMPD has traditionally used one of those available Fridays per team to provide training and as of recently, the additional second Friday has been designated for proactive patrol work.

There are many agencies that struggle to free up the time to train officers. This is typically because of workload demands and an existing work schedule that lacks flexibility. We applaud WDMPD for positioning itself to provide these overlap days and for the proactive use of this time.

## Minimum Staffing

WDMPD has established minimum staffing numbers for patrol field operations. Minimum staffing in the department is, in essence, the number of personnel assigned to a shift minus one officer who is allowed to be off work for scheduled time usage. For instance, at one point during this assessment, the following were the established minimum staffing numbers based on the schedule at that time:

- 1st Watch – 6 minimum.
- 2nd Watch – 7 minimum.
- 3rd Watch – 6 minimum.

Full staffing on WDMPD schedules at that time was as follows:

- 1st Watch – 1 sergeant and 6 officers (7 total).
- 2nd Watch – 1 sergeant and 7 officers (8 total).
- 3rd Watch – 1 sergeant and 6 officers (7 total).

We learned that after we collected that data the department was able to successfully add a few additional officers to the patrol function. For the shifts that received an additional officer, the established minimum staffing number was increased by one officer.

In our experience, a daily vacancy rate of 20 to 25 percent in patrol staffing is common in departments throughout the country. Every police employee has earned vacation time, which is

considered an employment benefit. Additionally, patrol officers work holidays, meaning normal city holidays are "banked," and patrol officers will take those days off at other times throughout the year. On top of those days that must be scheduled each year, there are days that employees might be off work due to illness, FMLA leave, training, or injury. Taking this into account, it's easy to see why a 20 to 25 percent vacancy rate is common.

In our opinion, and as was discussed with the WDMPD, the impact of the overtime that is often necessary to meet minimum staffing is taxing many members of the department.

We questioned the department's rationale for its established minimum staffing numbers. We were advised that those numbers were internally established based on a department assessment of overall calls for service when they were occurring throughout the day and perceived officer safety standards. In short, the department established those numbers based upon its knowledge of the community and its policing challenges, but not necessarily with hard data of how many officers should be deployed throughout each shift based on actual workload. Our concern with this rationale is that it changes based on how many people would be assigned the patrol function.

This report is intended to address the actual workload of WDMPD officers in the patrol function and to provide the department with the data needed to establish appropriate patrol staffing numbers.

Establishing minimum staffing numbers for patrol is often associated with employee association agreements or is at management's discretion. This is not a bad practice and can be a good guiding principle for department management. However, minimum staffing numbers should not deviate based on how many officers might be assigned if at full staffing. If the department chooses to establish minimum staffing numbers, then the number should hold firm even if additional officers are added to the shifts.

## PATROL DEPLOYMENT AND WORKLOAD

Uniformed patrol is considered the "backbone" of American policing. Bureau of Justice Statistics indicates that nearly all police departments in the U.S. in the same size category as the West Des Moines Police Department provide uniformed patrol. Officers assigned to this important function are the most visible members of the department and command the largest share of resources committed by the department. Proper allocation of these resources is critical in order to have officers available to respond to calls for service and provide law enforcement services to the public.

Staffing decisions, particularly for patrol, must be based on actual workload. Once the actual workload is determined the amount of discretionary time is determined and then staffing decisions can be made consistent with the department's policing philosophy and the community's ability to fund it. The WDMPD is a police department whose philosophy is to address essentially all requests for service in a community policing style. With this in mind, it is necessary to look at workload to understand the impact of this style of policing in the context of community demand.

To understand the *actual workload* (the time required to complete certain activities) it is critical to review the total reported events within the context of how the events originated, such as through directed patrol, administrative tasks, officer-initiated activities, and citizen-initiated activities. In this section we will offer a number of charts and tables outlining this information.

Understanding the difference between the various types of police department events and the resulting staffing implications is critical to determining deployment needs. This portion of the study looks at the total deployed hours of the police department with a comparison to the current time spent to provide services.

In general, a "Rule of 60" can be applied to evaluate patrol staffing. This rule has two parts. The first part states that 60 percent of the sworn officers in a department should be dedicated to the patrol function (patrol staffing) and the second part states that no more than 60 percent of their time should be committed to calls for service, which includes all activities that occupy an officer's time, including calls from the public, self-initiated work, and administrative tasks. This commitment of 60 percent of their time is referred to as the *Patrol Saturation Index*.

The Rule of 60 is not a hard-and-fast rule, but rather a starting point for discussion on patrol deployment. Resource allocation decisions must be made from a policy and/or managerial perspective through which costs and benefits of competing demands are considered. The patrol saturation index indicates the percentage of time dedicated by police officers to public demands for service and administrative duties related to their jobs. Effective patrol deployment would exist at amounts where the saturation index was less than 60 percent.

This Rule of 60 for patrol deployment does *not* mean the remaining 40 percent of time is downtime or break time. It is a reflection of the extent that patrol officer time is saturated by calls for service. The time when police personnel are not responding to calls should be committed to management-directed operations. This is a more focused use of time and can include supervised allocation of patrol officer activities toward proactive enforcement, crime prevention, community policing, and citizen safety initiatives. It will also provide ready and available resources in the event of a large-scale emergency.

From an organizational standpoint, it is important to have uniformed patrol resources available to undertake activities such as proactive enforcement, community policing, and emergency response. Patrol is generally the most visible and available resource in policing, and the ability to harness this resource is critical for successful operations.

From an officer's standpoint, once a certain level of CFS activity is reached, the officer's focus shifts to a CFS-based reactionary mode. The patrol officer's mindset begins to shift from one that looks for ways to deal with crime and quality-of-life conditions in the community to one that continually prepares for the next call. After saturation, officers cease proactive policing and engage in a reactionary style of policing. The outlook becomes "Why act proactively when my actions are only going to be interrupted by a call?" Any uncommitted time is spent waiting for the next call.

## Rule of 60 – Part 1

According to the WDMPD's personnel data, patrol is authorized for 48 sworn officers (1 captain, 2 Lieutenants, 7 sergeants, and 38 Police Officers). These 48 of the 92 sworn officers represent **52 percent** of the sworn officers in the West Des Moines Police Department.

This part of the "rule" is not hard-and-fast. Taken on its face, however, this part of the "rule" must be considered when examining the operational elements of the department when staffing recommendations are taken into consideration. The data presented by the department indicates that overall authorized staffing is below the 60 percent recommendation. We will discuss this in further detail at the end of this section.

## Rule of 60 – Part 2

The second part of the "Rule of 60" examines workload and discretionary time and suggests that no more than 60 percent of time should be committed to calls for service. In other words, CPSM suggests that no more than 60 percent of available patrol officer time be spent responding to the service demands of the community. The remaining 40 percent of the time is the "discretionary time" for officers to be available to address community problems and be available for serious emergencies.

It is CPSM's contention that patrol staffing is optimally deployed when the saturation index (SI) is in the 60 percent range. An SI greater than 60 percent indicates that the patrol manpower is largely reactive, and thus overburdened with CFS and workload demands. An SI of somewhat less than 60 percent indicates that patrol manpower is optimally staffed. SI levels much lower than 60 percent, however, indicate patrol resources that are underutilized.

Departments must be cautious in interpreting the SI too narrowly. One should not conclude that SI can never exceed 60 percent at any time during the day, or that in any given hour no more than 60 percent of any officer's time be committed to CFS. The SI at 60 percent is intended to be a benchmark to evaluate overall service demands on patrol staffing. When SI levels exceed 60 percent for substantial periods of a given shift, or at specific times during the day, then decisions should be made to reallocate or realign personnel to reduce the SI to levels below 60 percent.

Resource allocation decisions must be made from a policy and/or managerial perspective through which costs and benefits of competing demands are considered. The patrol saturation index indicates the percentage of time dedicated by police officers to public demands for service and administrative duties related to their jobs. Effective patrol deployment would exist at amounts where the saturation index was less than 60.

The CPSM data analysis in the second part of this report provides a rich overview of CFS and staffing demands experienced by the West Des Moines Police Department. The analysis here looks specifically at patrol deployment and how to maximize the personnel resources of the department to meet the demands of calls for service while also engaging in proactive policing to combat crime, disorder, and traffic issues in the community.

The following sets of figures depict staffing, workload, and the "saturation" of patrol resources in the West Des Moines Police Department during the two months (seasons) on which we focused our workload analysis. The figures represent the manpower, service demands, and workload saturation during weekdays and weekends during the periods of July 7 to August 31, 2022 (Summer) and January 4 to February 28, 2023 (Winter). Examination of these figures permits exploration of the second part of the Rule of 60.

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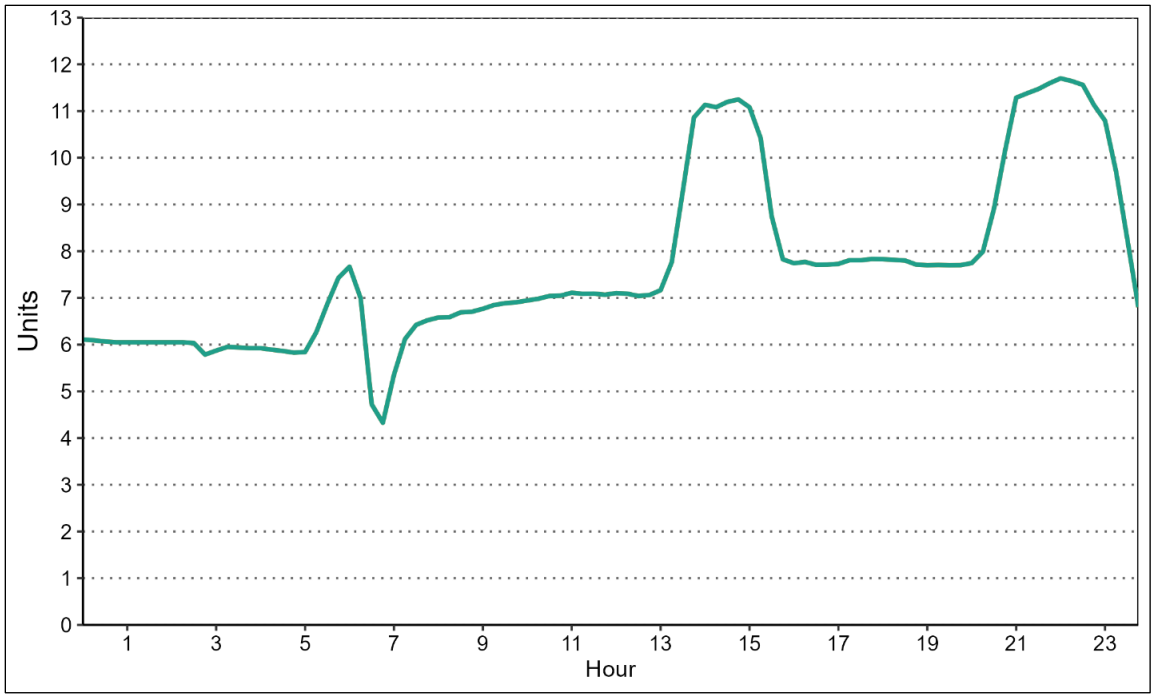
## Workload Analysis

### FIGURE 4-1: Deployed Officers, Weekdays, Summer 2022




### FIGURE 4-2: Deployment and All Workload, Weekdays, Summer 2022

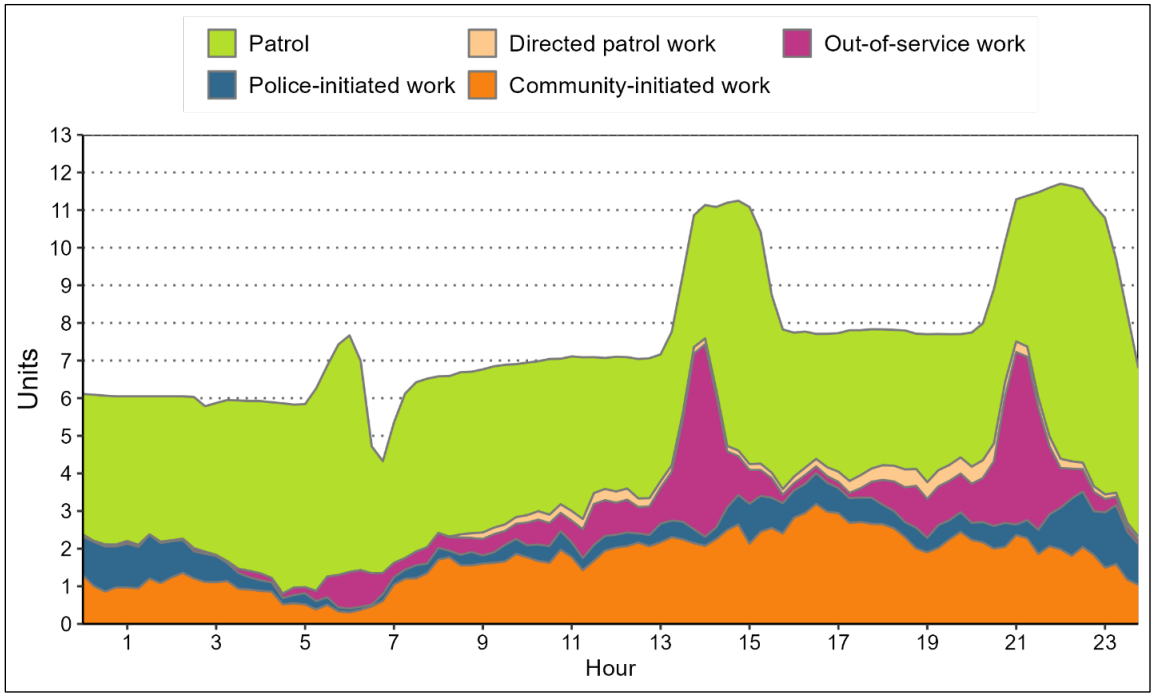
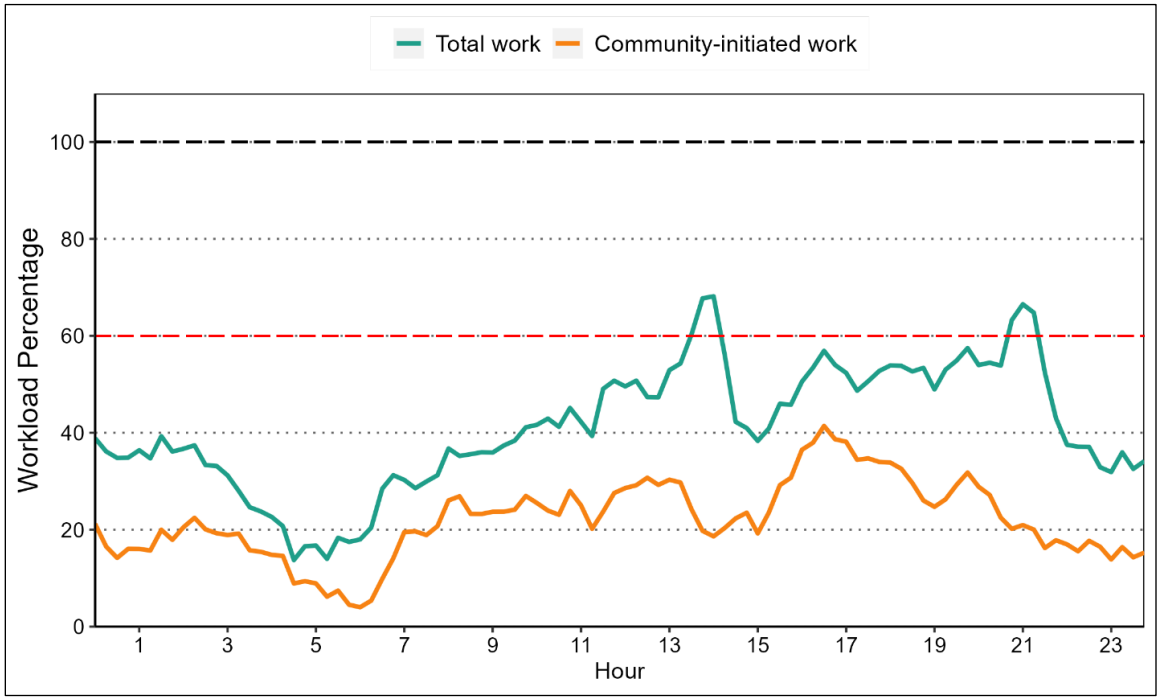


**FIGURE 4-3: Percentage of Workload, Weekdays, Summer 2022**




Workload v. Deployment – Weekdays, Summer 2022

| | |
|---|---|
| Avg. Deployment | 7.7 officers per hour |
| Avg. Workload: | 3.3 officers per hour |
| Avg. % Deployed (SI): | 42 percent |
| Peak SI: | 68 percent |
| Peak SI Time: | 2:00 p.m. |

The "Deployment and All Workload" figure shows the relationship of all on-duty police officers assigned to patrol that were factored into the workload analysis and what work is represented by those officers throughout the course of the day. The first figure that denotes deployed officers is also the same top line represented in the second figure denoting workload. The average deployment throughout the day was 7.7 officers. The average workload of 3.3 indicates that, on average, 3.3 on-duty officers (of the 7.7 average) were occupied with work (calls for service or administrative work). The spikes observed around 6 a.m., 2 p.m., and 9 p.m. represent shift change times when there is the occasional overlap of officers from different shifts. Under workload, those purple spikes occurring at shift change indicate officers were assigned to the CAD system but "out of service," likely in a briefing at that time. The average saturation index (SI) is 42 percent, and the peak SI is 68 percent at 2:00 p.m. These figures would suggest that WDMPD was optimally deployed on the weekdays during the summer months in 2022.

The orange section at the bottom of the workload chart indicates the average number of officers that were occupied with community-initiated work, an average of 1.7 officers per hour. The color that denotes police-initiated work indicates times officers were busy with work they observed and took some type of proactive policing approach (e.g., traffic stop). Out-of-service work will be explained in further detail later but is generally defined as being administrative in nature, while the largest green section of "patrol" indicates the number of officers that were available for a call and potentially looking for proactive work during any given time of the day.

Directed patrol is defined as officers who may have been on an assignment to extra patrol an area (for example, a park).

Now for the remainder of the workload figures for the periods analyzed.

**FIGURE 4-4: Deployed Officers, Weekends, Summer 2022**

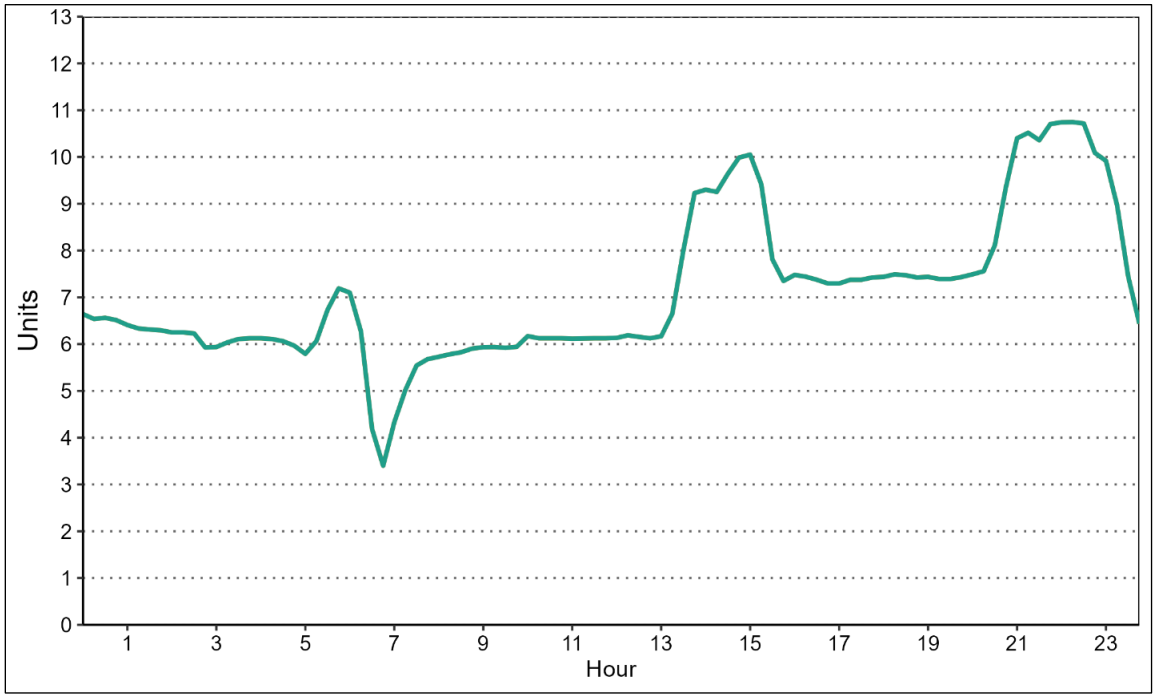



**FIGURE 4-5: Deployment and All Workload, Weekends, Summer 2022**

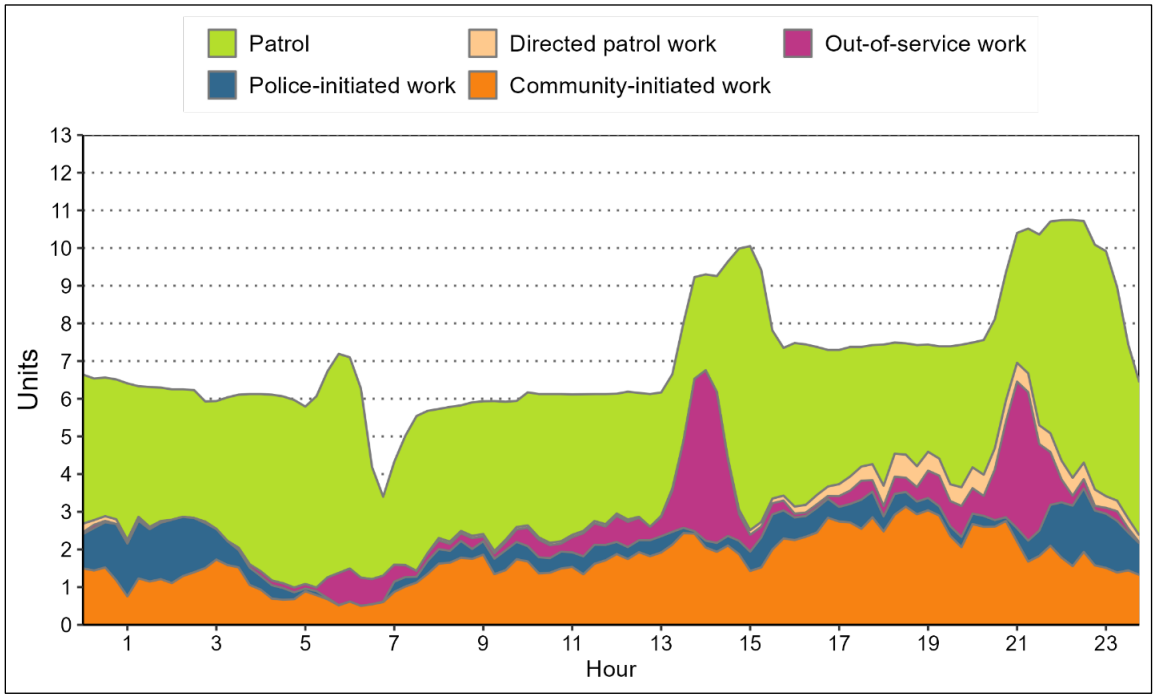
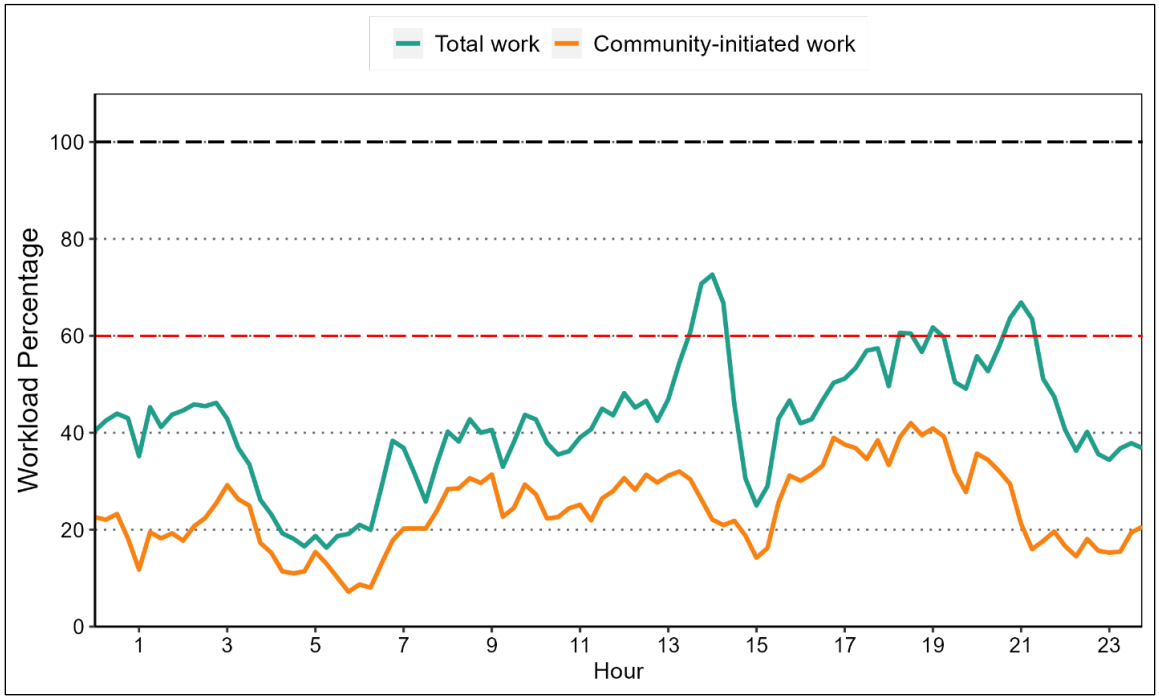


**FIGURE 4-6: Percentage of Workload, Weekends, Summer 2022**




Workload v. Deployment – Weekends, Summer 2022

| | |
|---|---|
| Avg. Deployment | 7.1 officers per hour |
| Avg. Workload: | 3.1 officers per hour |
| Avg. % Deployed (SI): | 43 percent |
| Peak SI: | 73 percent |
| Peak SI Time: | 2:00 p.m. |

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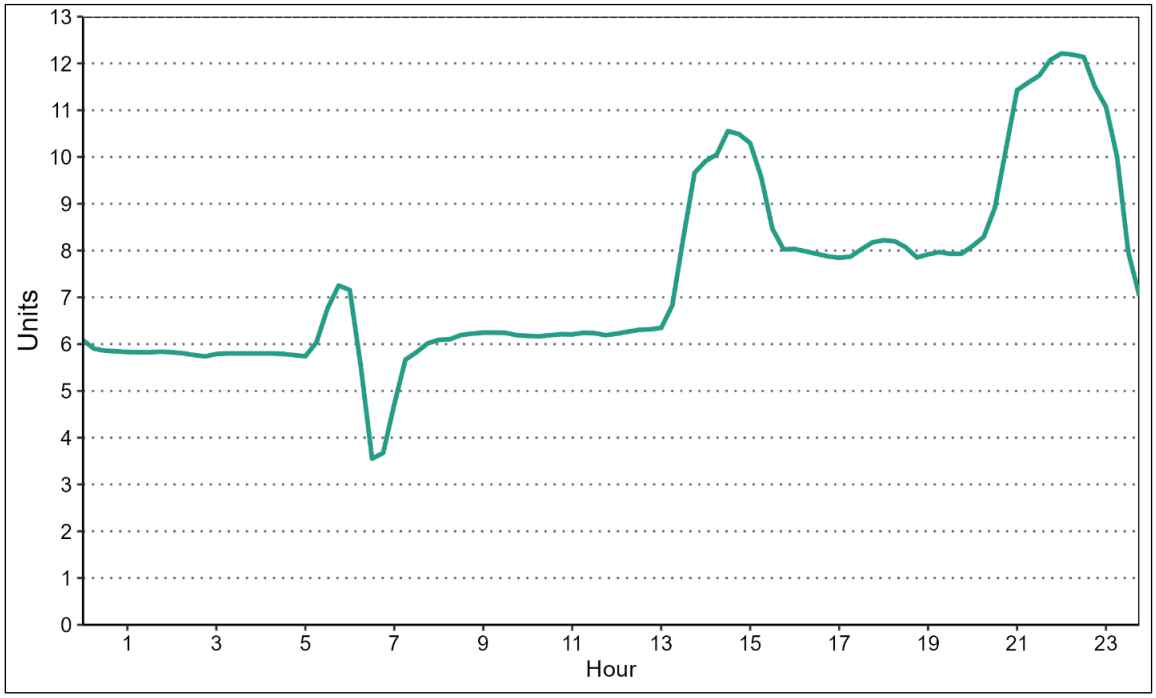
## FIGURE 4-7: Deployed Officers, Weekdays, Winter 2023




## FIGURE 4-8: Deployment and All Workload, Weekdays, Winter 2023

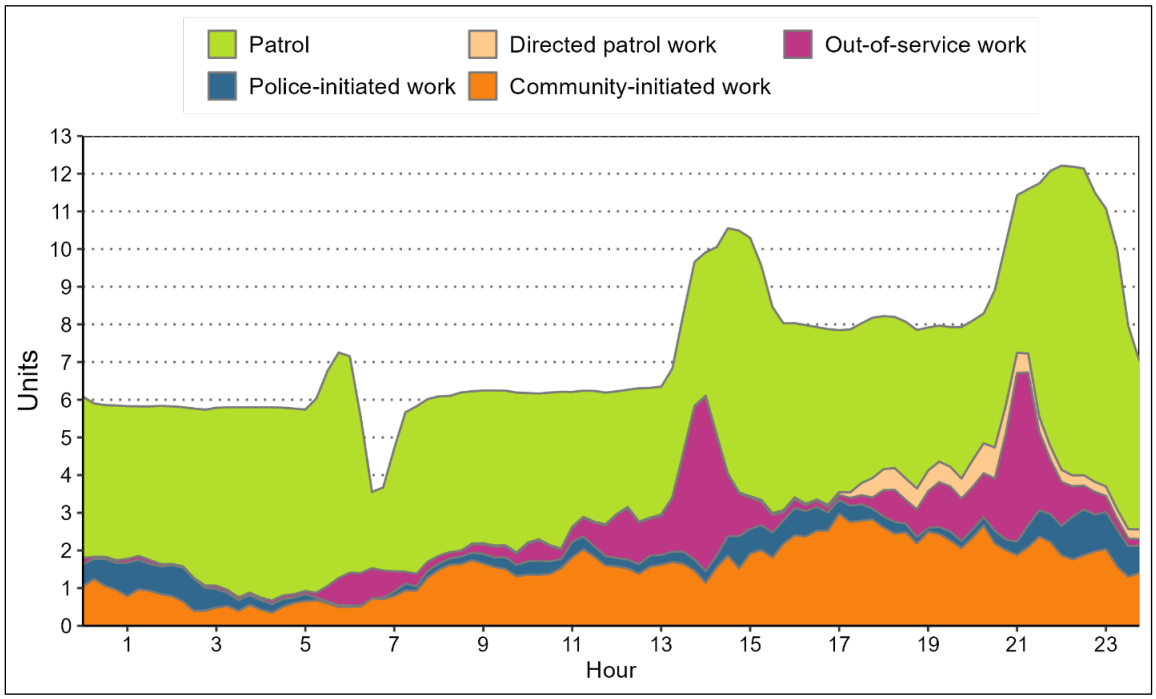
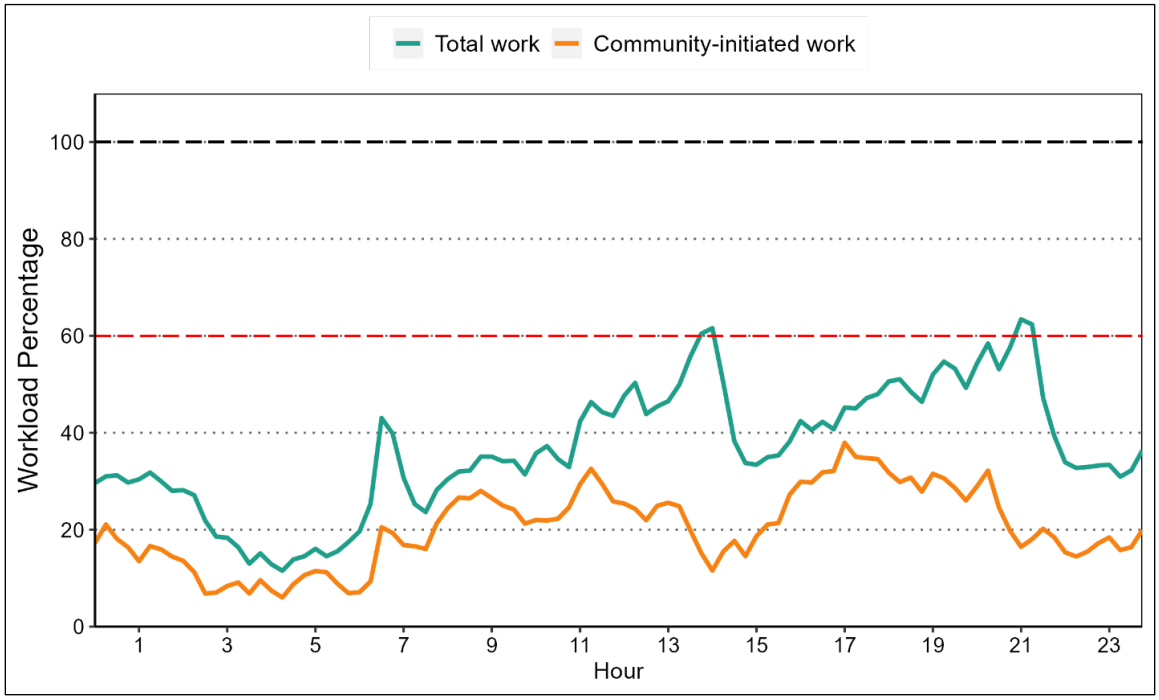


**FIGURE 4-9: Percentage of Workload, Weekdays, Winter 2023**




Workload v. Deployment – Weekdays, Winter 2022

| | |
|---|---|
| Avg. Deployment | 7.4 officers per hour |
| Avg. Workload: | 2.8 officers per hour |
| Avg. % Deployed (SI): | 38 percent |
| Peak SI: | 63 percent |
| Peak SI Time: | 9:00 p.m. |

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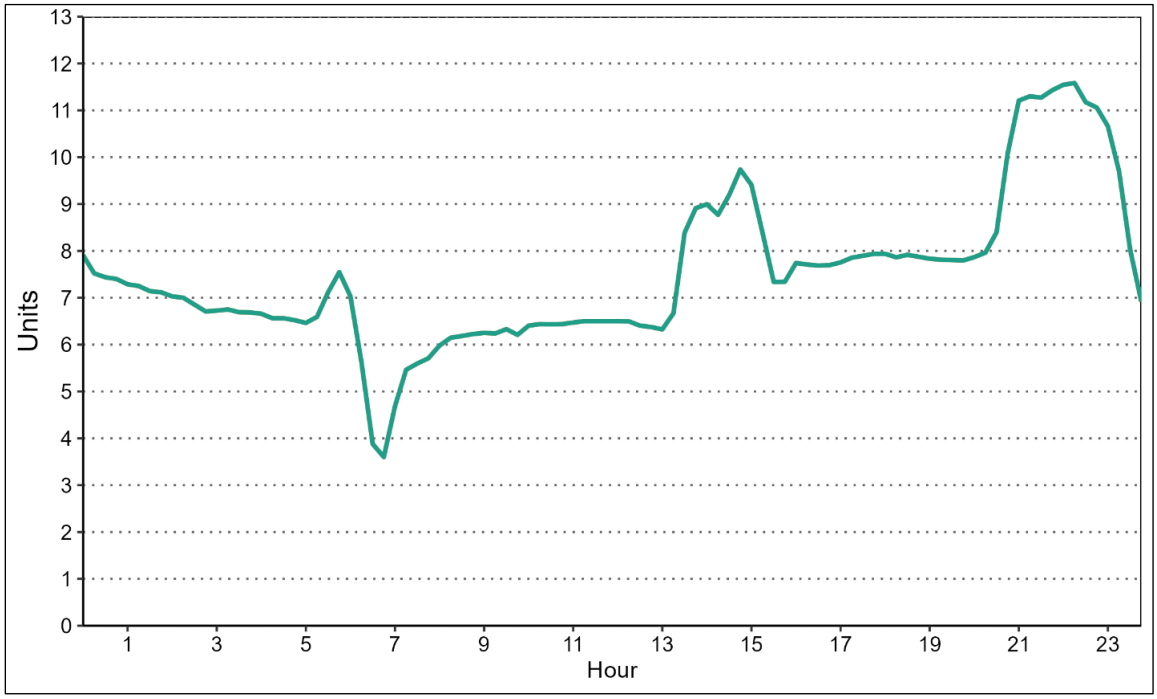
## FIGURE 4-10: Deployed Officers, Weekends, Winter 2023




## FIGURE 4-11: Deployment and All Workload, Weekends, Winter 2023

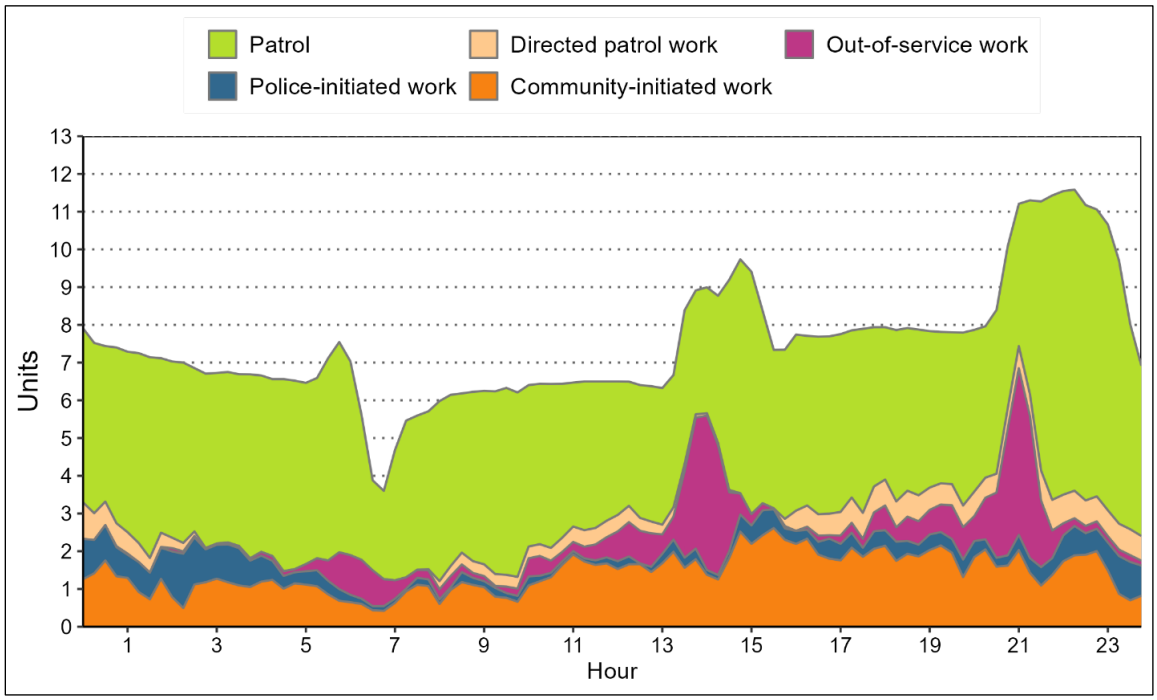
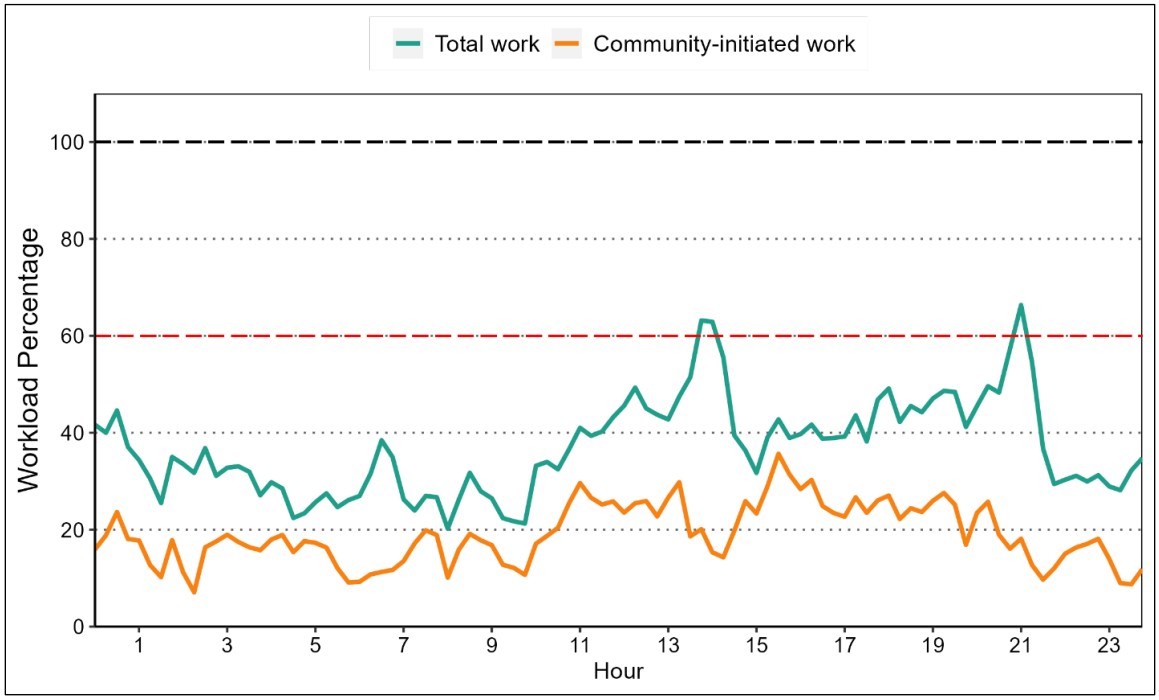


**FIGURE 4-12: Percentage of Workload, Weekends, Winter 2023**




Workload v. Deployment – Weekends, Winter 2022

| | |
|---|---|
| Avg. Deployment | 7.5 officers per hour |
| Avg. Workload: | 2.8 officers per hour |
| Avg. % Deployed (SI): | 38 percent |
| Peak SI: | 66 percent |
| Peak SI Time: | 9:00 p.m. |

As indicated earlier, the figures and data represented above are from two 8-week periods during the summer of 2022 and the winter of 2023; the data is broken down by weekdays and weekends. In evaluating the workload against the available staffing in the WDMPD patrol division, it "appears" that the division is properly staffed. Although there are times that workload does exceed the 60 percent threshold, we do not believe it remains at that level long enough to indicate an overworked patrol force based on data alone.

We know from conducting assessments involving departments throughout the country that these workload numbers do not represent all work being done in the department. Police culture, by its very nature, does not encourage 100 percent accounting of an officer's time. Beat integrity is a cultural element in all departments, and beat integrity encourages officers to be available to handle any service call or crime report in their area of responsibility. As a result, officers tend to remain "available" in the department's CAD system and not record all activities, such as report writing and other administrative tasks.

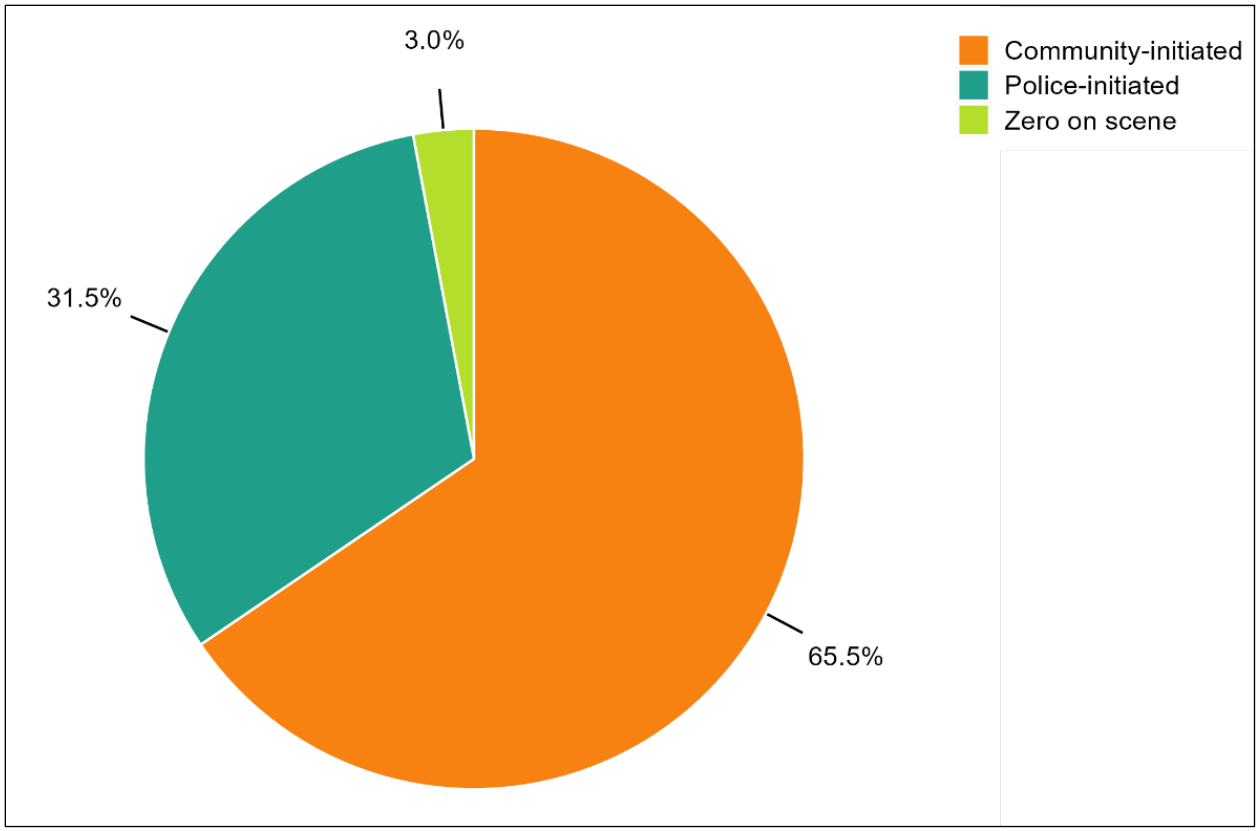
We observed this firsthand during our ride-along with patrol officers. Officers handled calls for service and completed some of the required paperwork (digital–computer entries) before 'clearing' the call and showing themselves available again. The actual report that still needed to be written was not completed until another time, and in most cases, those reports are completed while the officers are available for another call. This means they are doing an administrative task (report writing) when, in fact, they are coded in CAD as being on "patrol," potentially looking for community concerns that may need to be addressed.

There are methods that departments have instituted that enable officers to accurately record what they are doing while simultaneously being available to handle priority needs in their beat or for their beat partners. While on patrol, we observed that WDMPD has a very efficient system for this type of tracking. Officers showed us CAD commands on the computer screen that allowed them to show themselves "busy" on a task and unavailable; or, "busy" on a task yet still available for another service demand. Officers explained that these commands are sometimes used but not to the extent that accurately accounts for all of their administrative task time. Officers also expressed that when it was used in the past, many employees learned how to "game" the system.

We learned that there was a time in the recent history of WDMPD when officer productivity and time usage were closely monitored and broken down into charts and graphs that were used to hold officers accountable. This was communicated to us several times in discussions with members of the department, and almost universally, the employees expressed their dislike of this practice. It was the use of that system that created the simplicity of recording their busy time in CAD; the resulting use of that data and discontinuance of the management practice is partially to blame for those system commands not being used very often in today's WDMPD.

In this section of the report, we will explore what types of calls occupy the time of WDMPD patrol officers and where those calls originate from.

### FIGURE 4-13: Percentage Events per Day, by Initiator




**Note:** Percentages are based on a total of 40,610 events.

### TABLE 4-2: Events per Day, by Initiator

| Initiator | No. of Events | Events per Day |
|---|---|---|
| Community | 26,599 | 72.9 |
| Police-initiated | 12,809 | 35.1 |
| Zero on scene | 1,202 | 3.3 |
| **Total** | **40,610** | **111.3** |

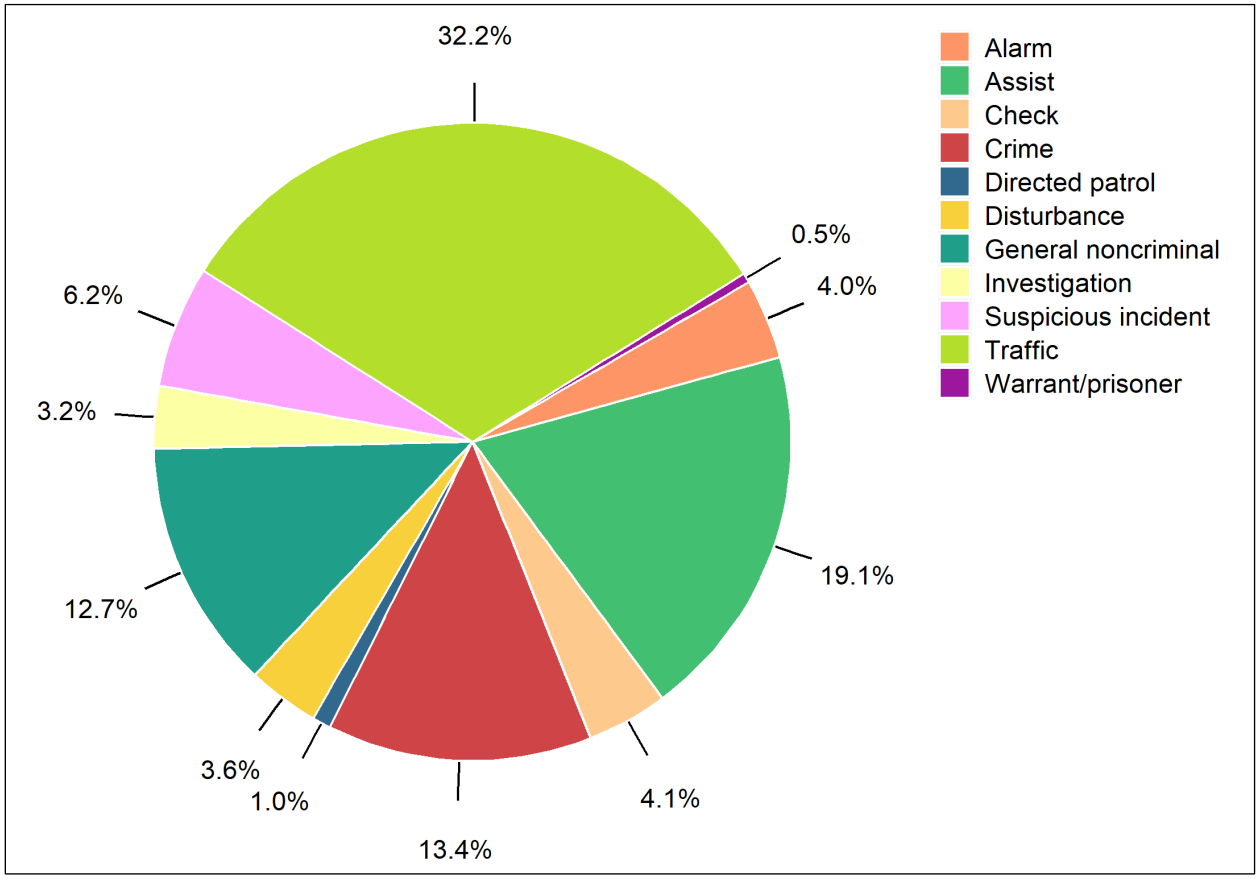
From our analysis of the total calls and events recorded in the department's CAD system in our one-year study period, we see that approximately 65 percent of those events originated from community requests for services, while 31 percent originated from police officer self-initiated or self-directed activity. We believe this is a healthy balance of community-initiated vs officer-initiated activity and it further supports the notion that WDMPD is appropriately deployed in patrol.

The table and figure that follow below further break down the daily events experienced by WDMPD and show that traffic-related matters occupy the largest percentage of an officer's attention. This is consistent with information shared by the department that traffic-related concerns are the primary complaint of West Des Moines residents.

### TABLE 4-3: Events per Day, by Category

| Category | No. of Events | Events per Day |
|---|---|---|
| Accident | 2,170 | 5.9 |
| Alarm | 1,644 | 4.5 |
| Animal call | 642 | 1.8 |
| Assist other agency | 1,996 | 5.5 |
| Check | 1,666 | 4.6 |
| Crime against persons | 1,368 | 3.7 |
| Crime against property | 2,301 | 6.3 |
| Crime against society | 1,783 | 4.9 |
| Directed patrol | 387 | 1.1 |
| Disturbance | 1,471 | 4.0 |
| Investigation | 1,288 | 3.5 |
| Mental health | 547 | 1.5 |
| Miscellaneous | 563 | 1.5 |
| Public assist | 5,775 | 15.8 |
| Suspicious incident | 2,517 | 6.9 |
| Traffic enforcement | 1,017 | 2.8 |
| Traffic stop | 9,871 | 27.0 |
| Violation | 3,404 | 9.3 |
| Warrant/prisoner | 200 | 0.5 |
| **Total** | **40,610** | **111.3** |

**FIGURE 4-14: Percentage Events per Day, by Category**

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The following table shows the average number of calls per day by category per month. Most categories of calls remain consistent throughout the year. Of interest in this table is the relationship between accidents and traffic stops during the month of December. Initially, one might conclude that the increase in traffic accidents could be related to early season winter weather and icy roads. However, the rise in traffic collisions also coincides with a significant drop in traffic stops.

### TABLE 4-4: Calls per Day, by Category and Month

| Category | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Accident | 5.3 | 6.2 | 4.7 | 5.2 | 5.4 | 6.0 | 7.7 | 9.8 | 4.9 | 5.2 | 5.1 | 5.3 |
| Alarm | 4.7 | 5.3 | 4.8 | 4.4 | 3.6 | 3.8 | 4.4 | 5.3 | 3.6 | 3.6 | 4.6 | 4.0 |
| Animal call | 2.2 | 1.6 | 1.2 | 1.2 | 1.2 | 1.3 | 1.4 | 1.9 | 1.7 | 1.7 | 1.9 | 1.8 |
| Assist other agency | 5.5 | 5.5 | 5.3 | 5.5 | 5.5 | 4.9 | 4.6 | 4.5 | 4.8 | 5.0 | 5.1 | 5.0 |
| Check | 4.4 | 5.1 | 4.7 | 4.6 | 4.7 | 4.7 | 4.4 | 5.5 | 4.1 | 4.9 | 3.5 | 3.8 |
| Crime against persons | 4.4 | 4.6 | 3.6 | 3.8 | 3.5 | 4.3 | 3.6 | 3.2 | 3.7 | 3.0 | 3.2 | 4.1 |
| Crime against property | 6.3 | 6.2 | 6.7 | 6.4 | 6.3 | 6.5 | 6.5 | 6.3 | 5.5 | 5.9 | 5.8 | 7.1 |
| Crime against society | 5.9 | 5.6 | 5.5 | 5.8 | 5.1 | 4.5 | 3.8 | 3.5 | 3.8 | 4.2 | 4.5 | 4.8 |
| Disturbance | 3.6 | 4.9 | 5.9 | 3.8 | 3.6 | 3.5 | 3.4 | 3.3 | 3.0 | 3.5 | 3.4 | 4.3 |
| Investigation | 3.7 | 3.5 | 4.5 | 3.4 | 3.9 | 3.3 | 3.4 | 2.6 | 3.1 | 2.3 | 3.2 | 3.9 |
| Mental health | 1.5 | 1.8 | 1.0 | 1.3 | 1.5 | 1.8 | 1.7 | 1.4 | 1.6 | 1.8 | 1.2 | 1.4 |
| Miscellaneous | 1.3 | 1.3 | 1.2 | 1.4 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 1.1 | 1.0 | 1.1 | 1.1 |
| Public assist | 16.5 | 17.9 | 17.9 | 17.7 | 17.0 | 15.5 | 14.6 | 14.8 | 14.5 | 12.3 | 13.0 | 13.4 |
| Suspicious incident | 8.2 | 8.0 | 7.8 | 9.0 | 7.3 | 7.1 | 5.7 | 4.2 | 5.3 | 5.5 | 6.1 | 6.0 |
| Traffic enforcement | 3.3 | 3.3 | 3.0 | 3.0 | 2.3 | 3.2 | 2.0 | 2.5 | 2.2 | 2.0 | 2.6 | 2.8 |
| Traffic stop | 27.3 | 25.9 | 26.5 | 35.9 | 35.8 | 28.9 | 23.8 | 14.9 | 27.8 | 25.7 | 26.5 | 24.2 |
| Violation | 9.0 | 10.2 | 10.0 | 8.4 | 8.2 | 6.9 | 7.0 | 7.3 | 7.8 | 8.2 | 8.8 | 9.5 |
| Warrant/prisoner | 0.3 | 0.5 | 0.9 | 0.5 | 0.7 | 0.3 | 0.4 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.6 | 0.6 | 0.7 |
| **Total** | **113.4** | **117.4** | **115.2** | **121.1** | **116.5** | **107.6** | **99.4** | **92.5** | **99.1** | **96.4** | **100.2** | **103.3** |

The following table shows the average amount of time that WDMPD patrol officers take to handle each category of call. This is useful to understand where the department may be able to establish efficiencies in its processes. For instance, the last category in the table is warrant/prisoner calls, which take almost one hour per incident on average. This is likely because every one of those calls involved transporting an arrested person to one of the four county jails that the WDMPD must use. Department management may see data such as this and explore alternative transport options that may minimize the time an officer is out of service. The average mental health call takes one or two officers out of service for almost 40 minutes. An effective alternative mental health response might mitigate that impact. WDMPD did recently establish an alternative response for mental health-related calls but it is too soon to know if this will have a positive impact on officer time devoted to these calls.

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### TABLE 4-5: Primary Unit's Average Occupied Times, by Category and Initiator

| Category | Community-Initiated | | Police-Initiated | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Minutes | Calls | Minutes | Calls |
| Accident | 37.1 | 2,060 | 32.4 | 99 |
| Alarm | 10.0 | 1,588 | 5.0 | 3 |
| Animal call | 13.6 | 567 | 14.2 | 15 |
| Assist other agency | 20.3 | 1,820 | 15.7 | 43 |
| Check | 25.4 | 1,471 | 9.4 | 180 |
| Crime against persons | 40.0 | 1,351 | 38.1 | 15 |
| Crime against property | 36.4 | 2,250 | 32.2 | 42 |
| Crime against society | 24.8 | 1,586 | 35.9 | 154 |
| Disturbance | 19.1 | 1,372 | 13.9 | 36 |
| Investigation | 36.9 | 926 | 25.8 | 318 |
| Mental health | 37.0 | 539 | 38.4 | 8 |
| Miscellaneous | 13.3 | 381 | 15.9 | 26 |
| Public assist | 18.6 | 4,697 | 15.1 | 940 |
| Suspicious incident | 16.7 | 1,919 | 20.3 | 525 |
| Traffic enforcement | 24.7 | 925 | 24.6 | 53 |
| Traffic stop | NA | 0 | 13.7 | 9,832 |
| Violation | 12.3 | 3,010 | 9.5 | 71 |
| Warrant/prisoner | 59.7 | 122 | 48.2 | 77 |
| **Weighted Average/Total Calls** | **23.4** | **26,584** | **15.1** | **12,437** |

In addition to looking at the amount of time officers spend on average managing each call there is also value in seeing how many officers are required on average per call depending on each call type. The following table shows that information. Again, mental health-type calls come to our attention as they require more officers per call than any other category, including crimes against persons (i.e., criminal assaults).

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### TABLE 4-6: Average Number of Responding Units, by Initiator and Category

| Category | Community-Initiated | | Police-Initiated | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | No. of Units | Calls | No. of Units | Calls |
| Accident | 1.5 | 2,060 | 1.4 | 99 |
| Alarm | 1.9 | 1,588 | 2.3 | 3 |
| Animal call | 1.2 | 567 | 1.0 | 15 |
| Assist other agency | 1.8 | 1,820 | 1.3 | 43 |
| Check | 2.2 | 1,471 | 1.1 | 180 |
| Crime against persons | 2.0 | 1,351 | 1.5 | 15 |
| Crime against property | 1.5 | 2,250 | 1.4 | 42 |
| Crime against society | 2.1 | 1,586 | 1.9 | 154 |
| Disturbance | 1.8 | 1,372 | 1.6 | 36 |
| Investigation | 1.4 | 926 | 1.1 | 318 |
| Mental health | 2.5 | 539 | 2.4 | 8 |
| Miscellaneous | 1.1 | 381 | 1.3 | 26 |
| Public assist | 1.2 | 4,697 | 1.1 | 940 |
| Suspicious incident | 2.0 | 1,919 | 1.5 | 525 |
| Traffic enforcement | 1.3 | 925 | 1.4 | 53 |
| Traffic stop | NA | 0 | 1.2 | 9,832 |
| Violation | 1.3 | 3,010 | 1.0 | 71 |
| Warrant/prisoner | 2.3 | 122 | 2.1 | 77 |
| **Weighted Average/Total Calls** | **1.6** | **26,584** | **1.2** | **12,437** |

## West Des Moines Police Territories

For purposes of patrol, the WDMPD divides the city into two sections, west and east, with three territories in each section. Each territory is then further divided into beats, The following figure shows the six territories into which the city is divided. Earlier in this report we noted the lack of clarity on city beat boundaries and made the recommendation to better communicate boundary changes as they occur.

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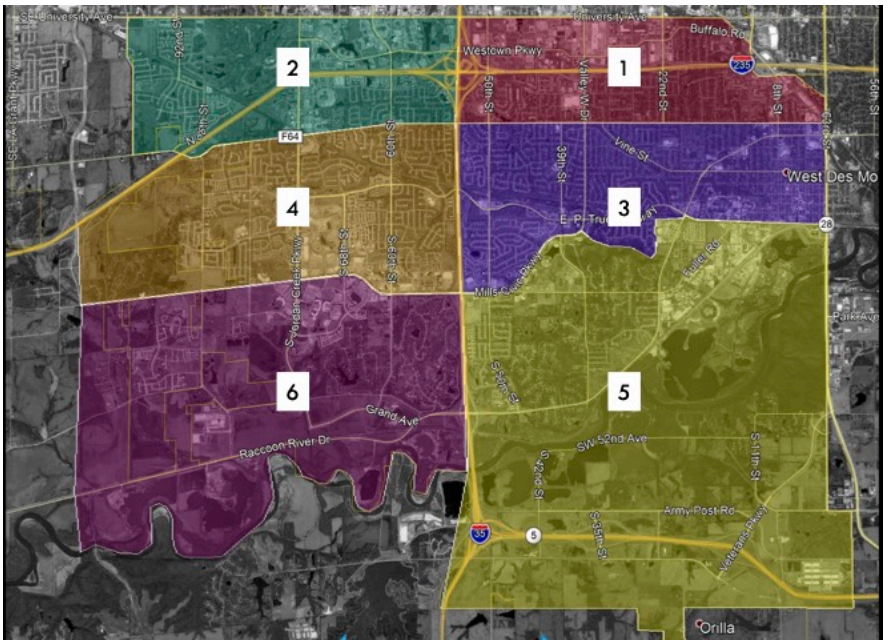
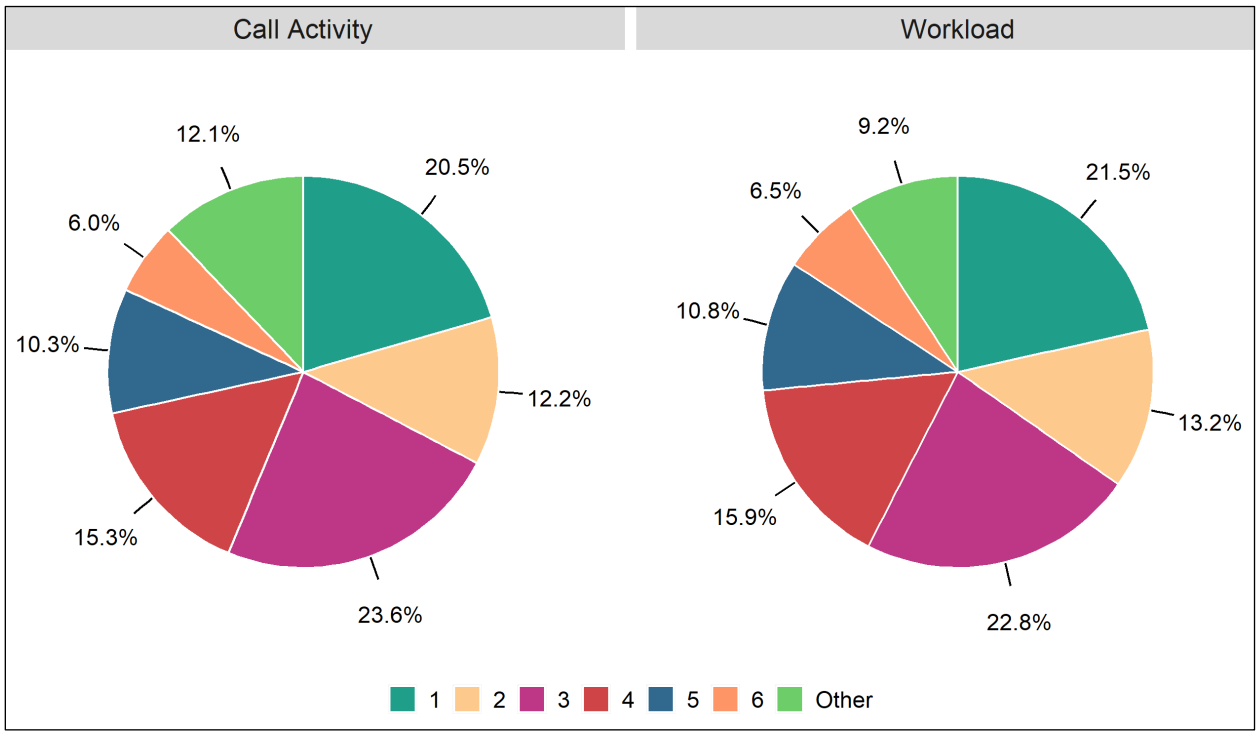
## FIGURE 4-15: West Des Moines Police Patrol Territories




## FIGURE 4-16: Percentage Calls and Work Hours, by Territory




**Note**: The "other" category includes calls at headquarters, calls missing beats, as well as calls with miscellaneous beats, for example, "MA Des Moines," "Windsor Heights PD," and "CLV EAST."

## TABLE 4-7: Calls and Work Hours by Beat, per Day

| Territory | Beat | Calls | Work Hours |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 11 | 8.1 | 4.2 |
| | 12 | 1.8 | 0.9 |
| | 13 | 6.0 | 3.0 |
| | 14 | 6.1 | 3.0 |
| | **Subtotal** | **21.9** | **11.2** |
| 2 | 21 | 3.1 | 1.8 |
| | 22 | 3.8 | 1.9 |
| | 23 | 3.4 | 1.7 |
| | 24 | 2.7 | 1.5 |
| | **Subtotal** | **13.1** | **6.9** |
| 3 | 31 | 2.5 | 1.0 |
| | 32 | 4.0 | 1.7 |
| | 33 | 13.5 | 6.4 |
| | 34 | 5.2 | 2.8 |
| | **Subtotal** | **25.2** | **11.9** |
| 4 | 41 | 2.2 | 1.0 |
| | 42 | 1.6 | 0.7 |
| | 43 | 3.4 | 1.7 |
| | 44 | 4.0 | 2.3 |
| | 45 | 2.6 | 1.3 |
| | 46 | 2.6 | 1.4 |
| | **Subtotal** | **16.4** | **8.3** |
| 5 | 51 | 4.2 | 1.9 |
| | 52 | 4.7 | 2.5 |
| | 53 | 1.1 | 0.5 |
| | 54 | 1.0 | 0.6 |
| | **Subtotal** | **11.0** | **5.6** |
| 6 | 61 | 1.5 | 0.9 |
| | 62 | 2.6 | 1.2 |
| | 63 | 1.4 | 0.8 |
| | 64 | 0.9 | 0.5 |
| | **Subtotal** | **6.4** | **3.4** |
| Other | HQ | 9.6 | 3.3 |
| | Miscellaneous | 3.1 | 1.4 |
| | Unknown | 0.2 | 0.0 |
| | **Subtotal** | 13.0 | 4.8 |
| **Total** | | **106.9** | **52.1** |

## Observations:

- Territory 3 had the most calls and largest workload; it accounted for 24 percent of total calls and 23 percent of total workload.
- An even distribution of calls and work would allot 15.7 calls and 7.9 work hours per territory per day.

## OUT-OF-SERVICE ACTIVITIES

Workload activity is divided into three distinct categories. Community-initiated work is a call for service that officers are dispatched to handle. For instance, when someone calls 911 to report a crime and an officer is sent to investigate, that is classified as a community-initiated call. Self-initiated or self-directed work is also self-explanatory. When an officer makes a traffic stop and takes whatever appropriate action is deemed necessary, that is classified as self-initiated. Almost all other work recorded in a department CAD system gets classified as being administrative in nature or as this category implies, an "out of service" activity.

The following table is a breakdown of all out-of-service activity that CPSM extracted from WDMPD's CAD data.

### TABLE 4-8: Activities and Occupied Times by Description

| Description | Occupied Time | Count |
|---|---|---|
| Area check | 11.4 | 642 |
| Busy | 21.8 | 1,504 |
| Cop | 21.5 | 42 |
| Court | 92.6 | 47 |
| Mechanical | 16.6 | 446 |
| Meeting | 62.0 | 248 |
| Report writing | 34.8 | 1,003 |
| Roll call | 51.4 | 3,327 |
| Traffic | 11.2 | 39 |
| Training | 35.2 | 67 |
| **Administrative - Weighted Average/Total Activities** | **37.6** | **7,365** |
| **Personal - Meal break - Average/Total Activities** | **28.9** | **2,931** |
| **Weighted Average/Total Activities** | **35.1** | **10,296** |

In evaluating this category, we do not find anything that is out of place. Earlier in this report we discussed report writing and the need to properly classify an officer's time. This is an area where report writing should be observed in department data. In this table, report writing was recorded 1,003 times in a 12-month period for an average of 35 minutes for each occurrence. Considering that this total is inclusive of all patrol officers, 24 hours per day, all year long, it is easy to see that report writing is vastly underreported and likely a culprit for misrepresenting all work time incurred by WDMPD patrol officers. We have already made recommendations to correct this deficiency to better account for officer time.

The remaining categories, amount of usage, and occupied time do not raise any concerns and are determined to be within industry standards.

## WORKLOAD MITIGATION STRATEGIES

Whenever the workload within any patrol force is evaluated, there should always be the question of what workload could be mitigated or achieved more efficiently. WDMPD's existing workload is not so problematic that it is critical the agency find alternative ways of handling its service demand. However, modern police agencies should be exploring any potential workload mitigation strategies to keep sworn officers available for emergencies or priority service demands to the greatest extent possible.

In our assessment of the West Des Moines Police Department, we found that management and the department is actively seeking to engage in best practices for efficiencies and workload mitigation. In this section of the report, we will cover many of the common mitigation practices currently being conducted by agencies around the country and which WDMPD may be able to explore for its own benefit.

### Response to Traffic Collisions

Investigating traffic collisions represents a significant workload for any police department. In WDMPD's case, it accounts for 5.9 calls per day or 2,159 calls annually. In most cases, collisions require multiple units and can be time-consuming, with nearly 40 minutes of labor per incident in these cases and occupying the attention of 1.5 officers per incident on average.

Serious crashes involving injuries or criminal conduct (DUI, etc.) certainly require a police response. However, most crashes are minor in nature and do not involve injuries or criminal prosecution. In many of those cases, departments can either seek an alternate response or elect not to respond at all since they are often deemed to be civil in nature.

Non-injury crashes can be handled by the involved parties exchanging information and managing the process through their auto insurance companies. We observed firsthand that WDMPD has a mechanism to efficiently document an exchange of information without having to write a full police report.

Another alternative would be to use civilian employees to respond to and investigate these incidents.

Modifying a response to traffic collisions is a difficult decision for many organizations because it is deemed a reduction in customer service, and there will likely be community pushback. In many cases, an alternative response to simple crashes is a recommendation because agencies are overwhelmed by an existing workload. West Des Moines is not overwhelmed by this workload, but common-sense changes such as this may become a necessity as the agency and the city move into the future. Strategically adopting an alternative response now may pay dividends in the future.,

### Use of Civilian Employees

The use of civilians in patrol work is found in departments across the nation and is deemed a best practice for departments seeking to deliver service in the most efficient manner. When deployed effectively these resources can be a force multiplier by handling nonhazardous, time-consuming patrol duties, thereby freeing up sworn officers to handle more critical functions as well as direct their efforts to community problem-solving. Another benefit of utilizing civilians in the patrol workforce is the lower training threshold in comparison to sworn officers. Although we encourage that all employees receive proper training for the jobs they are tasked with performing, which includes departments providing extensive training to civilian employees

working in the patrol function, there is no need or requirement to send these employees to a fully certified police academy for state certification. Civilian employees can typically be hired and trained internally at a much faster rate that a regular police officer. This can be a benefit when the department has multiple vacancies.

West Des Moines PD does have a civilian community service officer assigned to the patrol function and who assists with a variety of department needs, including assistance with maintaining the police fleet. During this assessment, we learned that the lone CSO has been approved internally to start assisting with some minor crime reports. This is good first step and we encourage an expansion of this practice in the organization.

We observe several areas in this report where the department could convert to a civilian employee versus a sworn officer/supervisor. Any position that can be converted into a civilian position may allow for the transfer of that sworn officer back to the patrol function. This will be discussed in other sections of this report.

It should be noted that in discussions with various employees there was opinion that using a civilian response model would not work in West Des Moines. Of the employees that voiced this opinion they felt that West Des Moines, as an affluent community, expects a police response when they call the police. This is not an uncommon response from departments that underutilize civilians in the police labor force. Many communities around the nation have effectively integrated civilians into the workforce to mitigate the patrol workload. In communities that have done it successfully there is an organizational commitment to use those employees to the greatest extent possible. Communities that have not reported success with the programs are those that have effectively restrained the use of civilian employees to the point of rendering the employees non-effective.

## Vehicle Lock-Outs

During our site visit, we learned that WDMPD officers often assist motorists who are locked out of their vehicles. In fact, every WDMPD patrol car is equipped with the tools to accomplish this task. Although it is appreciated by those who receive the service, we would recommend the practice be reconsidered. Many agencies have stopped providing this service or responding to these types of calls. Aside from the fact that many motorists have access to these services through modern technology or from a roadside assistance program, many agencies have experienced unnecessary claims to repair damage from officers doing this work.

## Alternative Reporting Options

Responding to service calls for very basic police reports is not an efficient use of a sworn officer's time. Aside from using civilian employees for basic service calls, many agencies have turned to technology to offset the workload. West Des Moines PD has invested in an online reporting system.

## False Alarm Mitigation

Most alarm responses tend to be false alarms, thereby wasting the valuable time of patrol officers tasked with responding to these calls. There are effective systems in place involving a municipal alarm ordinance, alarm registration, and assessed fees for false responses that have proven to be effective at mitigating the impact on police resources.

In West Des Moines, there were almost 1,600 alarm responses by WDMPD officers during our evaluation period.

West Des Moines does have a program in place that is aligned with industry standards. However, we learned that the tracking of false alarms and subsequent follow-up to assess fees to residents and businesses for unnecessary responses is not occurring. We encourage the city and WDMPD to enforce its in-place program.

## RESPONSE TIMES

We analyzed the response times to various types of calls, separating the duration into dispatch processing and travel time, to determine whether response times varied by call type. Response time is measured as the difference between when a call is received and when the first unit arrives on scene. This is further divided into dispatch processing and travel time. Dispatch processing is the time between when a call is received and when the first unit is dispatched. Travel time is the remaining time until the first unit arrives on scene.

We begin the discussion with statistics that include all calls combined. We started with 6,613 calls in summer and 5,440 calls in winter. We limited our analysis to community-initiated calls, which amounted to 4,332 calls in summer and 3,566 calls in winter. In addition, we removed the calls lacking a recorded arriving unit, a few calls located at headquarters, as well as calls outside West Des Moines police patrol beats and calls missing beats. We were left with 3,280 calls in summer and 2,729 calls in winter for our analysis. For the entire year, we began with 39,021 calls and limited our analysis to 26,599 community-initiated calls. With similar exclusions, we were left with 20,327 calls.

The following figure looks at all calls without considering their priorities. In addition to examining the differences in response times by both time of day and season (winter vs. summer), we show differences in response times by category. This shows that there is a reasonable consistency regardless of the time of year.

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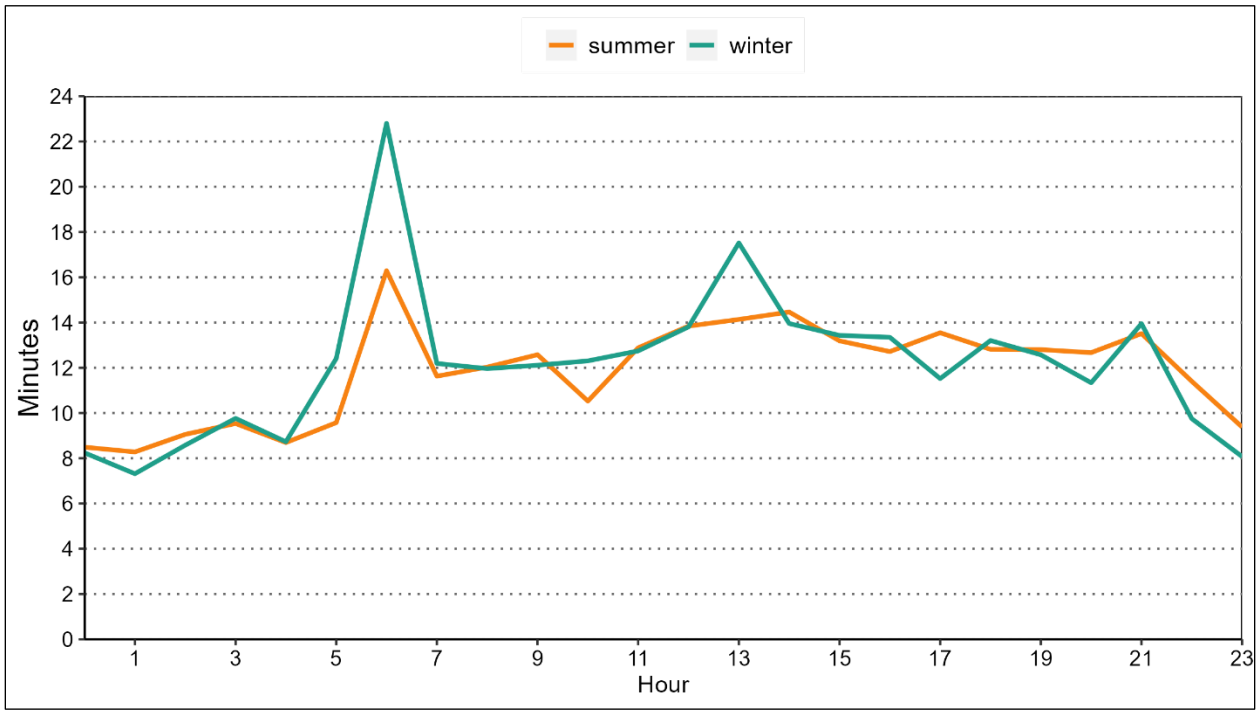
**FIGURE 4-17: Average Response Time and Dispatch Processing, by Hour of Day, Winter and Summer, 2022**




Next, we will explore the average response times to the various types of call categories in this report. Again, this table does not factor in the different priorities of call categorization.

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### TABLE 4-9: Average Response Time Components, by Category

| Category | Summer | | | | Winter | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Minutes | | | Count | Minutes | | | Count |
| | Dispatch | Travel | Response | | Dispatch | Travel | Response | |
| Accident | 5.3 | 6.7 | 11.9 | 238 | 5.1 | 6.9 | 12.0 | 252 |
| Alarm | 3.3 | 5.4 | 8.7 | 207 | 3.4 | 5.1 | 8.5 | 174 |
| Animal call | 11.0 | 6.9 | 17.9 | 51 | 10.4 | 7.2 | 17.6 | 62 |
| Assist other agency | 2.2 | 5.5 | 7.7 | 234 | 2.0 | 5.0 | 7.0 | 217 |
| Check | 5.2 | 6.3 | 11.5 | 224 | 5.1 | 6.6 | 11.7 | 188 |
| Crime against persons | 5.0 | 5.9 | 10.9 | 178 | 6.3 | 6.0 | 12.3 | 153 |
| Crime against property | 7.9 | 8.4 | 16.3 | 321 | 8.7 | 8.4 | 17.1 | 273 |
| Crime against society | 5.7 | 6.0 | 11.8 | 262 | 5.7 | 6.2 | 11.9 | 177 |
| Disturbance | 5.7 | 5.1 | 10.8 | 200 | 4.6 | 5.3 | 9.9 | 161 |
| Investigation | 7.3 | 7.3 | 14.6 | 106 | 7.6 | 8.4 | 16.0 | 59 |
| Mental health | 3.0 | 5.4 | 8.4 | 59 | 4.1 | 6.2 | 10.3 | 85 |
| Miscellaneous | 9.5 | 6.2 | 15.7 | 43 | 8.7 | 6.2 | 14.8 | 27 |
| Public assist | 6.4 | 7.2 | 13.6 | 293 | 7.3 | 7.2 | 14.6 | 239 |
| Suspicious incident | 4.3 | 6.1 | 10.4 | 330 | 4.1 | 6.0 | 10.2 | 200 |
| Traffic enforcement | 7.6 | 6.7 | 14.4 | 121 | 7.1 | 7.4 | 14.4 | 82 |
| Violation | 7.7 | 6.0 | 13.6 | 393 | 6.9 | 5.8 | 12.7 | 370 |
| Warrant/prisoner | 6.0 | 6.9 | 12.8 | 20 | 7.3 | 7.5 | 14.8 | 10 |
| **Total Average** | **5.8** | **6.4** | **12.1** | **3,280** | **5.8** | **6.4** | **12.2** | **2,729** |

Next, we will explore the average response times within the individual beats and territories in the city.

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## TABLE 4-10: Average Response Time Components, by Beat

| Territory | Beat | Minutes | | | Calls |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Dispatch | Travel | Response | |
| 1 | 11 | 5.6 | 6.4 | 12.0 | 1,860 |
| | 12 | 6.0 | 7.2 | 13.2 | 406 |
| | 13 | 6.2 | 6.1 | 12.3 | 1,254 |
| | 14 | 6.0 | 6.3 | 12.3 | 1,162 |
| | **Subtotal** | **5.9** | **6.4** | **12.3** | **4,682** |
| 2 | 21 | 6.2 | 9.3 | 15.5 | 753 |
| | 22 | 5.3 | 6.8 | 12.2 | 872 |
| | 23 | 4.9 | 6.2 | 11.2 | 622 |
| | 24 | 6.1 | 6.2 | 12.2 | 698 |
| | **Subtotal** | **5.6** | **7.2** | **12.8** | **2,945** |
| 3 | 31 | 6.8 | 6.1 | 12.9 | 481 |
| | 32 | 6.3 | 5.7 | 11.9 | 864 |
| | 33 | 6.4 | 6.3 | 12.7 | 2,563 |
| | 34 | 6.3 | 5.7 | 12.0 | 1,214 |
| | **Subtotal** | **6.4** | **6.1** | **12.4** | **5,122** |
| 4 | 41 | 5.4 | 6.8 | 12.2 | 443 |
| | 42 | 5.2 | 6.0 | 11.2 | 327 |
| | 43 | 6.3 | 6.5 | 12.7 | 791 |
| | 44 | 6.1 | 6.0 | 12.1 | 1,101 |
| | 45 | 5.8 | 6.6 | 12.4 | 613 |
| | 46 | 5.0 | 5.6 | 10.6 | 651 |
| | **Subtotal** | **5.8** | **6.2** | **12.0** | **3,926** |
| 5 | 51 | 5.9 | 6.4 | 12.4 | 853 |
| | 52 | 6.0 | 6.1 | 12.2 | 975 |
| | 53 | 7.2 | 9.7 | 16.9 | 167 |
| | 54 | 6.6 | 10.7 | 17.3 | 232 |
| | **Subtotal** | **6.1** | **7.0** | **13.1** | **2,227** |
| 6 | 61 | 5.9 | 8.4 | 14.3 | 419 |
| | 62 | 6.1 | 6.5 | 12.6 | 619 |
| | 63 | 5.2 | 7.3 | 12.5 | 227 |
| | 64 | 6.9 | 7.9 | 14.8 | 160 |
| | **Subtotal** | **6.0** | **7.3** | **13.4** | **1,425** |
| **Total Average** | | **6.0** | **6.5** | **12.5** | **20,327** |

## High-Priority Calls

The department assigns a priority to calls, with priorities 1 and 2 as the highest priorities. The following table shows average response times by priority. Also included is WDMPD's response times to known injury accidents, a category of call to which almost all police departments will attempt to have a fast response.

### TABLE 4-11: Average and 90th Percentile Response Times, by Priority

| Priority | Minutes | | | Calls | 90th Percentile Response Time, Minutes |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Dispatch | Travel | Response | | |
| 1 | 1.6 | 3.8 | 5.4 | 195 | 8.2 |
| 2 | 1.7 | 4.4 | 6.1 | 1,635 | 10.5 |
| 3 | 3.7 | 6.0 | 9.7 | 5,652 | 17.1 |
| 4 | 6.2 | 6.5 | 12.7 | 4,800 | 27.3 |
| 5 | 8.2 | 7.8 | 15.9 | 5,079 | 34.6 |
| 6 | 10.0 | 7.7 | 17.6 | 1,585 | 40.0 |
| 7 | 7.7 | 5.7 | 13.4 | 1,381 | 27.6 |
| **Total** | **6.0** | **6.5** | **12.5** | **20,327** | **27.1** |
| Injury Accident | 2.0 | 4.8 | 6.8 | 239 | 11.7 |

Police departments intentionally separate calls received by a dispatch center by priority. A specific set of guidelines is established that allows for decisions to be made that determine how important a call might be to justify an emergency response. A national benchmark that all police agencies try to reach is a 5-minute overall response to emergency-type calls. In our experience, very few agencies are able to reach that standard. WDMPD's average response time of 5.4 minutes to priority 1 calls is very good. The fact that only 195 calls fall into this category also indicates that the department is appropriately classifying calls into their correct prioritization level. The overall response times of all calls in all categories are also very good.

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## WEST DES MOINES PD – COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

CPSM has performed organizational assessments all over the United States. The following table shows the various metrics for WDMPD compared to other jurisdictions analyzed by CPSM.

### TABLE 4-12: Comparative Analysis of the West Des Moines PD

| Variable | Median | Minimum | Maximum | WDMPD | Compared to Median |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Population | 43,105 | 4,474 | 833,024 | 70,414 | Higher |
| Officer Ratio per 100,000 | 151.59 | 25.71 | 656.91 | 120.71 | Lower |
| CFS Rate per 1,000 Population | 644.44 | 67.08 | 6,642.05 | 554.17 | Lower |
| Primary Unit Service Time, Community-Initiated Calls | 30.33 | 13.0 | 54.66 | 23.29 | Lower |
| Primary Unit Service Time, Police-Initiated Calls | 17.0 | 7.1 | 56.8 | 15.13 | Lower |
| No. of Responding Units, Community-Initiated Calls | 1.74 | 1.0 | 2.56 | 1.61 | Lower |
| No. of Responding Units, Police-Initiated Calls | 1.26 | 1.0 | 1.99 | 1.23 | Lower |
| All Units Service Time, Community Initiated Calls | 45.58 | 19.7 | 88.09 | 33.14 | Lower |
| All Units Service Time, Police-Initiated Calls | 22.25 | 7.73 | 140.08 | 19.9 | Lower |
| Workload %, Summer Weekdays | 38.04 | 5.54 | 85.66 | 42.45 | Higher |
| Workload %, Summer Weekends | 39.43 | 5.02 | 81.95 | 43.3 | Higher |
| Workload %, Winter Weekdays | 36.22 | 5.08 | 66.61 | 38.16 | Higher |
| Workload %, Winter Weekends | 35.13 | 4.12 | 68.99 | 37.69 | Higher |
| Response Time, Summer | 13.1 | 2.4 | 81.35 | 12.14 | Lower |
| Response Time, Winter | 12.74 | 3.1 | 82.56 | 12.21 | Lower |
| High-Priority Calls Response Time | 7.23 | 2.84 | 23.12 | 6.06 | Lower |
| Violent Crime Rate (Per 100K) | 221.9 | 0 | 1,776.46 | 145.0 | Lower |
| Property Crime Rate (Per 100K) | 2,152.16 | 319.04 | 11,234.0 | 1,740 | Lower |
| Overall Crime Rate (Per 100K) | 2,446.3 | 404.96 | 12,424.0 | 1,885 | Lower |

## PATROL SUPERVISION

The patrol teams are all staffed with a sergeant who has supervisory responsibility over the team of patrol officers. In addition to the sergeants, WDMPD has a program referred to as the "Officer in Charge" or OIC program. The OIC is a designated police officer on the shift who is "in charge" in the absence of a sergeant. The OIC receives a small stipend for the added responsibility but carries no authority. We were told that WDMPD has provided training to those officers who are tasked with the OIC role to familiarize them with the supervisor forms and responsibilities. However, many of the OICs we spoke with said they never received any training. We were also told that no officer would be expected to take the OIC role if they did not want it. Many OICs told us that was not the case, and they were given the responsibility regardless of their desire to accept the additional duties and responsibilities.

Minimum staffing in WDMPD is filled by police officers on overtime if regularly scheduled personnel do not fill all necessary positions. If the sergeant is off for any reason, the position is not mandated to be filled by a sergeant on overtime; the shift simply goes into service without a sergeant, and the OIC is designated as being in charge of the shift. This occurs when other supervisors may be on duty fulfilling their normal non-patrol-related duties and also occurs when there are no other supervisors or managers working. This means there is no designated ranking person on duty during these times. The OICs we spoke with said they are frequently tasked with the role, and in some cases, they have performed the role every day for weeks at a time.

CPSM did not seek to audit the number of times a sergeant was not on duty and the role was shifted to a police officer acting as an OIC. Regardless of how often it may or may not occur, we do not think this is a good practice. A police department the size of West Des Moines should have a supervisor charged with overseeing patrol activity at all times. Yet, we understand that WDMPD is not big enough to justify two supervisors assigned to every shift.

It is our recommendation that WDMPD make changes to the patrol shift supervision responsibility. The department should either create a policy that mandates a sergeant be on duty and fill vacancies with overtime sergeants or certify an "acting" sergeant during long-term vacancies. Another alternative would be to create a 'corporal' position and designate it as a promotion/ranking position. If WDMPD elects to create a corporal position, it should mandate through policy that either a sergeant or a corporal must be on duty at all times. Many departments use a corporal position as a working shift supervisor even when a sergeant is on duty; this means the corporal is still handling calls as a primary responder and staffing a beat versus simply being a rover unit as a sergeant would normally be.

## PATROL STAFFING RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on our assessment of the West Des Moines Police Department workload during the periods observed in both the summer of 2022 and the winter of 2023, we believe that the number of units deployed in a patrol capacity is adequate to manage the workload. We have noted the problems that exist within the department's collection of data, specifically accounting for all officer activity. Recommendations have been made to rectify that data anomaly that is believed to exist on the part of WDMPD.

However, although those staffing numbers might be considered adequate, *we do not believe there are adequate numbers of personnel assigned to the patrol function*. As noted earlier and reiterated below, the WDMPD has/had established minimum staffing numbers as follows:

- 1st Watch – 6 minimum.
- 2nd Watch – 7 minimum.
- 3rd Watch – 6 minimum.

Full staffing on WDMPD schedules is as follows:

- 1st Watch – 1 sergeant and 6 officers (7 total).
- 2nd Watch – 1 sergeant and 7 officers (8 total).
- 3rd Watch – 1 sergeant and 6 officers (7 total).

The average daily deployment, as noted in the tables and graphs in this section of the report, closely mirrors those numbers. We have also noted that the department has 48 sworn personnel

assigned to the patrol function out of a total of 92 sworn employees. This total is 52 percent of the workforce; this is below the recommended number of 60 percent. This inadequacy with the patrol personnel allotment means that mandated overtime is expected of personnel in order to maintain minimum staffing. We believe a contributor to that mandated overtime is directly tied to the department's moving minimum staffing number of one officer less than "full staffing."

It is our opinion that each platoon should be staffed as follows:

- 1st Watch – 9 sworn employees (1 sergeant, 1 corporal, and 7 officers).[2]
- 2nd Watch – 10 sworn employees (1 sergeant, 1 corporal, and 8 officers).
- 3rd Watch – 8 sworn employees (1 sergeant, 1 corporal, and 6 officers).

To account for the standard 20 to 25 percent vacancy rate that is common within the police workforce, we recommend that at least 2 employees be considered 'overage' from minimum staffing, meaning that the required minimum staffing based on workload data be set at:

- 1st watch – 7 sworn employees.
- 2nd Watch – 8 sworn employees.
- 3rd watch – 6 sworn employees.

These recommendations set each platoon at 27 sworn employees. Factoring in two platoons with the administrative structure of 1 captain, 2 lieutenants, and 1 administrative sergeant, the patrol workforce should be set at 58 sworn employees. 58 sworn employees would represent 63 percent of the sworn workforce, placing the agency within the recommended guidelines of 60 percent noted earlier in this report. This represents an increase of 10 FTE sworn employees assigned to the patrol function.

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At the time this report is being written, WDMPD reports having 7 vacancies in the police officer rank (as of August 2023). However, only 2 of those vacancies were being held in patrol, both on 3rd watch of each platoon. The other vacancies were being carried in Support Services (1 in traffic, 1 in investigations, 2 in the ERU, 1 SRO). We will discuss this and department options in the summary of this report.

In addition to the additional sworn FTEs assigned to the patrol function, we believe the department may benefit greatly from the enhanced use of community service officers augmenting the patrol workload. There is one CSO assigned to the patrol function to assist with administrative duties, but not with patrol service demands. It is our understanding that the department recently authorized the employees to assist in a very limited manner to help with some calls. We outline earlier in this report the enhanced use of civilians in the patrol function. If WDMPD were to assign two CSOs to the patrol function working opposite days of the week to provide 7-day coverage and schedule them to work late morning and into the late afternoon or early evening hours, we believe it would benefit the overall patrol capacity. These employees could assist with lower-priority reports, handle administrative needs for officers, conduct traffic control, etc., which would enable the department to free up sworn officers for more critical needs. It would be incumbent on the department leadership to ensure these employees are used effectively and not unnecessarily restrained in how they might help.

2. This example is provided assuming WDMPD creates a corporal position in patrol. If the agency elects not to pursue that position then the example corporal position should be added to the officer total.

## Operations Division Recommendations:

- CPSM recommends that WDMPD take steps to accurately capture officer workload within the department's CAD system. (Recommendation No. 4.)
- CPSM recommends that CPD explore alternative workload mitigation measures as outlined in this report. (Recommendation No. 5.)
- CPSM recommends that West Des Moines enforce its false alarm policy. (Recommendation No. 6.)
- We recommend that WDMPD modify its patrol shift supervisor structure. (Recommendation No. 7.)
- CPSM recommends an increase of 10 FTE sworn employees to be assigned to the patrol workforce. (Recommendation No. 8.)
- CPSM recommends two community service officers be assigned to the patrol function to assist and augment calls for service. (Recommendation No. 9.)

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# SECTION 5. SUPPORT SERVICES DIVISION

The Support Services Division is commanded by a captain, whose primary responsibility is to provide general management, direction, and control for the Division. The Support Services Division consists of the Administrative Services Unit, the Criminal Investigation Unit, the Community Outreach Programs and Services Unit, the Special Operations Unit, and the Entertainment Response Unit.

## CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS

Like most mid-sized departments, the West Des Moines Police Department has a dedicated Criminal Investigations Unit. A lieutenant manages the unit, supervised by one sergeant, and staffed with eight full-time detectives. The detectives work a five-day-per-week schedule with slightly varied start times to provide more detective coverage at the beginning and the end of the day. One detective is on paid standby daily to be available for callouts after work hours.

All incoming cases are reviewed and assigned by the sergeant. The detectives have some specialty areas, such as crimes against persons, property crimes, and fraud. Generally, the supervisor assigns cases according to specialty areas. However, because of the small nature of the unit, varied workloads, and callouts, there are some deviations in the types of cases assigned. To adequately prepare for the diverse caseloads, each detective is required to attend advanced investigations training. Annually, the WDMPD hosts a homicide investigator course that all department investigators attend.

One detective works on the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF). The task force officer maintains a desk at the FBI office and the WDMPD detective unit. The detective still carries WDPD cases while assisting the task force with cases and acting as a liaison with the FBI. Another detective has the collateral duty of helping with electronic evidence. The detective works a regular caseload but has specialized training and equipment to access digital devices for evidentiary purposes. The detective assists in many other detectives' cases in addition to his own cases.

One detective is assigned full-time to the Mid-Iowa Narcotics Enforcement (MINE) Task Force. The task force is funded by state and county funds and is managed by a county sheriff's supervisor. The detective reports to the county sergeant and works with detectives from other agencies daily. The MINE task force handles major narcotic investigations in the City of West Des Moines and elsewhere in the region. WDPD benefits from the additional resources of outside agencies investigating local cases, and in return, its detective works cases with the team in other jurisdictions.

The structure and workflow of the unit are typical of what we see in high-performing police departments and are consistent with industry standards. The MINE task force is common for agencies the size of WDMPD and provides valuable assistance working on more significant, resource-intensive narcotics investigations. Participation in the FBI Joint Terrorism Task Force is also very valuable for an agency and an effective use of resources.

### Workload

There are no absolute standards to determine the appropriate caseload for police investigators. One murder investigation could occupy the time of several detectives for months; on the other

hand, one detective could handle hundreds of theft cases in a similar period. Nonetheless, the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) suggests that a detective caseload between 120 and 180 cases per year (10 to 15 per month) is manageable. Other sources suggest that departments should staff one detective for every 300 UCR Part I Index Crimes recorded annually.

An additional consideration when determining an appropriate number of cases for a detective caseload is that over the past few years, investigative techniques, filing standards, and mandates have increased the amount of investigative work required on many cases. Basic investigations often now include search warrants that require a much higher level of investigation and time commitment due to the need to examine such things as smartphones, information from social media accounts, or cell tower data. These changes have compounded the time required to investigate a case with pursuable leads, with no empirical metric yet developed as a "benchmark" for police agencies.

WDMPD had 1,885 total Part I Crimes in 2021 and 2,008 in 2022. A review of the case management system as of August 2023 revealed the detective unit had 168 open cases, an average of 21 cases per detective. The most any detective had was 37, and the least was 7. Most detectives were carrying under 20 open cases. The open cases metric and the Part I Crimes metric indicate that eight full-time detectives are sufficient.

During our site visit, we also found that many detectives perform auxiliary duties unrelated to their investigations caseload. These additional duties are typically a necessary component of a mid-sized agency. It does not appear to be an overwhelming problem at this point, but it is an issue that has been developing. It may become more significant as case demands or auxiliary duties increase. In preparation for a future need for additional resources, we recommend that WDMPD begin planning to add civilian personnel to the Investigations Unit. Many agencies across the country successfully use civilian investigators to mitigate sworn hiring challenges and budgetary constraints.

For planning purposes, leadership should monitor the issue and may need to recommend a limit to auxiliary assignments or request additional personnel if necessary.

## Training and Policy

Each detective is required to go through a detective field training program. The program outlines several tasks in a manual used by a senior detective to train a new detective. Both the detective providing the training and the detective receiving the training must sign each section and acknowledge that appropriate training was provided in each area. Our review of the field training manual found several topics covered in general terms. The tasks require discussion between the training detective and the new detective.

The detective training manual guides new detectives and provides several important tasks for new detectives to be trained. However, there were not any areas for demonstration of adequate performance. An area for improvement would be to enhance the manual to provide documentation of performance reviewed by the senior detective and the supervisor. This could be accomplished by a checklist of required tasks where the new detective has demonstrated satisfactory performance. Areas to evaluate performance could include crime reports, search warrants, case notes, etc. This may be done informally or formally in a performance evaluation. However, providing specifically for performance review in a training environment is most effective and ensures performance issues do not slip through the cracks during training.

As part of detective training and continuing development, detectives are routinely sent to investigator classes. Classes such as interview and interrogation are routinely available, and

detectives are sent. The department also partners with the FBI and provides space for local agencies to attend a homicide investigator class. This partnership allows WDMPD to send all of its investigators to the course. Although the training is provided as opportunities present themselves, the training topics are not included in the detective training manual. CPSM recommends the basic training classes desired for a new detective be included in the detective training. Adding the training classes to the training manual would formalize the process and help ensure each new detective gets a basic level of training.

## Clearance Rates

The most recent data for clearance rates from 2021 and 2022 are shown in the following tables. The data is from the FBI and taken from the department's Universal Crime Reporting (UCR) data. West Des Moines PD clearance rates vary by type of crime, with some crime types above average compared to the state and national clearance rates and some below the state and national averages. A few notable variances include a lower-than-average solvency rate for rape and robbery and higher-than-average solvability rates for aggravated assault and larceny.

The department does not track its clearance rates internally other than through regular UCR reporting. Clearance rates can be a valuable metric used to help determine the effectiveness of a department's investigation efforts. Many departments utilize clearance rates per detective as a metric to evaluate detectives' effectiveness.

CPSM recommends that WDPD develop an internal procedure to monitor clearance rates per detective and crime category.

### TABLE 5-1: Reported West Des Moines, Iowa, and National Crime Clearance Rates, 2021

| Crime | West Des Moines | | | Iowa | | | National | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Crimes | Clearances | Rate | Crimes | Clearances | Rate | Crimes | Clearances* | Rate |
| Murder Manslaughter | 0 | 0 | NA | 1,012 | 283 | 28% | 22,900 | 11,500 | 50% |
| Rape | 23 | 6 | 26% | 521 | 177 | 34% | 144,300 | 16,500 | 11% |
| Robbery | 17 | 5 | 29% | 5,614 | 3,607 | 64% | 202,200 | 48,800 | 24% |
| Aggravated Assault | 62 | 32 | 52% | 7,325 | 1,191 | 16% | 943,800 | 297,500 | 32% |
| Burglary | 151 | 13 | 9% | 28,248 | 5,442 | 19% | 899,700 | 107,200 | 12% |
| Larceny | 987 | 170 | 17% | 4,503 | 1,027 | 23% | 4,627,000 | 508,900 | 11% |
| Vehicle Theft | 87 | 9 | 10% | 1,012 | 283 | 28% | 890,200 | 68,500 | 8% |

**Note**: National crimes and clearances are estimated in the FBI's report, The Transition to the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS): A Comparison of 2020 and 2021 NIBRS Estimates.

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**TABLE 5-2: Reported West Des Moines and Iowa Crime Clearance Rates, 2022**

| Crime | West Des Moines | | | Iowa | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Crimes | Clearances | Rate | Crimes | Clearances | Rate |
| Murder Manslaughter | 2 | 1 | 50% | 67 | 47 | 70% |
| Rape | 16 | 4 | 25% | 955 | 205 | 21% |
| Robbery | 20 | 8 | 40% | 579 | 204 | 35% |
| Aggravated Assault | 139 | 63 | 45% | 6,035 | 3862 | 64% |
| Burglary | 89 | 7 | 8% | 6,444 | 1133 | 18% |
| Larceny | 1,055 | 279 | 26% | 28,656 | 6218 | 22% |
| Vehicle Theft | 93 | 30 | 32% | 4,190 | 890 | 21% |

## Criminal Investigations Recommendations:

- In preparation for a future need for additional resources, we recommend that WDMPD begin planning to add civilian personnel to the Investigations Unit. (Recommendation No. 10.)
- Enhance the new detective training manual to include an area for signing off on satisfactory performance of designated tasks. (Recommendation No. 11.)
- CPSM recommends adding topical training courses for new detectives to the detective training manual to ensure each new detective gets minimal training in desired areas. (Recommendation No. 12.)
- To enhance clearance rates for some crime types, CPSM recommends that WDMPD develop an internal method of tracking clearance rates per detective and crime type. (Recommendation No. 13.)

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## Crime Analysis

One crime analyst handles crime analysis duties for the WDMPD. The analyst conducts many routine crime analysis functions, such as authoring daily, weekly, monthly, and annual reports. The reports vary in form from administrative to tactical crime analysis. A partial list of the crime analyst's duties include:

- A variety of crime and statistical analysis in support of crime analysis activities.
- Collects, analyzes, provides, and presents data for operational, strategic, tactical, and administrative use for the deployment.
- Provides analysis in support of the investigative process and for the efficient operation of the department.
- Ensures the quality of crime data used and released by the department.
- Researches and analyzes data from a variety of sources to determine patterns, trends, and changes relating to criminal activity and police intelligence.
- Uses computer databases, Microsoft Office Suite, GIS, and various statistical applications.

- Responds to ad hoc requests, in verbal and written format, for information/findings to law enforcement personnel, government representatives, outside agencies, elected officials, and members of the public.
- Prepares a variety of reports such as crime information and patrol bulletins addressing crime trends and patterns and persons of interest, as well as officer safety information.
- Compiles monthly and quarterly reports, department annual reports, and specific statistical and research reports as needed.
- Assists with identification and analysis of hot spots for patrol operations to aid in community policing priorities.
- Uses crime mapping and geographical systems (GIS) to demonstrate relationships and enhance the visual presentation of research data.
- Monitors local, regional, and national crime trends.
- Presents analysis findings, in verbal and written format, to sworn and civilian police employees, government representatives, and community members.
- Maintains awareness of developments in the field of crime analysis and incorporates new developments as appropriate.
- Extraction, examination, and analysis of digital forensics.

The current analyst has a business background combined with some technical expertise. He has helped the IT team create automated features for supervisors to access real-time information. The automated information covers various areas of crime suppression and employee performance. The WDMPD has created a dashboard for supervisors to access real-time crime prevention, suppression, and employee performance evaluation data.

Reports are generated for the department's CompStat-style meetings, which are held monthly. The meetings are general management meetings with dedicated time to present crime statistics. During our site visit, conversations with employees showed that the meetings were routine and informative. They are more informational-based and not necessarily tactical, where resource decisions are made about crime. With an agency the size of WDMPD, it is common for the crime suppression strategy to be more information-based than tactical. Having truly effective real-time crime suppression meetings regularly is a cultural shift for many departments. CPSM recommends that WDMPD dedicate specific meetings or additional time in regular management meetings for tactical discussions about crime trends and safety issues in the community.

The current structure and responsibilities of the position seem to have been defined by the abilities of the current analyst. Although many crime analysts in police departments take on a large volume of work, the wide variety of work performed by the WDMPD analyst is unusual. For example, the analyst works with electronic evidence in cases, extracting and interpreting data for detectives. The analyst also performs a tremendous range of administrative analysis and technical support. The current analyst has fulfilled needs outside the traditional crime analyst job description and appears successful.

CPSM recommends that WDPD consider a long-term plan to remove certain duties from the crime analyst and create an additional civilian position in the Investigations Unit to handle digital evidence collection and analysis responsibilities. With the increase in demand for evidence extraction from electronic devices, many agencies now have dedicated analysts for computer forensics. Currently, WDMPD shares this responsibility between the crime analyst and a computer

forensics detective as an auxiliary duty. Removing these responsibilities from the crime analyst will provide additional time for proactive crime analysis to enhance the department's ability to prevent and solve crime.

### Crime Analysis Recommendations:

- CPSM recommends that WDMPD dedicate specific meetings or additional time in regular management meetings for tactical discussions about crime trends and safety issues in the community. (Recommendation No. 14.)
- CPSM recommends that WDMPD consider a long-term plan to remove certain duties from the crime analyst and create an additional civilian position in the Investigations Unit to handle digital evidence collection and analysis responsibilities. (Recommendation No. 15.)

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## ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES UNIT

A sergeant manages the Administrative Services Unit. The sergeant handles various duties, including being the department's Public Information Officer (PIO) and supervising the Records, Property/Evidence, Crime Analysis, and Crime Scene functions. A civilian supervisor previously handled the position, but when she retired, the department replaced the position with a sworn sergeant.

The PIO function handled by the Administrative Services Unit sergeant does not include the department's social media accounts. The sergeant handles direct media inquiries and liaisons with detectives on cases when there are media inquiries. The sergeant writes press releases and conducts media interviews. The social media accounts for the department are handled by a lieutenant in the police chief's office.

As WDMPD has grown, the demand and complexity for administrative and other related internal services have increased. In today's environment, most police departments operate with a robust social media presence as part of their public information efforts. The connection between social media and public information is critical. Having these two functions bifurcated into two different department divisions could be problematic, with crucial communication with the community being necessary. Given the number of duties held by the administrative services sergeant, we recommend the department consider adding a civilian public information officer position to handle both media inquiries and social media accounts. Social media accounts can be used for communication with the media and play an essential role in community engagement and recruiting.

### Property and Evidence

The property and evidence function is handled by a full-time civilian property and evidence technician. There is a community services officer (CSO) assigned to Records who is the backup for the technician—both the technician and the CSO report to the Administrative Services sergeant. The primary property person, her backup, and the sergeant are trained and hold certifications from the International Association of Property and Evidence (IAPE). The Administrative Services sergeant reports to the lieutenant of Investigations.

The policy governing the property and evidence function is in the general department policy, Section 802. The technician has created an internal manual for anybody in case she were to become unavailable suddenly. The manual is not an official department manual. Still, it is a

comprehensive manual that could be converted into an official department Property and Evidence manual that would operate as the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for the Unit. CPSM recommends the department use the current document to build an official West Des Moines Police Department Property and Evidence Manual that meets or exceeds critical recommendations by the IAPE.

During the site visit, our team was able to tour the Property and Evidence Unit. The work area consists of an intake area for officers to book property into evidence. The intake area was found to be clean and equipped with the packaging materials, tools, and equipment needed to package and prepare evidence for impounding properly. There are paper and coin money counters, copies of the manuals for packaging, lab protocols, and department policy. The area is monitored by a security camera. The area is equipped with a two-way locker and refrigerator system that can be opened by property staff on the secure side of the storage room.

The office adjacent to the intake area is where the property and evidence technician has her office. The facility is designed so a person would have to pass through her office to access the property storage room. The office is well-equipped with a current computer system and dual monitors.

There are two separate locking mechanisms on the property storage room door, an electronic key fob and a manual deadbolt. The deadbolt is unlocked while the property person is present in her office and locked when she leaves for the day. The city IT Department handles the key fob access, and the deadbolt is an appropriately added layer of security. The keys are tightly controlled, possessed only by the three IAPE-trained people with direct property and evidence responsibilities. There is a camera mounted just inside the door. The door is not equipped with an alarm.

Inside the property storage room is a sign-in book inside the door, as recommended by IAPE. The area is covered with several cameras. There is a separate secure room inside the storage room for high-security items: guns, money, drugs, and jewelry. The individual room is secured by electronic fob access that requires two authorized user cards (property tech, CSO, sergeant, and lieutenant) to be swiped in succession to access the room. Department policy requires two people to perform any activity inside the high-security room. There is adequate camera coverage outside and inside the high-security room. The evidence inside the high-security room is placed on shelves in bins like the evidence in the general property storage area. There is no safe for money, and all high-risk items are found in the same within the secured room. There are regular deposits of money weekly or as needed to maintain a balance of under $1,000.

All the property and evidence are maintained in a separate software system called TRACKS. This software is a contemporary system used throughout the industry. The department utilizes the bar code scanning system and equipment for accuracy and efficiency. Officers are trained in the system and enter the property and evidence into TRACKS when impounding it into a locker. The system then tracks every detail of each piece of property down to the specific location in a specific bin on a particular shelf, etc.

The department recently purchased a small incinerator and now performs destruction of small quantities of drugs. The incinerator is new, and there is no official policy on the process for drug destruction. The practice is for the property and evidence technician to have the police support specialist from the front desk come into the property room to witness the destruction and verify the cases. Due to the high liability and risk associated with handling and destroying narcotics, CPSM recommends the department adopt a policy or procedure in a department manual that provides step-by-step instructions to ensure accountability for drugs being destroyed. We also

recommend the involvement of the Professional Standard unit in verifying cases being destroyed and witnessing the destruction.

The property room has a refrigerator and freezer for biological evidence that must be preserved. The refrigerator and freezer are household-type appliances, not commercial grade, and they do not have temperature alarms as is common in many agencies. An equipment or electrical failure could quickly go undetected and evidence could be compromised. CPSM recommends the department consider upgrading the climate-controlled storage equipment in the property room to commercial-grade equipment with temperature alarms.

The property room's current tracking system and condition appear to be excellent. However, some items have been in storage for years and predate the existing software systems. Disposing of property is a current and growing issue. Historically, the Property and Evidence Unit has taken in more items yearly than it can dispose of, leading to space constraints. The number of items brought into the room versus those released or otherwise disposed of is an important metric to monitor. If the number of items brought in is consistently higher than those disposed of, a property room will eventually run out of space to store evidence. The WDPD property room currently has some space for new items but is on a path to exceeding capacity unless changes are made soon. The following table shows the property intake and disposition numbers for 2019 through 2023 YTD.

### TABLE 5-3: Property and Evidence Intake and Disposition, 2019–2023 YTD

| Year | Number of Items Checked In | Number of Items Disposed | Difference |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2019 | 6,168 | 2,046 | 4,122 |
| 2020 | 6,249 | 3,766 | 2,483 |
| 2021 | 6,678 | 3,905 | 2,773 |
| 2022 | 6,725 | 4,561 | 2,164 |
| 2023 YTD | 4,065 | 2,704 | 1,361 |
| **Total** | **29,885** | **16,982** | **12,903** |

There are a couple of ways to mitigate the impending space problem. The first way would be to increase the efficiency of the current space. The WDPD property room currently has a series of fixed metal shelves designed for general storage. Some specialty companies make shelves that are mounted on tracks; these shelves can be moved together and apart, meaning more shelves can be fit into the same space now used for fixed shelves. Storage bins designed explicitly for shelving systems can also increase the efficiency of the available space.

In addition to increasing the efficiency of the space, a significant amount of evidence could be purged (released or disposed of). Based on the number of items flowing in and out of the room annually and the process required to purge evidence, the one person assigned to the property is doing all they can to purge evidence when possible. However, the purge rate is insufficient, with only one full-time person working in the property room. There are different ways to consider working on the purge rate issue. One way is to add an employee assigned to the Property and Evidence Unit. Another way is to expend substantial personnel time in a task force-style effort over many months. We have seen this done in other agencies where select employees are trained in purge procedures. These employees gather on some workdays and on overtime to work on purging as a collateral duty, similar to other task force-style operations designed to address crime problems. CPSM recommends that WDMPD devise a plan to address the property purge rate to avoid running out of space.

Another space and staff time factor is the department's use of compact discs (CDs) to share and store digital evidence (audio and video). The property and evidence room currently stores 13,255 CDs. This evidence is from surveillance, in-car, or body-worn camera video. Each CD represents not only the time spent to create it but also the time to package it, create the impound invoice, process it in the software, and store it. With today's proliferation of video evidence, the time needed for this process could grow exponentially. The current method for storing electronic evidence is antiquated and inefficient. Many cloud-based storage solutions allow video sharing with secure storage; such a system would dramatically reduce staff time as well as save space. CPSM recommends that WDPD explore a cloud-based storage and sharing solution for digital evidence.

Another factor contributing to the purge rate problem is the lack of knowing what evidence is in storage. There does not appear to have ever been a complete inventory of property and evidence, and much of the evidence precedes the current computer inventory system. An adequately designed long-term effort to purge property could also achieve a complete inventory of all property in storage and get all evidence records into one software system.

Preserving evidence to ensure fair prosecutions and the safekeeping of people's property is integral to ensuring a police department's integrity. The WDMPD completes an annual unit audit to ensure the system's integrity. The audit is conducted by managers outside the unit and reported annually as a CALEA requirement. We highly encourage the audits to continue. The department may also consider engaging with an outside firm to conduct a comprehensive audit of the facility, systems, and property in storage. It does not appear the agency has ever had an external entity audit the room.

## Property and Evidence Recommendations:

- Convert the unit's informal procedure document into an official department Property and Evidence Manual to codify standard operating procedures into policy. (Recommen dation No. 16.)
- Add an alarm system to the property storeroom. (Recommen dation No. 17.)
- Consider adding a safe to the high-risk room to secure and separate money from drugs and other evidence. (Recommen dation No. 18.)
- Develop a formal step-by-step procedure for destroying drugs that involve the Office of Professional Standards. (Recommen dation No. 19.)
- CPSM recommends the department upgrade the climate-controlled storage (refrigerator and freezer) to commercial-grade equipment with temperature alarms to avoid loss of evidence in the event of a power or equipment failure. (Recommen dation No. 20.)
- We recommend the WDMPD develop a plan to significantly increase the annual property purge rate to avoid running out of storage space. (Recommen dation No. 21.)
- CPSM recommends the WDMPD purchase a cloud storage solution for digital evidence to reduce the substantial labor and space issues associated with copying and storing thousands of compact discs. (Recommen dation No. 22.)

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## Crime Scene Investigations Unit

The Crime Scene Investigations (CSI) Unit for WDMPD consists of six sworn officers working on crime scenes as an auxiliary duty. The team also has two CSOs trained and working with the team. Ideally, the team tries to have eight sworn, but due to recent attrition, there are two vacancies. The Administrative Services sergeant supervises the group and reports to the Investigations Lieutenant.

Unit members rotate on-call status for one week at a time and respond to crime scenes that must be processed day or night. Unit members receive on-call pay for each day they are on call. When called out, members drive to the station and pick up the crime scene van, which stores all their equipment. The unit does not keep track of callouts, and there was no information on how many crime scenes they have processed.

The unit Is approximately three years old and has replaced the previous model of one full-time employee who was the only crime scene investigator for the department. The team is still young and building their experience. Since joining the team, each team member attended a one-week crime scene investigator school and various specialty training classes. The supervisor conducts annual training that involves scenarios that are monitored and evaluated by outside agency crime scene investigators who are full-time CSIs. This training is an effective way for the team members to get training and be assessed on their skills.

One factor for how to evaluate the efficacy of the team would be to track the number of crime scenes to which it responds on an annual basis. CPSM recommends that the unit track its work and prepare a yearly report identifying the number and type of crime scenes it investigates. The report should also highlight the training the unit receives.

### Crime Scene Investigations Unit Recommendation:

- CPSM recommends that the unit track its work and prepare a yearly report identifying the number and type of crime scenes it investigates. The report should also highlight the training the unit receives. (Recommendation No. 23.)

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## Records

The Records Unit has three full-time records clerks and one CSO. The Administrative Services sergeant supervises the unit. The unit has the traditional duties of a records department, which include:

- The review of each departmental report after supervisors have approved them. They are approving reports for quality assurance and NIBRS/UCR coding.
- Management of all public records requests.
- Facilitating case filings with the four counties of WDMPD jurisdiction.
- Fulfill discovery requests with prosecutors and defense attorneys.
- Process and serve subpoenas.
- Serve as subject matter experts for the RMS and criminal justice information systems for the department.
- Answer telephone public inquiries and fill in at the front desk when necessary.

The Records Unit for WDMPD operates much like units in departments of similar size. Their duties are diverse and support various other department staff and units. The unit is supervised by the Administrative Services sergeant and appears to operate well with its current staffing.

### Front Desk

The front desk is open to the public from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Retired police officers hired back in civilian positions staff the desk. The officers answer walk-in and telephone inquiries from the public, process vehicle impound releases, and other routine paperwork. They also will take police reports over the phone or when somebody walks in if no suspect is known. The Administrative Services sergeant supervises the unit.

### Division Management

The functions of the Records, Front Desk, Property and Evidence, and Crime Scene Investigations units support all aspects of the department and work together closely. Several of these functions have become professions within law enforcement and provide career tracks for employees in most larger agencies. Given the size and complexity of WDMPD, we recommend the department consider creating civilian supervisor and manager positions to oversee the bulk of the Administrative Services Unit. Other agencies have experienced substantial benefits from civilianizing similar positions by creating a career ladder for civilian law enforcement employees and eliminating the need for rotational sworn supervisors and managers, many of whom have limited technical knowledge of the functions they oversee.

### Division Management Recommendation:

- We recommend the department consider creating civilian supervisor and manager positions to oversee the bulk of the Administrative Services Unit. (recommendation No. 24.)

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## SPECIAL OPERATIONS UNIT

The Special Operations unit is overseen by a sergeant responsible for running the School Resource Officers, the Traffic Unit, and one canine officer attached to the traffic unit.

### School Resource Officers (SROs)

School resource officers (SRO) are law enforcement officers who teach, counsel, and protect the school community. When SROs are integrated into a school system, the benefits go beyond reduced school violence. The officers often build relationships with students while serving as a resource to students, teachers, and administrators to help solve problems. SROs are more than just police officers assigned full-time to a school; they are the immediate first responders to any incidents that happen on campus, according to the National Association of School Resource Officers. The role of the SRO is twofold: they visit classrooms to make presentations on school safety, traffic laws, and crime prevention; and confer with students, parents, family, and faculty members on legal and crime prevention matters.

CPSM learned that there are three schools where school resource officers are assigned in the City of West Des Moines, one high school, a private school, and a ninth-grade school. Currently, the WDMPD has three officers assigned to the school resource unit and visits with the middle schools within the program. All resource officers work Monday through Friday, 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., allowing for coverage every day of the school week. The responsibilities of the school

resource officers are delineated in the department's policy manual, Section 346, which meets industry standards. The SROs are funded at 47 percent of their pay under an agreement with the school district.

All resource officers have received the basic school resource training and participate in providing educational safety presentations such as Safety Town, a basic traffic and general safety program for kindergarten-age children. The SROs handle all crime-related incidents at the schools and will handle school-related fights not handled as an administrative issue by the schools.

WDMPD school resource officers must wear their police uniforms as delineated in department policy. The school resource officers do not participate in student education programs such as "GREAT" or DARE, and no attempts have been made to have SROs provide any educational programs to the schools.

Considering that school violence and an active shooter can happen anywhere, the use of school resource offices provides a benefit to school safety. However, the SROs must be more than just a security presence in the schools; they must take active roles as mentors, counselors, and educators for parents, students, and school administrators.

### SRO Recommendations:

- CPSM recommends establishing a School Resource Program Guidebook to solidify the program's expectations, operations, and protocols, including critical incidents. (Recommendation No. 25.)
- CPSM recommends establishing goals and objectives for the school resource officers to define their major roles in law enforcement, mentoring/counseling, and as educators. (Recommendation No. 26.)

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## Traffic Unit

Traffic safety and the efficient flow of traffic are always important factors for any community; WDMPD Policy 500, Traffic, states that It is the policy of the West Des Moines Police Department to educate the public on traffic-related issues and to enforce traffic laws. The efforts of the department will be driven by such factors as the location and/or number of traffic accidents, citizen complaints, traffic volume, traffic conditions, and other traffic-related needs. The goal of traffic law enforcement and education is to increase public safety.

The WDMPD has dedicated a traffic unit staffed by four full-time officers and one canine officer; however, during the CPSM site visit, the traffic unit held one vacancy. The unit works from 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The unit's primary functions are traffic enforcement, traffic accident investigations, and all fatal accident reconstruction. However, most of the unit's time is spent on accident investigations and fatal accident reconstruction, leaving little time for actual traffic enforcement. When the traffic unit deploys for enforcement activity, it does not utilize crime analysis detail information to focus on critical intersections or areas for enforcement. The unit relies on anecdotal information and officer knowledge for random traffic enforcement.

In addition, CPSM learned that the majority of traffic enforcement is being done by overtime shifts funded by traffic safety grants. Officers are allowed to work a few hours before or after their regular shift or a traffic day. The overtime traffic enforcement is focused on speed and

occupant safety violations. These patrol details are not directed to traffic "hot spots" for enforcement but rather use a random traffic enforcement approach.

The WDMPD does not have motorcycle-certified police officers who can be used for traffic enforcement or special events as needed.

There is no industry standard for the number of citations expected of a police officer, and establishing quotas is undesirable and unlawful. Nonetheless, as part of the overall work effort, agencies can demand that sufficient effort be directed to those areas of greatest concern to the community. Measuring performance relative to traffic enforcement, individually and collectively, is appropriate when used as part of a broader overall performance measure.

Many factors go into the level of commitment given to traffic enforcement at a police agency. This report includes the department's performance expectations and the demand for other services, such as crime and community disorder. There is no question that, based on available staffing, the demand for WDMPD officers is high. However, the commitment to proactive traffic enforcement appears to be below average compared to the amount of time dedicated to traffic collisions. The information provided to CPSM seems to indicate that patrol operations has minimal interest in traffic and that most of the traffic citations are being written in the grant-funded details.

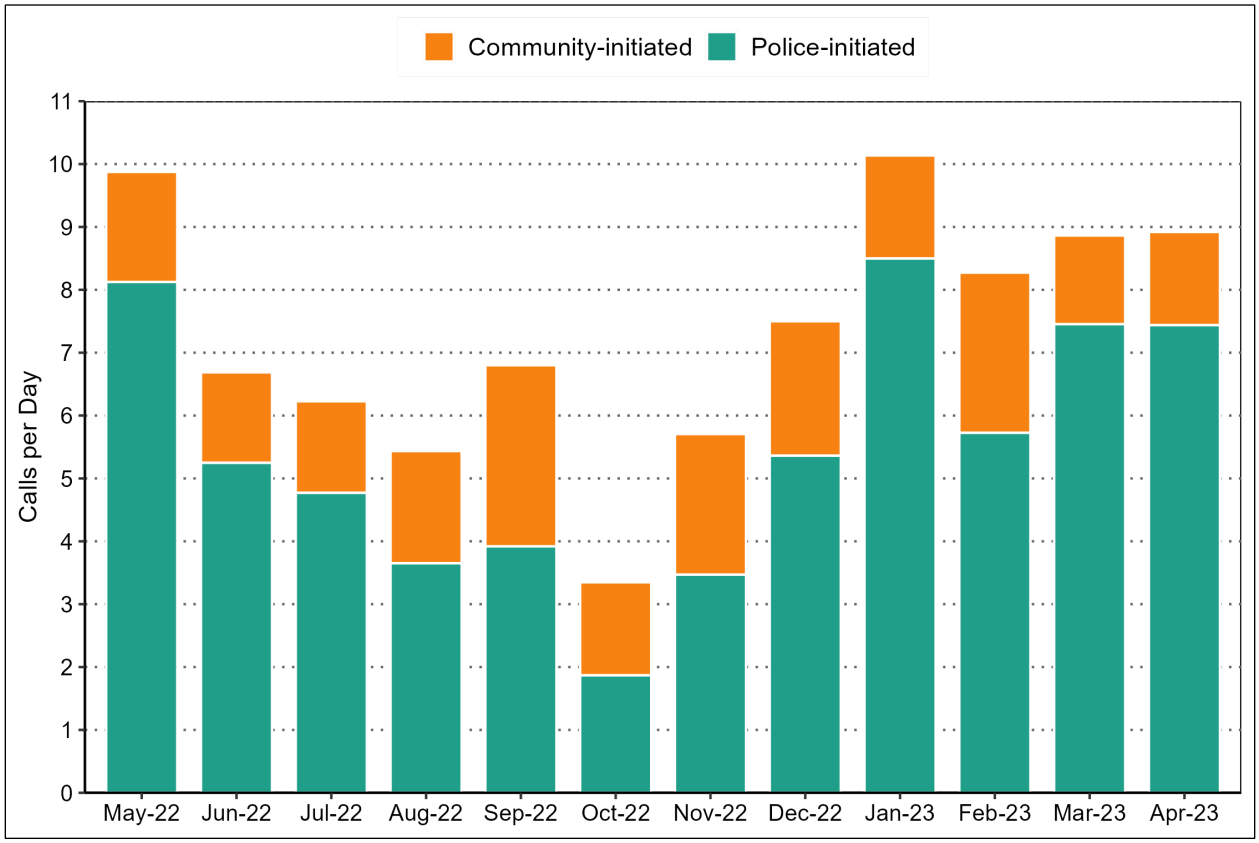
### TABLE 5-4: Events, Calls, and Workload by Category, Traffic Units

| Category | Events | Calls | Work Hours |
|---|---|---|---|
| Accident | 115 | 114 | 150.2 |
| Alarm | 13 | 13 | 2.0 |
| Animal call | 4 | 3 | 2.7 |
| Assist other agency | 51 | 45 | 21.2 |
| Check | 27 | 25 | 7.2 |
| Crime against persons | 28 | 27 | 31.4 |
| Crime against property | 35 | 34 | 19.3 |
| Crime against society | 24 | 22 | 9.2 |
| Directed patrol | 65 | NA | NA |
| Disturbance | 18 | 18 | 5.2 |
| Investigation | 117 | 115 | 79.6 |
| Mental health | 9 | 9 | 4.5 |
| Miscellaneous | 20 | 18 | 4.6 |
| Public assist | 101 | 93 | 34.4 |
| Suspicious incident | 50 | 49 | 22.1 |
| Traffic enforcement | 61 | 58 | 58.5 |
| Traffic stop | 1,083 | 1,073 | 287.8 |
| Violation | 33 | 27 | 4.9 |
| Warrant/prisoner | 25 | 25 | 16.6 |
| **Total** | **1,879** | **1,768** | **761.3** |

## Observations:

- 1,879 events involved a traffic unit.
  - 2 percent of the events had zero time on scene.
  - 74 percent of all events were police-initiated.
  - 24 percent of all events were community-initiated.
- On average, there were 7.2 calls per day. This was determined by dividing the total number of calls received (1,768 calls) by the number of days worked by units (244 days).
- The total workload averaged 3.1 hours per day.
- 70 percent of calls and 65 percent of work hours were traffic-related.

### FIGURE 5-1: Calls per Day by Initiator and Months, Traffic Units




### TABLE 5-5: Calls per Day by Initiator and Months, Traffic Units

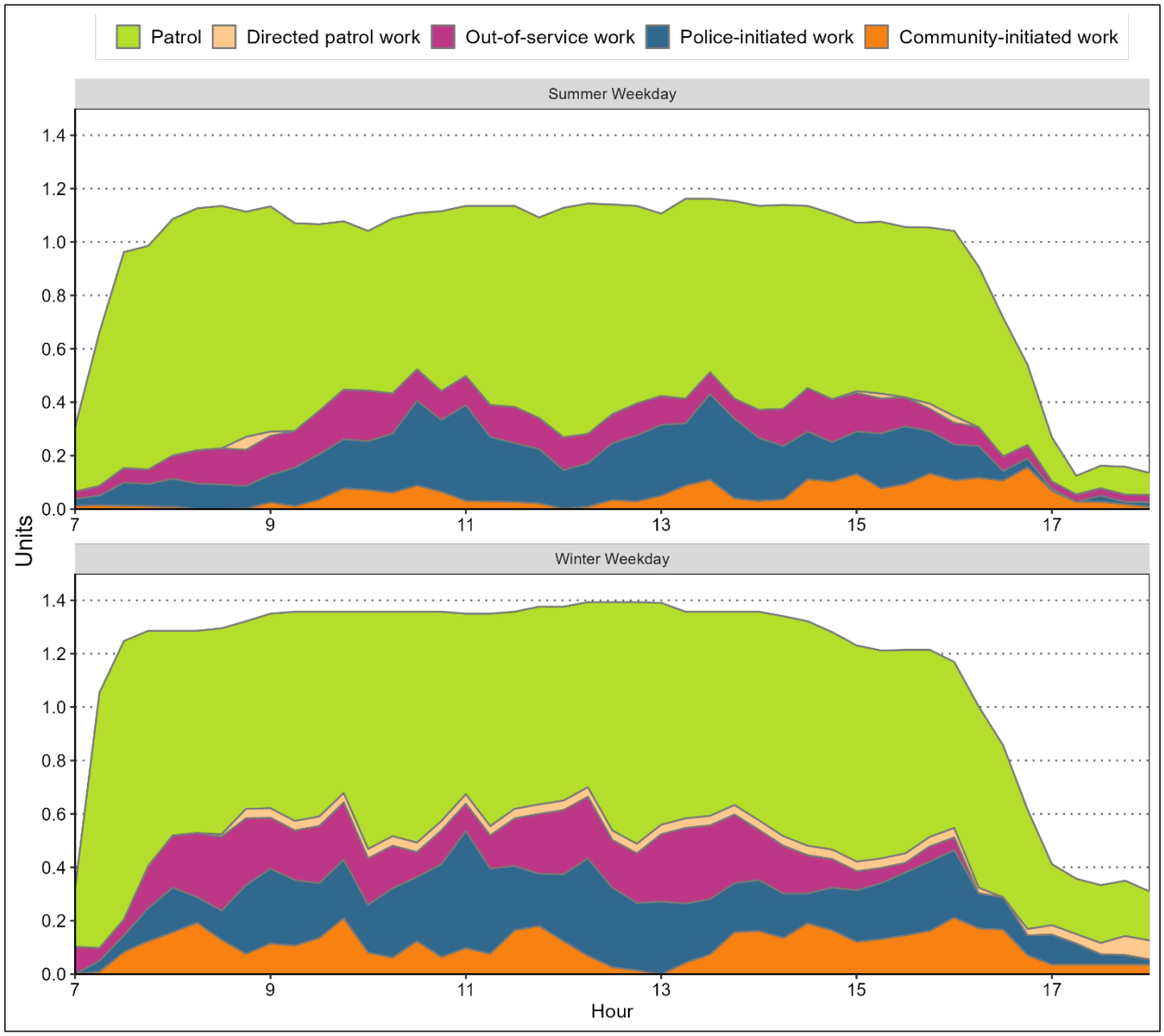
| Initiator | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Community-initiated | 1.8 | 1.4 | 1.5 | 1.8 | 2.9 | 1.5 | 2.2 | 2.1 | 1.6 | 2.5 | 1.4 | 1.5 |
| Police-initiated | 8.1 | 5.2 | 4.8 | 3.7 | 3.9 | 1.9 | 3.5 | 5.4 | 8.5 | 5.7 | 7.5 | 7.4 |
| **Total** | **9.9** | **6.7** | **6.2** | **5.4** | **6.8** | **3.3** | **5.7** | **7.5** | **10.1** | **8.3** | **8.9** | **8.9** |
| Days in Month | 16 | 16 | 22 | 23 | 25 | 23 | 17 | 22 | 22 | 11 | 22 | 25 |

## Observations:

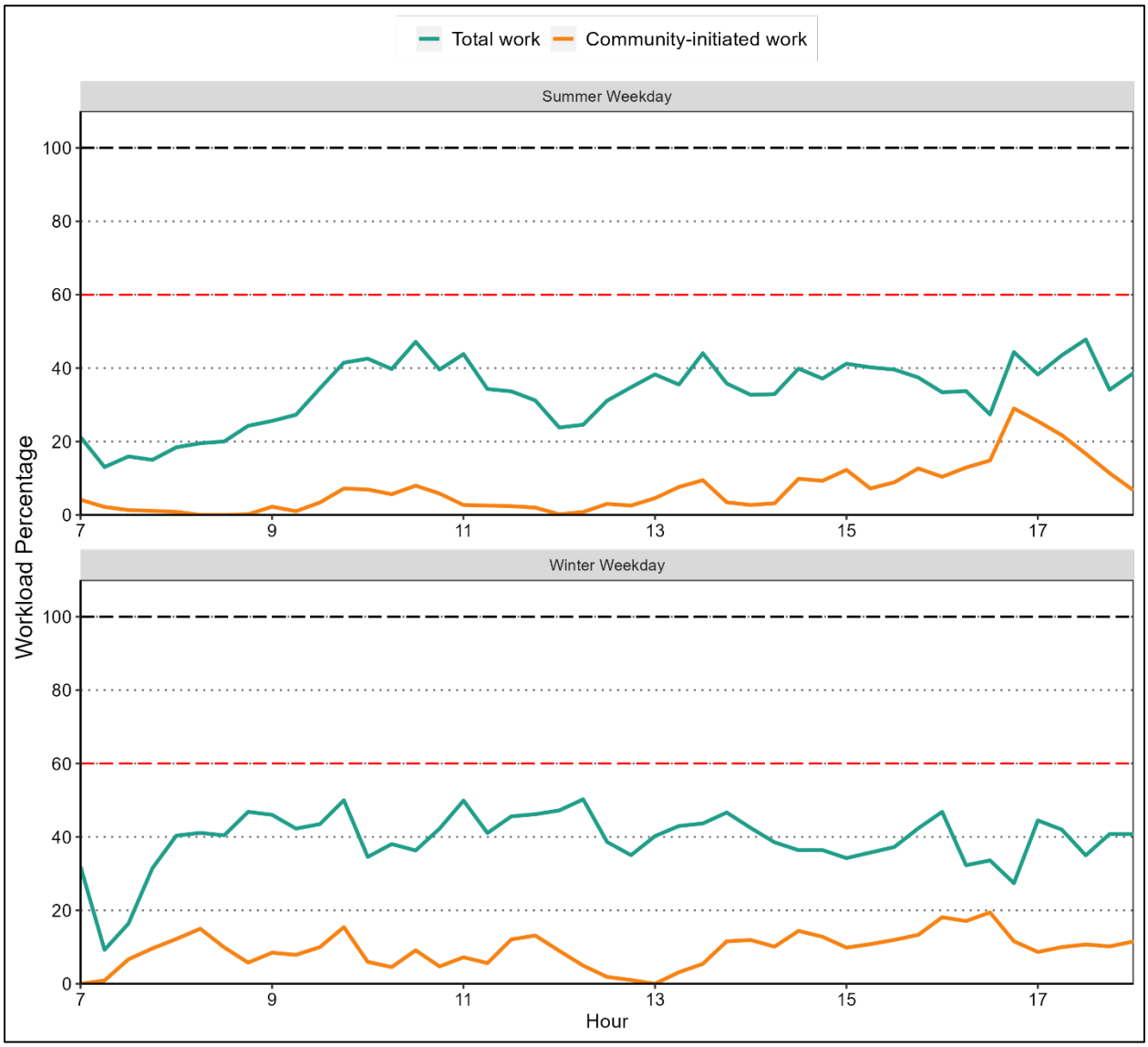
- The number of calls per day was the lowest in October.
- The number of calls per day was highest in January.

We examined deployment data for eight weeks in summer (July 7 through August 31, 2022) and four weeks in winter (January 4 through February 28, 2023), comparing workload against deployment by percentage. Traffic units were deployed on 10-hour schedules, starting at 7:00 a.m. or 8:00 a.m. The following shows the traffic units' workload on summer and winter weekdays.

### FIGURE 5-2: Deployment and All Workload, Traffic Units



## FIGURE 5-3: Workload Percentage by Hour, Traffic Units



## Observations:

### *Summer:*

- Deployment:
  - During the week, the average deployment was 0.9 officers per hour in summer.
  - During the week, the average deployment varied from 0.1 to 1.2 units per hour on weekdays.
- Community-initiated work:
  - During the week, the average workload was 0.1 units per hour.
  - During the week, this was approximately 5 percent of hourly deployment.
  - During the week, the workload reached a maximum of 29 percent of deployment between 4:45 p.m. and 5:00 p.m.
- All work:
  - During the week, the average workload was 0.4 units per hour.
  - During the week, this was approximately 33 percent of hourly deployment.
  - During the week, the workload reached a maximum of 48 percent of deployment between 5:30 p.m. and 5:45 p.m.

### *Winter:*

- Deployment:
  - During the week, the average deployment was 1.2 officers per hour in winter.
  - During the week, the average deployment varied from 0.3 to 1.4 units per hour on weekdays.
- Community-initiated work:
  - During the week, the average workload was 0.1 units per hour.
  - During the week, this was approximately 9 percent of hourly deployment.
  - During the week, the workload reached a maximum of 19 percent of deployment between 4:30 p.m. and 4:45 p.m.
- All work:
  - During the week, the average workload was 0.4 units per hour.
  - During the week, this was approximately 37 percent of hourly deployment.
  - During the week, the workload reached a maximum of 50 percent of deployment between 12:15 p.m. and 12:30 p.m.

An opportunity for improvement for the Traffic Unit could be to adopt a performance management approach (using traffic data to drive deployment and enforcement decisions) toward traffic accidents and injuries. This approach could be the unit's focus and could then be migrated to the rest of patrol. Adopting a strategic approach to traffic safety and engaging the entire department in this effort will magnify the current approach and make the overall traffic safety plan of the WDMPD more effective. The scope of this effort is beyond the unit itself and must be embraced by the Operations Division. Under this approach, the Patrol captain would

also become responsible for the overall traffic safety plan. The Traffic Unit would develop the plans necessary to focus the effort of the rest of the department.

This approach could entail the creation of written traffic safety plans, monthly reports using traffic crash data to identify times/days/locations/causes of traffic crashes, and holding patrol shifts accountable for implementing this plan. Normally, a traffic sergeant or investigator would assist in the data analysis, plan preparation, and other administrative assignments associated with traffic safety management. The traffic sergeant is by himself and has to supervise another unit and also has collateral duties and tasks. CPSM recommends that the department consider a performance management approach to mitigating traffic and DUI collisions.

In general, traffic safety is improved by the rigorous application of what is referred to as the three "E's": engineering, education, and enforcement. A concentration of traffic accidents at identifiable locations lends itself to examining opportunities to apply the three "E's" in addressing these locations. Having a traffic strategic plan can focus on smart policing concepts, have measurable objectives and outcomes, and give directed enforcement missions to abate traffic-related issues.

The WDMPD meets with the West Des Moines Public Services Department to discuss areas in which engineering can address traffic-related concerns; officers should then be briefed on pertinent information about these locations. However, the WDMPD does not track these projects or their results to measure effectiveness. Additionally, it would be recommended to overlap the educational and enforcement applications with the engineering to mitigate traffic-related community concerns completely and involve officers assigned to traffic in leading community problem-solving efforts.

The Traffic Unit appears to lack direction and has focused primarily on investigations. It is limited in enforcement and engineering and is not involved in community education efforts. The nonuse of traffic analysis is also problematic. In the absence of strategic planning, specific use of resources, and an overall department approach to reducing traffic collisions, a shortfall in addressing traffic-related incidents will impact both traffic officers and patrol officers, who can, multiple times each day, be drawn away from their primary duties to meet the demand associated with the investigation of traffic collisions.

### Traffic Unit Recommendations:

- It is recommended that the Traffic Unit use crime analysis detail traffic information to direct enforcement efforts. (Recommendation No 27.)
- CPSM recommends that the department consider a performance management approach to mitigating traffic and DUI collisions. (Recommendation No. 28.)
- It is recommended that community complaints be formally tracked for proper disposition. (Recommendation No. 29.)

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## K9 Officers

The West Des Moines Police Department has two police officers assigned as full-time K9 officers. Their canine partners are German Shepherds, a breed that is commonly used in the police canine field. The canines are trained in patrol search, narcotics, and explosive detection. The unit's two officers have one and one-half years and three years of experience, respectively, as handlers.

The Support Services lieutenant serves as the unit's supervisor; however, the canine teams are attached to the Traffic Unit and the Entertainment Resource Unit, and the respective unit supervises their daily operations. The department does not have a rotation policy for canine officers as it allows them to stay in the assignment if they meet standards. The handlers schedules are mirrored with their assigned unit of assignment.

During the study period, between May 1, 2022, and April 30, 2023, the dispatch center recorded 684 events associated with K9 units. After removing 17 zero-on-scene events and 6 directed patrol activities, 661 calls remained.

Additionally, the dispatch system recorded 28 out-of-service activities associated with K-9 units.

Unlike the larger patrol force, K9 units do not work 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. They had recorded work on 117 days during the study period:

- There were 114 weekdays, 1 Saturday, and 2 Sundays.
- Over eight weeks in the summer, K9 units worked 17 days, including 1 Sunday.
- Over eight weeks in the winter, K9 units worked 18 days, including 1 Saturday.
- Calls per day are measured by actual days worked in each month.
- Deployment and workload figures in this section focus on the days when K9 units worked and account for the fact that K9 units worked 16 weekdays in the summer period and 17 weekdays in the winter period.

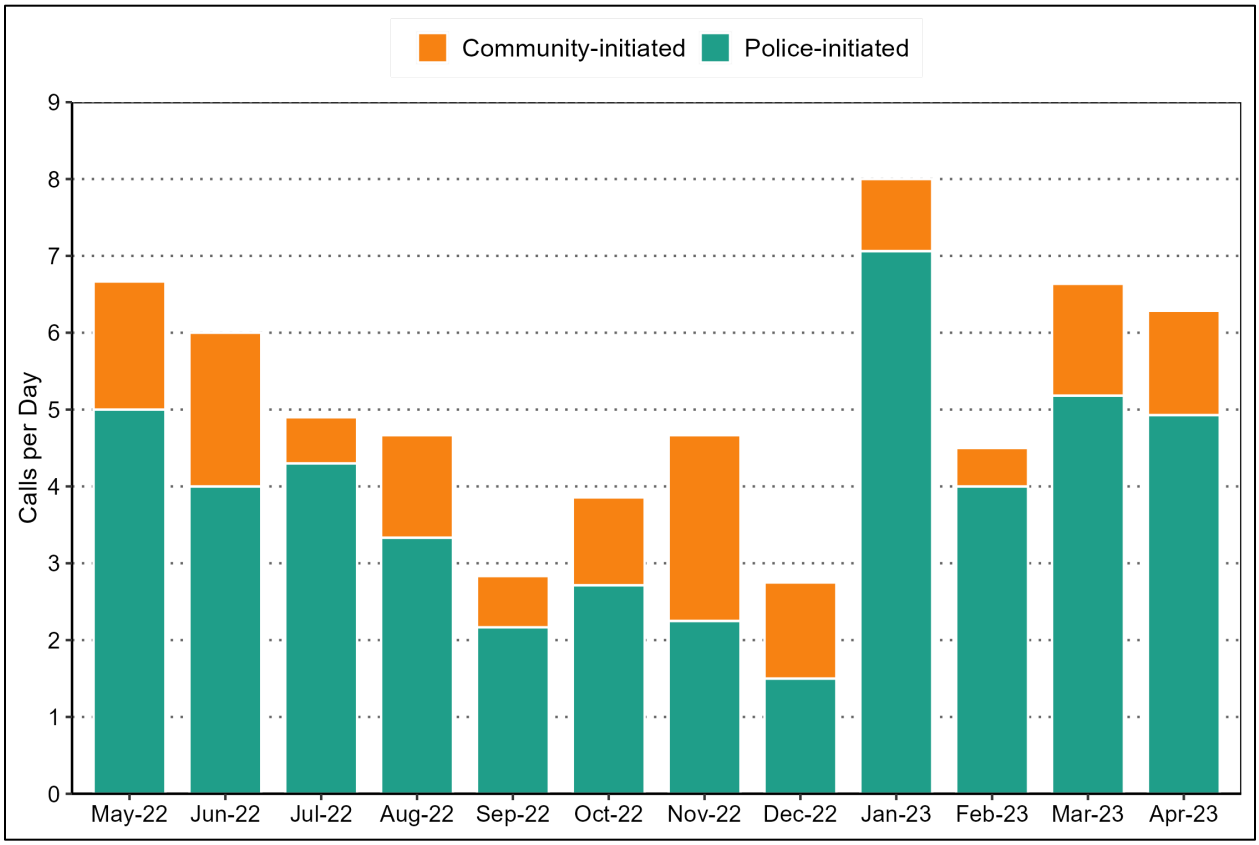
### TABLE 5-6: Events, Calls, and Workload by Category, K-9 Units

| Category | Events | Calls | Work Hours |
|---|---|---|---|
| Accident | 51 | 49 | 47.4 |
| Alarm | 8 | 8 | 1.5 |
| Animal call | 1 | NA | NA |
| Assist other agency | 13 | 12 | 6.9 |
| Check | 5 | 4 | 1.2 |
| Crime against persons | 19 | 19 | 8.9 |
| Crime against property | 12 | 12 | 2.9 |
| Crime against society | 9 | 9 | 6.2 |
| Directed patrol | 7 | NA | NA |
| Disturbance | 3 | 3 | 0.8 |
| Investigation | 47 | 47 | 22.4 |
| Mental health | 3 | 2 | 1.7 |
| Miscellaneous | 2 | 2 | 0.2 |
| Public assist | 25 | 24 | 8.3 |
| Suspicious incident | 27 | 26 | 15.7 |
| Traffic enforcement | 17 | 17 | 12.6 |
| Traffic stop | 416 | 408 | 83.0 |
| Violation | 9 | 9 | 3.6 |
| Warrant/prisoner | 10 | 10 | 8.9 |
| **Total** | **684** | **661** | **232.0** |

## Observations:

- 684 events involved a K-9 unit.
  - 3 percent of the events had zero time on scene.
  - 74 percent of all events were police-initiated.
  - 24 percent of all events were community-initiated.
- On average, there were 5.6 calls per day. This was determined by dividing the total number of calls received (661 calls) by the number of days worked by units (117 days).
- The total workload averaged 2.0 hours per day.
- 72 percent of calls and 62 percent of work hours were traffic-related.

### FIGURE 5-4: Calls per Day by Initiator and Months, K-9 Units




### TABLE 5-7: Calls per Day by Initiator and Months, K-9 Units

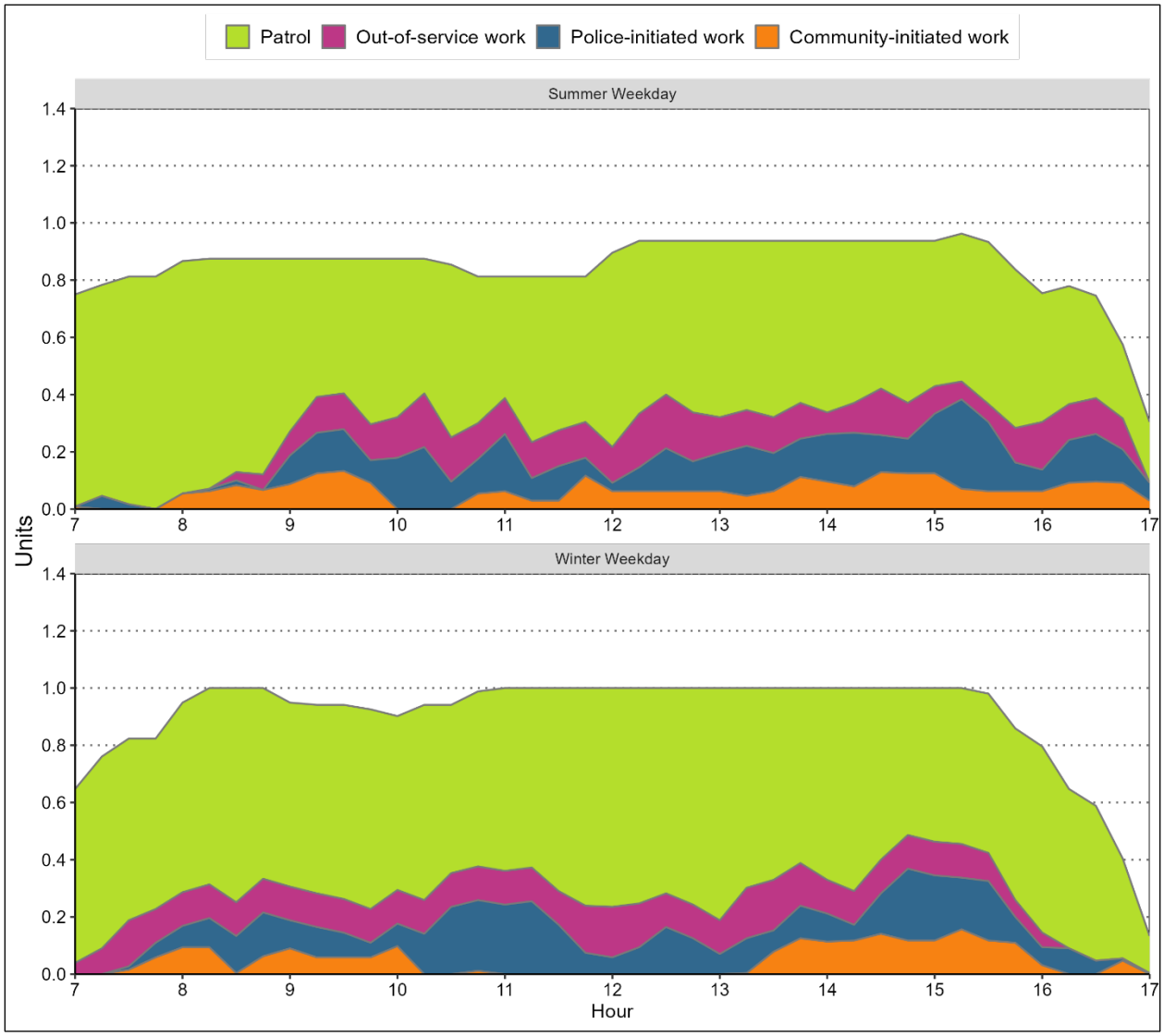
| Initiator | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Community-initiated | 1.7 | 2.0 | 0.6 | 1.3 | 0.7 | 1.1 | 2.4 | 1.2 | 0.9 | 0.5 | 1.5 | 1.4 |
| Police-initiated | 5.0 | 4.0 | 4.3 | 3.3 | 2.2 | 2.7 | 2.2 | 1.5 | 7.1 | 4.0 | 5.2 | 4.9 |
| **Total** | **6.7** | **6.0** | **4.9** | **4.7** | **2.8** | **3.9** | **4.7** | **2.8** | **8.0** | **4.5** | **6.6** | **6.3** |
| Days in Month | 12 | 12 | 10 | 9 | 6 | 7 | 12 | 4 | 16 | 4 | 11 | 14 |

## Observations:

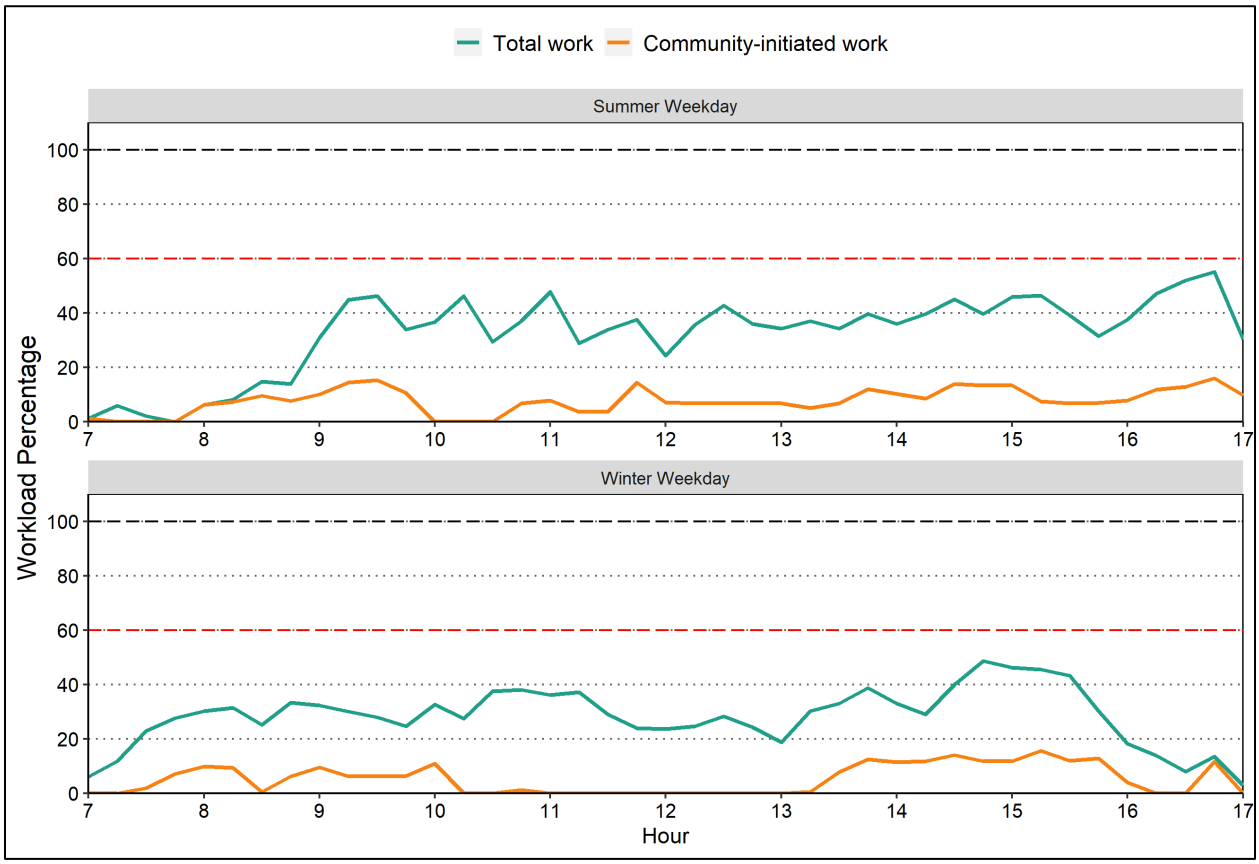
- The number of calls per day was the lowest in December.
- The number of calls per day was highest in January.

We examined deployment data for eight weeks in summer (July 7 through August 31, 2022) and eight weeks in winter (January 4 through February 28, 2023), comparing workload against deployment by percentage. K9 units were mostly deployed on 10-hour schedules, starting at 7:00 a.m. The following shows K9 units' deployment and workload for weekdays in both the summer and winter periods.

### FIGURE 5-5: Deployment and All Workload, K-9 Units



## FIGURE 5-6: Workload Percentage by Hour, K-9 Units




# Observations:

### *Summer:*

- Deployment:
  - During the week, the average deployment was 0.9 units per hour in summer.
  - During the week, the average deployment varied from 0.3 to 1.0 units per hour on weekdays.
- Community-initiated work:
  - During the week, the average workload was 0.1 units per hour.
  - During the week, this was approximately 8 percent of hourly deployment.
  - During the week, the workload reached a maximum of 16 percent of deployment between 4:45 p.m. and 5:00 p.m.
- All work:
  - During the week, the average workload was 0.3 units per hour.
  - During the week, this was approximately 33 percent of hourly deployment.
  - During the week, the workload reached a maximum of 55 percent of deployment between 4:45 p.m. and 5:00 p.m.

***Winter:***

- Deployment:
  - During the week, the average deployment was 0.9 units per hour in winter.
  - During the week, the average deployment varied from 0.1 to 1.0 units per hour on weekdays.
- Community-initiated work:
  - During the week, the average workload was 0.1 units per hour.
  - During the week, this was approximately 5 percent of hourly deployment.
  - During the week, the workload reached a maximum of 16 percent of deployment between 3:15 p.m. and 3:30 p.m.
- All work:
  - During the week, the average workload was 0.3 units per hour.
  - During the week, this was approximately 30 percent of hourly deployment.
  - During the week, the workload reached a maximum of 49 percent of deployment between 2:45 p.m. and 5:00 p.m.

The canine unit trains with the Des Moines Police Department. The training objectives and plan are developed by a master trainer accredited by the United States Police Canine Association (USPCA). The master trainer oversees all training of the canine teams and manages the basic canine handler course. The West Des Moines Police Department tracks its training in a software system designed for police canine teams, which is known as PAC-Track. An officer's training is entered using the software through a computer or mobile device. The unit supervisor can review the training to ensure compliance with the unit standards, which mirror recommended standards by the USPCA. The standards are written into the department manual Section 313, Canines. The unit operates under the general department policy. The unit standards relayed to the CPSM consulting team appear to follow industry best practices. However, there is no canine guidebook or manual to establish protocols and procedures.

The officers take their canine partners home and care for them 24 hours a day, seven days per week. In compliance with federal and state laws, the handlers are compensated for off-duty care at an on-duty rate for one hour per day. The department provides the necessary equipment for home care, including a kennel, doghouse, and food. All other necessary equipment is provided by the department upon need and request. The unit's equipment is reportedly in good condition and routinely replaced on a three-year cycle or when necessary.

The department has a budget for basic canine equipment, veterinary care, food, etc., and spends significant staff resources to train at least 16 hours a month. Much of that training is also completed on duty by adjusting officers' hours on various schedules.

The West Des Moines Police Department program meets the standards of other canine teams.

## K9 Recommendation:

- CPSM recommends establishing a canine manual to delineate handler training, expectations, and protocols. (Recommendation No. 30.)

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## Training and Emergency Management Unit

Under the functional supervision of the Support Services lieutenant and the operational oversight of the Community Outreach and the Program and Services sergeant, the Training and Emergency Management Unit consists of two police officers. The unit works Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

The primary area of responsibility for this unit is to be the training coordinator for the department. As the training coordinator, they shall ensure that all regular officers receive the required minimum hours of in-service training.

A training plan is outlined in department Policy 203, which delineates the required training plan, including government-mandated and outside training. A review of the policy shows that it meets industry standards.

A master training calendar is used to plan out all training for a 12-month period for the entire department. Consistent with policy, mandated training is given priority to meet all Iowa Law Enforcement Academy requirements and then any additional discretionary training is planned in. Most of the training is handled in-house by department instructors. However, none of the instructors have attended any formalized instructor development course, as the Iowa Law Enforcement Academy does not require instructors to attend this class before instructing.

A master training calendar is not a static document but a living tool subject to change. This is a vitally important document to ensure that necessary and appropriate recurring training is provided. As training priorities shift, it is too easy to neglect to schedule an important curriculum without such a schedule. Although the policy addresses specific training, a master calendar serves as the plan to develop, review, update, and maintain training and ensure that mandated basic, in-service, and department-required training is completed by all members as needed or required. The use of a master calendar is in keeping with best practices.

The West De Moines Police Department prioritizes training by incorporating one training day per month in the deployment schedule. Platoons and specialized units rotate within the schedule to ensure patrol coverage. During these training days, mandated and discretionary training is delivered. All training is tracked via the Police One data portal, which records training and facilitates the training management schedule. Overall, CPSM observed the training unit management systems to be well organized.

CPSM was informed that all police officers fill out a "Career Development Sheet," identifying a police officer's interest for a possible career path. The career development sheet is also utilized to prioritize requests for discretionary training. For example, if several officers request to attend the same discretionary training, the officer who stated interest in that area in a career sheet is given priority to attend the training regardless of job assignment or performance considerations. The career development sheet is a good practice if utilized as a mentoring tool. However, using the career development sheet as a determining factor for the selection in training can have its drawbacks. Police work is fluid, and training should reflect the needs of the department and the police officer. Limiting training opportunities to only those who have indicated interest at the start of the year when the sheets are filled out can be limiting, as the needs and interests of police officers often change with the more experience they gain. CPSM was advised that an officer can update their career development sheet anytime. This practice is good; however, it can still have limitations, as training opportunities can be missed before updates can be made.

The Support Services Division commander may establish a Training Committee on a temporary or as-needed basis per department Policy 203.6; such a committee would be charged with

assisting with identifying training needs. The policy outlines that the training committee should be comprised of at least three members, with the senior ranking member of the committee acting as the chairperson. Committee members should be selected based on their abilities at post-incident evaluation and at assessing related training needs.

During focus groups with professional staff, it was brought to CPSM's attention that civilian employees do not feel they have the same training opportunities as sworn employees. Professional staff is told they have the same opportunities and are encouraged to seek out training; however, they are often denied training opportunities with minimal explanation.

## Training Recommendations:

- CPSM recommends establishing a standard operating procedures guide to approve all discretionary training requests for the chain of command approval and equitable consideration instead of relying solely on the career development sheets. (Recommendation No. 31.)
- CPSM recommends considering working with the Iowa Police Academy to establish a required Instructor Development Course for advanced instructor training to provide a consistent and professional level of instruction. (recommendation No. 32.)
- It is recommended that civilian professional staff be included in the training management system and be provided with training opportunities. (Recommendation No. 33.)

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### *Field Training Officer Program*

Upon completion of academy training, probationary officers are assigned to a period of post-academy field training. Field training ensures standardized training and evaluation, facilitates the transition from the academic setting to the actual performance of general law enforcement duties, and introduces the policies, procedures, and operations of the West Des Moines Police Department.

At the time of this review, the WDMPD had five police officers in the program. All are being trained by field training officers and supervisors certified as police training officers.

The field training program is 160 hours of instruction broken up into specific phases and complies with Iowa Law Enforcement Academy requirements. The multiphase structure includes a formal evaluation progress report completed by the field training officer. Assignments of the trainee to various shifts and geographical areas and the trainee being rotated to different field training officers ensures an objective performance evaluation.

The forms and reports used to document and evaluate the performance of training officers were inspected and found to be well-structured and appropriate for their intended use. There is no field training officer evaluation guide to establish standards and performance expectations. However, police training officers do train according to their methods and style. The department tries to assign probationary officers to several different police training officers during the officers' various training phases.

All the department's training and evaluation materials for police training officers were reviewed and found to be clearly written, comprehensive, well-indexed, and appropriate for their intended purpose. The department's training materials and related policies and practices concerning training probationary officers generally meet those of similarly sized American police agencies as spelled out in department Policy 417.

Department members generally expressed satisfaction with the quantity and quality of the training delivered/received via the program. However, some did express concern that there was no onboarding process for new trainees and that the field training officer training received by field training officers could be better. Additionally, no advanced field training officer school is available for the police officers training to keep up to date on adult learning models and techniques.

## Police Training Officer Program Recommendations:

- CPSM recommends that a review of the police officer training program phases be conducted for practical utilization of the trainee's actual needs and include an onboarding process for new trainees. (Recommendation No. 34.)
- CPSM recommends that a chain of command review process include an audit of probationary documentation to ensure compliance with department training standards, policies, and protocols to eliminate police training officers training to their styles and methods. (Recommendation No. 35.)
- It is recommended that a Field Training Officer Guide be developed to establish consistent standards and performance expectations. (Recommendation No. 36.)
- It is recommended that the department find an advanced field training officer training class to send all field training officers. (Recommendation No. 37.)

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### *Emergency Management*

The Emergency Management Unit is staffed by one police officer with oversight by the Community Outreach Programs and Services Unit sergeant. The sergeant reports to the Support Services lieutenant. The Emergency Management Unit is responsible for planning and coordinating the West Des Moines Police Department's response to special events, emergency response, and community preparedness, including site assessments.

A review of the Emergency Management Unit process found that all planning for special events and emergency responses is done using an in-house system. The WDMPD does not use the nationally recognized standard Incident Command System (ICS) in preparing for small or large special events or emergency response.

The Incident Command System (ICS) is a standardized approach to incident management used at all government levels and applies to small, large, and complex incidents. It is used for emergencies and planned events and can enable a coordinated response among various agencies and jurisdictions. ICS establishes common processes for incident-level planning and resource management and allows for the integration of resources within a common structure.

Currently, the WDMPD relies on the supervising sergeant of the unit to run and supervise all special events. There are no rotation opportunities for other supervisors or command staff to gain experience as an incident commander, which limits their capabilities in the event of a real catastrophic incident.

The use of the in-house system and the single-purpose use of one sergeant to run all special events can put the WDMPD at a disadvantage. In a real emergency and the absence of the sergeant, the experience and capabilities could become cumbersome when a well-coordinated response is most needed.

## Emergency Management Recommendations:

- It is recommended that the department use the Incident Command System to plan all special events and manage all emergencies. (Recommendation No. 38.)
- CPSM recommends that all supervisors and command staff receive training in the Incident Command System. (Recommendation No. 39.)
- It is recommended that emergency management teams be established and used on a rotating basis to handle planned and unplanned incidents. (Recommendation No. 40.)

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## COMMUNITY OUTREACH PROGRAMS AND SERVICES UNIT

The Community Outreach Unit comprises three sections supervised by the Community Outreach and Services sergeant. The unit is staffed by three police officers, each responsible for their assigned section. The Community Outreach Unit is comprised of the Crime Free Multi-housing section; Community Education and Outreach; and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

The police officer assigned to the crime-free multi-housing section attends and is the liaison with approximately 15 apartment complexes that have been certified as crime-free multi-houses. Additionally, the police officer maintains a contact list of all the apartment and multi-housing complexes in the City of West Des Moines. The officer is assigned to attend community meetings and functions while acting as a department representative. The police officer handles community complaints and builds relationships with the community.

The Community Education Outreach section is responsible for the coordination of the Community Police Academy and community safety programs; in addition, it is utilized to develop operations plans for large-scale events impacting the WDMPD.

The police officer assigned to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion is responsible for building relationships with minority groups and business and religious leaders. However, this has had limited success as there is no strategic plan developed to work with the community, and the police officer is provided limited guidance on the vision of the department for their position.

Currently, the officers assigned to Community and Outreach Programs and Services have received training at the academy on problem-solving by following the SARA model, whereby law enforcement scans the community for problems, analyzes identified problems in depth, responds to problems using innovative approaches that extend beyond traditional law enforcement responses, and assess the effectiveness of the project. For the SARA model to be effective, problems selected for interventions should be both recurring and geographically defined. By identifying where and when the most service calls occur and focusing resources in those areas the Community Engagement Team can maximize its efficiency. Additionally, building community partnerships from formal and informal collaborations would build the free flow of communication to include community leaders such as business, faith, and local government leaders, which needs to be a staple in re-establishing the community engagement unit.

The Community Outreach Unit is limited in what it can focus on. Due to staffing limitations, the WDMPD has focused the scope of its community engagement on three areas. A review of department Policy 343, Community Relations, shows that the community relations function shall be assigned to the Community Outreach Programs and Services Unit within the Support Services Division and shall be the main responsibility of the community outreach officers within the unit.

These officers shall report directly to the Support Services Division chain of command and shall be responsible for developing, improving, planning, and coordinating crime prevention and community involvement programs. The community outreach officers shall establish liaisons with existing community organizations and assist in establishing new community groups as needed. These officers shall meet periodically with community organizations to receive information important to the department's operations and distribute information on crime prevention, safety, educational materials, and other community interests. The policy was found to be sound and consistent with industry standards.

The current status for community outreach revolves around three specific and limited areas and should be more community policing-centric, emphasizing partnership and community problem-solving. During focus groups conducted by CPSM, participants said the vision of community engagement and its community policing strategies were unclear and had not been communicated to patrol officers and supervisors by command staff.

As the Community Outreach Units move forward it is important that community policing responsibilities do not become the sole responsibility of this specialized unit or handful of personnel. The department would be better served by engaging all employees at all levels, sworn and non-sworn, around the community policing philosophy.

### Community Outreach Unit Recommendations:

- It is recommended that a comprehensive community policing strategic plan be created. (Recommendation No. 41.)
- CPSM recommends that the Community Outreach Programs and Services Unit be assessed to include consolidating the three units to create one community outreach unit with clear goals and objectives. (Recommendation No. 42.)
- CPSM recommends that all problem-solving efforts include all areas of the department in a coordinated effort led by one point of contact responsible for developing, implementing, and following action plans for accountability. (Recommendation No. 43.)

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## Crisis Intervention

Mental health and homeless-related issues plague many communities and require a multifaceted approach to address. This is true in West Des Moines, where these services are handled by the Crisis Interventions Unit, comprised of two full-time employees, one police officer, and a mental health clinician who provide daily coverage.

The Crisis Intervention Unit's primary function is to respond to calls for service that include mental health evaluations by providing services and outreach. The unit can take people into protective custody for psychiatric evaluations and can drive detainees to hospitals or mental health facilities for voluntary evaluations and committals. At the time of the CPSM visit, a new police officer had been assigned to the unit. The unit has been up and running for four months and is supervised by the Community Outreach Programs and Services Unit sergeant, who does not provide them with field supervision.

Due to the newness of the unit, data on the number of contacts and productivity was not readily available. CPSM recommends that the department develop a tracking system for all activity related to the Crisis Intervention Unit, including monthly tallies of contacts, mental evaluation holds, and acceptance of outreach services.

Dealing with persons with mental illness is high risk and can heighten the danger police officers and clinicians can experience. A regular training schedule that includes response, recognition of mental disorders, new technology, and the law should be established to ensure consistency when the Crisis Intervention Unit responds to calls for service. The Crisis Intervention Unit is an excellent use of resources and should be continued and supported with equipment and a well-trained staff.

### Crisis Intervention Recommendations:

- CPSM recommends better oversight during daily operations on the unit's shifts should be considered. (Recommendation No. 44.)
- CPSM recommends that the department develop a tracking system for all activity related to the Crisis Intervention Unit, including monthly tallies of contacts, mental evaluation holds, and acceptance of outreach services. (Recommendation No. 45.)
- It is recommended that a regular training schedule that includes response, recognition of mental disorders, new technology, and the law should be established to ensure consistency when the Crisis Intervention Unit responds to calls for service. (Recommendation No. 46.)

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## ENTERTAINMENT RESPONSE UNIT

The Entertainment Response Unit (ERU) was established as a specialized group of officers responsible for crime reduction strategies involving the 26 hotels within West Des Moines, the entertainment district, and the Jordan Creek Town Center, Iowa's largest retail shopping complex. ERU is under the command of the Support Services lieutenant and is directly supervised by a sergeant. The unit is composed of four police officers and one canine unit. Currently, the unit has one police officer vacancy.

ERU works Tuesday through Friday or Wednesday through Saturday from 5:00 p.m. to 3:00 a.m. This flexible schedule allows the unit to maximize its liaison and enforcement responsibilities.

The Entertainment Response Unit utilizes approximately half of its time in liaison with the hotels and local businesses to gain intelligence on crime-related issues, such as human trafficking and narcotics, and disturbance-related calls for service, such as juvenile fights. Additionally, ERU is used by the department to investigate crime stopper tips and as a force multiplier in deploying for special events. The ERU is also responsible for enforcement of tobacco and alcohol sales to minors and patrolling the bar district. The unit meets with the bar owners monthly to discuss issues like security and zero tolerance for public intoxication. While on patrol, the unit walks a foot beat in the bar district to deter public disorder. In addition, ERU is also used to patrol the parks during high peak-use times.

The West Des Moines Police Department participates in a regional vice task force and has one police officer permanently assigned to the task force. ERU and the regional vice unit appear to be working on the same public nuisance issues that are commercial, complained of, and conspicuous, impacting the community's quality of life. However, it was undetermined how much enforcement activity is being conducted by the regional vice unit in addressing the issues in West Des Moines.

The training the unit receives has been limited to human trafficking investigations. Much emphasis is given to the potential for prostitution at many hotels in the city. For instance, the unit uses the Spotlight System to search for internet advertisements for prostitution impacting the City

of West Des Moines. These investigations are very time-consuming, requiring many investigative hours and undercover "sting" operations. In addition, during the time of the CPSM site visit, ERU was investigating two massage businesses. With the time and resources required for these investigations and only two human trafficking arrests made in 2022, it would be recommended that the unit's productivity and impact on the department's objectives on crime reduction goals be evaluated to determine the best use of the department's resources.

The review of the Entertainment Response Unit assignments shows that they are spread very thin and given multiple responsibilities. In such cases, units are only minimally effective in addressing each area and don't have much of an impact on the department's crime reduction or community engagement goals. A focused mission supported by crime analysis data would better address the community's needs.

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During the study period, between May 1, 2022, and April 30, 2023, the dispatch center recorded 2,548 events associated with ERU personnel. After removing 49 zero-on-scene events and 37 directed patrol activities, 2,462 calls remained.

Additionally, the dispatch system recorded 276 out-of-service activities associated with the ERU.

Unlike the larger patrol force, ERU personnel do not work 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. They work from 5:00 p.m. to 3:00 a.m. and recorded work on 288 days during the study period:

- There were 206 weekdays, 48 Saturdays, and 34 Sundays.
- Over eightweeks in the summer period, ERU personnel worked 51 days, including 7 Saturdays and
  8 Sundays.
- Over 8 weeks in the winter period, ERU personnel worked 41 days, including 8 Saturdays and 4 Sundays.
- Calls per day are measured by actual days worked in each month.
- Deployment and workload figures that follow focus on the days when ERU personnel worked and account for the fact that ERT units worked 51 weekdays in the summer and 41 weekdays in the winter.

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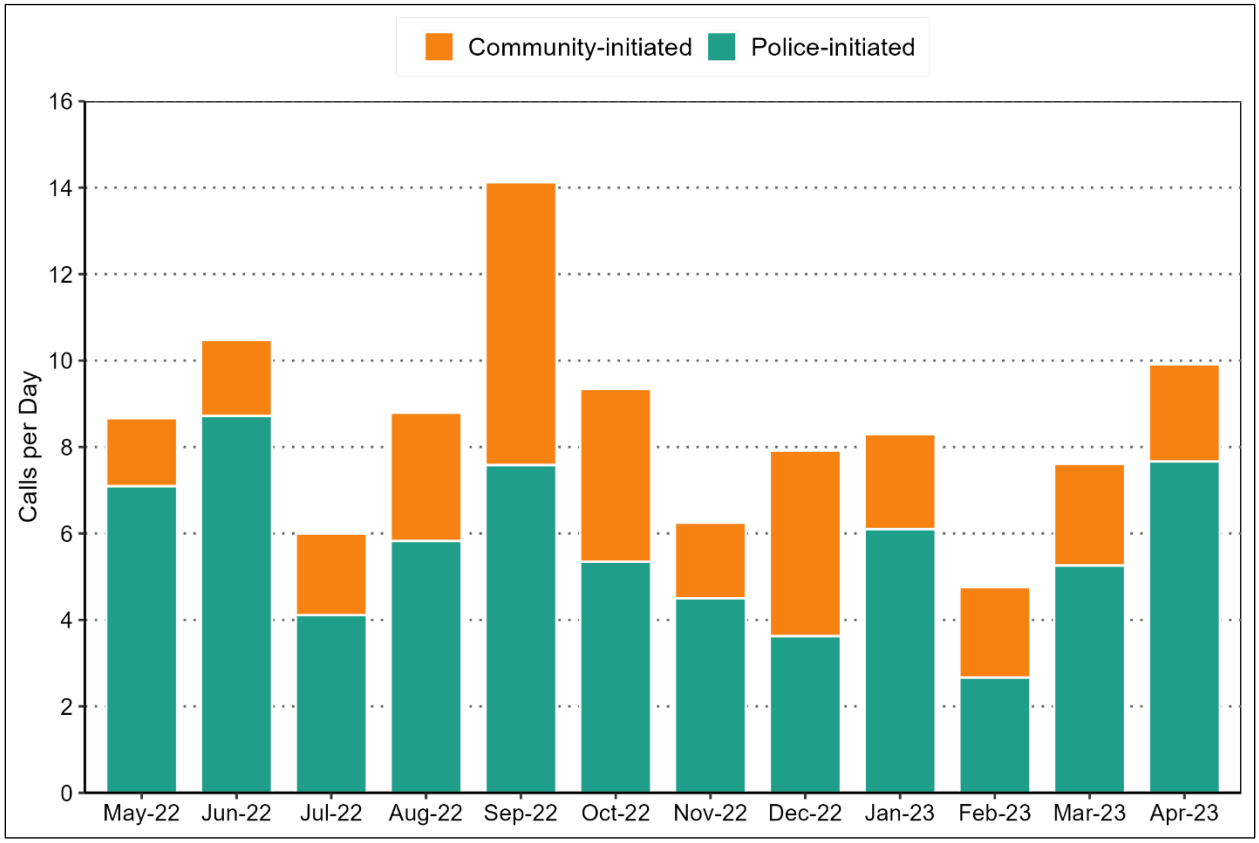
### TABLE 5-8: Events, Calls, and Workload by Category, ERU

| Category | Events | Calls | Work Hours |
|---|---|---|---|
| Accident | 51 | 49 | 43.7 |
| Alarm | 38 | 35 | 4.7 |
| Animal call | 8 | 8 | 2.3 |
| Assist other agency | 82 | 82 | 63.1 |
| Check | 120 | 112 | 48.7 |
| Crime against persons | 69 | 67 | 69.9 |
| Crime against property | 79 | 79 | 72.4 |
| Crime against society | 146 | 143 | 115.9 |
| Directed patrol | 37 | NA | NA |
| Disturbance | 82 | 81 | 70.0 |
| Investigation | 50 | 47 | 37.5 |
| Mental health | 32 | 31 | 18.1 |
| Miscellaneous | 2 | 2 | 0.0 |
| Public assist | 121 | 120 | 51.1 |
| Suspicious incident | 190 | 188 | 129.0 |
| Traffic enforcement | 51 | 47 | 26.2 |
| Traffic stop | 1,252 | 1,237 | 469.3 |
| Violation | 85 | 81 | 47.9 |
| Warrant/prisoner | 53 | 53 | 85.2 |
| **Total** | **2,548** | **2,462** | **1,354.9** |

## Observations:

- 2,548 events involved an ERU unit.
  - 2 percent of the events had zero time on scene.
  - 66 percent of all events were police-initiated.
  - 32 percent of all events were community-initiated.
- On average, there were 8.5 calls per day. This was determined by dividing the total number of calls received (2,462 calls) by the number of days worked by units (288 days).
  - The total workload averaged 4.7 hours per day.
  - 54 percent of calls and 40 percent of work hours were traffic-related.
  - 12 percent of calls and 20 percent of work hours were crime calls.

## FIGURE 5-7: Calls per Day by Initiator and Months, ERU




## TABLE 5-9: Calls per Day by Initiator and Months, ERU

| Initiator | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Community-initiated | 1.6 | 1.8 | 1.9 | 3.0 | 6.5 | 4.0 | 1.8 | 4.3 | 2.2 | 2.1 | 2.3 | 2.2 |
| Police-initiated | 7.1 | 8.7 | 4.1 | 5.8 | 7.6 | 5.3 | 4.5 | 3.6 | 6.1 | 2.7 | 5.3 | 7.7 |
| **Total** | **8.7** | **10.5** | **6.0** | **8.8** | **14.1** | **9.3** | **6.2** | **7.9** | **8.3** | **4.8** | **7.6** | **9.9** |
| Days in Month | 21 | 25 | 27 | 29 | 24 | 26 | 24 | 24 | 20 | 21 | 23 | 24 |

## Observations:

- The number of calls per day was the lowest in February.
- The number of calls per day was highest in September.

We examined deployment data for eight weeks in summer (July 7 through August 31, 2022) and four weeks in winter (January 4 through February 28, 2023), comparing workload against deployment by percentage. ERU personnel were deployed on 10-hour schedules, starting at 5:00 p.m. The following figures show ERU deployment and workload for summer ad winter weekdays and weekends.

### FIGURE 5-8: Deployment and All Workload, ERU

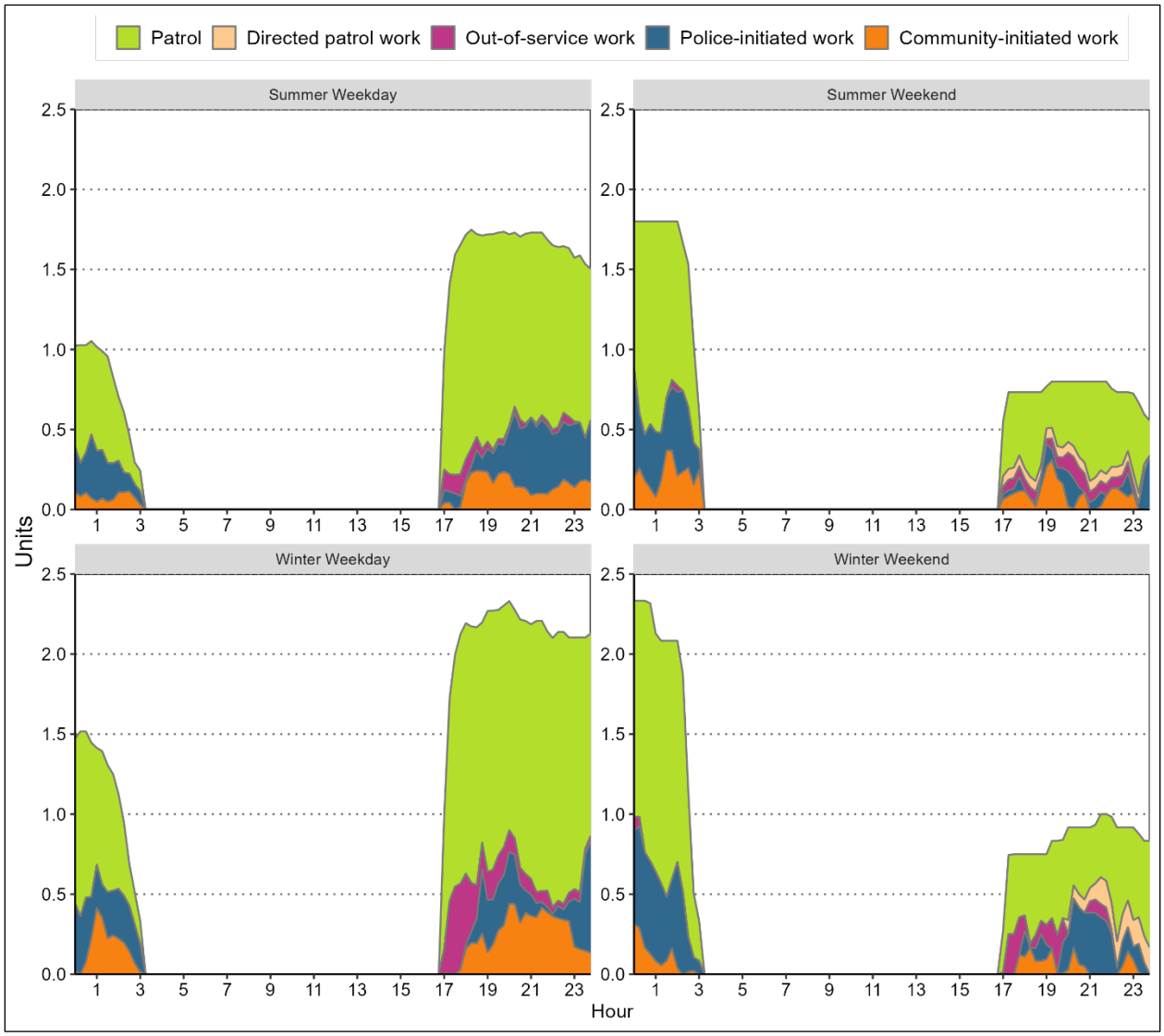



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**FIGURE 5-9: Workload Percentage by Hour, ERU**

## Observations:

### *Summer:*

- Deployment:
  - The average deployment was 1.4 units per hour during the weekdays and 1.0 units per hour on the weekends.
  - Average deployment varied from 0.2 to 1.7 units per hour on weekdays and 0.6 to 1.8 units per hour on weekends.
- Community-initiated work:
  - Average community-initiated workload was 0.1 units per hour during the week and 0.1 units per hour on weekends.

- This was approximately 9 percent of hourly deployment during the week and 13 percent of hourly deployment on weekends.
- During the week, workload reached a maximum of 26 percent of deployment between 2:45 a.m. and 3:00 a.m.
- On weekends, workload reached a maximum of 41 percent of deployment between 3:00 a.m. and 3:15 a.m.

- All work:
  - The average workload was 0.4 units per hour during the week and 0.3 units per hour on weekends.
  - This was approximately 30 percent of hourly deployment during the week and 34 percent of hourly deployment on weekends.
  - During the week, workload reached a maximum of 53 percent of deployment between 2:45 a.m. and 3:00 a.m.
  - On weekends, workload reached a maximum of 66 percent of deployment between 7:00 p.m. and 7:15 p.m.

***Winter:***

- Deployment:
  - The average deployment was 1.8 units per hour during the weekdays and 1.1 units per hour on weekends.
  - Average deployment varied from 0.3 to 2.3 units per hour on weekdays and 0.3 to 2.3 units per hour on weekends.
- Community-initiated work:
  - Average community-initiated workload was 0.2 units per hour during the week and 0.1 units per hour on weekends.
  - This was approximately 12 percent of hourly deployment during the week and 16 percent of hourly deployment on weekends.
  - During the week, workload reached a maximum of 29 percent of deployment between 1:00 a.m. and 1:15 a.m.
  - On weekends, workload reached a maximum of 22 percent of deployment between 6:15 p.m. and 6:30 p.m.
- All work:
  - The average workload was 0.6 units per hour during the week and 0.4 units per hour on weekends.
  - This was approximately 31 percent of hourly deployment during the week and 32 percent of hourly deployment on weekends.
  - During the week, workload reached a maximum of 62 percent of deployment between 2:30 a.m. and 2:45 a.m.

- On weekends, workload reached a maximum of 61 percent of deployment between 9:15 p.m. and 9:30 p.m.

## Entertainment Response Unit Recommendation:

- CPSM recommends conducting a workload analysis of the Entertainment Response Unit to focus its enforcement efforts to have the highest impact on addressing the community's needs. (Recommendation No. 47.)

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# SECTION 6. OTHER ASPECTS OF DEPARTMENT OPERATIONS

## SPECIAL WEAPONS AND TACTICS (SWAT)

WDMPD participates in a metro area regional tactical team called the Suburban Emergency Response Team (SERT). The SERT team is equivalent to what many agencies call a SWAT team. The team is a regionalized effort of nine agencies collaborating to provide emergency specialized equipment and tactics to high-risk situations when time permits. A regionalized approach to a tactical team is common and, in many cases, necessary for smaller agencies.

The team is constructed through a multi-agency memorandum of understanding (MOU) signed by each participating jurisdiction. The MOU provides for a Chiefs' Executive Board, which oversees the team's operations. The Chiefs' Board appoints the SERT Commander and two executive officers. The team commander, assisted by the executive officers, is responsible for the team's operations. Currently, there are 48 members of the team, including operators (entry element), crisis negotiators, tactical medics, and snipers. The team is divided into four teams, each with a team leader and assistant team leader. WDPD has 12 members assigned to various teams within SERT.

The team has a robust manual that acts as a governing document and standard operating procedures (SOPs). The manual is comprehensive and appears to meet recommendations and standards set by CALEA and the National Tactical Officers Association (NTOA).

The team trains for 8 to 10 hours monthly, plus two three-day trainings annually. As difficult as it can be for staffing, the monthly proficiency training and the biannual multiday trainings are best practices and should be continued. The monthly proficiency training is focused on maintaining proficiencies in specific disciplines, and the multiday efforts focus on overall team performance and evaluation of individual and team capabilities. The team commander maintains all the training and performance records of individuals and the team.

The commander prepares an annual report to the Chiefs' Executive Board, which includes information about personnel, training, deployments, and other miscellaneous issues. A review of the previous three annual reports shows an average of about 15 operations per year, the majority being high-risk search warrants. The other common operations involved barricaded subjects and investigative assists. A number of deployments in 2020 were in response to civil disturbances triggered by the death of George Floyd. The activity, training, and other material reviewed in the reports are consistent with other regional teams we have reviewed.

The structure of the SERT team does not specify rank; this should be re-evaluated. The current team commander is a sergeant. The sergeant is responsible for the 48-member team and the overall operations of the team for the nine agencies. The current commander is experienced, with 18 years on the team as an operator and sergeant before becoming the team commander. However, the responsibilities of a large multi-agency team typically reside with somebody of a rank higher than a first-line supervisor. Most agencies are commanded by a lieutenant or higher. In addition, there are other sergeants and even a lieutenant on the team as operators. The SERT rank structure is contrary to typical police and SWAT operations. When this was discussed with WDMPD staff, it did not seem to be a concern, primarily because of the people currently in the positions. Given the complexity, risk, and liability of the team's operations,

CPSM recommends the SERT's Chiefs' Executive Board review the rank structure of the team to consider more traditional roles, specifically regarding:

- Requiring the SERT Commander position to be a lieutenant.
- Requiring team leaders to be sergeants.
- Eliminating sergeants and lieutenants from the operational levels of the team.

As with any regional team, equipment, uniforms, and other logistics can be challenging. For the most part, these issues seem to be resolved easily. Each agency equips its operators with equipment according to an equipment list provided by the SERT Commander. This arrangement works well for the most part; however, some agencies sometimes purchase different brands or types of equipment due to availability or cost. The commander monitors this issue and reports to the Executive Board if problems are persistent or insurmountable.

There is a shared budget that each agency contributes to annually. Different member agencies apply for equipment grants, which routinely assist in supplying larger equipment purchases. There seems to be a cooperative group effort from the member agencies to keep the team well-equipped. However, we did notice that the annual budget and each member agency contribution have been the same yearly. Due to rising costs and the ever-increasing demands for new technology and equipment, CPSM recommends the Executive Board consider adjusting the member contributions annually according to inflation or some other method to ensure the team can maintain proper equipment.

Overall, the SERT team is a well-organized, equipped, and managed organization that supports the nine member jurisdictions well. Based on the various reviews CPSM has conducted of regional tactical teams, we find the Suburban Emergency Response Team is a model for agencies to follow. The interagency cooperation, structure, and overall operations exceed many industry standards and are to be commended.

## SERT Recommendations:

- CPSM recommends the SERT's Chiefs' Executive Board review the rank structure of the team to consider more traditional roles, specifically regarding: (Recommendation No. 48.)
  - Requiring the SERT Commander position to be a lieutenant.
  - Requiring team leaders to be sergeants.
  - Eliminating sergeants and lieutenants from the operational levels of the team.
- We recommend the SERT Executive Board consider adjusting the member contributions annually, according to inflation, or some other method to ensure the team maintains proper equipment for operational readiness. (Recommendation No. 49.)

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## EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS/DISPATCH

All 9-1-1 and dispatch services are provided for the West Des Moines Police Department through a regional dispatch agency called Westcom. Created more than 15 years ago to maximize resources for a few departments in the area, Westcom has grown into a robust regional center offering police, fire, and EMS communications to more than a dozen agencies in six cities.

The dispatch center is located in a West Des Moines facility, Fire Station 19. The center is operated as an independent agency according to a multijurisdictional governmental agreement. The agency has a chief responsible for day-to-day operations and reports to a board that oversees the agency. There is also a unique relationship wherein the City of West Des Moines operates as the coordinating agency for Westcom. As the coordinating agency, the City of West Des Moines owns and operates the facility and acts as the contracting authority for the center at the direction of the Westcom Management Committee.

Westcom, as a stand-alone agency, is accredited by CALEA. The accreditation is separate from the West Des Moines PD CALEA accreditation and is solely for the communications center. The Center has undergone some leadership changes in the last year. Internal (agency) customer service appears to have improved with the transition. There are three separate monthly meetings (chiefs' meeting, management meeting, and operational meeting) with agencies to ensure efficient operations and adequate communication at all levels of the involved agencies.

The dispatch center was originally a WDMPD-only operation, and was located in the main police station. However, there were only one to two dispatchers on duty at any one time, and an officer would have to come in on night shifts and act as a relief dispatcher. In 2005, the Westcom regional dispatch concept started with WDMPD merging with Clive and Urbandale to form Westcom. Over the years, the number of agencies has grown to six, with two agencies added in the last few years.

The agency currently serves as the 9-1-1 and emergency communications dispatch center for police, fire, and EMS in the following jurisdictions:

- West Des Moines.
- Urbandale.
- Clive.
- Norwalk.
- Waukee.
- Windsor Heights.

With the number of agencies involved in the multijurisdictional structure of Westcom, a detailed analysis of the operations is outside the scope of this evaluation. However, during our site visit and other conversations with West Des Moines employees, concerns were expressed about the current level of service the WDMPD currently receives from Westcom. Some concerns were typical of agencies serviced by a regional dispatch center, and others were more unique to West Des Moines. CPSM did not evaluate the validity of the concerns expressed, but we offer a summary of concerns expressed multiple times during our visit. Those concerns include:

- Several "dead spots" in radio coverage have been reported for years without resolution.
- Too many agencies on one channel may create officer safety issues.

- The center is having difficulty hiring, training, and retaining dispatchers.
- One radio coordinator is not enough to handle the hardware and software issues that arise for all the agencies involved in Westcom.
- The dispatchers do not know the geographical areas of each jurisdiction.
- The large number of agencies on one channel has dramatically diminished the services dispatchers provide to officers (researching intel while en route to calls, voicing call updates, etc.).
- A "one-size-fits-all" system for dispatching each agency is ineffective, meaning an agency with five calls per day has different needs than an agency with 100 calls per day.

Based on our observations and discussions during the site visit, Westcom is a robust regional center that allows agencies to share costs and other resources to provide emergency communications to several jurisdictions. Outside of CALEA accreditation, we are unaware of any review of the center by emergency communications professionals. With the addition of three new jurisdictions in the last few years and the issues reported to us during our site visit, CPSM recommends the City of West Des Moines work with the Westcom Management Committee to conduct a comprehensive review of Westcom. The National Emergency Number Association (NENA) and Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials (APCO) are professional organizations that can assist with an independent review of the Westcom Center. An independent study would assess the management structure, technology, policies, procedures, and workload of the Westcom Center.

### Emergency Communications/Dispatch Recommendation:

- CPSM recommends the City of West Des Moines work with the Westcom Management Committee to conduct a comprehensive review of Westcom. (Recommendation No. 50.)

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## TECHNOLOGY

Consistent with virtually all law enforcement agencies, the West Des Moines Police Department utilizes various information technologies. Aside from personnel, these technologies serve as the organization's lifeblood and are essential to virtually all department functions. Simple examples include the 911 telephone system, the computer-aided dispatch system, the records management system, and the radio broadcast system. A failure of any one of these systems can severely impact and/or cripple access to emergency fire, medical, and law enforcement services. Also vitally important are the case management systems used by detectives, internal affairs, traffic investigators, etc. A broader list of technologies in use includes:

- Microsoft SharePoint – Intranet.
  - Multiple subsites for various collaboration and data storage needs.
  - EDMS.
- Internet browsers Google Chrome, Firefox, Microsoft Edge.
- Central Square – CAD/RMS & Mobile.
  - Iowa/NCIC Information Systems.

- UKC Workforce Ready – HR.
- Active911.
- Granicus – Website.
- CarFax.
- Shieldware.
- Microsoft Office – More than 15 programs.
- ArcGIS.
- Adobe Acrobat.
- Flock – LPR.
- PowerDMS.
- Lexipol KMS.
- PoliceOne Academy.
- WatchGuard In-Car and Body Worn Video Cameras.
- Genetec – City buildings and traffic cameras.
- TraCS.
- Zoom.
- LeadsOnline – Pawn records, associates, etc.
- Thomson Reuters Clear – Information for investigations.
- In-Time Scheduling.
- Tracker – Evidence Management.
- Clearview AI.
- Jail Calls – PCSO.
- eLineup – Photo Lineups.
- FARO Total Station – 3D Laser Scanner.
- FARO Scene Software – Processing and managing scan data.
- FARO Zone 3D Software – Visual 2D/3D diagrams, analysis, animations, and videos.
- BOSCH Crash Data Retrieval – Imaging event data records on vehicles.
- Canon DSLR Camera – High image quality with 32.5 Megapixel for photography/ photogrammetry.
- VLC Media Player.
- Iowa Department of Transportation Cameras.

Currently, the West Des Moines Police Department does not have an in-house Information Technology (IT) support team. One police lieutenant acts as a troubleshooter to provide IT with some support in a limited capacity. Technology contracts are tracked and coordinated by the

City of West Des Moines, which also provides IT services when support is out of capacity. The West Des Moines Police Department is very advanced in its use of technology for patrol operations. However, due to a data breach several years ago, the department has resorted to burning and storing compact disks as a backup system and, as such, has multiple file cabinets of compact disks. Understandably, the department is apprehensive given the history of the data breach; however, with the advances made in cloud security, the department would be better served to invest in a secure government cloud-based storage system for its digital files.

### Technology Recommendation:

- CPSM recommends that the department evaluate using a secure cloud-based information storage platform. (Recommendation No. 51.)

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## BODY-WORN CAMERAS AND VIDEO

Policy 424 addresses portable audio/video recording devices, including all recording systems, whether body-worn, hand-held, or integrated into portable equipment. The policy details how and when uniformed officers will use the body-worn cameras.

The West Des Moines Police Department has used body-worn cameras since 2017. It is currently reviewing different replacement options, as the department's Watchguard cameras currently in use are at the end of their life cycle. There are currently 88 body-worn cameras in inventory and eight spares that are rotated and harvested for replacement parts on an as-needed basis. The sergeant assigned as the body-worn video coordinator is the contact when officers need a replacement battery or other equipment. CPSM learned that the department has an in-house server for video storage and uses a disk-burning system to review and retain videos with evidentiary value. The supervisor has no audit responsibilities for compliance with policy, nor does he review videos for risk management issues, training, or the quality of community contacts.

Department policy addresses the review of recorded media files by supervisors. It delineates that a supervisor may view recorded files investigating a specific act of conduct and to assess officers' performance. However, no audit function is spelled out to ensure compliance with the proper use of body-worn video.

Body-worn camera technology in law enforcement is valuable in recording police and public contacts; however, video review is time-consuming for sergeants reviewing uses of force, pursuits, and other risk management issues. Although the reviews can be time-consuming, using body-worn cameras is well worth the investment.

### Body-Worn Cameras and Video Recommendations:

- CPSM recommends that body-worn videos be randomly audited by supervisors for compliance with policy and professional standards. (Recommendation No. 52.)
- It is recommended that the new body-worn camera platform have cloud-based storage capabilities. (Recommendation No. 53.)

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## PUBLIC INFORMATION

Public information officer (PIO) responsibilities are handled by the Administrative Services Unit sergeant, who primarily oversees Crime Analysis, the Property Room, and Records. The position is an ancillary position, and the sergeant has been working as the PIO for the last three years. There is no designated backup person to handle the position in the sergeant's absence. There has been some internal discussion about whether the position should become a primary duty assignment. However, the internal discussions have yet to pass the discussion phase.

With turnover always happening in police departments, there should be robust plans for succession planning for key positions. Having a key position such as PIO be an ancillary position is not necessarily uncommon for an agency the size of the West Des Moines Police Department. However, a burdensome auxiliary assignment can result in diminished capacity and/or performance in both regular and auxiliary responsibilities.

The public information officer duties for any police department are very important responsibilities. Given the current complexities of policing, the ever-increasing demands for information from the media and the community, and the rise of social media influence, the position of public information officer must be given proper priority. The WDMPD has not been very proactive in the public information space, especially in basic training for their PIO and supervisors and in developing a media strategy to meet the changing needs of the community and the department. The PIO only received a total of five hours of media relations training three years ago and is self-taught in other areas regarding media access, first amendment applications, and modern definitions of media. CPSM learned that there is no media guide available for department field personnel to assist them in dealing with the press. Our review of department Policy 327, Media Relations, found it is sound and meets industry standards, delineating general functions such as responsibilities, training, providing advance information, media requests, access, and the release of information.

The department's control of its social media accounts is bifurcated. The PIO has been left out of the communications loop and only becomes aware of a social media post when it causes some organizational reaction. We did find there were some quality posts. However, the number of platforms used is minimal, and engagement is nonexistent. In years past, it was standard practice for police departments to post information but not engage in a dialogue with users. Over the last few years that has changed, and departments nationwide have found that active social media engagement is a very effective way to interact with the community. However, this does require the use of multiple social media platforms to reach different demographics. For example, some information may be best put out on NextDoor so it can be focused on a specific neighborhood. Other information may be better shared on Facebook to target an older demographic; some information may be best posted on Instagram to target a younger demographic. Finally, some information may need to be posted on all platforms.

To engage properly on social media, a staff person needs to have time daily to interact with users and speak on behalf of the department. Many agencies have turned to civilian employees for public information roles. CPSM recommends that the city and WDMPD evaluate the possibility of creating and staffing a civilian public information officer position. We also recommend that the department review its current social media accounts and examine the feasibility of creating profiles on additional platforms to engage with all demographics the department serves.

The West Des Moines Police Department is following some best practices in its public information efforts. For example, the PIO is a direct report to the Chief of Police and is included in the

notification advisories. The PIO has established liaisons with local media outlets, and they share contact information for real-time communication and exchange of information. Additionally, the PIO is included in all appropriate meetings related to the state of the department.

### Public Information Recommendations:

- It is recommended that a robust media plan be developed to provide guidelines and succession planning for the public information officer's duties. (Recommendation No. 54.)
- It is recommended that the department follow its media relations policy and provide updated training for the position of public information officer. (Recommendation No. 55.)
- CPSM recommends that the department evaluate the possibility of creating and staffing a civilian public information officer position. (Recommendation No. 56.)
- CPSM recommends the development of a media guide for use by police officers and supervisors in the field. (Recommendation No. 57.)

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## PUBLIC SAFETY CHAPLAINS

A Chaplain Corps can be a great asset to a police department in that chaplains are integral in supporting agencies as trained counselors with expertise in areas of crisis response and traumatic stress, spiritual lead, and source experts. Chaplains are usually community clergy members and bring years of training and experience to a department. Chaplains provide emotional and spiritual support, comfort, and assistance to employees and their family members. They travel where and when they are requested. Chaplains respond to major occurrences, hospital call-outs, or to their respective areas of assignment during times of crisis; they officiate at weddings and funerals; deliver benedictions and invocations at department events; assist with death notifications; conduct a ministry of presence at their respective departments, getting to know their officers and civilian staff; and keep themselves available to department personnel and their families for comfort, guidance, spiritual counsel, and resource information.

Chaplains serve as a support system to benefit department employees and their families. These chaplains are not intended to replace an employee's family clergy or any mental health professional support but rather to work alongside those entities to benefit the department's personnel.

The West Des Moines Police Department currently has five chaplains participating in the department's Chaplain Corps program. The program is formalized via department Policy 336, solidifying its role within the department. Our review of the policy indicates it meets all industry standards; it covers eligibility, recruitment, identification cards and uniforms, and duties and responsibilities. A prospective chaplain must complete an application and undergo a background check to ensure they have a valid driver's License and the experience to perform the duties of a public safety chaplain. CPSM learned that the vetting process includes a review of the chaplain's reputation within their church and a check that they meet the department's professional standards.

Upon appointment, the chaplains are considered volunteers and serve at the discretion of the Chief of Police. There is no formalized training for the chaplains, and in-service training is non-existent. If the chaplain wanted to attend a training class, they must submit a request for consideration and approval.

The chaplains are allowed to wear a police-style uniform that mirrors that of a West Des Moines police officer. According to policy, uniforms and necessary safety equipment will be provided for each chaplain. Identification symbols worn by chaplains shall be different and distinct from those worn by officers by including "Chaplain" on the uniform. Chaplain uniforms shall not reflect any religious affiliation. Chaplain Corps has a formal coordinator at the rank of lieutenant; however, much of their activities are driven by a lead chaplain in the program. The lead chaplain sets the on-call schedule.

CPSM learned that no operational guideline manual for the chaplain program exists and which establishes responsibilities, guidelines, and training requirements.

## Chaplain Corps Recommendations:

- The chaplain program should establish an onboarding training program for chaplains. (Recommendation No. 58.)
- CPSM recommends establishing a quarterly training calendar to address subjects such as conflict resolution, police operations, etc. (Recommendation No. 59.)
- It is recommended that department policy be followed in establishing a chaplain uniform distinct from police officers. (Recommendation No. 60.)
- CPSM recommends establishing a standard operating guide to provide an orientation to members of the Chaplain Corps regarding duties, access, the chain of command, and department expectations. (Recommendation No. 61.)

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## YOUTH JUSTICE INITIATIVE

The West Des Moines Police Department has been working with the Youth Justice Initiative (YJI) for more than 20 years. This program is considered an organic approach to crime and crime prevention in the West Des Moines community. YJI's ecosystem of collective community care incorporates restorative practices, academic strengthening, family engagement, and community service. Community members help youth grow socially and emotionally and to be accountable. YJI engages the community to encourage youth to:

- Make positive changes in school attendance and performance.
- Improve family relationships.
- Refrain from drug use.
- Reduce criminal activity.
- Become positive, participatory citizens.

YJI provides individualized services for youth ages 5 to 18 who have offended (diversion), or who are at risk for offending or are at risk of dropping out of school (prevention).

Youth are referred by police (both programs) and school staff (prevention only).

Priority is given to youth attending school or residing in West Des Moines; other youth from Polk, Dallas, and Warren counties may be considered if resources are available.

The YJI provides services anchored in love to create a sense of belonging. It ensures families have equitable access to and feel appreciated in police spaces. All services encourage positive changes in youths' attitudes toward family, community, academics, and crime. Diversion programming allows youth to learn the impacts of their behaviors on others and helps them put things as right as possible without having a criminal record. YJI has *the lowest recidivism rate for diversion programs in Polk County*.

Core diversion services that include youth, parents, and siblings (when appropriate):

### *Justice Circles*

- Monthly justice circles with 8+ stakeholders to model/teach empathy.
- Support & accountability by victims, family, school, and community.

### *Case Monitors*

- Meet one-on-one with youth at least once per week to monitor progress.
- Encourage self-confidence, family participation, and academic best efforts.
- Assist parents with boundaries and follow through of reasonable consequences.

Services available to both diversion and prevention (support) cases:

### *Family Efforts*

- Family Class – 15-hour, 5-week program (includes harm reduction drug education).
- Family Coaching/Mediation – to address and reduce conflict.

### *Academic Efforts*

- Study Table – twice weekly during the school year; 171 youth served in FY23.
- Twenty volunteers and staff provide 1:1 support and full, healthy meals.
- Weekly outdoor Summer Adventures reduce "summer's learning slide."
- On-site summer and after-school programming at a low-income, section 8 housing complex in WDM.

### *Models Used*

**Restorative Justice** – International research documents the efficacy of community dialogue and relationship-based interventions.

**Assessment** – Modeled after the "8% Solution" (Oakland, CA). Results replicated by Iowa Attorney General. Intervention recommended "multi-systemic, wraparound services."

CPSM recognizes that the Youth Justice Initiative is a valuable program that needs to be continually supported by the West Des Moines Police Department.

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# SECTION 7. SUMMARY

It is our general opinion that the West Des Moines Police Department is a very good organization. The department appears to be well-managed and staffed with professionals who are dedicated to the overall policing mission.

There are a number of recommendations made in this report along with some areas that we identified for improvement. Many of the recommendations are minor in nature. Some of the recommendations, such as those impacting staffing, will require a greater degree of planning and decision-making on the part of police department as well as city management.

Specifically, the decision on how to properly staff patrol is the single largest management decision that should be made in regard to the content of this report. Proper staffing is at the heart of why departments often ask for these assessments to be conducted. We specifically recommend that patrol staffing be increased to a level that should allow for proper response to service calls but also allow for proper workload distribution and reduced overtime usage within the Operations Division. However, this recommendation falls short of recommending an overall increase in the size of the West Des Moines Police Department.

It is our belief that police departments have a primary responsibility to respond to calls for service in an efficient manner and to be able to properly investigate crimes to provide justice for crime victims, and to properly support those two very important functions. Most police departments, including WDMPD, also provide services and resources that extend beyond these very basic needs. Most of these other functions are important and, in many cases, provide a great benefit to the communities they serve. It becomes incumbent on management to balance the resources it has in the most efficient manner, including the allocation of resources outside the very basic policing needs.

In the case of WDMPD, the department has created specialized policing functions outside of the regular patrol and investigative responsibilities (ERU, Traffic, Community Outreach, SROs, K9s). All of these functions are important to today's policing mission and most departments the size of WDMPD are striving to have functions similar to these units to increase the level of service they are providing in their communities.

It can be argued that in today's policing environment, many of these functions are becoming an expectation rather than an additional luxury. Additionally, WDMPD management consistently raised concerns about having adequate resources to respond to any event within its shopping and hospitality districts in the community. These concerns, along with community traffic complaints, have been at the heart of management's decisions to staff the ERU and traffic functions of the department.

Within this report, we have raised concerns over the efficiency and effectiveness of some of these specialized functions.

The ERU unit was, at the time of our assessment, immersed in some investigations that were not statistically significant in contributing to crime reduction in the community. It certainly did not appear to be offsetting the patrol workload associated with the shopping and hospitality segments of the city.

The Traffic Unit is immersed in investigating collisions and doing traffic reconstruction work. A majority of the labor hours proactively addressing traffic concerns was being done on an overtime basis (through traffic safety grants). It is our understanding that both of these units were

created and staffed to mitigate the workload on patrol. This was part of the rationale for moving officers out of patrol and into these functions.

If a unit is created to fulfill a specific policing mission, it requires very specific direction and proactive supervision and management to keep that unit focused on its mission. Many times we have observed police units that were created for a certain function but which have gotten sidetracked doing other work.

Traffic can be a perfect example of this dynamic. Traffic units should be a proactive and visible community presence focused on enforcement and safety. However, most traffic officers have an interest in developing their investigative skills. Becoming a "reconstructionist" is a desirable title to achieve for many officers wishing to pursue a specialty in this field. However, very few collision investigations actually require reconstruction work. Unless it is a collision that involves felony prosecution and typically involves a fatality of an innocent person, there is rarely a need to perform that level of work on a case.

Traffic cases are successfully prosecuted all the time without reconstruction work. Oftentimes, the real beneficiaries of doing this level of investigation are the insurance companies and private attorneys, who will not need to do it themselves if the police have already done it for them. There are many agencies that do not perform any reconstruction work. If this specialization is offered, it requires very active management, balancing what officers might want to do versus what they "need" to do in order to fulfill their mission.

There are also some functions that are filled by a sworn officer in the WDMPD that are effectively filled with civilian employees in other departments. Examples include crime-free rental housing, some community affairs positions, and, to some extent, some training positions.

Based on our assessment, we do not believe many of the specialized functions within WDMPD are fulfilling their mission as originally intended.

As such, the first management decision that should be tackled is redefining the mission of these units to address community priorities in the most efficient manner possible. This is assuming the department and the community feel strongly that these functions are an important component of the service provided to the community. In general, we believe they are important functions.

The second decision should be to determine the extent to which WDMPD is willing to offset sworn labor with civilian labor. This decision will undoubtedly create a need to add civilian employees into the organization, but in most cases, civilian labor is less expensive than sworn labor, and often easier to fill and less expensive to train.

After the city and the department have reached a consensus on the future of those functions, they may find that enough resources have been shifted back into the patrol function, and thus there will not be a need to add sworn employees to fill the shortage that exists now. However, if the management decision is made to keep various existing units in place and in their current staffing configuration, we would recommend expanding the size of the organization to properly staff patrol according to the workload as analyzed in this report.

We highlighted the possibility that workload is not properly captured, specifically the administrative role of report writing. Assuming expectations are reiterated to patrol officers to accurately capture their time, that patrol is staffed to the recommended levels, and that common-sense workload mitigation measures are put into place, then WDMPD should reassess the workload in two to three years to ensure whether staffing remains at the desired level or needs to be revisited.

In closing, we would like to extend our appreciation and thanks to Chief Chris Scott, Lieutenant Steve Areges, and the entire staff at the West Des Moines Police Department for their cooperation and openness during this process. They remained professional throughout, responsive to our needs and requests, and gracious hosts during our time in West Des Moines.

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# SECTION 8. DATA ANALYSIS: OPERATIONS DIVISION

This data analysis report on police patrol operations for the West Des Moines Police Department focuses on three main areas: workload, deployment, and response times. These three areas are related almost exclusively to patrol operations, which constitute a significant portion of the police department's personnel and financial commitment.

All information in this analysis was developed using data from Westcom Emergency Communication's computer-aided dispatch (CAD) system.

CPSM collected data for one year from May 1, 2022, through April 30, 2023. The majority of the first section of the analysis, concluding with Table 8-9, uses call data for one year. For the detailed workload analysis, we use two eight-week sample periods. The first period is from July 7 through August 31, 2022, or summer, and the second period is from January 4 through February 28, 2023, or winter.

## WORKLOAD ANALYSIS

When CPSM analyzes a set of dispatch records, we go through a series of steps:

- We first process the data to improve accuracy. For example, we remove duplicate patrol units recorded on a single event as well as records that do not indicate an actual activity. We also remove incomplete data, as found in situations where there is not enough time information to evaluate the record.
- At this point, we have a series of records that we call "events." We identify these events in three ways:
  - We distinguish between patrol and nonpatrol units.
  - We assign a category to each event based on its description.
  - We indicate whether the call is "zero time on scene" (i.e., patrol units spent less than 30 seconds on scene), "police-initiated," or "community-initiated."
- We then remove all records that do not involve a patrol unit to get a total number of patrol-related events.
- At important points during our analysis, we focus on a smaller group of events designed to represent actual calls for service. This excludes events with no officer time spent on scene and directed patrol activities.

In this way, we first identify a total number of records, then limit ourselves to patrol events, and finally focus on calls for service.

As with similar cases around the country, we encountered several issues when analyzing the dispatch data for West Des Moines. We made assumptions and decisions to address these issues.

- 1,202 events (about 3 percent) involved patrol units spending zero time on scene.

- The computer-aided dispatch (CAD) system used approximately 180 different event descriptions, which we condensed into 19 categories for our tables and 11 categories for our figures (shown in Chart 8-1). Table 8-20 in the appendix shows how each call description was categorized.

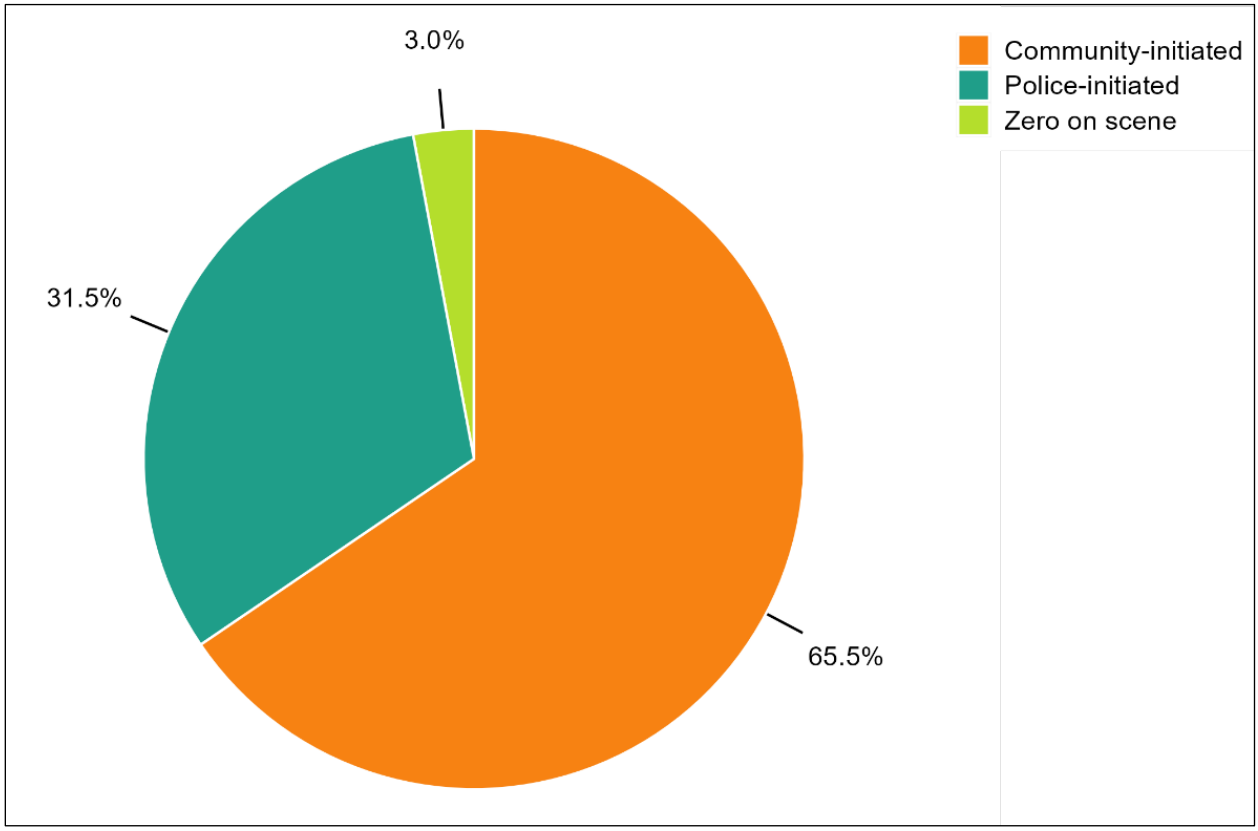
Between May 1, 2022, and April 30, 2023, the communications center recorded approximately 40,610 events that were assigned call numbers, which included an adequate record of a responding patrol unit as either the primary or secondary unit. When measured daily, the department reported an average of 111.3 patrol-related events per day, approximately 3 percent of which (3.3 per day) had fewer than 30 seconds spent on the call.

In the following pages, we show two types of data: activity and workload. The activity levels are measured by the average number of calls per day, broken down by the type and origin of the calls, and categorized by the nature of the calls (crime, traffic, etc.). Workloads are measured in average work hours per day.

## CHART 8-1: Event Descriptions for Tables and Figures

| Table Category | Figure Category |
|---|---|
| Alarm | Alarm |
| Assist other agency | Assist |
| Public assist | |
| Check | Check |
| Crime against persons | Crime |
| Crime against property | |
| Crime against society | |
| Directed patrol | Directed patrol |
| Disturbance | Disturbance |
| Animal call | General noncriminal |
| Mental health | |
| Miscellaneous | |
| Violation | |
| Investigation | Investigation |
| Suspicious incident | Suspicious incident |
| Accident | Traffic |
| Traffic enforcement | |
| Traffic stop | |
| Warrant/prisoner | Warrant/prisoner |

## FIGURE 8-1: Percentage Events per Day, by Initiator




**Note:** Percentages are based on a total of 40,610 events.

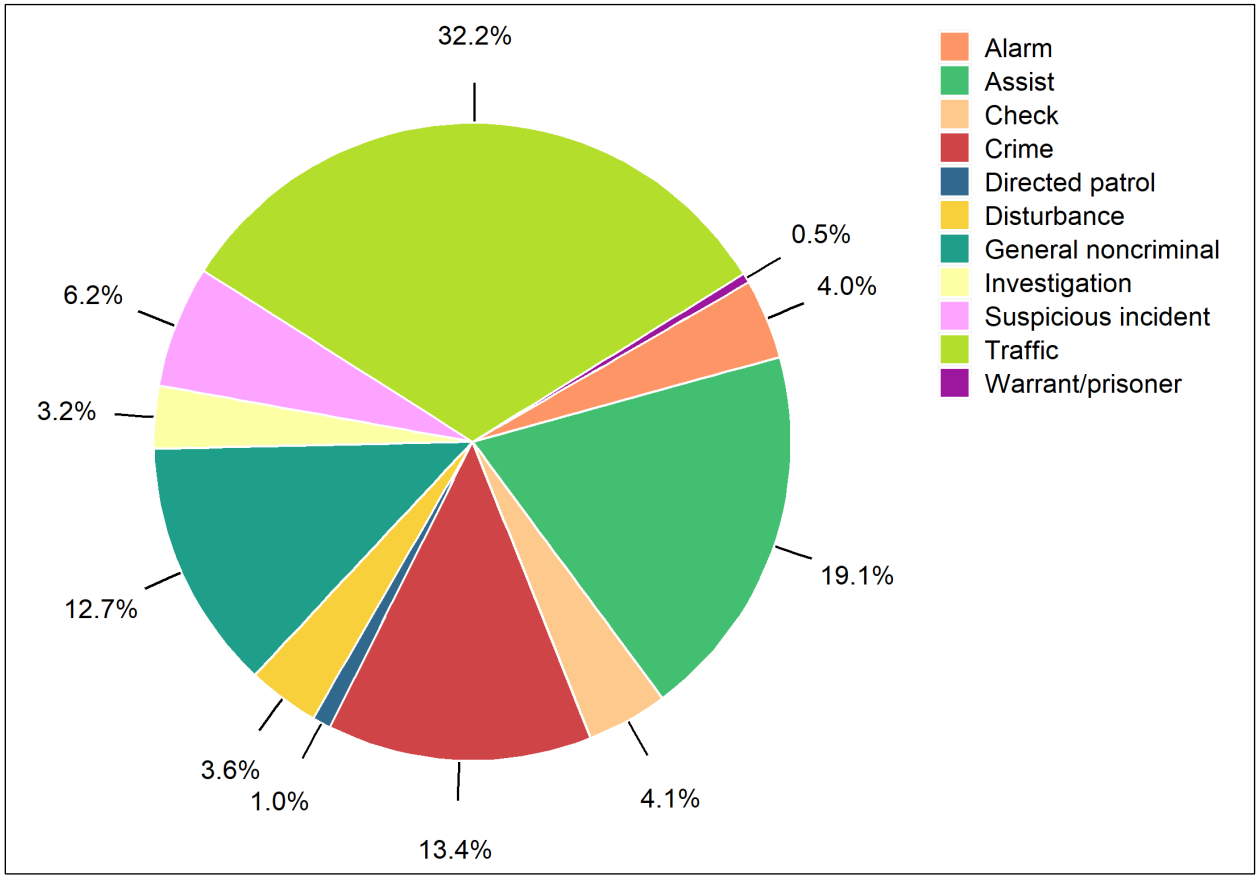
## TABLE 8-1: Events per Day, by Initiator

| Initiator | No. of Events | Events per Day |
|---|---|---|
| Community | 26,599 | 72.9 |
| Police-initiated | 12,809 | 35.1 |
| Zero on scene | 1,202 | 3.3 |
| **Total** | **40,610** | **111.3** |

## Observations:

- 3 percent of the events had zero time on scene.
  - The top three descriptions are "wireless 911 call," "information," and "phone call request," and accounted for 53 percent of zero time on scene events.
- 32 percent of all events were police-initiated.
- 65 percent of all events were community-initiated.

## FIGURE 8-2: Percentage Events per Day, by Category




**Note:** The figure combines categories in the following table according to the description in Chart 8-1.

### TABLE 8-2: Events per Day, by Category

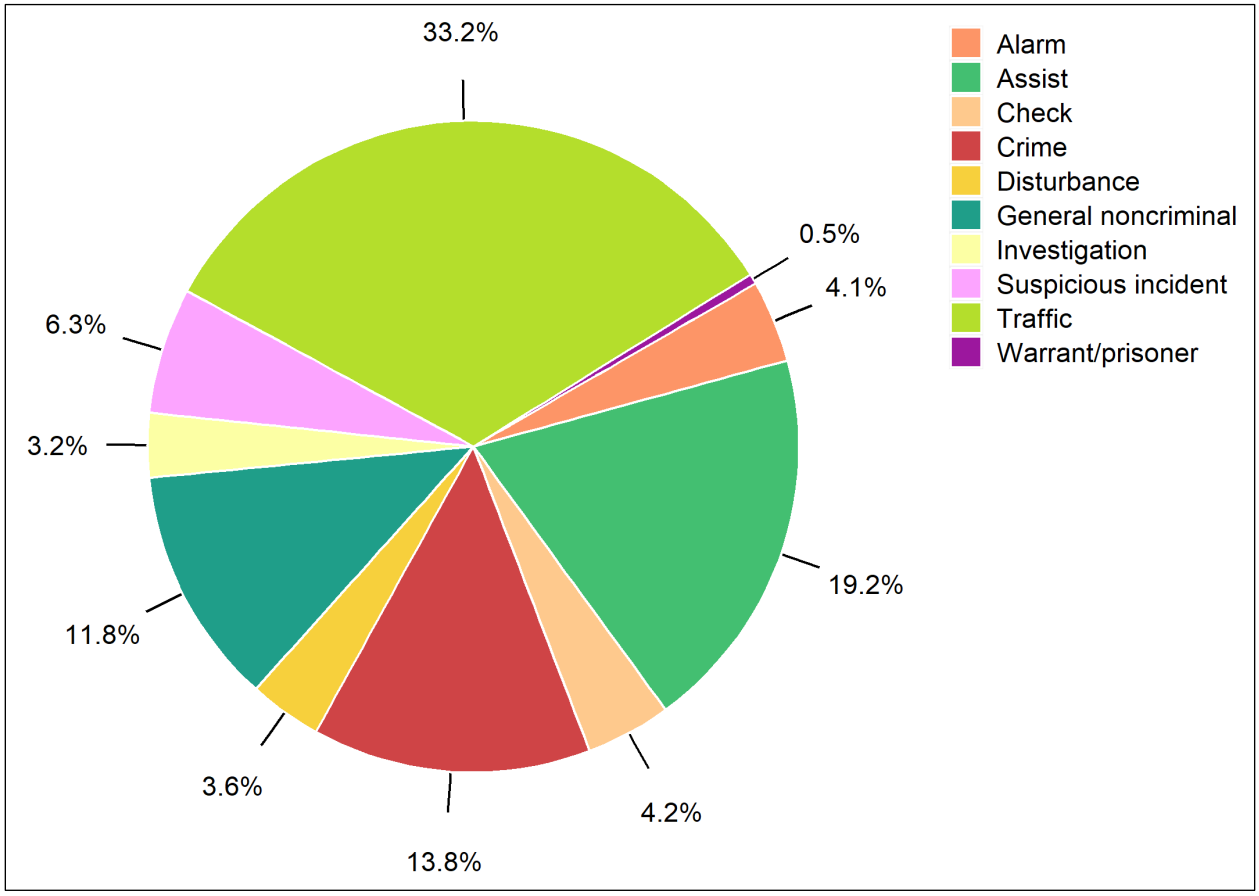
| Category | No. of Events | Events per Day |
|---|---|---|
| Accident | 2,170 | 5.9 |
| Alarm | 1,644 | 4.5 |
| Animal call | 642 | 1.8 |
| Assist other agency | 1,996 | 5.5 |
| Check | 1,666 | 4.6 |
| Crime against persons | 1,368 | 3.7 |
| Crime against property | 2,301 | 6.3 |
| Crime against society | 1,783 | 4.9 |
| Directed patrol | 387 | 1.1 |
| Disturbance | 1,471 | 4.0 |
| Investigation | 1,288 | 3.5 |
| Mental health | 547 | 1.5 |
| Miscellaneous | 563 | 1.5 |
| Public assist | 5,775 | 15.8 |
| Suspicious incident | 2,517 | 6.9 |
| Traffic enforcement | 1,017 | 2.8 |
| Traffic stop | 9,871 | 27.0 |
| Violation | 3,404 | 9.3 |
| Warrant/prisoner | 200 | 0.5 |
| **Total** | **40,610** | **111.3** |

**Note:** Observations below refer to events shown within the figure rather than the table.

## Observations:

- The top four categories accounted for 77 percent of events:
  - 32 percent of events were traffic-related.
  - 19 percent of events were assists.
  - 13 percent of events were crimes.
  - 13 percent of events were general noncriminal activities.

## FIGURE 8-3: Percentage Calls per Day, by Category




**Note:** The figure combines categories in the following table according to the description in Chart 8-1.

### TABLE 8-3: Calls per Day, by Category

| Category | No. of Calls | Calls per Day |
|---|---|---|
| Accident | 2,159 | 5.9 |
| Alarm | 1,591 | 4.4 |
| Animal call | 582 | 1.6 |
| Assist other agency | 1,863 | 5.1 |
| Check | 1,651 | 4.5 |
| Crime against persons | 1,366 | 3.7 |
| Crime against property | 2,292 | 6.3 |
| Crime against society | 1,740 | 4.8 |
| Disturbance | 1,408 | 3.9 |
| Investigation | 1,244 | 3.4 |
| Mental health | 547 | 1.5 |
| Miscellaneous | 407 | 1.1 |
| Public assist | 5,637 | 15.4 |
| Suspicious incident | 2,444 | 6.7 |
| Traffic enforcement | 978 | 2.7 |
| Traffic stop | 9,832 | 26.9 |
| Violation | 3,081 | 8.4 |
| Warrant/prisoner | 199 | 0.5 |
| **Total** | **39,021** | **106.9** |

**Note:** The focus here is on recorded calls rather than recorded events. We removed 1,202 events with zero time on scene, and 387 directed patrol service activities.

## Observations:

- On average, there were 106.9 calls per day, or 4.5 per hour.
- The top four categories accounted for 78 percent of calls:
  - 33 percent of calls were traffic-related.
  - 19 percent of calls were assists.
  - 14 percent of calls were crimes.
  - 12 percent of calls were general noncriminal calls.

## FIGURE 8-4: Calls per Day, by Initiator and Month

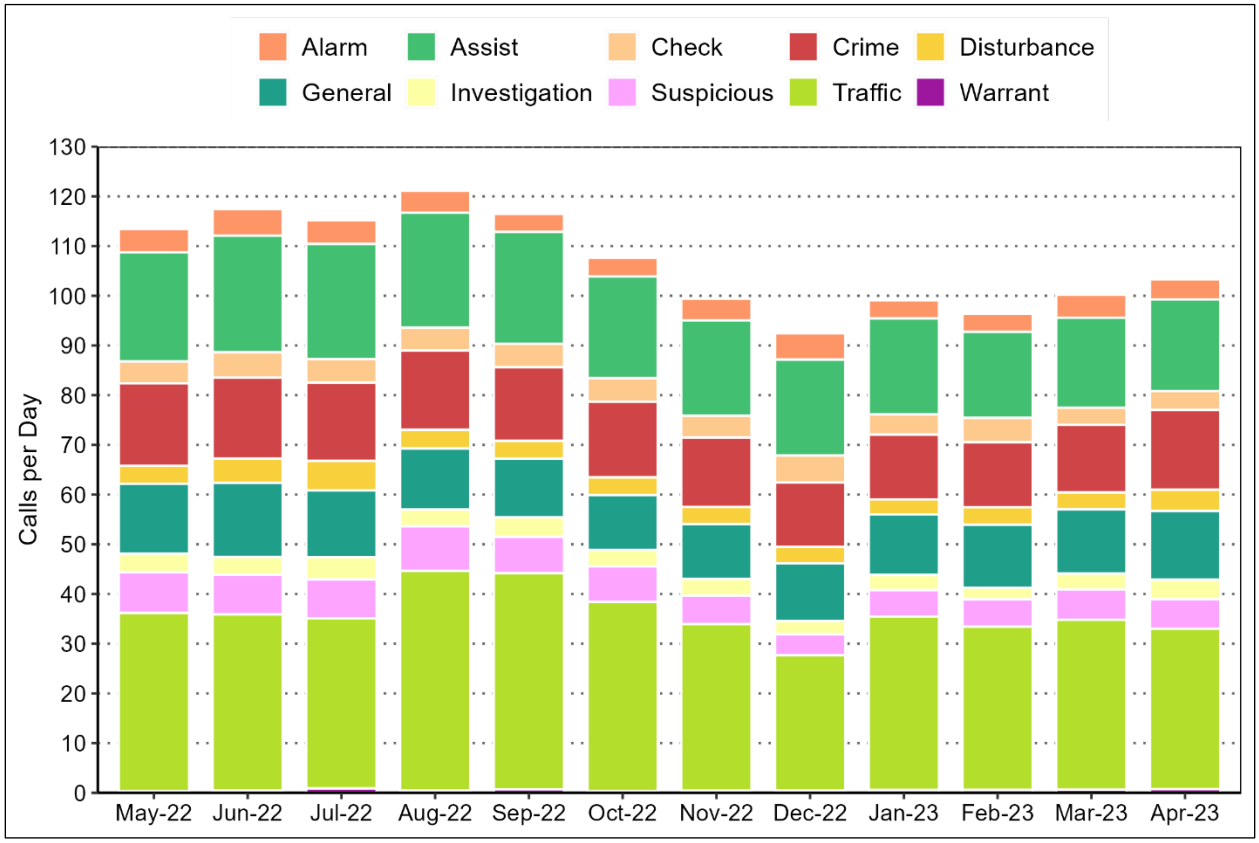
## TABLE 8-4: Calls per Day, by Initiator and Months

| Initiator | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Community | 78.3 | 82.6 | 80.1 | 77.2 | 74.0 | 72.9 | 69.2 | 70.2 | 64.3 | 64.7 | 67.3 | 72.5 |
| Police | 35.1 | 34.9 | 35.1 | 43.9 | 42.4 | 34.7 | 30.2 | 22.2 | 34.8 | 31.7 | 32.9 | 30.8 |
| **Total** | **113.4** | **117.4** | **115.2** | **121.1** | **116.5** | **107.6** | **99.4** | **92.5** | **99.1** | **96.4** | **100.2** | **103.3** |

## Observations:

- The number of calls per day was lowest in December.
- The number of calls per day was highest in August.
- The months with the most calls had 31 percent more calls than the months with the fewest calls.
- August had the most police-initiated calls, with 98 percent more than December, which had the fewest.
- June had the most community-initiated calls, with 28 percent more than January and February, which had the fewest.

## FIGURE 8-5: Calls per Day, by Category and Month




**Note:** The figure combines categories in the following table according to the description in Chart 8-1.

### TABLE 8-5: Calls per Day, by Category and Month

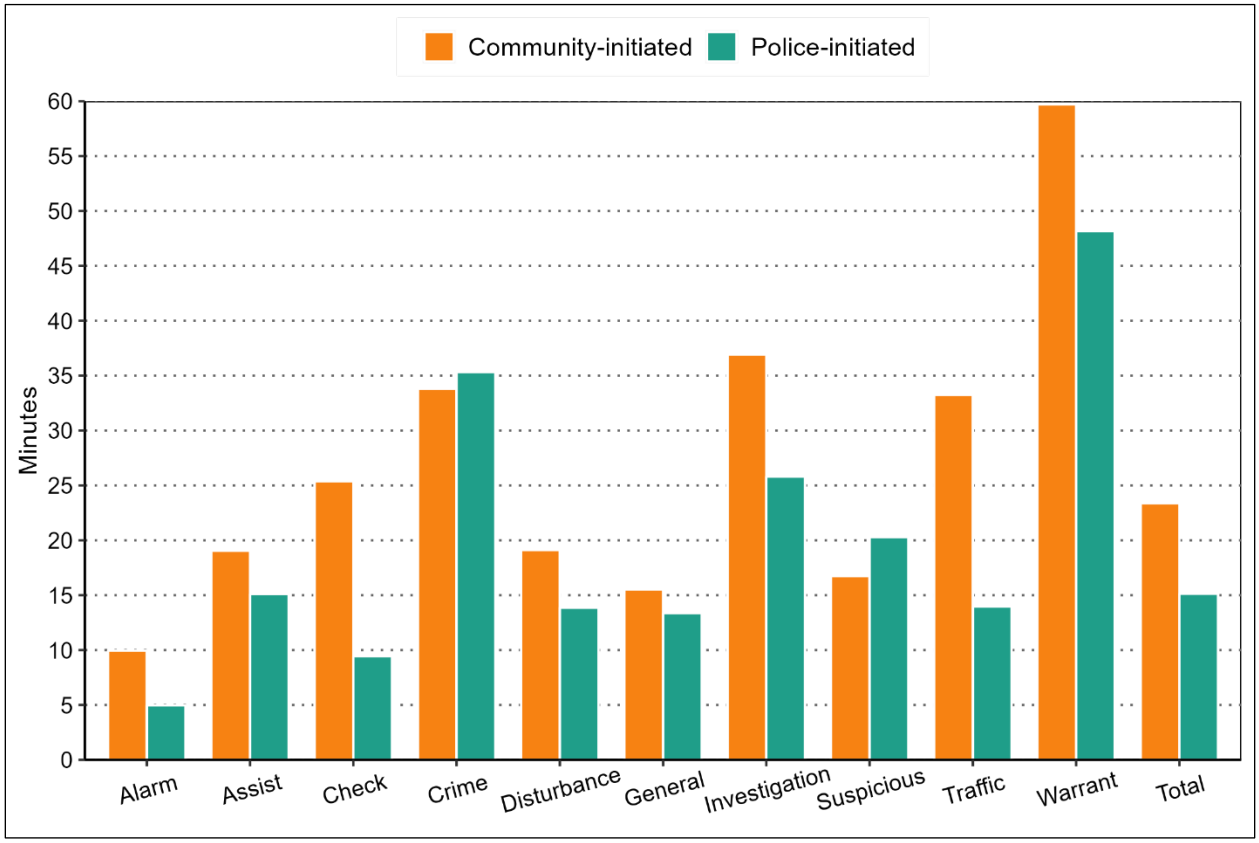
| Category | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Accident | 5.3 | 6.2 | 4.7 | 5.2 | 5.4 | 6.0 | 7.7 | 9.8 | 4.9 | 5.2 | 5.1 | 5.3 |
| Alarm | 4.7 | 5.3 | 4.8 | 4.4 | 3.6 | 3.8 | 4.4 | 5.3 | 3.6 | 3.6 | 4.6 | 4.0 |
| Animal call | 2.2 | 1.6 | 1.2 | 1.2 | 1.2 | 1.3 | 1.4 | 1.9 | 1.7 | 1.7 | 1.9 | 1.8 |
| Assist other agency | 5.5 | 5.5 | 5.3 | 5.5 | 5.5 | 4.9 | 4.6 | 4.5 | 4.8 | 5.0 | 5.1 | 5.0 |
| Check | 4.4 | 5.1 | 4.7 | 4.6 | 4.7 | 4.7 | 4.4 | 5.5 | 4.1 | 4.9 | 3.5 | 3.8 |
| Crime against persons | 4.4 | 4.6 | 3.6 | 3.8 | 3.5 | 4.3 | 3.6 | 3.2 | 3.7 | 3.0 | 3.2 | 4.1 |
| Crime against property | 6.3 | 6.2 | 6.7 | 6.4 | 6.3 | 6.5 | 6.5 | 6.3 | 5.5 | 5.9 | 5.8 | 7.1 |
| Crime against society | 5.9 | 5.6 | 5.5 | 5.8 | 5.1 | 4.5 | 3.8 | 3.5 | 3.8 | 4.2 | 4.5 | 4.8 |
| Disturbance | 3.6 | 4.9 | 5.9 | 3.8 | 3.6 | 3.5 | 3.4 | 3.3 | 3.0 | 3.5 | 3.4 | 4.3 |
| Investigation | 3.7 | 3.5 | 4.5 | 3.4 | 3.9 | 3.3 | 3.4 | 2.6 | 3.1 | 2.3 | 3.2 | 3.9 |
| Mental health | 1.5 | 1.8 | 1.0 | 1.3 | 1.5 | 1.8 | 1.7 | 1.4 | 1.6 | 1.8 | 1.2 | 1.4 |
| Miscellaneous | 1.3 | 1.3 | 1.2 | 1.4 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 1.1 | 1.0 | 1.1 | 1.1 |
| Public assist | 16.5 | 17.9 | 17.9 | 17.7 | 17.0 | 15.5 | 14.6 | 14.8 | 14.5 | 12.3 | 13.0 | 13.4 |
| Suspicious incident | 8.2 | 8.0 | 7.8 | 9.0 | 7.3 | 7.1 | 5.7 | 4.2 | 5.3 | 5.5 | 6.1 | 6.0 |
| Traffic enforcement | 3.3 | 3.3 | 3.0 | 3.0 | 2.3 | 3.2 | 2.0 | 2.5 | 2.2 | 2.0 | 2.6 | 2.8 |
| Traffic stop | 27.3 | 25.9 | 26.5 | 35.9 | 35.8 | 28.9 | 23.8 | 14.9 | 27.8 | 25.7 | 26.5 | 24.2 |
| Violation | 9.0 | 10.2 | 10.0 | 8.4 | 8.2 | 6.9 | 7.0 | 7.3 | 7.8 | 8.2 | 8.8 | 9.5 |
| Warrant/prisoner | 0.3 | 0.5 | 0.9 | 0.5 | 0.7 | 0.3 | 0.4 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.6 | 0.6 | 0.7 |
| **Total** | **113.4** | **117.4** | **115.2** | **121.1** | **116.5** | **107.6** | **99.4** | **92.5** | **99.1** | **96.4** | **100.2** | **103.3** |

**Note:** Calculations were limited to calls rather than events.

## Observations:

- The top four categories averaged between 75 and 80 percent of calls throughout the year:
  - Traffic calls averaged between 27.2 and 44.2 calls per day throughout the year.
  - Assist calls averaged between 17.3 and 23.5 calls per day throughout the year.
  - Crime calls averaged between 12.9 and 16.6 calls per day throughout the year.
  - General noncriminal calls averaged between 11.0 and 14.9 calls per day throughout the year.
- Crime calls accounted for 13 to 16 percent of total calls throughout the year.

## FIGURE 8-6: Primary Unit's Average Occupied Times, by Category and Initiator




**Note:** The figure combines categories using weighted averages from the following table according to the description in Chart 8-1.

### TABLE 8-6: Primary Unit's Average Occupied Times, by Category and Initiator

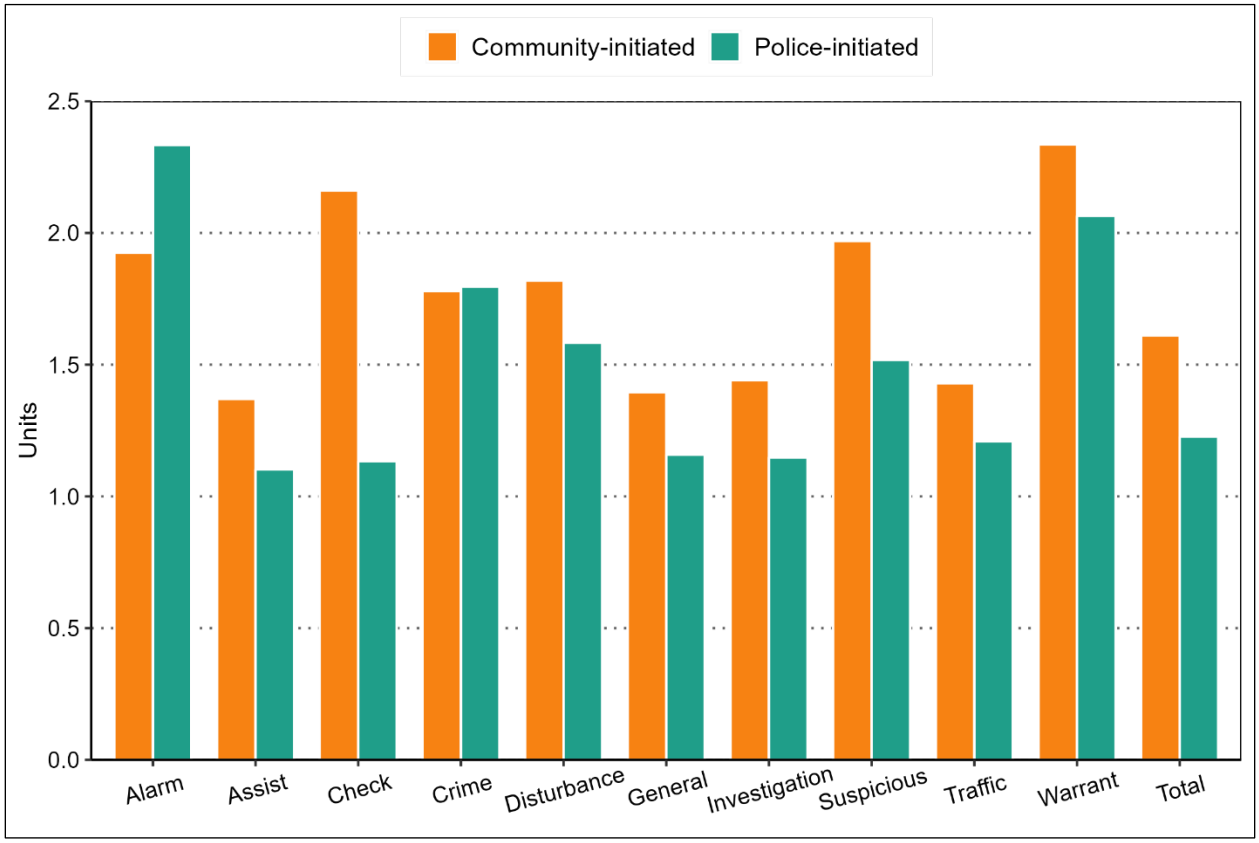
| Category | Community-Initiated | | Police-Initiated | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Minutes | Calls | Minutes | Calls |
| Accident | 37.1 | 2,060 | 32.4 | 99 |
| Alarm | 10.0 | 1,588 | 5.0 | 3 |
| Animal call | 13.6 | 567 | 14.2 | 15 |
| Assist other agency | 20.3 | 1,820 | 15.7 | 43 |
| Check | 25.4 | 1,471 | 9.4 | 180 |
| Crime against persons | 40.0 | 1,351 | 38.1 | 15 |
| Crime against property | 36.4 | 2,250 | 32.2 | 42 |
| Crime against society | 24.8 | 1,586 | 35.9 | 154 |
| Disturbance | 19.1 | 1,372 | 13.9 | 36 |
| Investigation | 36.9 | 926 | 25.8 | 318 |
| Mental health | 37.0 | 539 | 38.4 | 8 |
| Miscellaneous | 13.3 | 381 | 15.9 | 26 |
| Public assist | 18.6 | 4,697 | 15.1 | 940 |
| Suspicious incident | 16.7 | 1,919 | 20.3 | 525 |
| Traffic enforcement | 24.7 | 925 | 24.6 | 53 |
| Traffic stop | NA | 0 | 13.7 | 9,832 |
| Violation | 12.3 | 3,010 | 9.5 | 71 |
| Warrant/prisoner | 59.7 | 122 | 48.2 | 77 |
| **Weighted Average/Total Calls** | **23.4** | **26,584** | **15.1** | **12,437** |

**Note:** The information in Figure 8-6 and Table 8-6 is limited to calls and excludes all events that show zero time on scene. A unit's occupied time is measured as the time from when the unit was dispatched until the unit becomes available again. The times shown are the average occupied minutes per call for the primary unit, rather than the total occupied minutes for all units assigned to a call. Observations below refer to times shown within the figure rather than the table.

## Observations:

- A unit's average time spent on a call ranged from 5 to 60 minutes overall.
- The longest average times were for community-initiated warrant/prisoner calls.
- The average time spent on crime calls was 34 minutes for community-initiated calls and 35 minutes for police-initiated calls.

## FIGURE 8-7: Number of Responding Units, by Initiator and Category



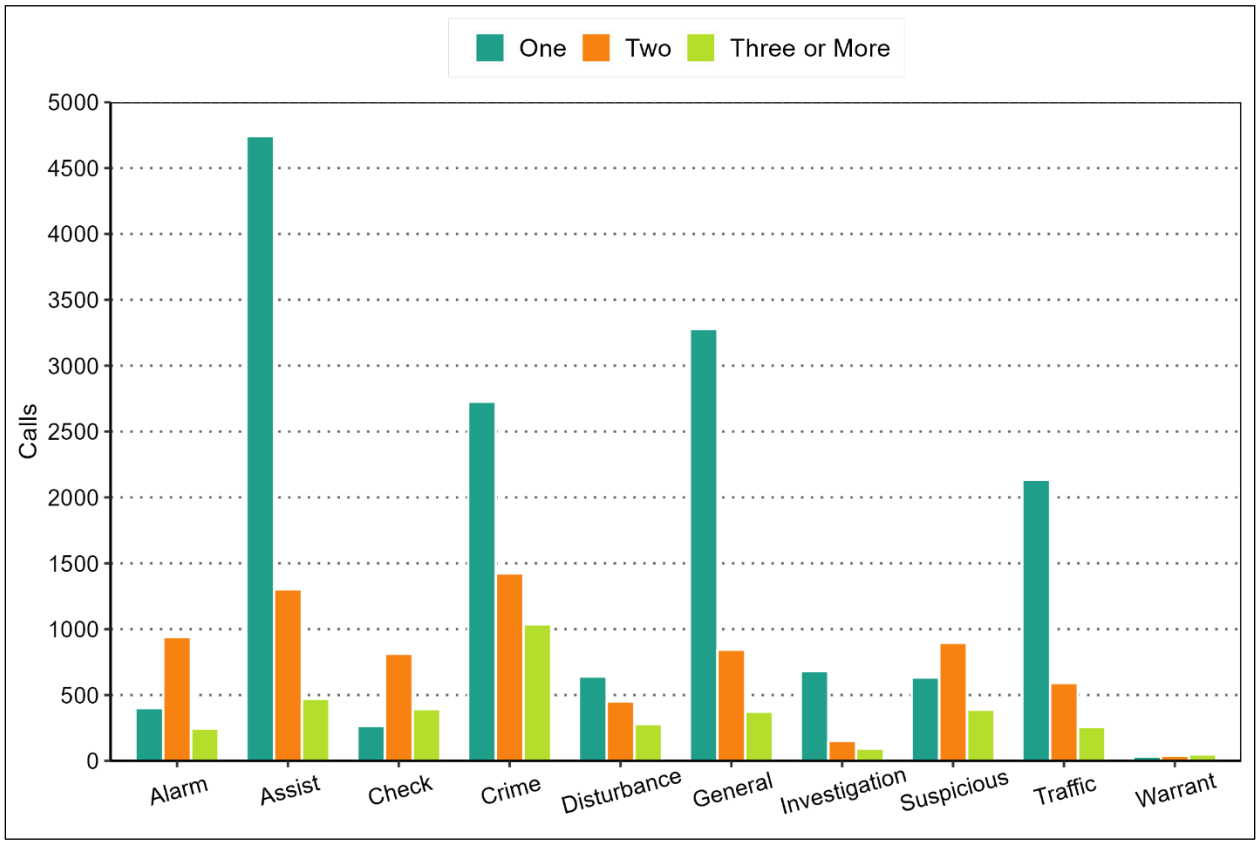

**Note:** The figure combines categories using weighted averages from the following table according to the description in Chart 8-1.

## TABLE 8-7: Average Number of Responding Units, by Initiator and Category

| Category | Community-Initiated | | Police-Initiated | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | No. of Units | Calls | No. of Units | Calls |
| Accident | 1.5 | 2,060 | 1.4 | 99 |
| Alarm | 1.9 | 1,588 | 2.3 | 3 |
| Animal call | 1.2 | 567 | 1.0 | 15 |
| Assist other agency | 1.8 | 1,820 | 1.3 | 43 |
| Check | 2.2 | 1,471 | 1.1 | 180 |
| Crime against persons | 2.0 | 1,351 | 1.5 | 15 |
| Crime against property | 1.5 | 2,250 | 1.4 | 42 |
| Crime against society | 2.1 | 1,586 | 1.9 | 154 |
| Disturbance | 1.8 | 1,372 | 1.6 | 36 |
| Investigation | 1.4 | 926 | 1.1 | 318 |
| Mental health | 2.5 | 539 | 2.4 | 8 |
| Miscellaneous | 1.1 | 381 | 1.3 | 26 |
| Public assist | 1.2 | 4,697 | 1.1 | 940 |
| Suspicious incident | 2.0 | 1,919 | 1.5 | 525 |
| Traffic enforcement | 1.3 | 925 | 1.4 | 53 |
| Traffic stop | NA | 0 | 1.2 | 9,832 |
| Violation | 1.3 | 3,010 | 1.0 | 71 |
| Warrant/prisoner | 2.3 | 122 | 2.1 | 77 |
| **Weighted Average/Total Calls** | **1.6** | **26,584** | **1.2** | **12,437** |

**Note:** The information in Figure 8-7 and Table 8-7 is limited to calls and excludes all events that show zero time on scene. Observations refer to the number of responding units shown within the figure rather than the table.

## FIGURE 8-8: Number of Responding Units, by Category, Community-initiated Calls




**Note:** The figure combines categories using weighted averages from the following table according to the description in Chart 8-1.

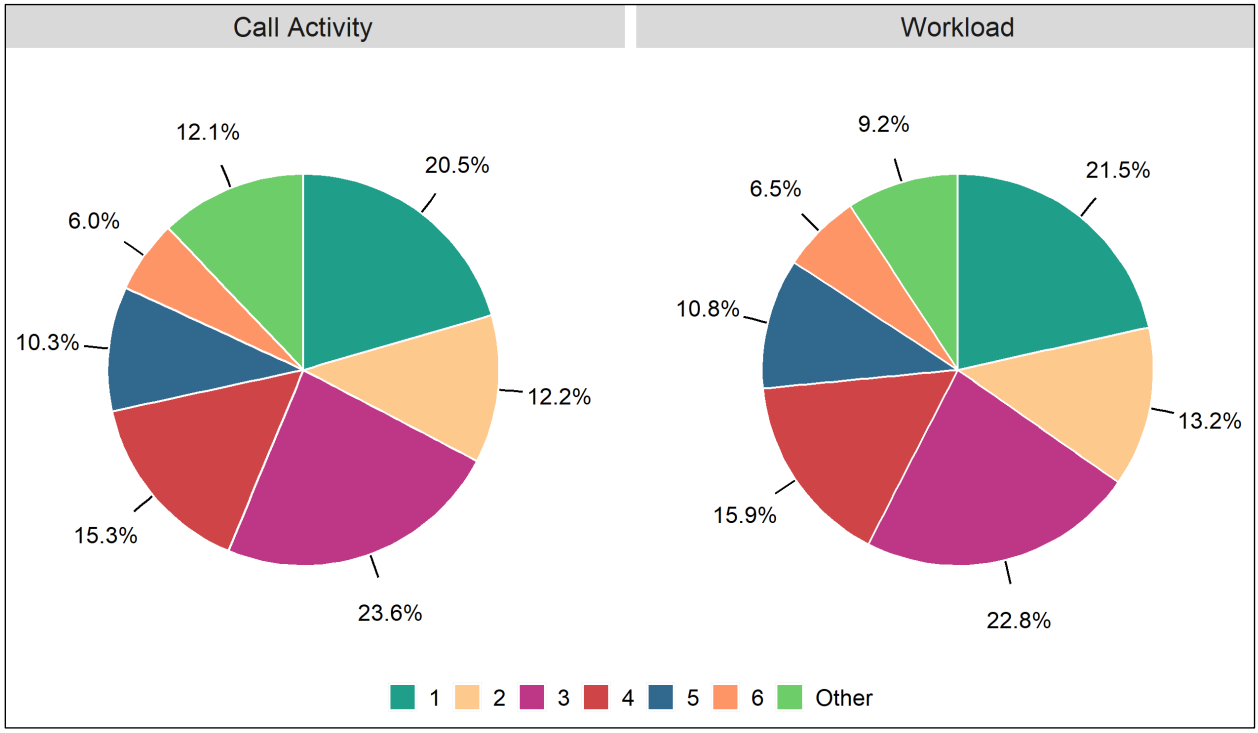
### TABLE 8-8: Number of Responding Units, by Category, Community-initiated Calls

| Category | Responding Units | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | One | Two | Three or More |
| Accident | 1,406 | 447 | 207 |
| Alarm | 401 | 941 | 246 |
| Animal call | 488 | 74 | 5 |
| Assist other agency | 821 | 668 | 331 |
| Check | 264 | 814 | 393 |
| Crime against persons | 615 | 357 | 379 |
| Crime against property | 1,594 | 410 | 246 |
| Crime against society | 518 | 656 | 412 |
| Disturbance | 641 | 451 | 280 |
| Investigation | 681 | 152 | 93 |
| Mental health | 56 | 282 | 201 |
| Miscellaneous | 342 | 34 | 5 |
| Public assist | 3,922 | 635 | 140 |
| Suspicious incident | 633 | 897 | 389 |
| Traffic enforcement | 729 | 144 | 52 |
| Violation | 2,393 | 454 | 163 |
| Warrant/prisoner | 32 | 40 | 50 |
| **Total** | **15,536** | **7,456** | **3,592** |

## Observations:

- The overall mean number of responding units was 1.2 for police-initiated calls and 1.6 for community-initiated calls.
- The mean number of responding units was as high as 2.3 for warrant/prisoner calls that were community-initiated.
- 58 percent of community-initiated calls involved one responding unit.
- 28 percent of community-initiated calls involved two responding units.
- 14 percent of community-initiated calls involved three or more responding units.
- The largest group of calls with three or more responding units involved crimes.

## FIGURE 8-9: Percentage Calls and Work Hours, by Territory




**Note**: The "other" category includes calls at headquarters, calls missing beats, as well as calls with miscellaneous beats, for example, "MA Des Moines," "Windsor Heights PD," and "CLV EAST."

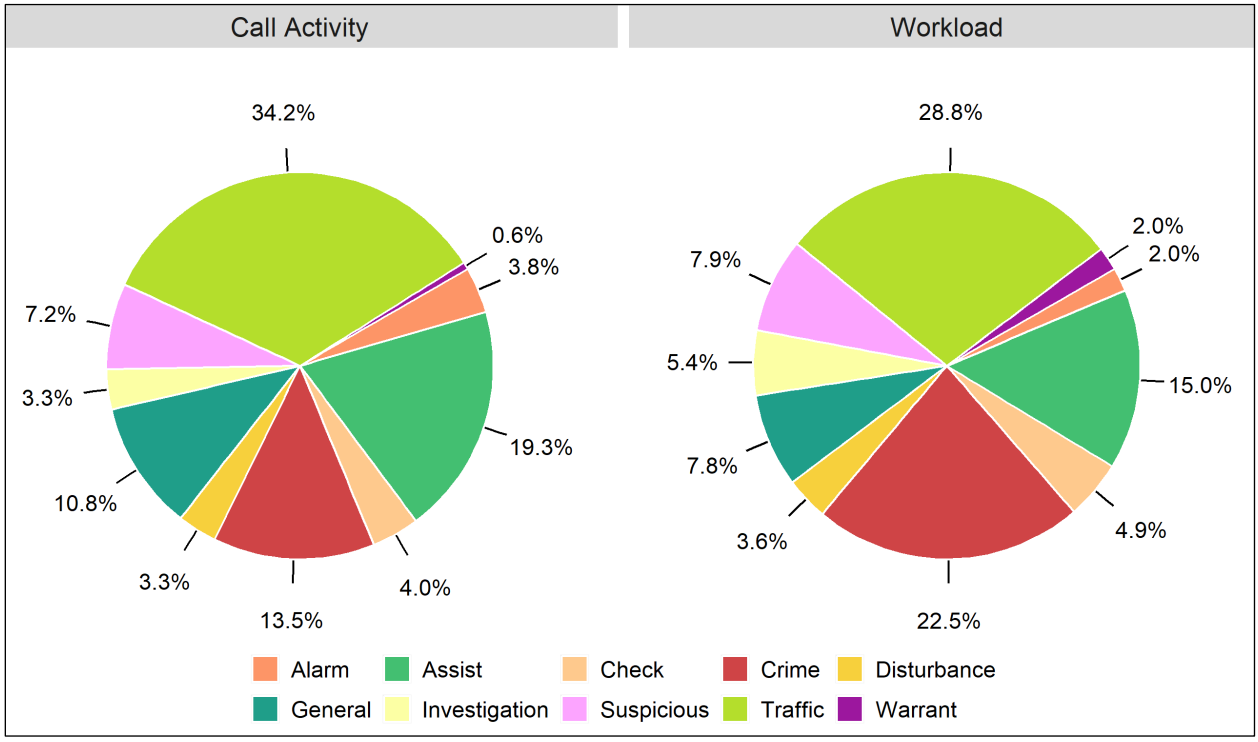
## TABLE 8-9: Calls and Work Hours by Beat, per Day

| Territory | Beat | Calls | Work Hours |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 11 | 8.1 | 4.2 |
| | 12 | 1.8 | 0.9 |
| | 13 | 6.0 | 3.0 |
| | 14 | 6.1 | 3.0 |
| | **Subtotal** | **21.9** | **11.2** |
| 2 | 21 | 3.1 | 1.8 |
| | 22 | 3.8 | 1.9 |
| | 23 | 3.4 | 1.7 |
| | 24 | 2.7 | 1.5 |
| | **Subtotal** | **13.1** | **6.9** |
| 3 | 31 | 2.5 | 1.0 |
| | 32 | 4.0 | 1.7 |
| | 33 | 13.5 | 6.4 |
| | 34 | 5.2 | 2.8 |
| | **Subtotal** | **25.2** | **11.9** |
| 4 | 41 | 2.2 | 1.0 |
| | 42 | 1.6 | 0.7 |
| | 43 | 3.4 | 1.7 |
| | 44 | 4.0 | 2.3 |
| | 45 | 2.6 | 1.3 |
| | 46 | 2.6 | 1.4 |
| | **Subtotal** | **16.4** | **8.3** |
| 5 | 51 | 4.2 | 1.9 |
| | 52 | 4.7 | 2.5 |
| | 53 | 1.1 | 0.5 |
| | 54 | 1.0 | 0.6 |
| | **Subtotal** | **11.0** | **5.6** |
| 6 | 61 | 1.5 | 0.9 |
| | 62 | 2.6 | 1.2 |
| | 63 | 1.4 | 0.8 |
| | 64 | 0.9 | 0.5 |
| | **Subtotal** | **6.4** | **3.4** |
| Other | HQ | 9.6 | 3.3 |
| | Miscellaneous | 3.1 | 1.4 |
| | Unknown | 0.2 | 0.0 |
| | **Subtotal** | **13.0** | **4.8** |
| **Total** | | **106.9** | **52.1** |

## Observations:

- Territory 3 had the most calls and largest workload; it accounted for 24 percent of total calls and 23 percent of total workload.
- An even distribution of calls and work would allot 15.7 calls and 7.9 work hours per territory.

**FIGURE 8-10: Percentage Calls and Work Hours, by Category, Summer 2022**



### TABLE 8-10: Calls and Work Hours per Day, by Category, Summer 2022

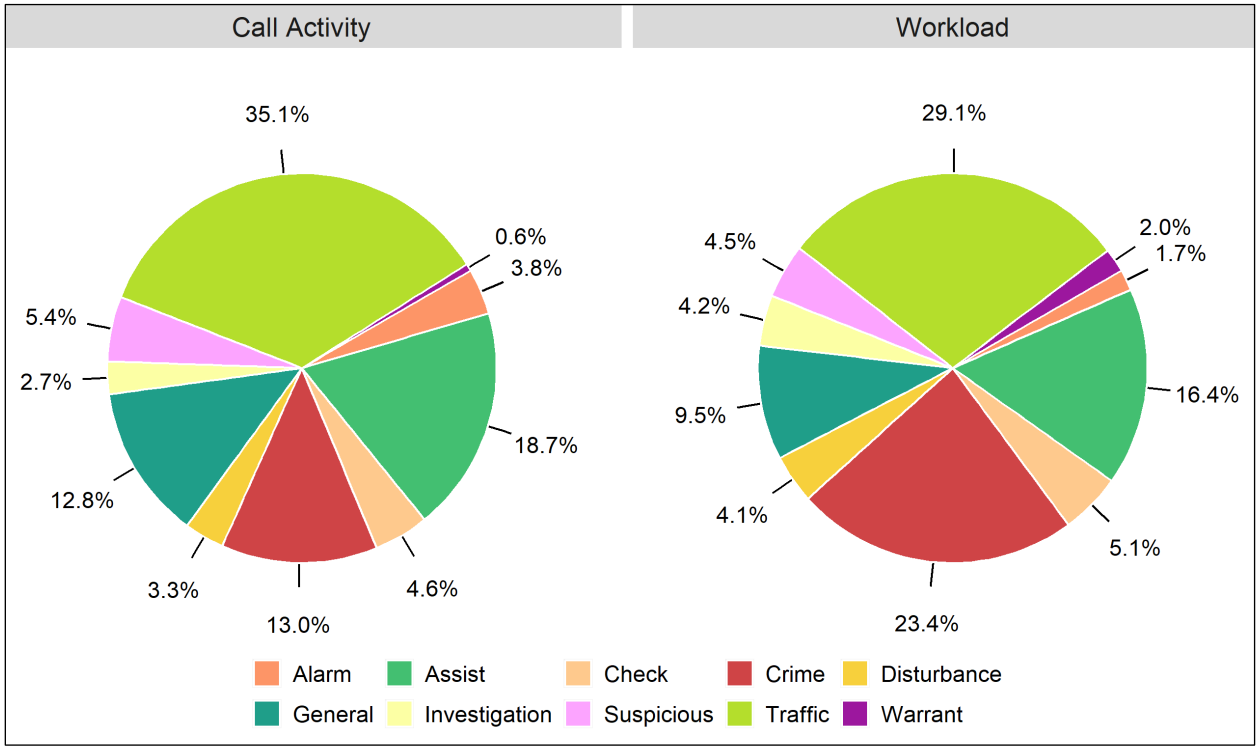
| Category | Per Day | |
|---|---|---|
| | Calls | Work Hours |
| Accident | 4.9 | 4.5 |
| Alarm | 4.5 | 1.1 |
| Animal call | 1.1 | 0.3 |
| Assist other agency | 5.2 | 2.9 |
| Check | 4.7 | 2.7 |
| Crime against persons | 3.8 | 3.8 |
| Crime against property | 6.4 | 4.7 |
| Crime against society | 5.8 | 3.8 |
| Disturbance | 3.9 | 2.0 |
| Investigation | 3.9 | 3.0 |
| Mental health | 1.2 | 1.3 |
| Miscellaneous | 1.3 | 0.3 |
| Public assist | 17.5 | 5.4 |
| Suspicious incident | 8.5 | 4.4 |
| Traffic enforcement | 3.1 | 1.4 |
| Traffic stop | 32.4 | 9.9 |
| Violation | 9.1 | 2.5 |
| Warrant/prisoner | 0.7 | 1.1 |
| **Total** | **118.1** | **54.9** |

**Note:** Workload calculations focused on calls rather than events.

## Observations, Summer:

- Total calls averaged 118 per day or 4.9 per hour.
- Total workload averaged 55 hours per day, meaning that on average 2.3 units per hour were busy responding to calls.
- Traffic calls constituted 34 percent of calls and 29 percent of the workload.
- Assist calls constituted 19 percent of calls and 15 percent of the workload.
- Crime calls constituted 13 percent of calls and 23 percent of the workload.
- General noncriminal calls constituted 11 percent of calls and 8 percent of the workload.
- These top four categories constituted 78 percent of calls and 74 percent of the workload.

**FIGURE 8-11: Percentage Calls and Work Hours, by Category, Winter 2023**



### TABLE 8-11: Calls and Work Hours per Day, by Category, Winter 2023

| Category | Per Day | |
|---|---|---|
| | Calls | Work Hours |
| Accident | 5.1 | 4.8 |
| Alarm | 3.7 | 0.8 |
| Animal call | 1.6 | 0.4 |
| Assist other agency | 4.9 | 3.3 |
| Check | 4.4 | 2.3 |
| Crime against persons | 3.1 | 3.4 |
| Crime against property | 5.6 | 4.6 |
| Crime against society | 3.9 | 2.8 |
| Disturbance | 3.2 | 1.9 |
| Investigation | 2.6 | 1.9 |
| Mental health | 1.7 | 1.8 |
| Miscellaneous | 1.1 | 0.3 |
| Public assist | 13.2 | 4.3 |
| Suspicious incident | 5.2 | 2.1 |
| Traffic enforcement | 2.0 | 1.2 |
| Traffic stop | 27.0 | 7.4 |
| Violation | 8.1 | 1.8 |
| Warrant/prisoner | 0.6 | 0.9 |
| **Total** | **97.1** | **46.0** |

**Note:** Workload calculations focused on calls rather than events.

## Observations, Winter:

- Total calls averaged 97 per day or 4.0 per hour.
- Total workload averaged 46 hours per day, meaning that on average 1.9 units per hour were busy responding to calls.
- Traffic calls constituted 35 percent of calls and 29 percent of the workload.
- Assist calls constituted 19 percent of calls and 16 percent of the workload.
- Crime calls constituted 13 percent of calls and 23 percent of the workload.
- General noncriminal calls constituted 13 percent of calls and 9 percent of the workload.
- These top four categories constituted 80 percent of calls and 78 percent of the workload.

## OUT-OF-SERVICE ACTIVITIES

In the period from May 1, 2022, through April 30, 2023, the dispatch center also recorded out-of-service activities without incident numbers. We focused on those activities that involved a patrol unit. We also limited our analysis to out-of-service activities that occurred during shifts where the same patrol unit was also responding to calls for service. There were a few problems with the data provided and we made assumptions and decisions to address these issues:

- We excluded activities that lasted less than 30 seconds. These are irrelevant and contribute little to the overall workload.
- After these exclusions, 10,296 activities remained. These activities had an average duration of 35.1 minutes.

In this section, we report out-of-service activities and workload by descriptions. In the next section, we include these activities in the overall workload when comparing the total workload against available personnel in winter and summer.

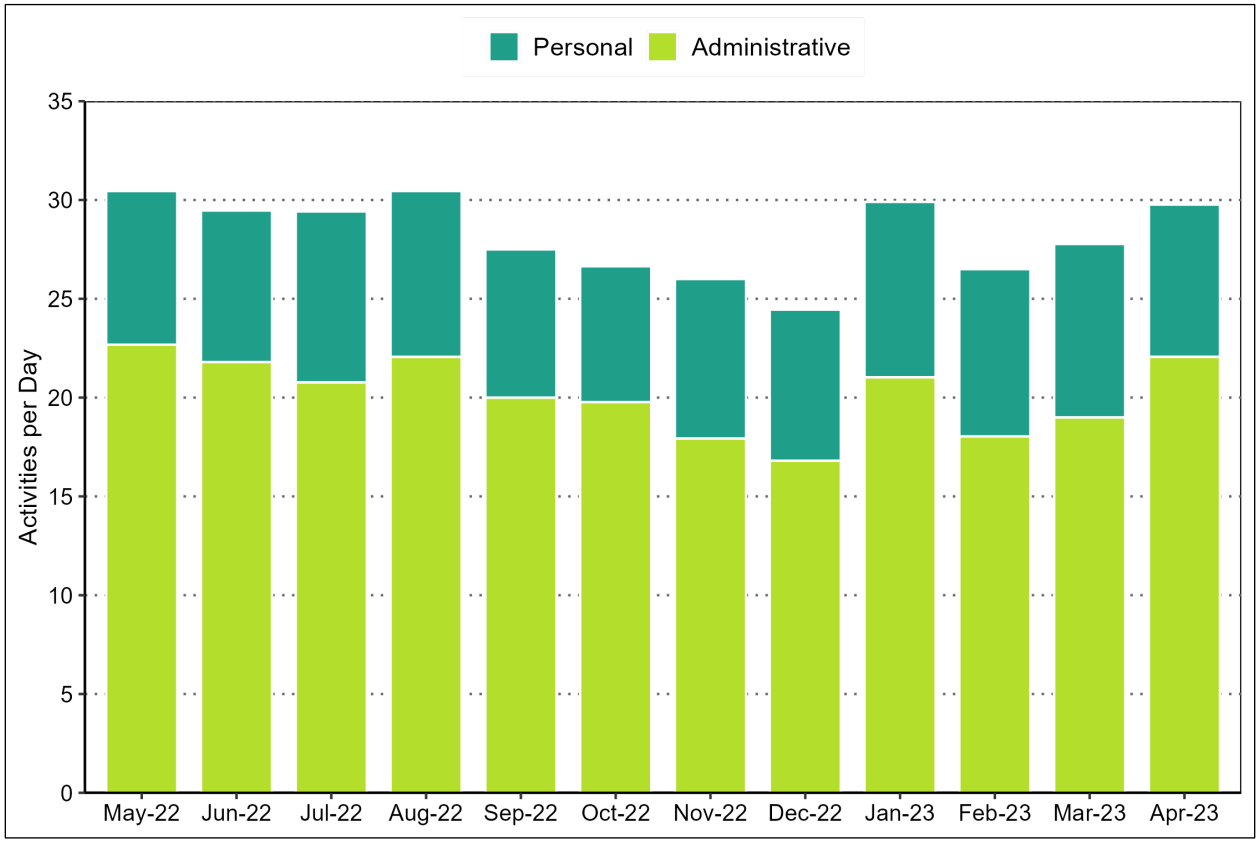
### TABLE 8-12: Activities and Occupied Times by Description

| Description | Occupied Time | Count |
|---|---|---|
| Area check | 11.4 | 642 |
| Busy | 21.8 | 1,504 |
| Cop | 21.5 | 42 |
| Court | 92.6 | 47 |
| Mechanical | 16.6 | 446 |
| Meeting | 62.0 | 248 |
| Report writing | 34.8 | 1,003 |
| Roll call | 51.4 | 3,327 |
| Traffic | 11.2 | 39 |
| Training | 35.2 | 67 |
| **Administrative - Weighted Average/Total Activities** | **37.6** | **7,365** |
| **Personal - Meal break - Average/Total Activities** | **28.9** | **2,931** |
| **Weighted Average/Total Activities** | **35.1** | **10,296** |

## Observations:

- The most common administrative out-of-service activity was for "roll call."
- The activities with the longest average time were court duties.

## FIGURE 8-12: Activities per Day, by Month



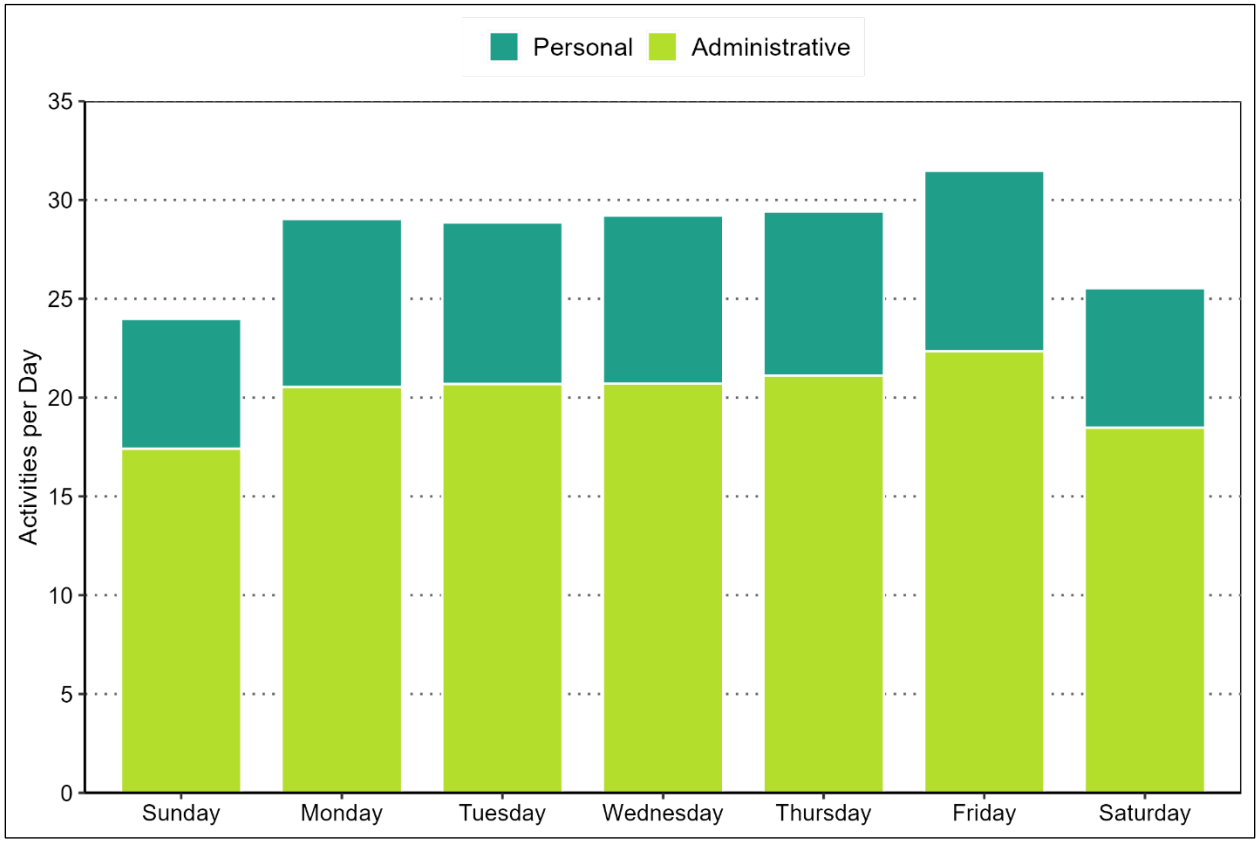

## TABLE 8-13: Activities and Workload per Day, by Month

| Activities | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Administrative | 22.7 | 21.8 | 20.8 | 22.1 | 20.0 | 19.8 | 17.9 | 16.8 | 21.0 | 18.0 | 19.0 | 22.1 |
| Personal | 7.8 | 7.7 | 8.6 | 8.4 | 7.5 | 6.9 | 8.1 | 7.6 | 8.9 | 8.5 | 8.8 | 7.7 |
| **Total** | **30.5** | **29.5** | **29.4** | **30.5** | **27.5** | **26.6** | **26.0** | **24.5** | **29.9** | **26.5** | **27.8** | **29.8** |

## Observations:

- The number of activities per day was the lowest in December.
- The number of activities per day was highest in May and August.

## FIGURE 8-13: Activities per Day, by Day of Week



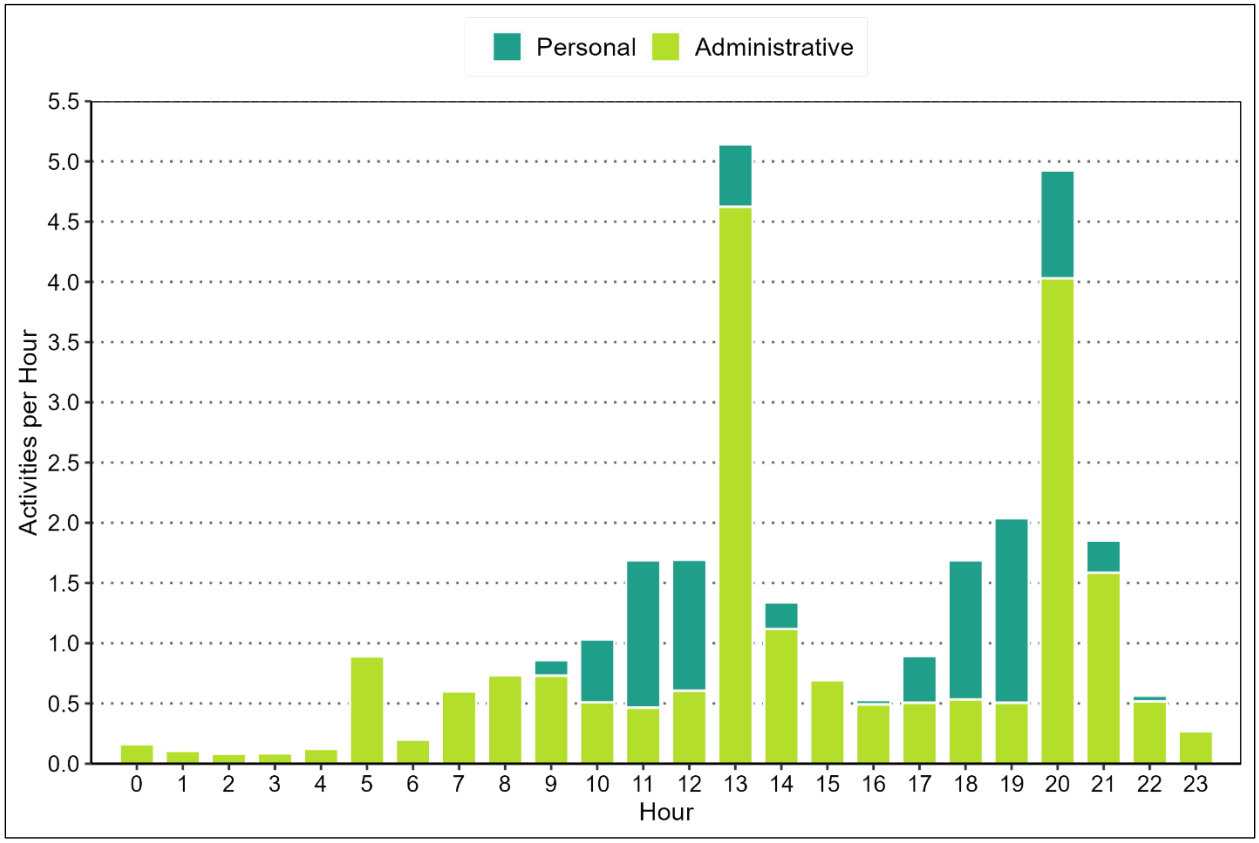

## TABLE 8-14: Activities per Day, by Day of Week

| Day of Week | Administrative | Personal | Activities |
|---|---|---|---|
| Sunday | 17.4 | 6.6 | 24.0 |
| Monday | 20.5 | 8.5 | 29.0 |
| Tuesday | 20.7 | 8.2 | 28.9 |
| Wednesday | 20.7 | 8.5 | 29.2 |
| Thursday | 21.1 | 8.3 | 29.4 |
| Friday | 22.3 | 9.1 | 31.5 |
| Saturday | 18.5 | 7.1 | 25.5 |
| **Weekly Average** | **20.2** | **8.0** | **28.2** |

## Observations:

- The number of out-of-service activities per day was lowest on weekends.
- The number of out-of-service activities per day was highest on Fridays.

## FIGURE 8-14: Activities per Day, by Hour of Day



### TABLE 8-15: Activities per Hour, by Hour of Day

| Hour | Personal | Administrative | Activities |
|---|---|---|---|
| 0 | 0.00 | 0.16 | 0.16 |
| 1 | 0.00 | 0.11 | 0.11 |
| 2 | 0.00 | 0.08 | 0.08 |
| 3 | 0.01 | 0.09 | 0.09 |
| 4 | 0.00 | 0.12 | 0.12 |
| 5 | 0.00 | 0.89 | 0.89 |
| 6 | 0.00 | 0.20 | 0.20 |
| 7 | 0.00 | 0.60 | 0.60 |
| 8 | 0.00 | 0.73 | 0.73 |
| 9 | 0.13 | 0.73 | 0.86 |
| 10 | 0.52 | 0.51 | 1.03 |
| 11 | 1.22 | 0.47 | 1.69 |
| 12 | 1.09 | 0.61 | 1.69 |
| 13 | 0.52 | 4.62 | 5.14 |
| 14 | 0.22 | 1.12 | 1.34 |
| 15 | 0.01 | 0.69 | 0.70 |
| 16 | 0.04 | 0.49 | 0.53 |
| 17 | 0.39 | 0.51 | 0.89 |
| 18 | 1.15 | 0.53 | 1.69 |
| 19 | 1.53 | 0.51 | 2.04 |
| 20 | 0.90 | 4.03 | 4.93 |
| 21 | 0.27 | 1.59 | 1.85 |
| 22 | 0.05 | 0.52 | 0.56 |
| 23 | 0.00 | 0.27 | 0.27 |
| **Hourly Average** | **0.33** | **0.84** | **1.18** |

## Observations:

- The number of activities per hour was lowest between 2:00 a.m. and 3:00 a.m.
- The number of activities per hour was highest between 1:00 p.m. and 2:00 p.m. and between 8:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. These activities primarily involved roll calls during shift changes.

## DEPLOYMENT

For this study, we examined deployment information for eight weeks in summer (July 7 through August 31, 2022) and eight weeks in winter (January 4 through February 28, 2023). The department's patrol force consists of patrol officers and patrol sergeants, operating on 10-hour shifts starting at 6:00 a.m., 2:00 p.m., and 9:00 p.m. The police department's patrol force deployed an average of 7.5 officers per hour during the 24-hour day in summer 2022 and an average of 7.4 officers per hour in winter 2023.

In this section, we describe the deployment and workload in distinct steps, distinguishing between summer and winter and between weekdays (Monday through Friday) and weekends (Saturday and Sunday):

- First, we focus on patrol deployment alone.
- Next, we compare "all" workload, which includes community-initiated calls, police-initiated calls, directed patrol activities, and out-of-service activities.
- Finally, we compare the workload against deployment by percentage.

Comments follow each set of four figures, with separate discussions for summer and winter.

**FIGURE 8-15: Deployed Officers, Weekdays, Summer 2022**

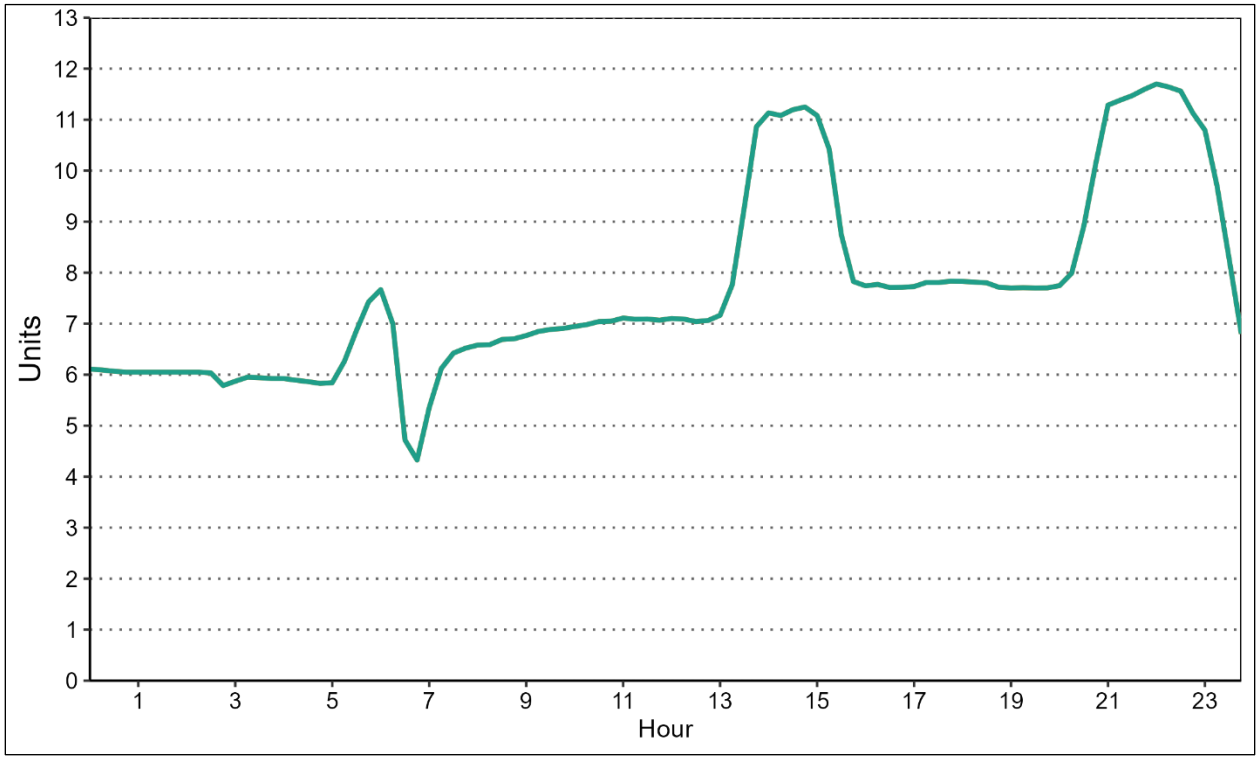



**FIGURE 8-16: Deployed Officers, Weekends, Summer 2022**

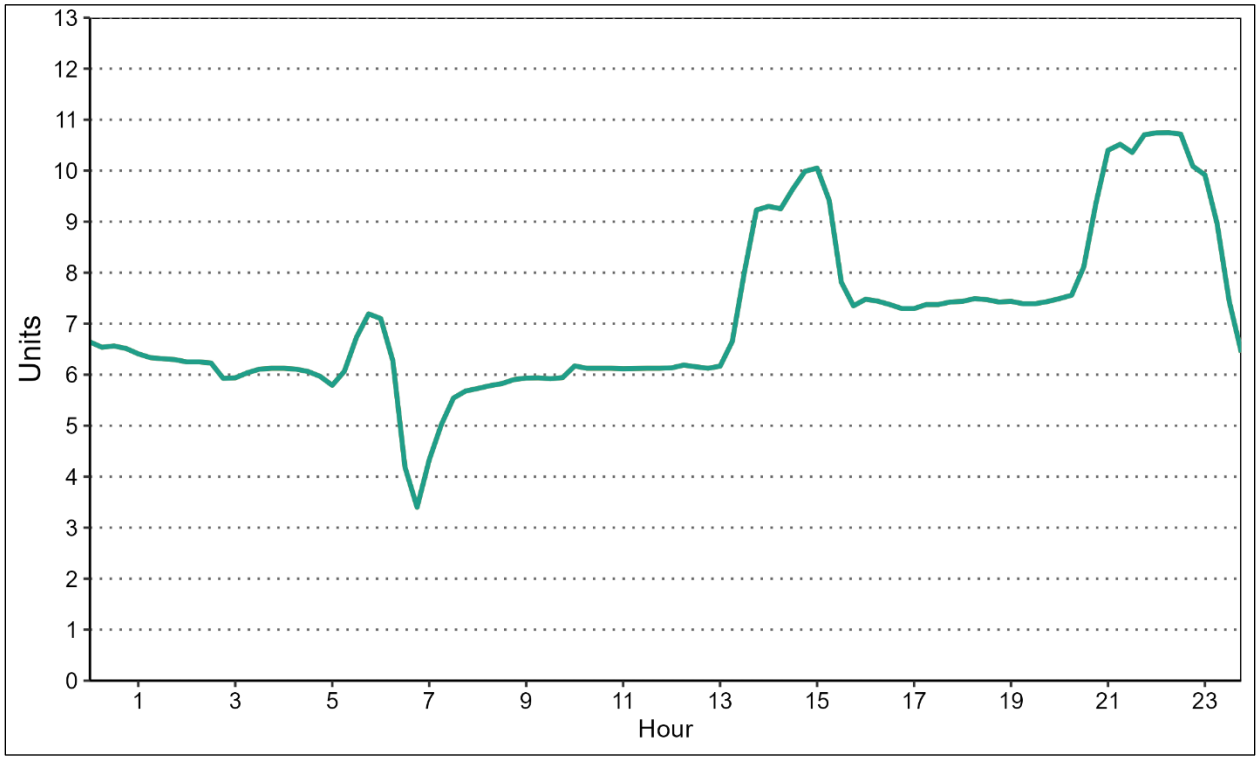


**FIGURE 8-17: Deployed Officers, Weekdays, Winter 2023**

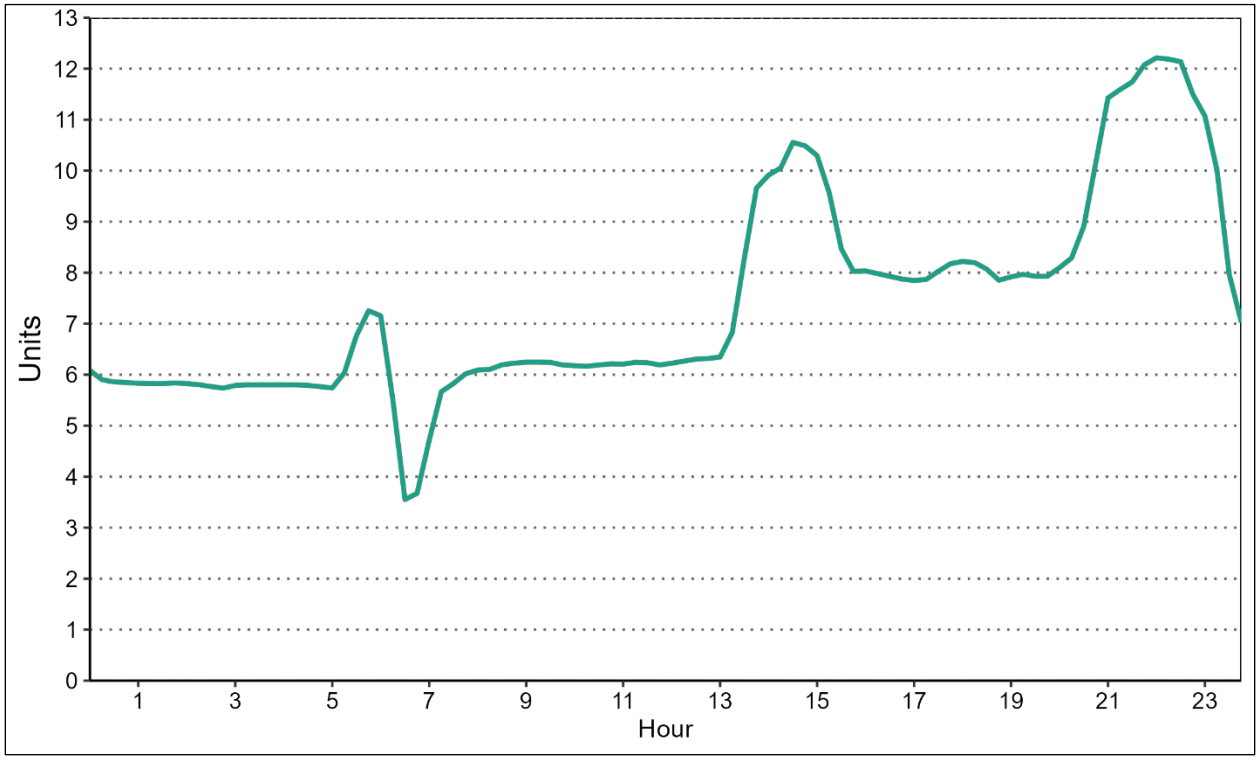
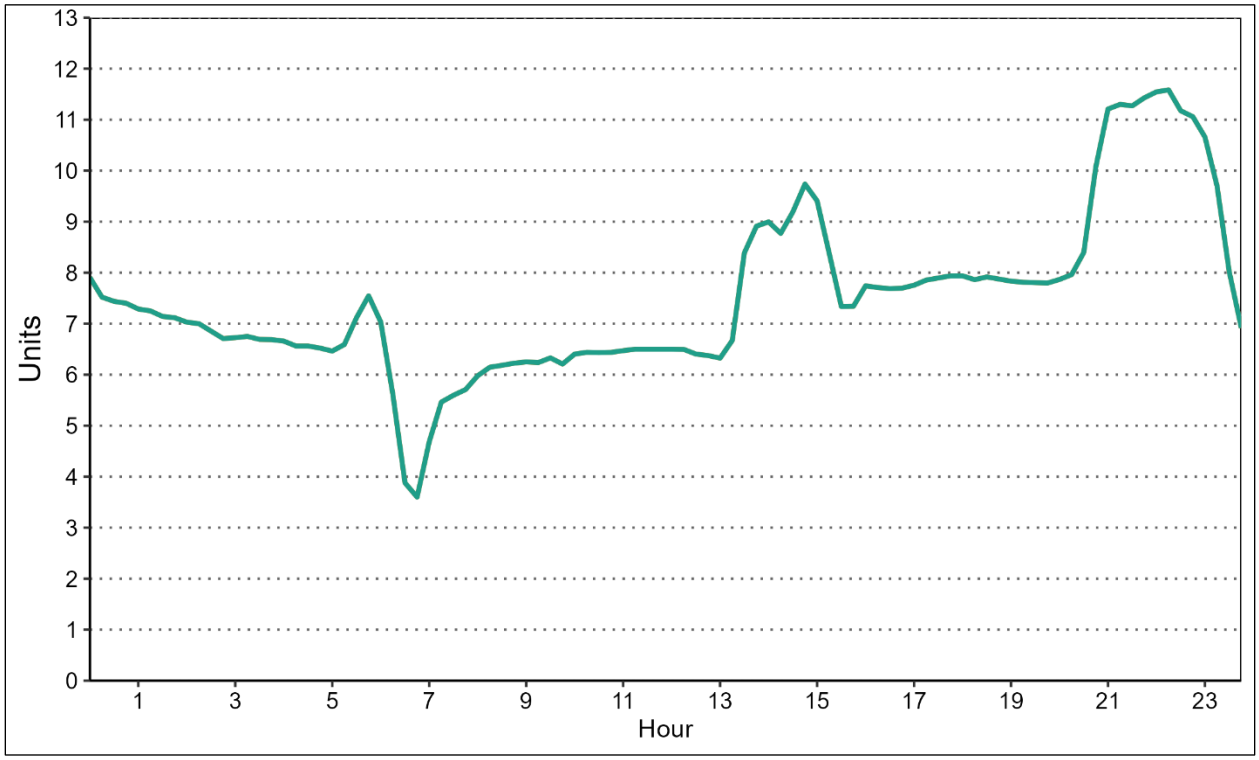


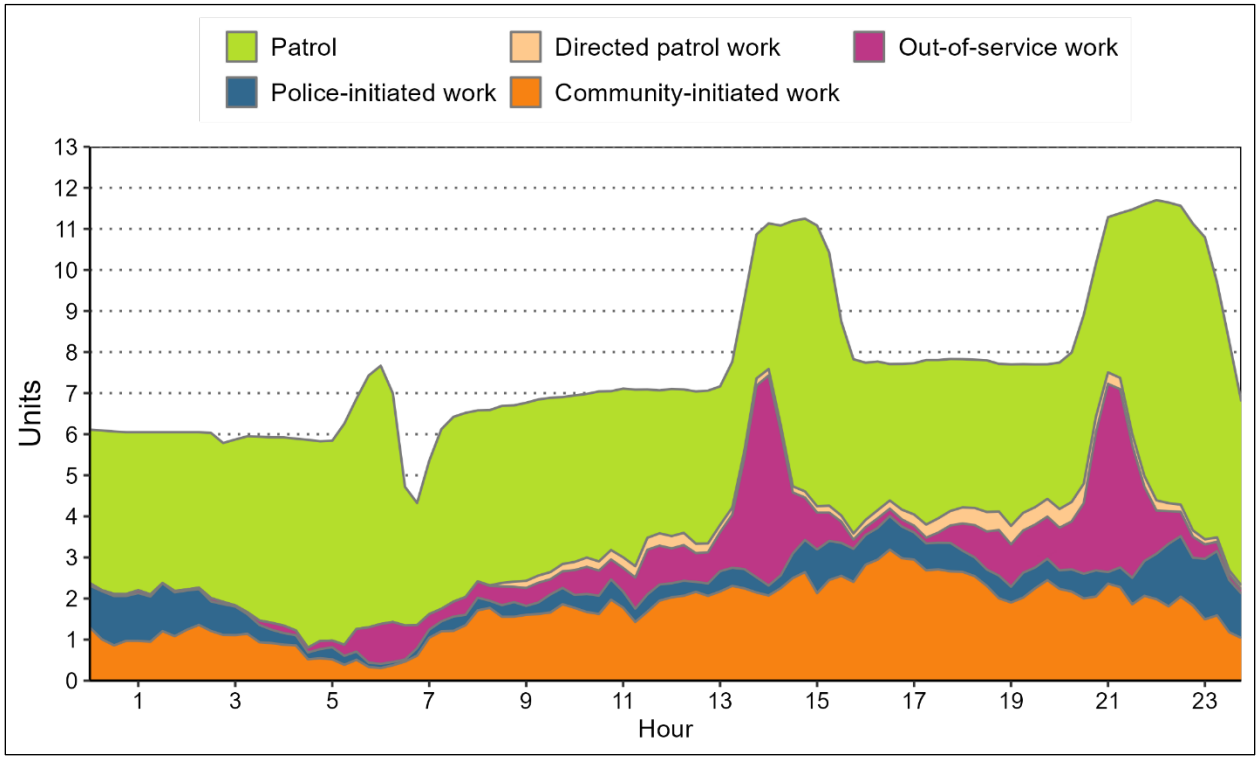

**FIGURE 8-18: Deployed Officers, Weekends, Winter 2023**



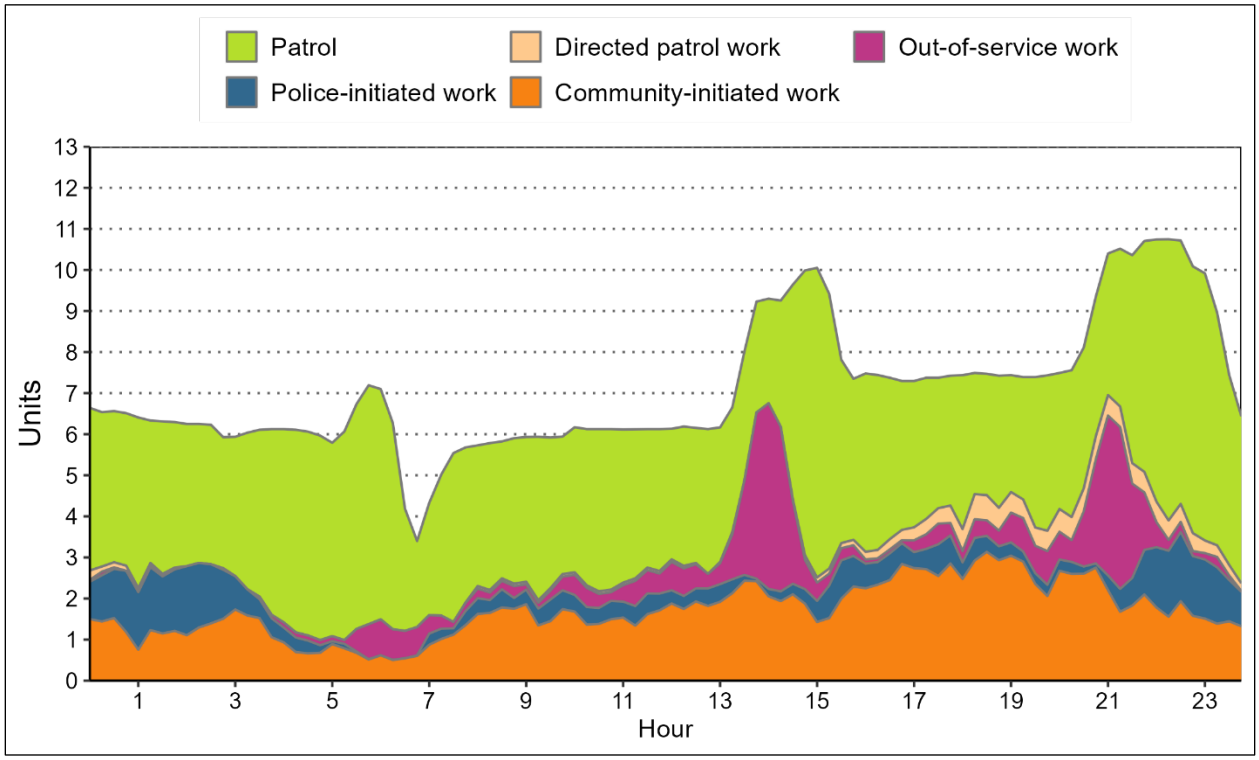
## Observations:

- For Summer (July 7 through August 31, 2022):
  - The average deployment was 7.7 units per hour during the week and 7.1 units per hour on the weekend.
  - Average deployment varied from 4.3 to 11.7 units per hour on weekdays and 3.4 to 10.7 units per hour on weekends.
- For Winter (January 4 through February 28, 2023):
  - The average deployment was 7.4 units per hour during the week and 7.5 units per hour on the weekend.
  - Average deployment varied from 3.6 to 12.2 units per hour on weekdays and 3.6 to 11.6 units per hour on weekends.

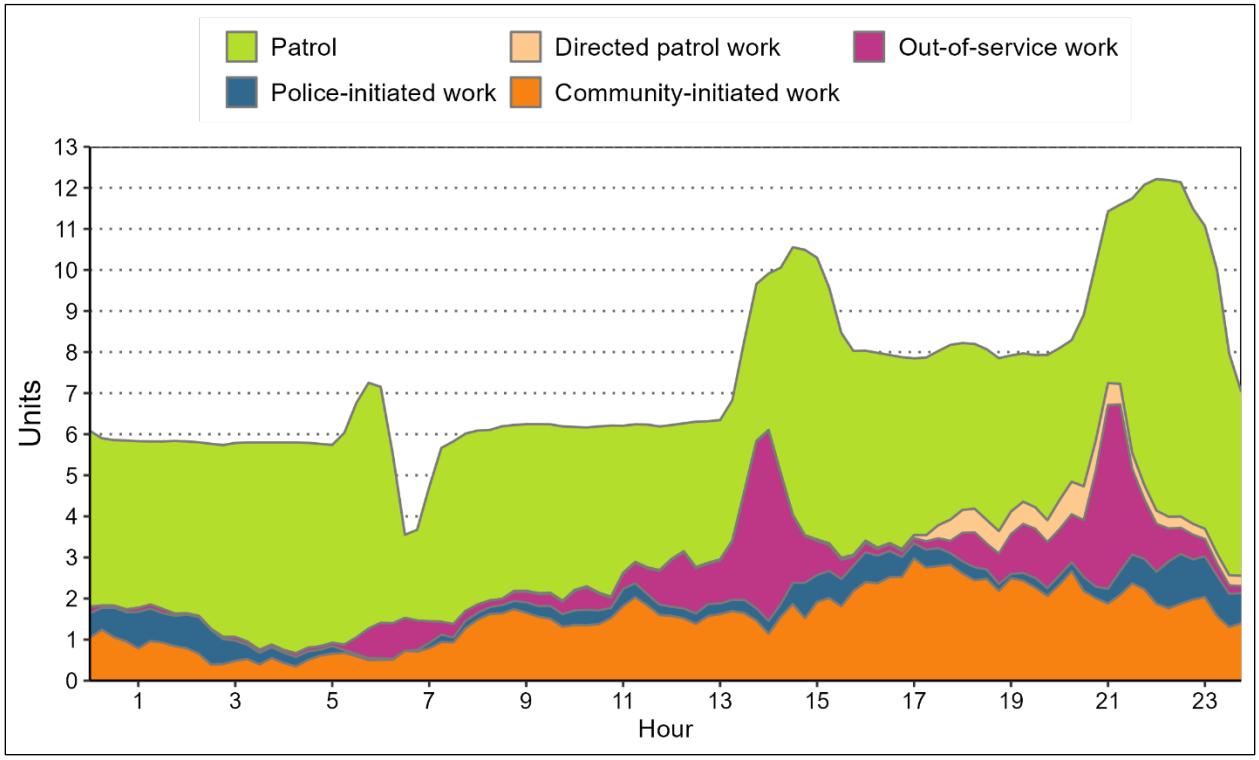
## FIGURE 8-19: Deployment and All Workload, Weekdays, Summer 2022



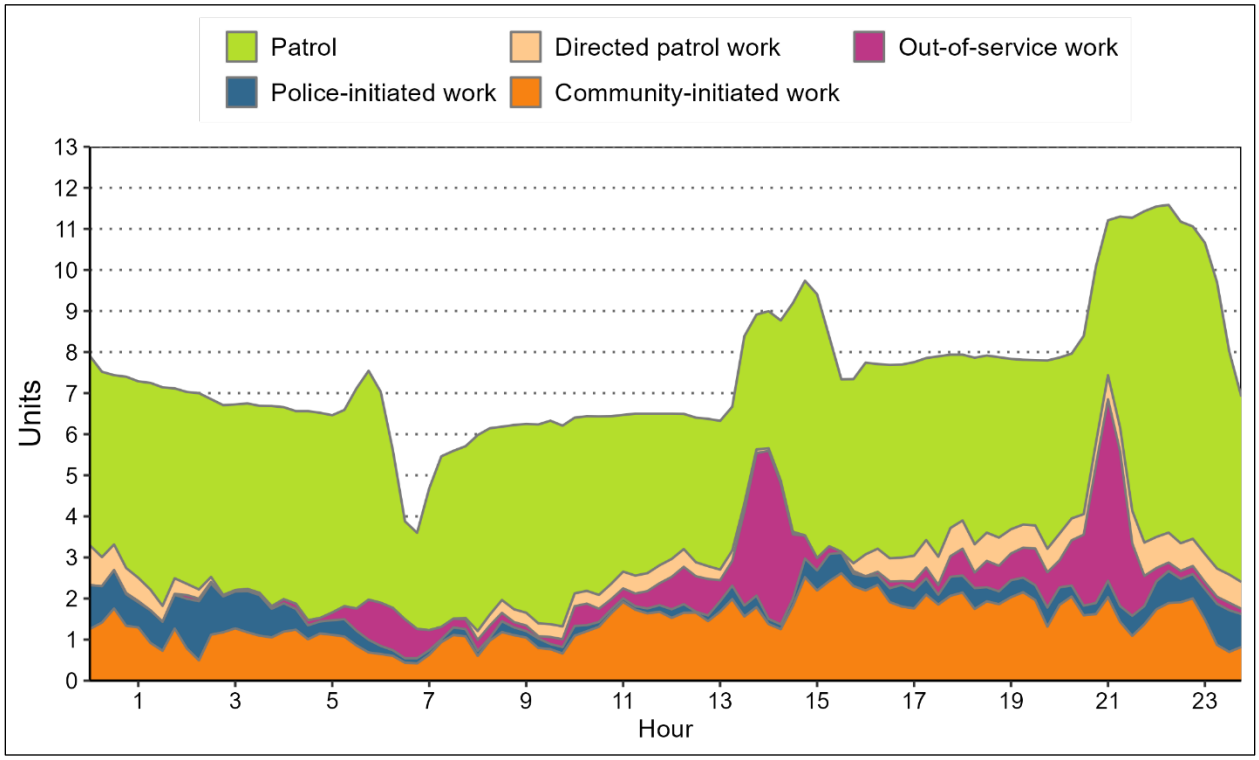

## FIGURE 8-20: Deployment and All Workload, Weekends, Summer 2022



## FIGURE 8-21: Deployment and All Workload, Weekdays, Winter 2023




## FIGURE 8-22: Deployment and All Workload, Weekends, Winter 2023




**Note:** Figures 8-19 to 8-22 show deployment along with all workloads from community-initiated calls and police-initiated calls, directed patrol work, and out-of-service work.

## Observations:

### *Summer:*

- Community-initiated work:
  - Average community-initiated workload was 1.7 units per hour during the week and 1.7 units per hour on weekends.
  - This was approximately 22 percent of hourly deployment during the week and 24 percent of hourly deployment on weekends.
- All work:
  - The average workload was 3.3 units per hour during the week and 3.1 units per hour on weekends.
  - This was approximately 42 percent of hourly deployment during the week and 43 percent of hourly deployment on weekends.

### *Winter:*

- Community-initiated work:
  - Average community-initiated workload was 1.5 units per hour during the week and 1.4 units per hour on weekends.
  - This was approximately 21 percent of hourly deployment during the week and 19 percent of hourly deployment on weekends.
- All work:
  - The average workload was 2.8 units per hour during the week and 2.8 units per hour on weekends.
  - This was approximately 38 percent of hourly deployment during the week and 38 percent of hourly deployment on weekends.

**FIGURE 8-23: Percentage of Workload, Weekdays, Summer 2022**

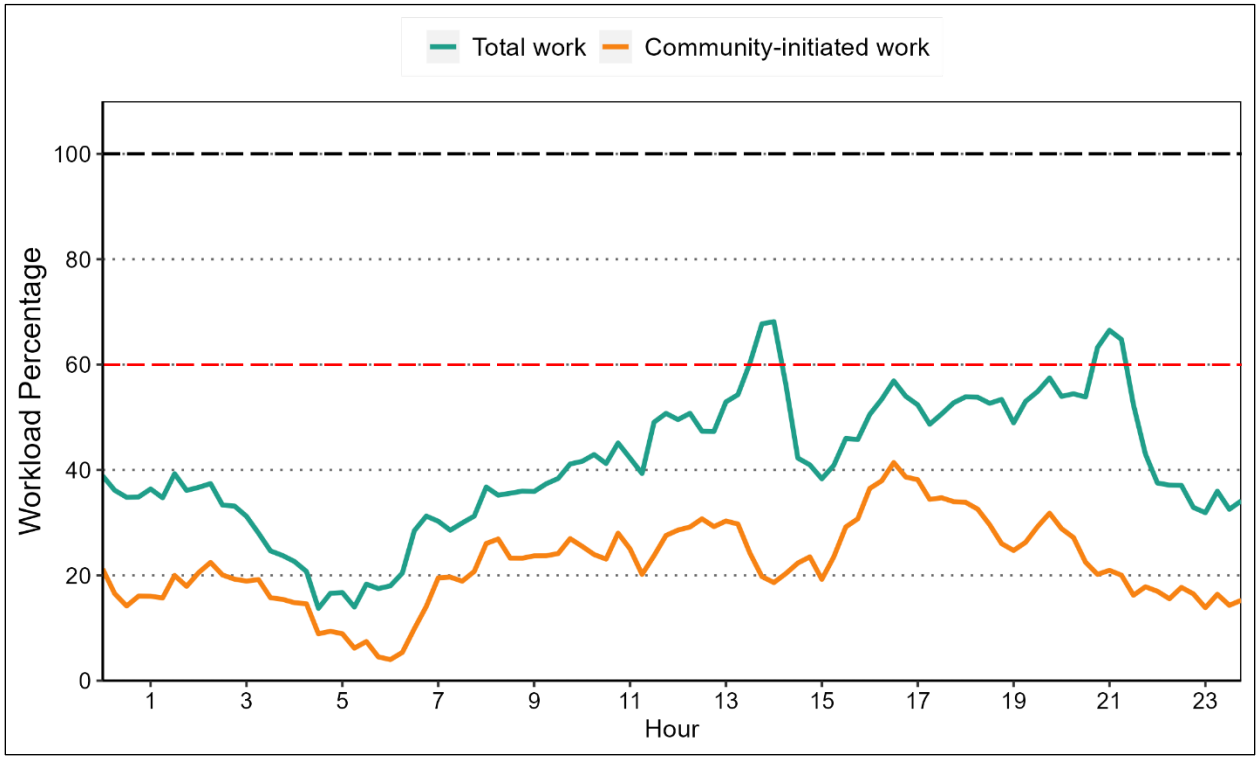



**FIGURE 8-24: Percentage of Workload, Weekends, Summer 2022**

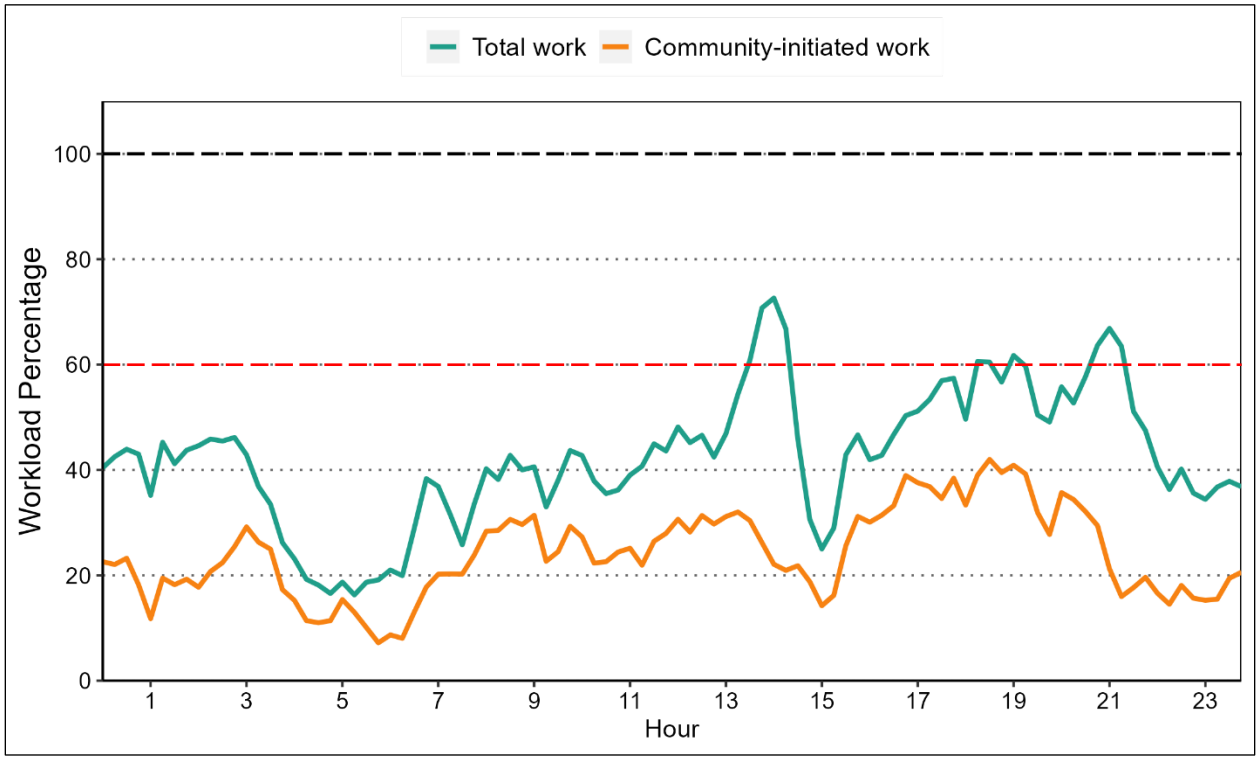


**FIGURE 8-25: Percentage of Workload, Weekdays, Winter 2023**

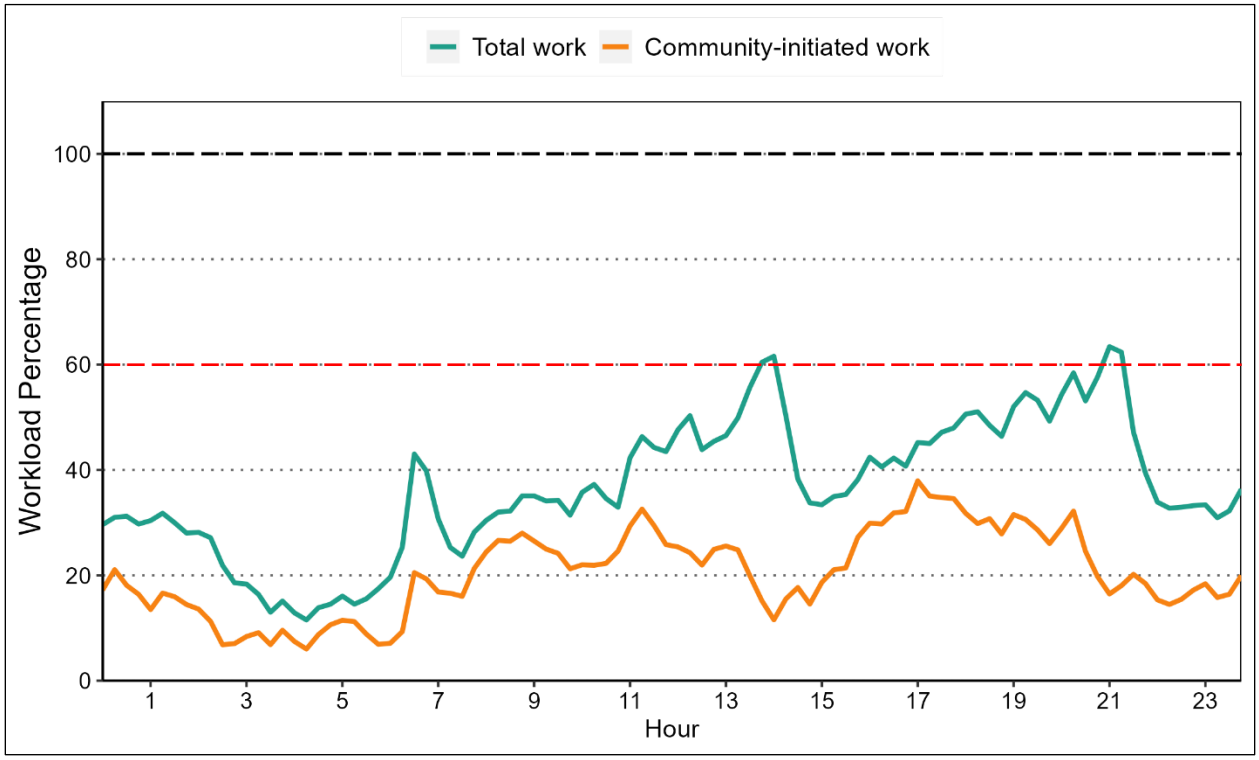
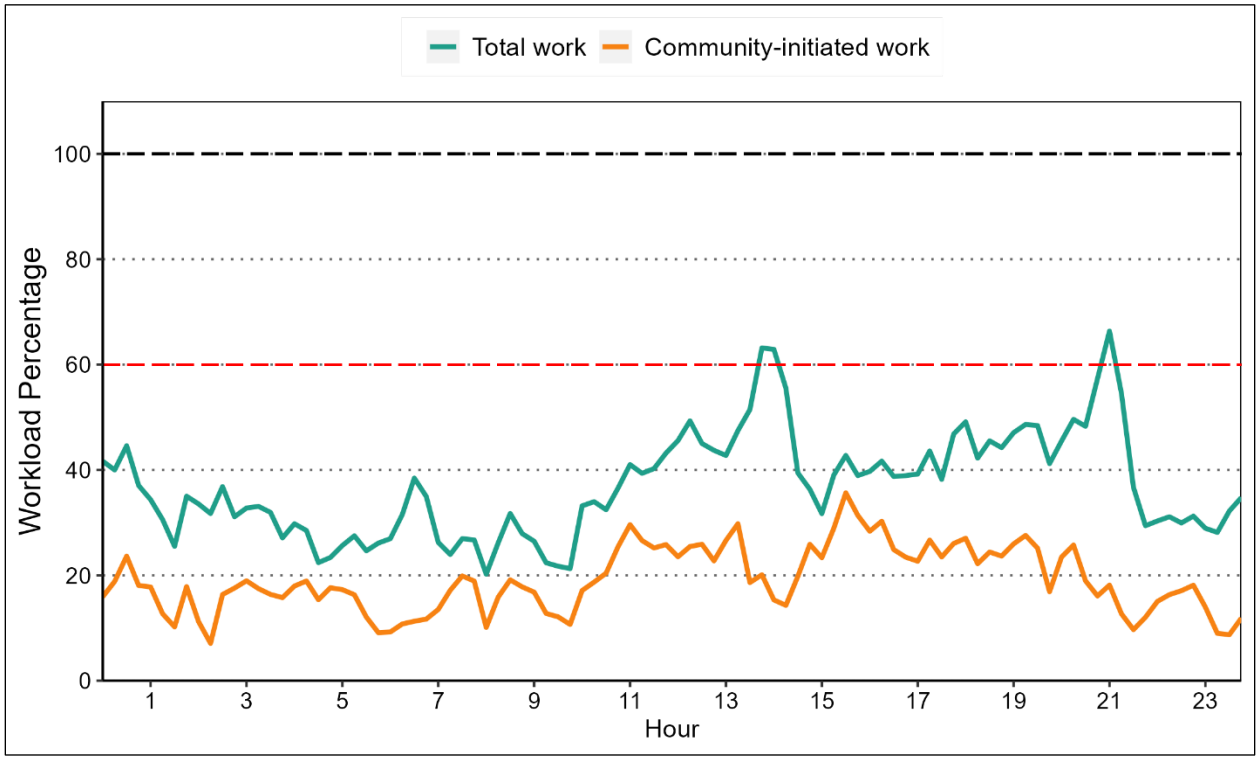



**FIGURE 8-26: Percentage of Workload, Weekends, Winter 2023**



## Observations:

### *Summer:*

- Community-initiated work:
  - During the week, the workload reached a maximum of 41 percent of deployment between 4:30 p.m. and 4:45 p.m.
  - On weekends, the workload reached a maximum of 42 percent of deployment between 6:30 p.m. and 6:45 p.m.
- All work:
  - During the week, the workload reached a maximum of 68 percent of deployment between 1:45 p.m. and 2:15 p.m.
  - On weekends, the workload reached a maximum of 73 percent of deployment between 2:00 p.m. and 2:15 p.m.

### *Winter:*

- Community-initiated work:
  - During the week, the workload reached a maximum of 38 percent of deployment between 5:00 p.m. and 5:15 p.m.
  - On weekends, the workload reached a maximum of 36 percent of deployment between 3:30 p.m. and 3:45 p.m.
- All work:
  - During the week, the workload reached a maximum of 63 percent of deployment between 9:00 p.m. and 9:15 p.m.
  - On weekends, the workload reached a maximum of 66 percent of deployment between 9:00 p.m. and 9:15 p.m.

## RESPONSE TIMES

We analyzed the response times to various types of calls, separating the duration into dispatch processing and travel time, to determine whether response times varied by call type. Response time is measured as the difference between when a call is received and when the first unit arrives on scene. This is further divided into dispatch processing and travel time. Dispatch processing is the time between when a call is received and when the first unit is dispatched. Travel time is the remaining time until the first unit arrives on scene.

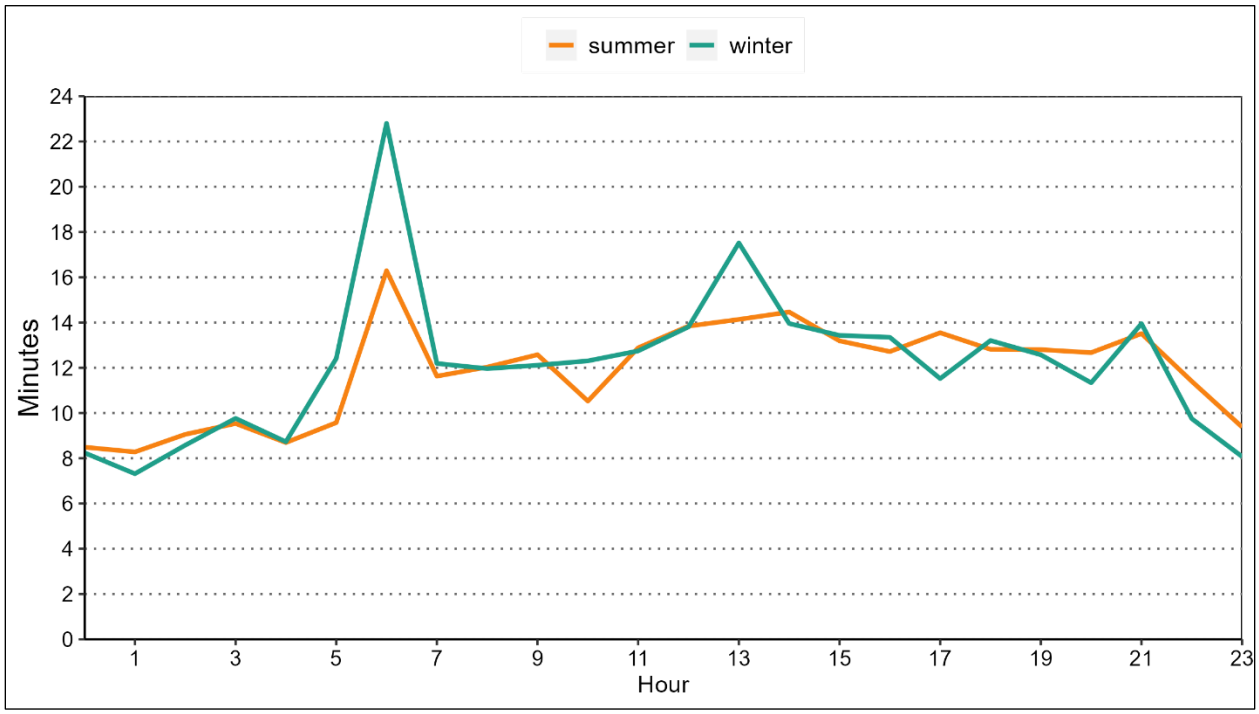
We begin the discussion with statistics that include all calls combined. We started with 6,613 calls in summer and 5,440 calls in winter. We limited our analysis to community-initiated calls, which amounted to 4,332 calls in summer and 3,566 calls in winter. In addition, we removed the calls lacking a recorded arriving unit, a few calls located at headquarters, as well as calls outside West Des Moines police patrol beats and calls missing beats. We were left with 3,280 calls in summer and 2,729 calls in winter for our analysis. For the entire year, we began with 39,021 calls and limited our analysis to 26,599 community-initiated calls. With similar exclusions, we were left with 20,327 calls.

Our initial analysis does not distinguish calls based on priority; instead, it examines the difference in response to all calls by time of day and compares summer and winter periods. We then present a brief analysis of response time for high-priority calls alone.

## All Calls

This section looks at all calls without considering their priorities. In addition to examining the differences in response times by both time of day and season (winter vs. summer), we show differences in response times by category.

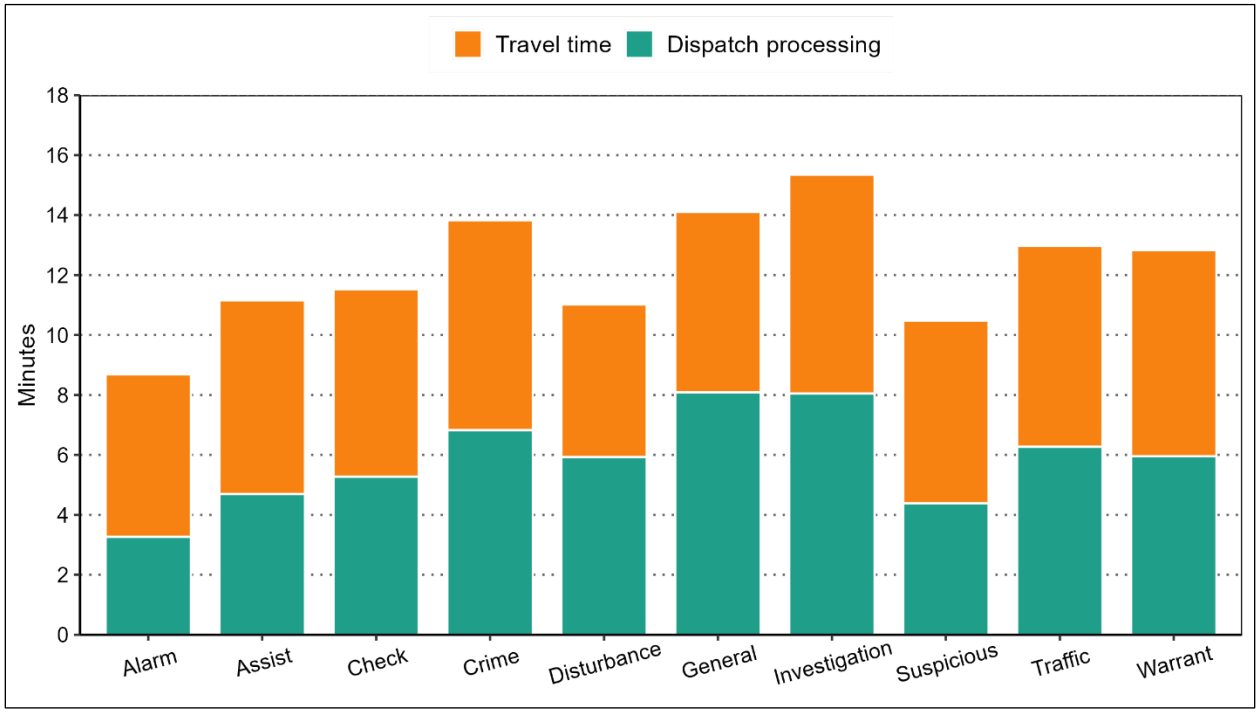
### FIGURE 8-27: Average Response Time and Dispatch Processing, by Hour of Day, Winter and Summer 2022



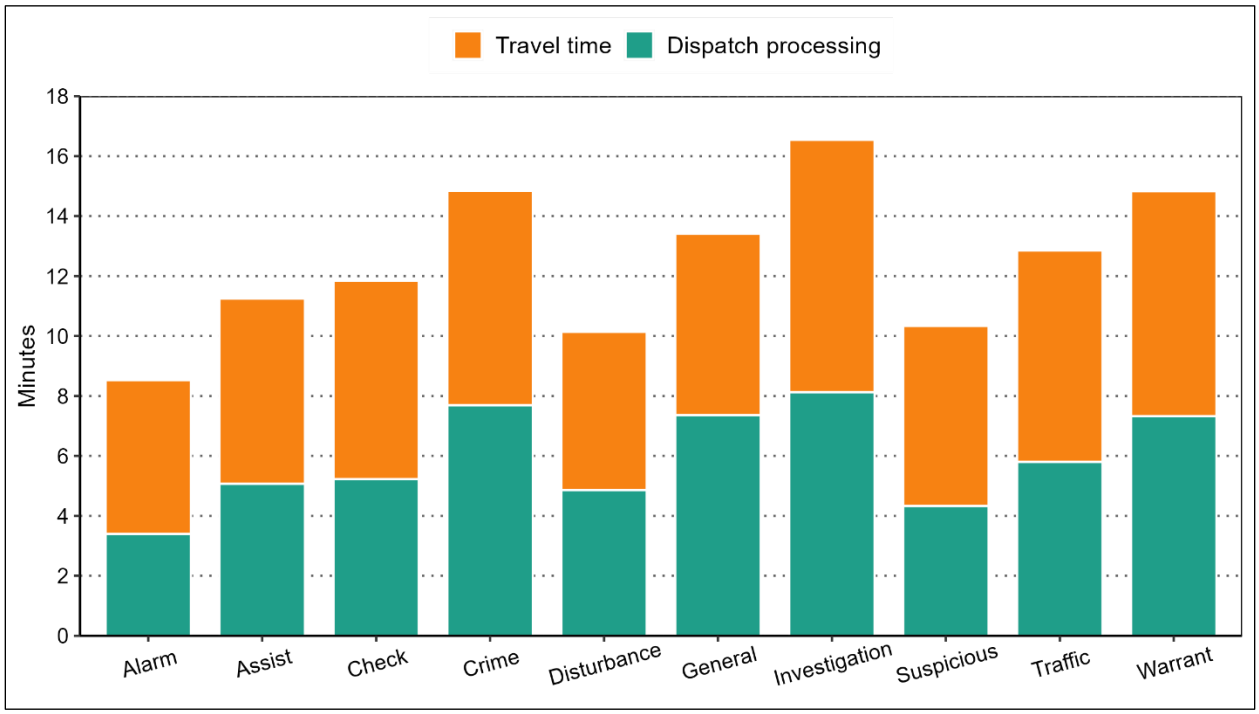

## Observations:

- Average response times varied significantly by the hour of the day.
- In summer, the longest response times were between 6:00 a.m. and 7:00 a.m., with an average of 15.8 minutes.
- In summer, the shortest response times were between 1:00 a.m. and 2:00 a.m., with an average of 8.2 minutes.
- In winter, the longest response times were between 6:00 a.m. and 7:00 a.m., with an average of 21.0 minutes.
- In winter, the shortest response times were between 1:00 a.m. and 2:00 a.m., with an average of 7.3 minutes.

## FIGURE 8-28: Average Response Time by Category, Summer 2022




## FIGURE 8-29: Average Response Time by Category, Winter 2023



### TABLE 8-16: Average Response Time Components, by Category

| Category | Summer | | | | Winter | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Minutes | | | Count | Minutes | | | Count |
| | Dispatch | Travel | Response | | Dispatch | Travel | Response | |
| Accident | 5.3 | 6.7 | 11.9 | 238 | 5.1 | 6.9 | 12.0 | 252 |
| Alarm | 3.3 | 5.4 | 8.7 | 207 | 3.4 | 5.1 | 8.5 | 174 |
| Animal call | 11.0 | 6.9 | 17.9 | 51 | 10.4 | 7.2 | 17.6 | 62 |
| Assist other agency | 2.2 | 5.5 | 7.7 | 234 | 2.0 | 5.0 | 7.0 | 217 |
| Check | 5.2 | 6.3 | 11.5 | 224 | 5.1 | 6.6 | 11.7 | 188 |
| Crime against persons | 5.0 | 5.9 | 10.9 | 178 | 6.3 | 6.0 | 12.3 | 153 |
| Crime against property | 7.9 | 8.4 | 16.3 | 321 | 8.7 | 8.4 | 17.1 | 273 |
| Crime against society | 5.7 | 6.0 | 11.8 | 262 | 5.7 | 6.2 | 11.9 | 177 |
| Disturbance | 5.7 | 5.1 | 10.8 | 200 | 4.6 | 5.3 | 9.9 | 161 |
| Investigation | 7.3 | 7.3 | 14.6 | 106 | 7.6 | 8.4 | 16.0 | 59 |
| Mental health | 3.0 | 5.4 | 8.4 | 59 | 4.1 | 6.2 | 10.3 | 85 |
| Miscellaneous | 9.5 | 6.2 | 15.7 | 43 | 8.7 | 6.2 | 14.8 | 27 |
| Public assist | 6.4 | 7.2 | 13.6 | 293 | 7.3 | 7.2 | 14.6 | 239 |
| Suspicious incident | 4.3 | 6.1 | 10.4 | 330 | 4.1 | 6.0 | 10.2 | 200 |
| Traffic enforcement | 7.6 | 6.7 | 14.4 | 121 | 7.1 | 7.4 | 14.4 | 82 |
| Violation | 7.7 | 6.0 | 13.6 | 393 | 6.9 | 5.8 | 12.7 | 370 |
| Warrant/prisoner | 6.0 | 6.9 | 12.8 | 20 | 7.3 | 7.5 | 14.8 | 10 |
| **Total Average** | **5.8** | **6.4** | **12.1** | **3,280** | **5.8** | **6.4** | **12.2** | **2,729** |

**Note:** The total average is weighted according to the number of calls per category.

## Observations:

- In summer, the average response time for most categories was between 9 minutes and 15 minutes.
- In summer, the average response time was as short as 9 minutes (for alarms) and as long as 15 minutes (for investigations).
- In winter, the average response time for most categories was between 9 minutes and 16 minutes.
- In winter, the average response time was as short as 9 minutes (for alarms) and as long as 16 minutes (for investigations).
- The average response time for crime was 13 minutes in summer and 14 minutes in winter.

### TABLE 8-17: 90th Percentiles for Response Time Components, by Category

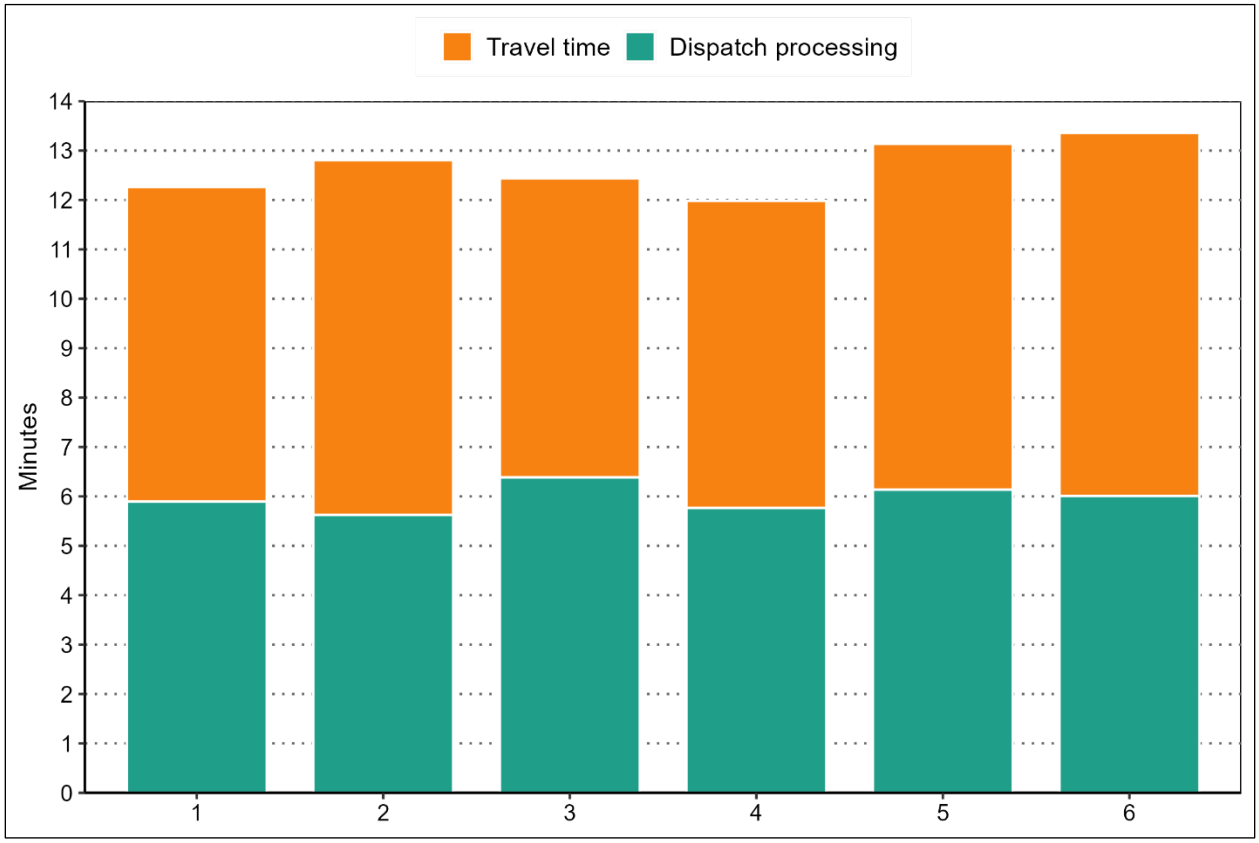
| Category | Summer, Minutes | | | Winter, Minutes | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Dispatch | Travel | Response | Dispatch | Travel | Response |
| Accident | 13.7 | 13.5 | 23.7 | 11.2 | 13.1 | 23.1 |
| Alarm | 6.7 | 10.2 | 15.8 | 5.6 | 9.6 | 13.6 |
| Animal call | 36.5 | 16.3 | 41.2 | 22.1 | 14.9 | 38.9 |
| Assist other agency | 4.8 | 9.8 | 13.8 | 4.4 | 9.4 | 12.7 |
| Check | 9.6 | 10.8 | 19.7 | 9.2 | 11.3 | 19.3 |
| Crime against persons | 12.4 | 10.8 | 21.9 | 19.6 | 11.6 | 28.9 |
| Crime against property | 23.9 | 18.6 | 35.8 | 26.2 | 17.8 | 39.6 |
| Crime against society | 16.2 | 11.1 | 24.3 | 14.4 | 11.6 | 23.3 |
| Disturbance | 15.2 | 9.7 | 21.3 | 8.2 | 9.8 | 17.8 |
| Investigation | 21.4 | 13.9 | 36.2 | 20.4 | 13.6 | 36.3 |
| Mental health | 5.5 | 9.1 | 13.2 | 6.5 | 10.5 | 18.1 |
| Miscellaneous | 18.7 | 14.6 | 36.4 | 31.2 | 12.7 | 34.0 |
| Public assist | 16.1 | 13.8 | 26.9 | 16.8 | 14.5 | 29.5 |
| Suspicious incident | 8.5 | 10.8 | 19.1 | 7.3 | 11.7 | 17.5 |
| Traffic enforcement | 18.8 | 12.2 | 29.2 | 20.6 | 15.9 | 34.6 |
| Violation | 19.5 | 12.0 | 28.7 | 17.3 | 11.8 | 27.2 |
| Warrant/prisoner | 15.7 | 11.6 | 25.1 | 11.1 | 18.7 | 37.8 |
| **Total Average** | **16.0** | **12.1** | **25.8** | **15.2** | **12.3** | **26.0** |

**Note:** A 90th percentile value of 25.8 minutes means that 90 percent of all calls are responded to in fewer than 25.8 minutes. For this reason, the columns for dispatch processing and travel time may not be equal to the total response time.

## Observations:

- In summer, the 90th percentile value for response time was as short as 16 minutes (for alarms) and as long as 36 minutes (for investigations).
- In winter, the 90th percentile value for response time was as short as 14 minutes (for alarms) and as long as 38 minutes (for warrant/prisoner calls).

## FIGURE 8-30: Average Response Time Components, by Territory



## TABLE 8-18: Average Response Time Components, by Beat

| Territory | Beat | Minutes | | | Calls |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Dispatch | Travel | Response | |
| 1 | 11 | 5.6 | 6.4 | 12.0 | 1,860 |
| | 12 | 6.0 | 7.2 | 13.2 | 406 |
| | 13 | 6.2 | 6.1 | 12.3 | 1,254 |
| | 14 | 6.0 | 6.3 | 12.3 | 1,162 |
| | **Subtotal** | **5.9** | **6.4** | **12.3** | **4,682** |
| 2 | 21 | 6.2 | 9.3 | 15.5 | 753 |
| | 22 | 5.3 | 6.8 | 12.2 | 872 |
| | 23 | 4.9 | 6.2 | 11.2 | 622 |
| | 24 | 6.1 | 6.2 | 12.2 | 698 |
| | **Subtotal** | **5.6** | **7.2** | **12.8** | **2,945** |
| 3 | 31 | 6.8 | 6.1 | 12.9 | 481 |
| | 32 | 6.3 | 5.7 | 11.9 | 864 |
| | 33 | 6.4 | 6.3 | 12.7 | 2,563 |
| | 34 | 6.3 | 5.7 | 12.0 | 1,214 |
| | **Subtotal** | **6.4** | **6.1** | **12.4** | **5,122** |
| 4 | 41 | 5.4 | 6.8 | 12.2 | 443 |
| | 42 | 5.2 | 6.0 | 11.2 | 327 |
| | 43 | 6.3 | 6.5 | 12.7 | 791 |
| | 44 | 6.1 | 6.0 | 12.1 | 1,101 |
| | 45 | 5.8 | 6.6 | 12.4 | 613 |
| | 46 | 5.0 | 5.6 | 10.6 | 651 |
| | **Subtotal** | **5.8** | **6.2** | **12.0** | **3,926** |
| 5 | 51 | 5.9 | 6.4 | 12.4 | 853 |
| | 52 | 6.0 | 6.1 | 12.2 | 975 |
| | 53 | 7.2 | 9.7 | 16.9 | 167 |
| | 54 | 6.6 | 10.7 | 17.3 | 232 |
| | **Subtotal** | **6.1** | **7.0** | **13.1** | **2,227** |
| 6 | 61 | 5.9 | 8.4 | 14.3 | 419 |
| | 62 | 6.1 | 6.5 | 12.6 | 619 |
| | 63 | 5.2 | 7.3 | 12.5 | 227 |
| | 64 | 6.9 | 7.9 | 14.8 | 160 |
| | **Subtotal** | **6.0** | **7.3** | **13.4** | **1,425** |
| **Total Average** | | **6.0** | **6.5** | **12.5** | **20,327** |

## Observations:

- All 6 territories share a similar dispatch delay, which is about 6 minutes.
- Territory 2 had the shortest average dispatch time of 5.6 minutes.
- Territory 4 had the shortest average response time of 12.0 minutes.

## High-Priority Calls

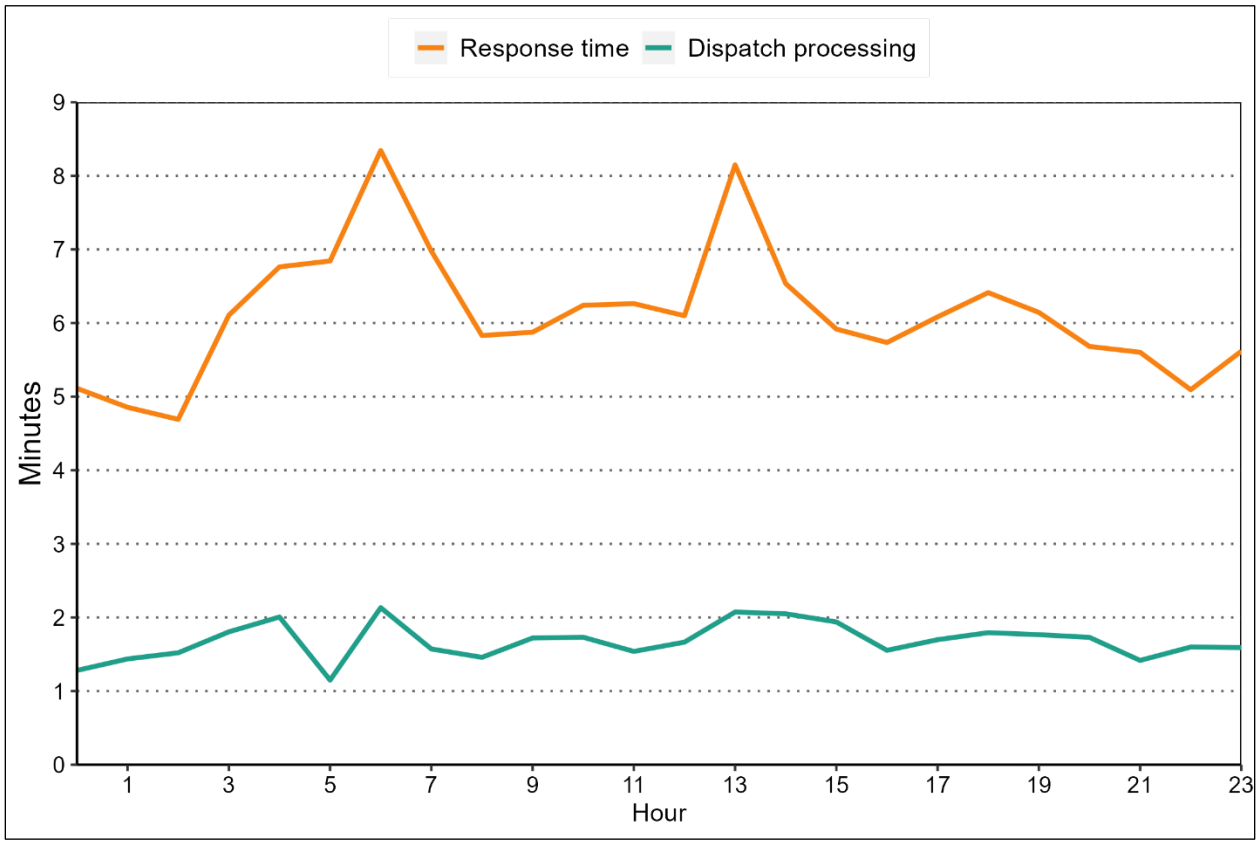
The department assigned priorities to calls with priorities 1 and 2 as the highest priorities. The following table shows average response times by priority. Also, we identified injury accidents by including accident calls whose descriptions matched "pd mvc entrapment" and "pd mvc injury."

### TABLE 8-19: Average and 90th Percentile Response Times, by Priority

| Priority | Minutes | | | Calls | 90th Percentile Response Time, Minutes |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Dispatch | Travel | Response | | |
| 1 | 1.6 | 3.8 | 5.4 | 195 | 8.2 |
| 2 | 1.7 | 4.4 | 6.1 | 1,635 | 10.5 |
| 3 | 3.7 | 6.0 | 9.7 | 5,652 | 17.1 |
| 4 | 6.2 | 6.5 | 12.7 | 4,800 | 27.3 |
| 5 | 8.2 | 7.8 | 15.9 | 5,079 | 34.6 |
| 6 | 10.0 | 7.7 | 17.6 | 1,585 | 40.0 |
| 7 | 7.7 | 5.7 | 13.4 | 1,381 | 27.6 |
| **Total** | **6.0** | **6.5** | **12.5** | **20,327** | **27.1** |
| Injury Accident | 2.0 | 4.8 | 6.8 | 239 | 11.7 |

**Note:** The total average is weighted according to the number of calls within each priority level.

**FIGURE 8-31: Average Response Times and Dispatch Processing for High-priority Calls, by Hour**




## Observations:

- High-priority calls had an average response time of 6.1 minutes, lower than the overall average of 12.5 minutes for all calls.
- Average dispatch processing was 1.7 minutes for high-priority calls, compared to 6.0 minutes overall.
- For high-priority calls, the longest response times were between 6:00 a.m. and 7:00 a.m., with an average of 8.3 minutes.
- For high-priority calls, the shortest response times were between 2:00 a.m. and 3:00 a.m., with an average of 4.7 minutes.
- Average response time for injury accidents was 6.8 minutes, with a dispatch processing of 2.0 minutes.

## APPENDIX A: CALL TYPE CLASSIFICATION

Call descriptions for the department's calls for service from May 1, 2022, to April 30, 2023, were classified into the following categories.

### TABLE 8-20: Call Type, by Category

| Call Type Description | Table Category | Figure Category |
|---|---|---|
| Burg alarm | Alarm | Alarm |
| Hold up alarm/panic/duress | | |
| Medical alarm | | |
| Unknown alarm | | |
| Vehicle alarm | | |
| Assist other agency | Assist other agency | Assist |
| Pd abdominal problems | | |
| Pd allergic reaction | | |
| Pd assist fd | | |
| Pd back pain | | |
| Pd bomb found/susp package | | |
| Pd breathing problems | | |
| Pd burn patient | | |
| Pd carb monoxide sick | | |
| Pd cardiac arrest | | |
| Pd chest pain | | |
| Pd child birth | | |
| Pd choking | | |
| Pd cold exposure | | |
| Pd diabetic problems | | |
| Pd drowning/diving accident | | |
| Pd electrical hazard | | |
| Pd elevator rescue | | |
| Pd entrapment | | |
| Pd fainting | | |
| Pd fall | | |
| Pd fire alarm | | |
| Pd fuel spill | | |
| Pd gas leak | | |
| Pd gas odor | | |
| Pd gunshot wound | | |
| Pd hazmat | | |
| Pd headache | | |
| Pd heart problems | | |
| Pd heat exposure | | |
| Pd hemorrhage | | |

| Call Type Description | Table Category | Figure Category |
|---|---|---|
| Pd medical * | | |
| Pd outside fire | | |
| Pd overdose | | |
| Pd person on fire | | |
| Pd poisoning | | |
| Pd pregnancy problems | | |
| Pd psychiatric patient | | |
| Pd seizures | | |
| Pd service call | | |
| Pd sick person | | |
| Pd smoke investigation | | |
| Pd strange odor | | |
| Pd stroke | | |
| Pd struct fire * | | |
| Pd struct fire appliance cont | | |
| Pd struct fire odor only | | |
| Pd traumatic injury | | |
| Pd unconscious patient | | |
| Pd vehicle fire * | | |
| Pd vehicle fire commercial veh | | |
| Pd water rescue | | |
| Wires down | | |
| Keep the peace | Public assist | |
| Lock in/out | | |
| Lock in/out danger | | |
| Motorist assist | | |
| Observer | | |
| Phone call request | | |
| Public assist | | |
| Building check | Check | Check |
| Compliance check | | |
| Welfare check | | |
| Abduction/custodial abd past | Crime against persons | Crime |
| Abuse/neglect/abandon * | | |
| Abuse/neglect/abandon past | | |
| Assault * | | |
| Assault past | | |
| Assault weapon | | |
| Domestic fight/physical | | |
| Domestic weapon | | |
| Harassment/threat * | | |
| Harassment/threat past | | |

| Call Type Description | Table Category | Figure Category |
|---|---|---|
| Harassment/threat weapon | | |
| Pd sexual assault * | | |
| Pd stabbing | | |
| Road rage * | | |
| Road rage past | | |
| Road rage weapon | | |
| Robbery * | | |
| Robbery weapon | | |
| Sexual assault past | | |
| Violation of court order * | | |
| Violation of court order past | | |
| Burg * | Crime against property | |
| Burg past | | |
| Burglary to vehicle * | | |
| Burglary to vehicle past | | |
| Fraud/forgery * | | |
| Fraud/forgery past | | |
| Theft * | | |
| Theft past | | |
| Theft suspect detained | | |
| Trespassing * | | |
| Trespassing past | | |
| Vandalism * | | |
| Vandalism past | | |
| Vehicle theft * | | |
| Vehicle theft past | | |
| Animal cruelty | Crime against society | |
| Domestic non-physical | | |
| Domestic past/one half only | | |
| Drug situation * | | |
| Drug situation past | | |
| Fight physical | | |
| Fight weapon | | |
| Impaired person | | |
| Indecency * | | |
| Indecency past | | |
| Mischief * | | |
| Mischief past | | |
| Nuisance | | |
| Prostitution * | | |
| Prostitution past | | |
| Unwanted person weapon | | |

| Call Type Description | Table Category | Figure Category |
|---|---|---|
| Weapons | | |
| Special assignment | Directed patrol | Directed patrol |
| Dispute/disturbance * | Disturbance | Disturbance |
| Dispute/disturbance past | | |
| Dispute/disturbance weapon | | |
| Fireworks complaint | | |
| Noise complaint | | |
| Unknown problem | | |
| Animal attack | Animal call | General noncriminal |
| Animal bite | | |
| Barking dog | | |
| Stray/unwanted animal | | |
| Mental health | Mental health | |
| Pd suicide attempt * | | |
| Suicide attempt weapon | | |
| Suicide threat * | | |
| Suicide threat weapon | | |
| City service complaint | Miscellaneous | |
| Document/property pickup | | |
| Information | | |
| Officer needs assistance | | |
| Repossession | | |
| Illegal dumping | Violation | |
| Parking complaint | | |
| Unwanted person * | | |
| Unwanted person past | | |
| Wireless 911 call | | |
| Deceased person | Investigation | Investigation |
| Found person | | |
| Found property | | |
| Lost property | | |
| Missing person | | |
| Supplemental | | |
| Landline 911 call | Suspicious incident | Suspicious incident |
| Open door | | |
| Shots fired heard only | | |
| Shots fired suspect seen | | |
| Susp activity * | | |
| Susp activity past | | |
| Susp activity weapon | | |
| Suspic person * | | |
| Suspic person past | | |

| Call Type Description | Table Category | Figure Category |
|---|---|---|
| Suspic person weapon | | |
| Suspicious vehicle * | | |
| Suspicious vehicle past | | |
| Mvc no injury | Accident | Traffic |
| Mvc unk injury | | |
| Pd mvc entrapment | | |
| Pd mvc injury | | |
| Hit and run injury | Traffic enforcement | |
| Hit and run no injury | | |
| Hit and run unk injury | | |
| Impaired driving | | |
| Pursuit vehicle | | |
| Reckless driving complaint | | |
| Traffic hazard | | |
| Traffic stop | Traffic stop | |
| Search warrant | Warrant/prisoner | Warrant/prisoner |
| Transport person/vehicle/item | | |
| Wanted person/vehicle | | |

## APPENDIX B: UNIFORM CRIME REPORT INFORMATION

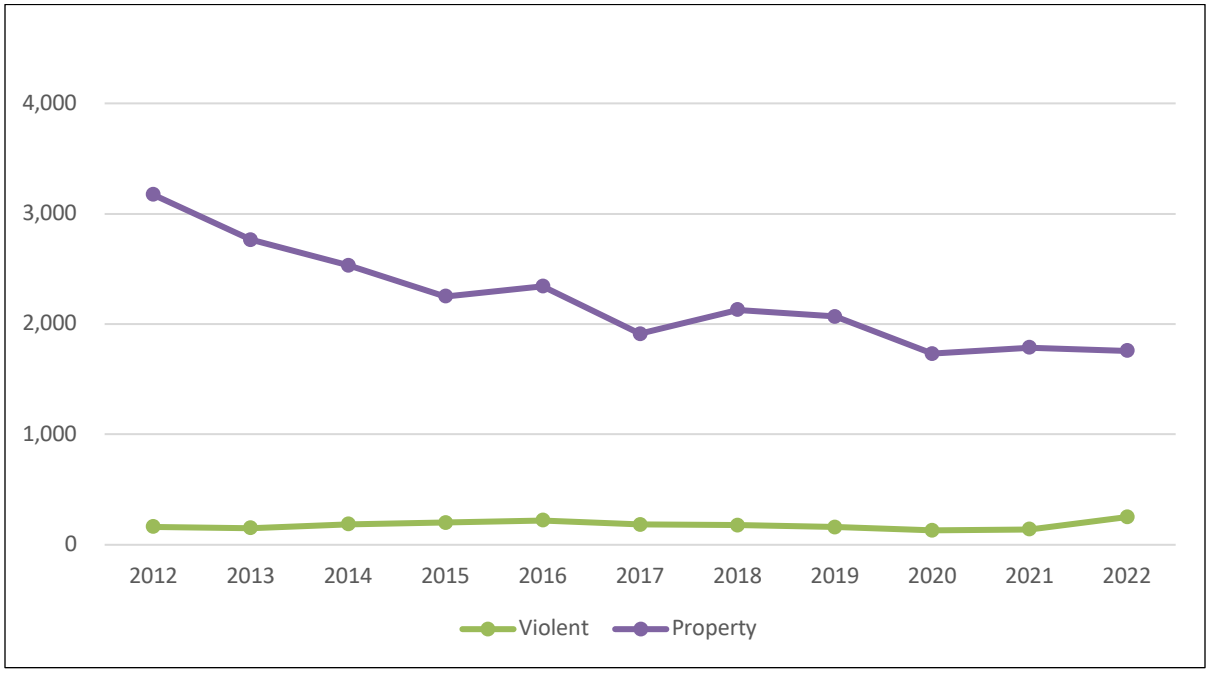
This section presents information obtained from Uniform Crime Reports (UCR) collected by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the Iowa Department of Public Safety. The tables and figures include the most recent information that is publicly available at the national level. This includes crime reports for 2013 through 2022, along with clearance rates for 2021 and 2022. Crime rates are expressed as incidents per 100,000 population.

### TABLE 8-21: Reported Crime Rates in 2021 and 2022, by City

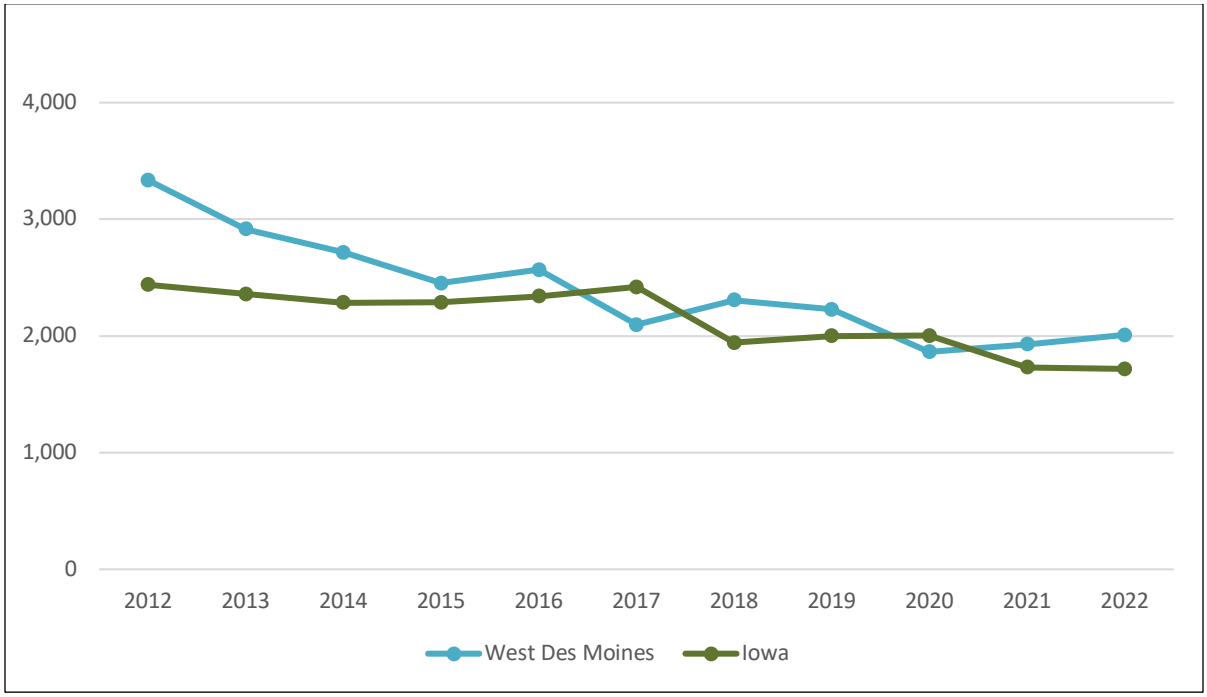
| Municipality | State | 2021 | | | | 2022 | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Population | Crime Rates | | | Population | Crime Rates | | |
| | | | Violent | Property | Total | | Violent | Property | Total |
| Altoona | IA | 20,064 | 269 | 1,884 | 2,153 | 21,503 | 199 | 1,381 | 1,580 |
| Ames | IA | 67,886 | 181 | 1,304 | 1,485 | 66,950 | 200 | 1,277 | 1,477 |
| Ankeny | IA | 73,109 | 133 | 977 | 1,109 | 72,222 | 185 | 1,078 | 1,263 |
| Clive | IA | 17,652 | 91 | 1,280 | 1,371 | 18,908 | 283 | 1,201 | 1,484 |
| Fort Dodge | IA | 23,788 | 492 | 2,505 | 2,997 | 24,657 | 547 | 3,212 | 3,759 |
| Indianola | IA | 16,203 | 463 | 1,697 | 2,160 | 16,069 | 852 | 1,716 | 2,568 |
| Johnston | IA | 23,759 | 147 | 838 | 985 | 24,390 | 72 | 694 | 766 |
| Marshalltown | IA | 26,651 | 413 | 1,812 | 2,225 | 27,433 | 683 | 1,880 | 2,563 |
| Urbandale | IA | 45,201 | 115 | 900 | 1,015 | 46,648 | 111 | 721 | 832 |
| Waukee | IA | 27,858 | 90 | 660 | 750 | 29,167 | 140 | 757 | 897 |
| Council Bluffs | IA | 62,415 | 346 | 3,490 | 3,836 | 62,405 | 415 | 3,078 | 3,493 |
| Dubuque | IA | 59,119 | 431 | 2,057 | 2,488 | 58,873 | 438 | 1,851 | 2,290 |
| Ankeny | IA | 70,287 | 137 | 1,059 | 1,195 | 72,222 | 187 | 1,091 | 1,278 |
| Brooklyn Park | MN | 79,946 | 442 | 3,217 | 3,659 | 82,682 | 370 | 3,324 | 3,694 |
| Schaumburg Village | IL | 77,082 | 77 | 1,232 | 1,309 | 76,225 | 98 | 2,133 | 2,232 |
| Evanston | IL | 77,517 | 175 | 2,135 | 2,310 | 75,544 | 177 | 2,487 | 2,665 |
| Shawnee | KS | 66,710 | 294 | 1,616 | 1,910 | 67,617 | 269 | 1,424 | 1,693 |
| Lenexa | KS | 57,012 | 200 | 1,698 | 1,898 | 59,289 | 224 | 1,553 | 1,778 |
| Blue Spring | MO | 59,430 | 195 | 2,122 | 2,317 | 59,518 | 210 | 2,196 | 2,406 |
| O'Fallon | MO | 93,644 | 104 | 802 | 906 | 93,663 | 97 | 741 | 838 |
| **West Des Moines** | **IA** | **70,414** | **145** | **1,740** | **1,885** | **70,741** | **251** | **1,757** | **2,008** |
| **Iowa** | | **3,193,079** | **270** | **1,462** | **1,732** | **3,200,517** | **280** | **1438** | **1,718** |
| **National** | | ***332,031,554** | **396** | **1,933** | **2,329** | **NA** | | | |

**Note**: *We used national crime rates estimated in the FBI's report *The Transition to the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS): A Comparison of 2020 and 2021 NIBRS Estimates.*

## FIGURE 8-32: Reported West Des Moines Violent and Property Crime Rates, by Year




## FIGURE 8-33: Reported City and State Crime Rates, by Year



## TABLE 8-22: Reported West Des Moines, Iowa, and National Crime Rates, by Year

| Year | West Des Moines | | | | Iowa | | | | National | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Population | Violent | Property | Total | Population | Violent | Property | Total | Population | Violent | Property | Total |
| 2013 | 60,068 | 151 | 2,765 | 2,917 | 3,114,347 | 259 | 2,099 | 2,358 | 321,947,240 | 362 | 2,627 | 2,989 |
| 2014 | 62,359 | 186 | 2,531 | 2,717 | 3,131,021 | 263 | 2,022 | 2,285 | 324,699,246 | 357 | 2,464 | 2,821 |
| 2015 | 65,006 | 200 | 2,252 | 2,452 | 3,153,349 | 269 | 2,020 | 2,289 | 327,455,769 | 368 | 2,376 | 2,744 |
| 2016 | 65,631 | 227 | 2,305 | 2,532 | 3,165,023 | 285 | 2,054 | 2,339 | 329,308,297 | 383 | 2,353 | 2,736 |
| 2017 | 65,940 | 184 | 1,912 | 2,096 | 3,145,711 | 293 | 2,125 | 2,419 | 325,719,178 | 383 | 2,362 | 2,745 |
| 2018 | 66,966 | 178 | 2,129 | 2,307 | 3,156,145 | 250 | 1,692 | 1,942 | 327,167,434 | 369 | 2,200 | 2,568 |
| 2019 | 67,911 | 159 | 2,036 | 2,196 | 3,155,070 | 267 | 1,734 | 2,000 | 328,239,523 | 379 | 2,010 | 2,489 |
| 2020 | 69,252 | 134 | 1,646 | 1,780 | 3,163,561 | 304 | 1,698 | 2,002 | 331,449,281 | 399 | 1,958 | 2,357 |
| 2021 | 70,414 | 145 | 1,740 | 1,885 | 3,193,079 | 270 | 1,462 | 1,732 | 332,031,554 | 396 | 1,933 | 2,329 |
| 2022 | 70,741 | 141 | 1,788 | 1,929 | 3,200,517 | 280 | 1438 | 1,718 | NA | | | |

## TABLE 8-23: Reported West Des Moines, Iowa, and National Crime Clearance Rates, 2021

| Crime | West Des Moines | | | Iowa | | | National | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Crimes | Clearances | Rate | Crimes | Clearances | Rate | Crimes | Clearances* | Rate |
| Murder Manslaughter | 0 | 0 | NA | 95 | 61 | 64% | 22,900 | 11,500 | 50% |
| Rape | 23 | 6 | 26% | 1,012 | 283 | 28% | 144,300 | 16,500 | 11% |
| Robbery | 17 | 5 | 29% | 521 | 177 | 34% | 202,200 | 48,800 | 24% |
| Aggravated Assault | 62 | 32 | 52% | 5,614 | 3607 | 64% | 943,800 | 297,500 | 32% |
| Burglary | 151 | 13 | 9% | 7,325 | 1191 | 16% | 899,700 | 107,200 | 12% |
| Larceny | 987 | 170 | 17% | 28,248 | 5442 | 19% | 4,627,000 | 508,900 | 11% |
| Vehicle Theft | 87 | 9 | 10% | 4,503 | 1027 | 23% | 890,200 | 68,500 | 8% |

**Note**: National crimes and clearances are estimated in the FBI's report *The Transition to the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS): A Comparison of 2020 and 2021 NIBRS Estimates*.

## TABLE 8-24: Reported West Des Moines, Iowa, and National Crime Clearance Rates, 2022

| Crime | West Des Moines | | | Iowa | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Crimes | Clearances | Rate | Crimes | Clearances | Rate |
| Murder Manslaughter | 2 | 1 | 50% | 67 | 47 | 70% |
| Rape | 16 | 4 | 25% | 955 | 205 | 21% |
| Robbery | 20 | 8 | 40% | 579 | 204 | 35% |
| Aggravated Assault | 139 | 63 | 45% | 6,035 | 3862 | 64% |
| Burglary | 89 | 7 | 8% | 6,444 | 1133 | 18% |
| Larceny | 1,055 | 279 | 26% | 28,656 | 6218 | 22% |
| Vehicle Theft | 93 | 30 | 32% | 4,190 | 890 | 21% |

# SECTION 9. DATA ANALYSIS: SPECIAL OPERATIONS UNITS

## TRAFFIC UNIT

During the study period between May 1, 2022, and April 30, 2023, the dispatch center recorded 1,879 events associated with traffic units. After removing 46 zero on scene events and 65 directed patrol activities, 1,768 calls remained.

Additionally, the dispatch system recorded 223 out-of-service activities associated with traffic units.

Unlike the larger patrol force, traffic units do not work 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. They had recorded work on 244 days during the study period:

- There were 204 weekdays, 24 Saturdays, and 16 Sundays.
- Over 8 weeks in the summer, traffic units worked 40 days, including 3 Saturdays and 1 Sunday.
- Over 8 weeks in the winter, traffic units worked 31 days, including 2 Saturdays and 2 Sundays.
- Calls per day are measured by actual days worked in each month.
- Deployment and workload graphs focus on weekdays rather than weekends. In addition, they are limited to days when traffic units worked and account for the fact that traffic units worked 36 weekdays in the summer period and 27 weekdays in the winter period.

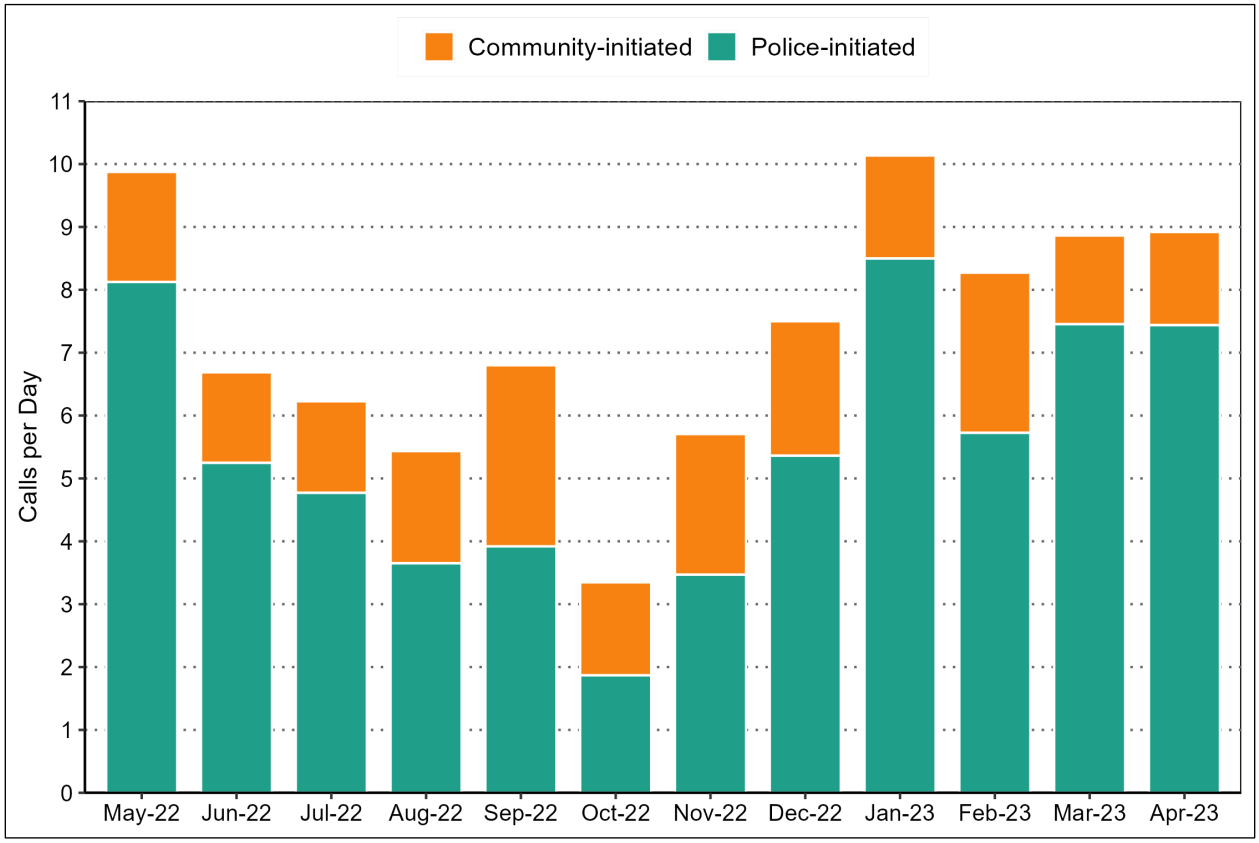
### TABLE 9-1: Events, Calls, and Workload by Category, Traffic Units

| Category | Events | Calls | Work Hours |
|---|---|---|---|
| Accident | 115 | 114 | 150.2 |
| Alarm | 13 | 13 | 2.0 |
| Animal call | 4 | 3 | 2.7 |
| Assist other agency | 51 | 45 | 21.2 |
| Check | 27 | 25 | 7.2 |
| Crime against persons | 28 | 27 | 31.4 |
| Crime against property | 35 | 34 | 19.3 |
| Crime against society | 24 | 22 | 9.2 |
| Directed patrol | 65 | NA | NA |
| Disturbance | 18 | 18 | 5.2 |
| Investigation | 117 | 115 | 79.6 |
| Mental health | 9 | 9 | 4.5 |
| Miscellaneous | 20 | 18 | 4.6 |
| Public assist | 101 | 93 | 34.4 |
| Suspicious incident | 50 | 49 | 22.1 |
| Traffic enforcement | 61 | 58 | 58.5 |
| Traffic stop | 1,083 | 1,073 | 287.8 |
| Violation | 33 | 27 | 4.9 |
| Warrant/prisoner | 25 | 25 | 16.6 |
| **Total** | **1,879** | **1,768** | **761.3** |

## Observations:

- 1,879 events involved a traffic unit.
  - 2 percent of the events had zero time on scene.
  - 74 percent of all events were police initiated.
  - 24 percent of all events were community-initiated.
- On average, there were 7.2 calls per day. This was determined by dividing the total number of calls received (1,768 calls) by the number of days worked by units (244 days).
- The total workload averaged 3.1 hours per day.
- 70 percent of calls and 65 percent of work hours were traffic-related.

## FIGURE 9-1: Calls per Day by Initiator and Months, Traffic Units




## TABLE 9-2: Calls per Day by Initiator and Months, Traffic Units

| Initiator | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Community-initiated | 1.8 | 1.4 | 1.5 | 1.8 | 2.9 | 1.5 | 2.2 | 2.1 | 1.6 | 2.5 | 1.4 | 1.5 |
| Police-initiated | 8.1 | 5.2 | 4.8 | 3.7 | 3.9 | 1.9 | 3.5 | 5.4 | 8.5 | 5.7 | 7.5 | 7.4 |
| **Total** | **9.9** | **6.7** | **6.2** | **5.4** | **6.8** | **3.3** | **5.7** | **7.5** | **10.1** | **8.3** | **8.9** | **8.9** |
| Days in Month | 16 | 16 | 22 | 23 | 25 | 23 | 17 | 22 | 22 | 11 | 22 | 25 |

## Observations:

- The number of calls per day was the lowest in October.
- The number of calls per day was highest in January.

During the study period, the dispatch center recorded activities for traffic units that were not assigned a call number.

### TABLE 9-3: Activities and Occupied Times by Description, Traffic Units

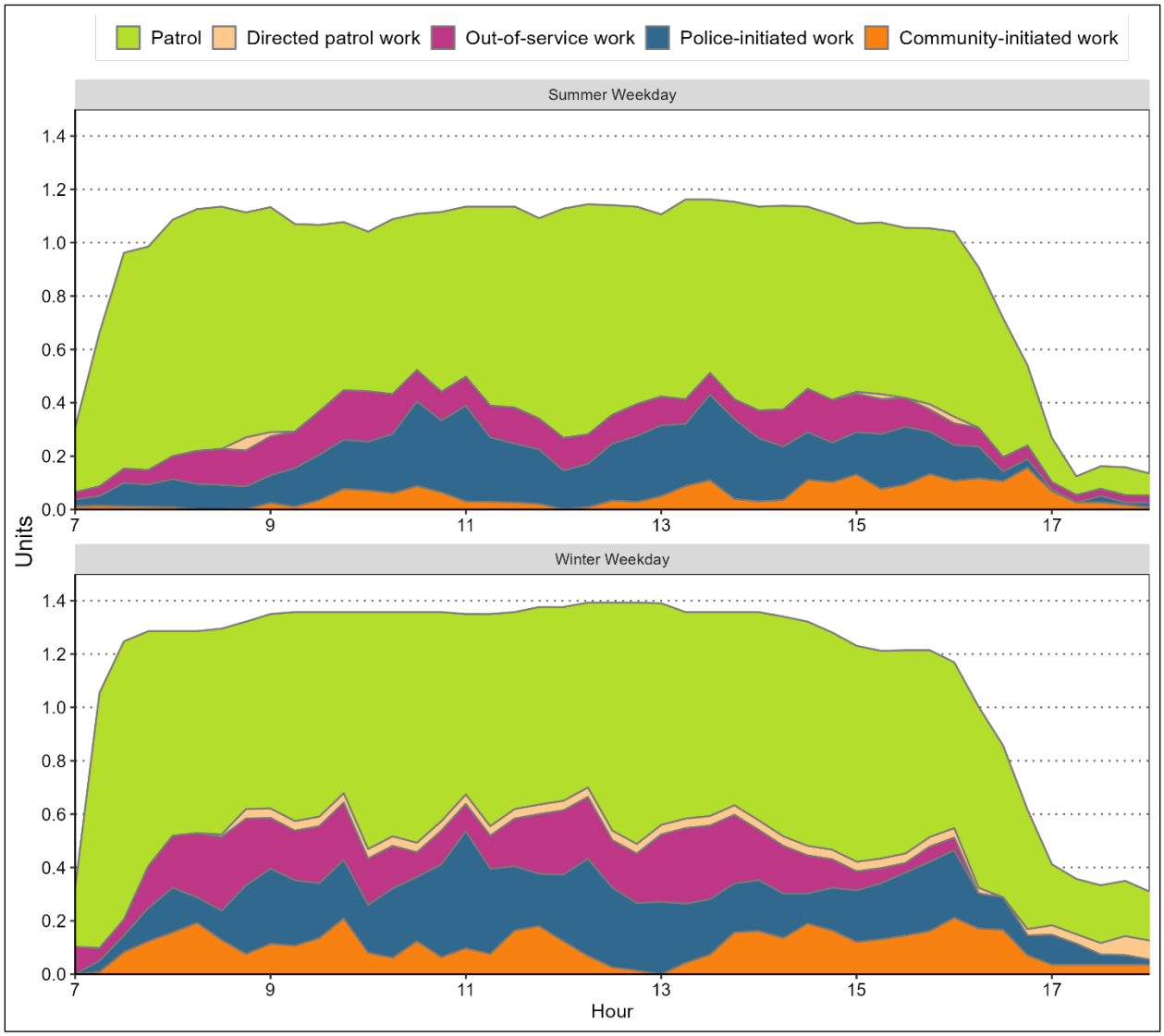
| Description | Occupied Time | Count |
|---|---|---|
| Busy | 27.2 | 1 |
| Court | 75.2 | 83 |
| Mechanical | 113.6 | 6 |
| Meeting | 16.0 | 11 |
| Report writing | 104.2 | 27 |
| Roll call | 120.8 | 27 |
| Traffic | 57.4 | 16 |
| Training | 28.3 | 8 |
| Meal break | 33.2 | 40 |
| **Weighted Average/Total Calls** | **74.0** | **223** |

## Observations:

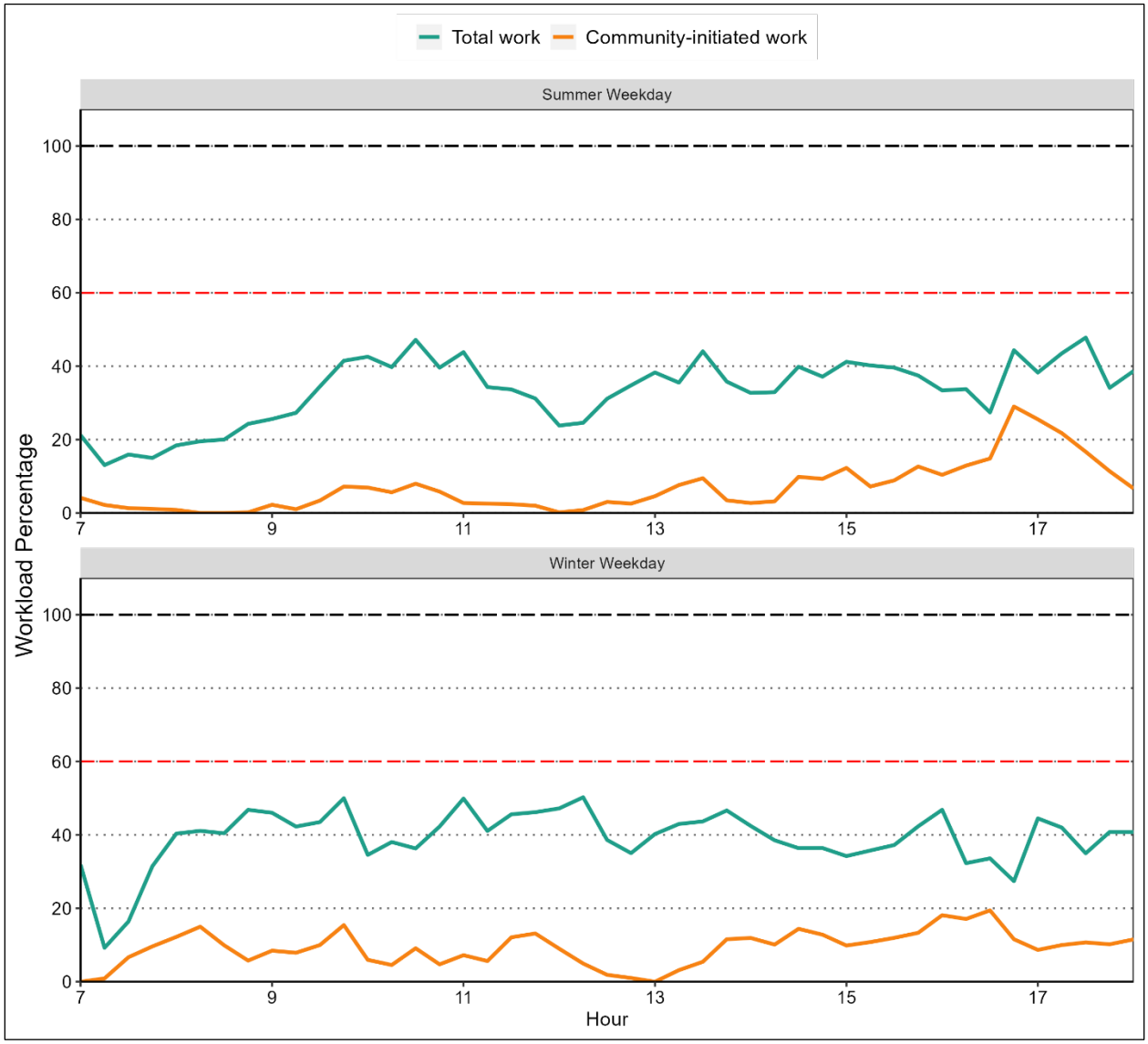
- The average number of activities per day was 0.9, calculated by dividing the total number of activities (223) by the number of days the officers worked (244).
- The average time spent on these non-call activities was 74.0 minutes.
- The most frequently recorded activities were for court duties.

We examined deployment data for eight weeks in summer (July 7 through August 31, 2022) and eight weeks in winter (January 4 through February 28, 2023), comparing workload against deployment by percentage. Traffic units were deployed on 10-hour schedules, starting at 7:00 a.m. or 8:00 a.m. The following figures shows the Traffic Units' workload on weekdays during the two periods.

## FIGURE 9-2: Deployment and All Workload, Traffic Units



## FIGURE 9-3: Workload Percentage by Hour, Traffic Units



## Observations:

### *Summer:*

- Deployment:
  - During the week, the average deployment was 0.9 officers per hour in summer.
  - During the week, the average deployment varied from 0.1 to 1.2 units per hour on weekdays.
- Community-initiated work:
  - During the week, the average workload was 0.1 units per hour.
  - During the week, this was approximately 5 percent of hourly deployment.
  - During the week, the workload reached a maximum of 29 percent of deployment between 4:45 p.m. and 5:00 p.m.
- All work:
  - During the week, the average workload was 0.4 units per hour.
  - During the week, this was approximately 33 percent of hourly deployment.
  - During the week, the workload reached a maximum of 48 percent of deployment between 5:30 p.m. and 5:45 p.m.

### *Winter:*

- Deployment:
  - During the week, the average deployment was 1.2 officers per hour in winter.
  - During the week, the average deployment varied from 0.3 to 1.4 units per hour on weekdays.
- Community-initiated work:
  - During the week, the average workload was 0.1 units per hour.
  - During the week, this was approximately 9 percent of hourly deployment.
  - During the week, the workload reached a maximum of 19 percent of deployment between 4:30 p.m. and 4:45 p.m.
- All work:
  - During the week, the average workload was 0.4 units per hour.
  - During the week, this was approximately 37 percent of hourly deployment.
  - During the week, the workload reached a maximum of 50 percent of deployment between 12:15 p.m. and 12:30 p.m.

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## K9 UNITS

During the study period, between May 1, 2022, and April 30, 2023, the dispatch center recorded 684 events associated with K9 units. After removing 17 zero on scene events and 6 directed patrol activities, 661 calls remained.

Additionally, the dispatch system recorded 28 out-of-service activities associated with K9 units.

Unlike the larger patrol force, K9 units do not work 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. They had recorded work on 117 days during the study period:

- There were 114 weekdays, 1 Saturday, and 2 Sundays.
- Over 8 weeks in the summer, K-9 units worked 17 days, including 1 Sunday.
- Over 8 weeks in the winter, K-9 units worked 18 days, including 1 Saturday.
- Calls per day are measured by actual days worked in each month.
- Deployment and workload graphs focus on the weekdays when K9 units worked and account for the fact that K9 units worked 16 weekdays in the summer period and 17 weekdays in the winter.

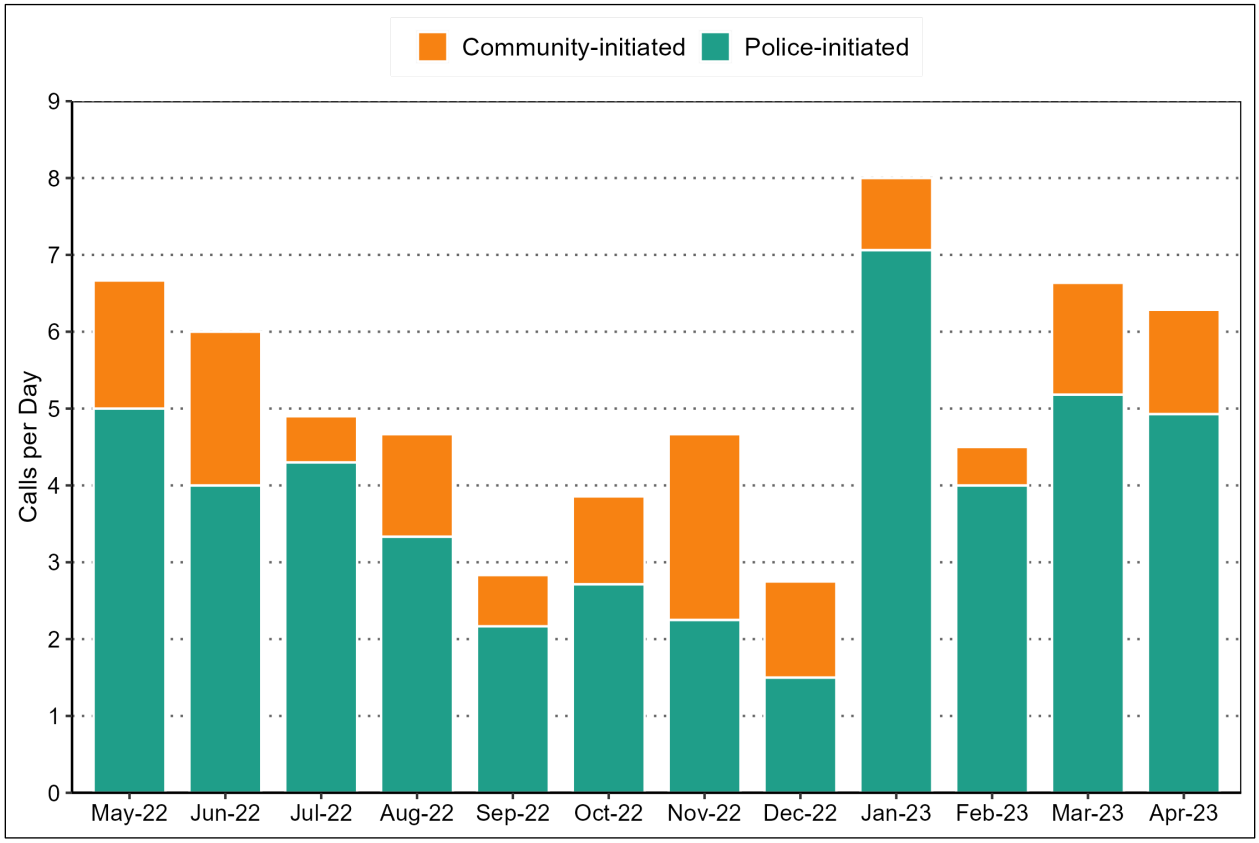
### TABLE 9-4: Events, Calls, and Workload by Category, K9 Units

| Category | Events | Calls | Work Hours |
|---|---|---|---|
| Accident | 51 | 49 | 47.4 |
| Alarm | 8 | 8 | 1.5 |
| Animal call | 1 | NA | NA |
| Assist other agency | 13 | 12 | 6.9 |
| Check | 5 | 4 | 1.2 |
| Crime against persons | 19 | 19 | 8.9 |
| Crime against property | 12 | 12 | 2.9 |
| Crime against society | 9 | 9 | 6.2 |
| Directed patrol | 7 | NA | NA |
| Disturbance | 3 | 3 | 0.8 |
| Investigation | 47 | 47 | 22.4 |
| Mental health | 3 | 2 | 1.7 |
| Miscellaneous | 2 | 2 | 0.2 |
| Public assist | 25 | 24 | 8.3 |
| Suspicious incident | 27 | 26 | 15.7 |
| Traffic enforcement | 17 | 17 | 12.6 |
| Traffic stop | 416 | 408 | 83.0 |
| Violation | 9 | 9 | 3.6 |
| Warrant/prisoner | 10 | 10 | 8.9 |
| **Total** | **684** | **661** | **232.0** |

## Observations:

- 684 events involved a K-9 unit.
  - 3 percent of the events had zero time on scene.
  - 74 percent of all events were police-initiated.
  - 24 percent of all events were community-initiated.
- On average, there were 5.6 calls per day. This was determined by dividing the total number of calls received (661 calls) by the number of days worked by units (117 days).
- The total workload averaged 2.0 hours per day.
- 72 percent of calls and 62 percent of work hours were traffic-related.

## FIGURE 9-4: Calls per Day by Initiator and Months, K9 Units




## TABLE 9-5: Calls per Day by Initiator and Months, K-9 Units

| Initiator | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Community-initiated | 1.7 | 2.0 | 0.6 | 1.3 | 0.7 | 1.1 | 2.4 | 1.2 | 0.9 | 0.5 | 1.5 | 1.4 |
| Police-initiated | 5.0 | 4.0 | 4.3 | 3.3 | 2.2 | 2.7 | 2.2 | 1.5 | 7.1 | 4.0 | 5.2 | 4.9 |
| **Total** | **6.7** | **6.0** | **4.9** | **4.7** | **2.8** | **3.9** | **4.7** | **2.8** | **8.0** | **4.5** | **6.6** | **6.3** |
| Days in Month | 12 | 12 | 10 | 9 | 6 | 7 | 12 | 4 | 16 | 4 | 11 | 14 |

## Observations:

- The number of calls per day was the lowest in December.
- The number of calls per day was highest in January.

During the study period, the dispatch center recorded activities for K9 units that were not assigned a call number.

### TABLE 9-6: Activities and Occupied Times by Description, K9 Units

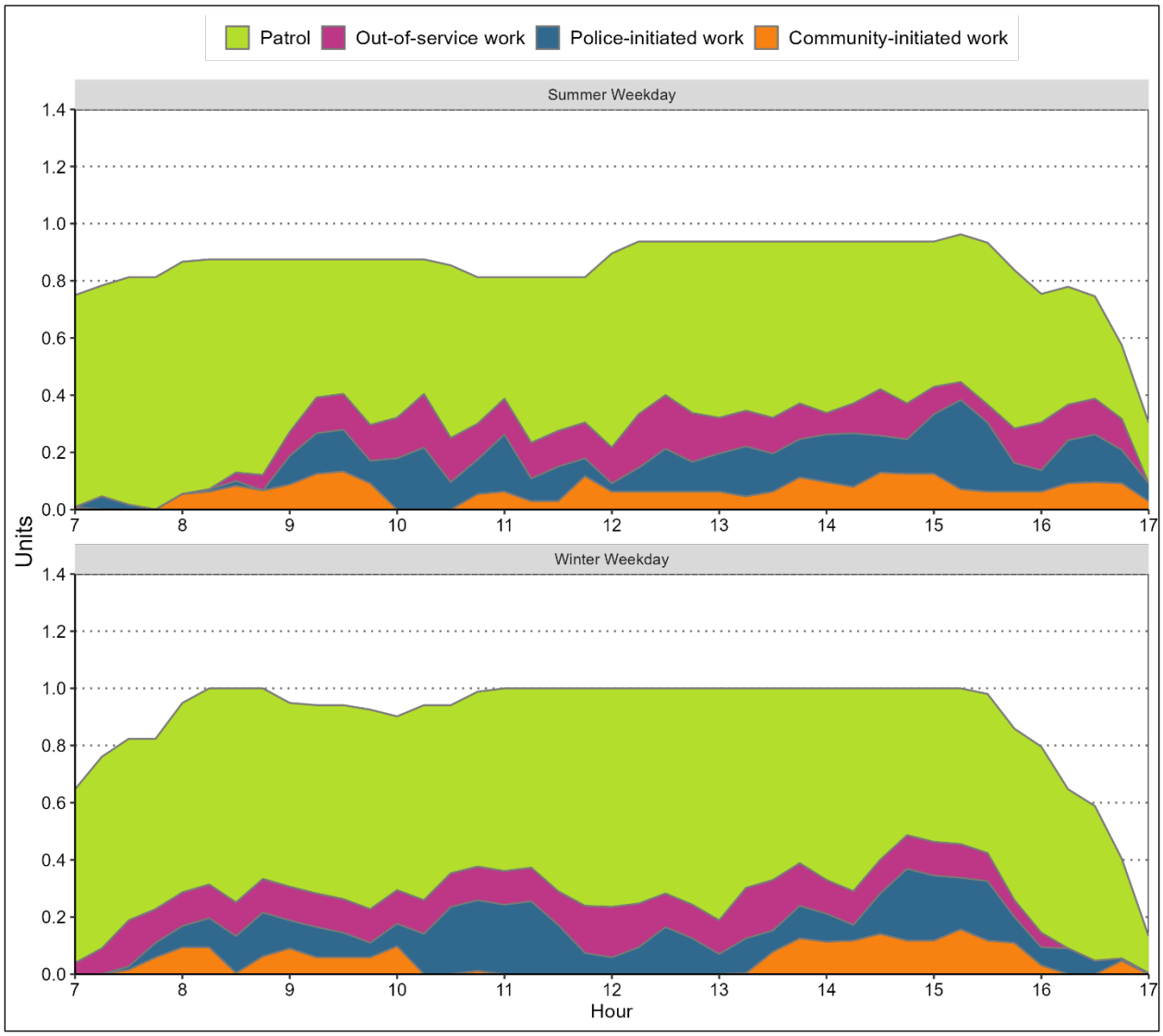
| Description | Occupied Time | Count |
|---|---|---|
| Area check | 10.6 | 1 |
| Busy | 219.2 | 11 |
| Court | 108.1 | 1 |
| Mechanical | 25.4 | 1 |
| Training | 110.2 | 12 |
| Meal break | 32.7 | 2 |
| **Weighted Average/Total Calls** | **140.8** | **28** |

## Observations:

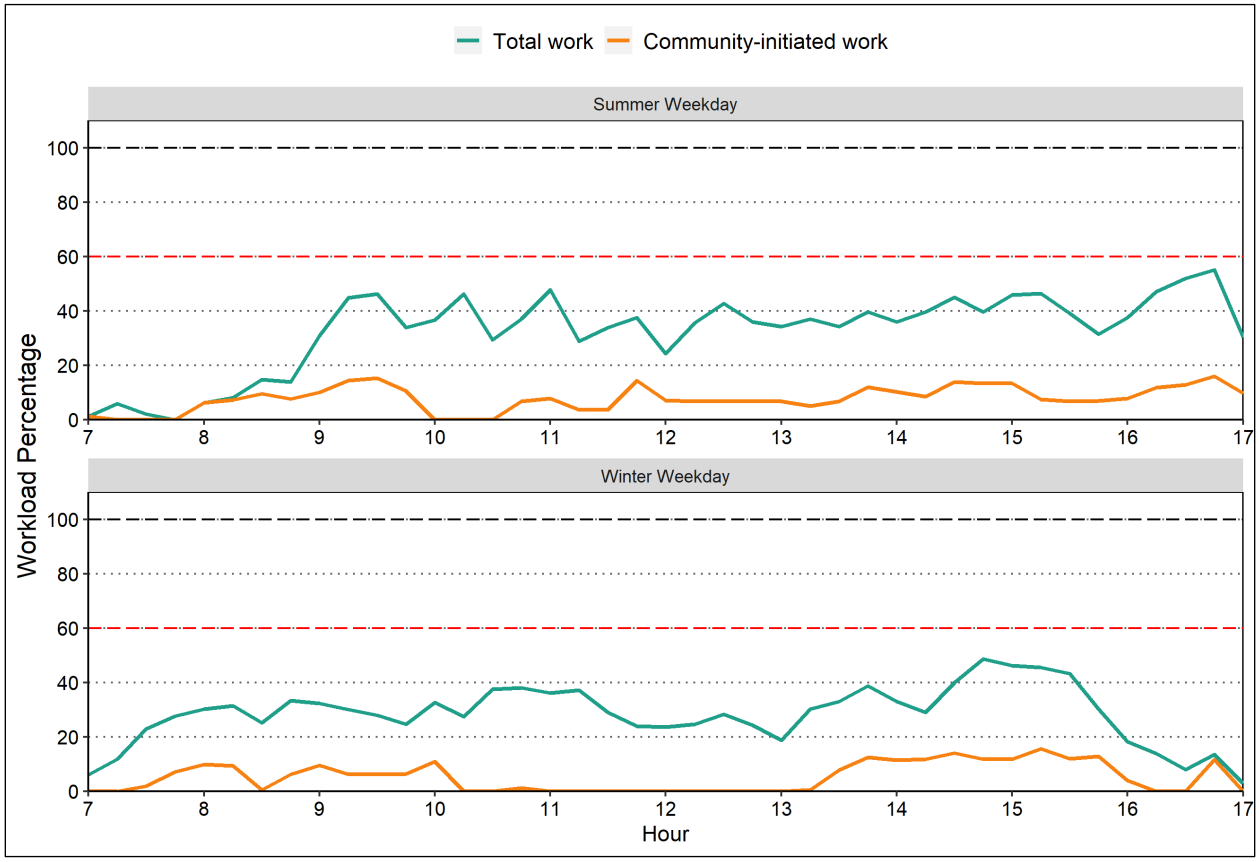
- The average number of activities per day was 0.2, calculated by dividing the total number of activities (28) by the number of days the units worked (117).
- The average time spent on these non-call activities was 140.8 minutes.
- The most frequently recorded activities were for training.

We examined deployment data for eight weeks in summer (July 7 through August 31, 2022) and eight weeks in winter (January 4 through February 28, 2023), comparing workload against deployment by percentage. K9 units were mostly deployed on 10-hour schedules, starting at 7:00 a.m. The following figures shows the K9 units' workload on weekdays during the two periods.

## FIGURE 9-5: Deployment and All Workload, K-9 Units



## FIGURE 9-6: Workload Percentage by Hour, K9 Units



## Observations:

### *Summer:*

- Deployment:
  - During the week, the average deployment was 0.9 units per hour in summer.
  - During the week, the average deployment varied from 0.3 to 1.0 units per hour on weekdays.
- Community-initiated work:
  - During the week, the average workload was 0.1 units per hour.
  - During the week, this was approximately 8 percent of hourly deployment.
  - During the week, the workload reached a maximum of 16 percent of deployment between 4:45 p.m. and 5:00 p.m.
- All work:
  - During the week, the average workload was 0.3 units per hour.
  - During the week, this was approximately 33 percent of hourly deployment.
  - During the week, the workload reached a maximum of 55 percent of deployment between 4:45 p.m. and 5:00 p.m.

### *Winter:*

- Deployment:
  - During the week, the average deployment was 0.9 units per hour in winter.
  - During the week, the average deployment varied from 0.1 to 1.0 units per hour on weekdays.
- Community-initiated work:
  - During the week, the average workload was 0.1 units per hour.
  - During the week, this was approximately 5 percent of hourly deployment.
  - During the week, the workload reached a maximum of 16 percent of deployment between 3:15 p.m. and 3:30 p.m.
- All work:
  - During the week, the average workload was 0.3 units per hour.
  - During the week, this was approximately 30 percent of hourly deployment.
  - During the week, the workload reached a maximum of 49 percent of deployment between 2:45 p.m. and 5:00 p.m.

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## ENTERTAINMENT RESPONSE UNIT

During the study period, between May 1, 2022, and April 30, 2023, the dispatch center recorded 2,548 events associated with the ERU. After removing 49 zero on scene events and 37 directed patrol activities, 2,462 calls remained.

Additionally, the dispatch system recorded 276 out-of-service activities associated with the ERU.

Unlike the larger patrol force, the ERU officers do not work 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. They work from 5:00 p.m. to 3:00 a.m. and recorded work on 288 days during the study period:

- There were 206 weekdays, 48 Saturdays, and 34 Sundays.
- Over 8 weeks in the summer, ERU personnel worked 51 days, including 7 Saturdays and 8 Sundays.
- Over 8 weeks in the winter, ERU personnel worked 41 days, including 8 Saturdays and 4 Sundays.
- Calls per day are measured by actual days worked in each month.
- Deployment and workload graphs focus on weekdays rather than weekends. In addition, they are limited to days when ERU personnel worked to account for the fact that ERU personnel worked 51 weekdays in the summer period and 41 weekdays in the winter period.

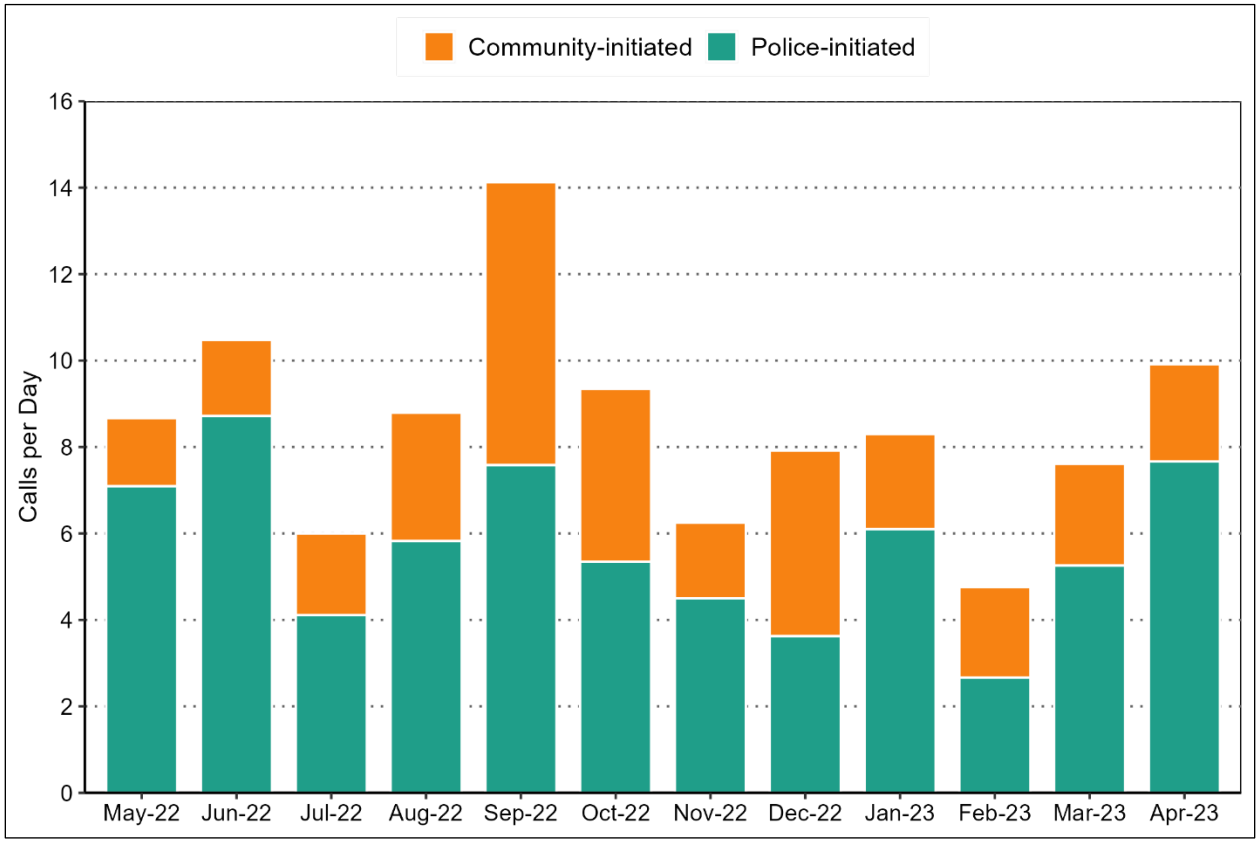
### TABLE 9-7: Events, Calls, and Workload by Category, ERU

| Category | Events | Calls | Work Hours |
|---|---|---|---|
| Accident | 51 | 49 | 43.7 |
| Alarm | 38 | 35 | 4.7 |
| Animal call | 8 | 8 | 2.3 |
| Assist other agency | 82 | 82 | 63.1 |
| Check | 120 | 112 | 48.7 |
| Crime against persons | 69 | 67 | 69.9 |
| Crime against property | 79 | 79 | 72.4 |
| Crime against society | 146 | 143 | 115.9 |
| Directed patrol | 37 | NA | NA |
| Disturbance | 82 | 81 | 70.0 |
| Investigation | 50 | 47 | 37.5 |
| Mental health | 32 | 31 | 18.1 |
| Miscellaneous | 2 | 2 | 0.0 |
| Public assist | 121 | 120 | 51.1 |
| Suspicious incident | 190 | 188 | 129.0 |
| Traffic enforcement | 51 | 47 | 26.2 |
| Traffic stop | 1,252 | 1,237 | 469.3 |
| Violation | 85 | 81 | 47.9 |
| Warrant/prisoner | 53 | 53 | 85.2 |
| **Total** | **2,548** | **2,462** | **1,354.9** |

## Observations:

- 2,548 events involved an ERU unit.
  - 2 percent of the events had zero time on scene.
  - 66 percent of all events were police-initiated.
  - 32 percent of all events were community-initiated.
- On average, there were 8.5 calls per day. This was determined by dividing the total number of calls received (2,462 calls) by the number of days worked by units (288 days).
- The total workload averaged 4.7 hours per day.
- 54 percent of calls and 40 percent of work hours were traffic-related.
- 12 percent of calls and 20 percent of work hours were crime calls.

## FIGURE 9-7: Calls per Day by Initiator and Months, ERU




## TABLE 9-8: Calls per Day by Initiator and Months, ERU

| Initiator | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Community-initiated | 1.6 | 1.8 | 1.9 | 3.0 | 6.5 | 4.0 | 1.8 | 4.3 | 2.2 | 2.1 | 2.3 | 2.2 |
| Police-initiated | 7.1 | 8.7 | 4.1 | 5.8 | 7.6 | 5.3 | 4.5 | 3.6 | 6.1 | 2.7 | 5.3 | 7.7 |
| **Total** | **8.7** | **10.5** | **6.0** | **8.8** | **14.1** | **9.3** | **6.2** | **7.9** | **8.3** | **4.8** | **7.6** | **9.9** |
| Days in Month | 21 | 25 | 27 | 29 | 24 | 26 | 24 | 24 | 20 | 21 | 23 | 24 |

## Observations:

- The number of calls per day was the lowest in February.
- The number of calls per day was highest in September.

During the study period, the dispatch center recorded activities for the ERU that were not assigned a call number.

### TABLE 9-9: Activities and Occupied Times by Description, ERU

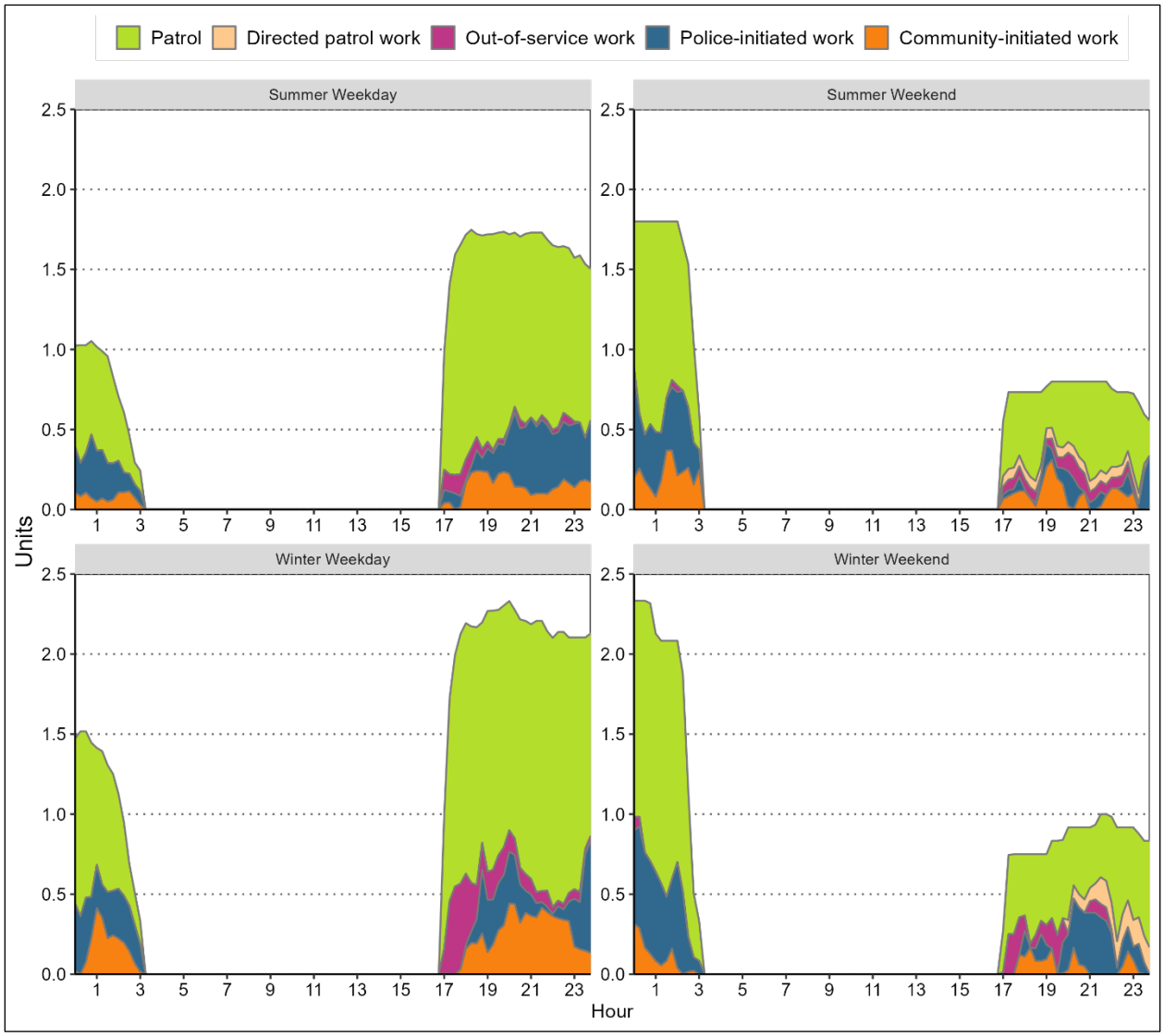
| Description | Occupied Time | Count |
|---|---|---|
| Area check | 10.4 | 13 |
| Busy | 127.3 | 98 |
| Cop | 4.0 | 2 |
| Mechanical | 18.1 | 5 |
| Meeting | 68.5 | 13 |
| Report writing | 62.5 | 23 |
| Roll call | 64.9 | 90 |
| ERT | 14.9 | 1 |
| Meal break | 35.9 | 31 |
| **Weighted Average/Total Calls** | **79.8** | **276** |

## Observations:

- The average number of activities per day was 1.0, calculated by dividing the total number of activities (276) by the number of days the units worked (288).
- The average time spent on these non-call activities was 79.8 minutes.
- The most frequently recorded activities were for "busy."

We examined deployment data for eight weeks in summer (July 7 through August 31, 2022) and eight weeks in winter (January 4 through February 28, 2023), comparing workload against deployment by percentage. ERU personnel were deployed on 10-hour schedules, starting at 5:00 p.m. The following figures shows the ERU's workload on both weekdays and weekends during the two periods.

## FIGURE 9-8: Deployment and All Workload, ERU



## FIGURE 9-9: Workload Percentage by Hour, ERU

## Observations:

### *Summer:*

- Deployment:
  - The average deployment was 1.4 units per hour during the weekdays and 1.0 units per hour on the weekends.
  - Average deployment varied from 0.2 to 1.7 units per hour on weekdays and 0.6 to 1.8 units per hour on weekends.
- Community-initiated work:
  - Average community-initiated workload was 0.1 units per hour during the week and 0.1 units per hour on weekends.
  - This was approximately 9 percent of hourly deployment during the week and 13 percent of hourly deployment on weekends.
  - During the week, workload reached a maximum of 26 percent of deployment between 2:45 a.m. and 3:00 a.m.
  - On weekends, workload reached a maximum of 41 percent of deployment between 3:00 a.m. and 3:15 a.m.
- All work:
  - The average workload was 0.4 units per hour during the week and 0.3 units per hour on weekends.
  - This was approximately 30 percent of hourly deployment during the week and 34 percent of hourly deployment on weekends.
  - During the week, workload reached a maximum of 53 percent of deployment between 2:45 a.m. and 3:00 a.m.
  - On weekends, workload reached a maximum of 66 percent of deployment between 7:00 p.m. and 7:15 p.m.

### *Winter:*

- Deployment:
  - The average deployment was 1.8 units per hour during the weekdays and 1.1 units per hour on weekends.
  - Average deployment varied from 0.3 to 2.3 units per hour on weekdays and 0.3 to 2.3 units per hour on weekends.
- Community-initiated work:
  - Average community-initiated workload was 0.2 units per hour during the week and 0.1 units per hour on weekends.
  - This was approximately 12 percent of hourly deployment during the week and 16 percent of hourly deployment on weekends.

- During the week, workload reached a maximum of 29 percent of deployment between 1:00 a.m. and 1:15 a.m.
- On weekends, workload reached a maximum of 22 percent of deployment between 6:15 p.m. and 6:30 p.m.

- All work:
  - The average workload was 0.6 units per hour during the week and 0.4 units per hour on weekends.
  - This was approximately 31 percent of hourly deployment during the week and 32 percent of hourly deployment on weekends.
  - During the week, workload reached a maximum of 62 percent of deployment between 2:30 a.m. and 2:45 a.m.
  - On weekends, workload reached a maximum of 61 percent of deployment between 9:15 p.m. and 9:30 p.m.

*END*