

Report of the Police Department 2007

The year 2007 showed us a continual change in the where the activity of the department originates from. In a presentation to the Budget Committee in 2004 I advised the committee that a larger percentage of the Calls for Service were coming from the commercial areas along Lafayette Road. Over the past three years this trend has changed and we are experiencing an increased number of calls for service that are initiated from the residential areas in town. Most of the calls from the residential areas are of the Misdemeanor or Violation level crimes, but there was also two Felony Sexual Assaults that were initiated within the residential area. The year 2007 revealed a trend where the calls for service increased substantially, but there are also areas where the numbers slightly decreased. The year 2007 is the first year we actually had the full complement of police officers that were approved in 2005. A fully staffed agency achieved the expected results of a decrease in response times to calls for service, which makes it a safer environment for our residents. As expected, these staffing levels also increased the safety of our officers where they have another North Hampton Officer in town with them that will arrive in a short period of time to back them up.

In 2007 the overall calls for service increased to 11,661, from 9445 in 2006 (+ 23%). At the same time total number of Reportable Accidents (does not include self-reported) increased to 167, from 159 in 2006 (+5%). Investigative cases in 2007 were down slightly dropping from 458 in 2006, to 439 in 2007 (-4%), and this trend also surfaced in the arrests category where the arrests in 2007 totaled 323, which is down slightly from 2006 where total arrests was 345 (-6%). On-view arrests, i.e. crimes or violations in progress increased from 215 in 2006 to 221 in 2007. The remaining arrests are categorized as "warrant arrests," which are disposed by follow-up investigation by the Detective Division or the Patrol Division. In 2007 there were 102 such arrests, compared to 129 in 2006. Outside of overall calls for service, these numbers are relatively consistent from 2006 to 2007, but these figures are considerably high where they are compounded by the increases over the last three calendar years.

In 2007 the efforts of Officer Michael Oliveira paid off after completion of the final version of the School Safety Plan, and we began conducting lockdown drills with the school. The collaboration and cooperation between the school administration and our department was extremely important in completing this plan. We have a great deal of confidence that this plan will keep the children and the staff at the school as safe as possible in the event of an internal event at the school, or even an external event that may occur in the immediate area of the school. In early 2008, it is the intention of our department, in unison with the school, to have a parent's night at the school. This will give us the opportunity to explain the School Safety Plan, and have a question and answer session as to what to do if the school is in lockdown during dismissal time, or if there is an event where the children have to be released early because of an emergency. I expect that we will do another lockdown drill, and an offsite evacuation of the school prior to the end of the school year in 2008. Although we consider the plan to be complete, it will continue to take a considerable time obligation by the police department and the school in

order to conduct drills and maintain the plan. I would like to thank Peter Sweet and the entire staff at the school for their patience, and their obvious dedication to this important process. In addition, I would like to thank the North Hampton School Board, and the Administration at the school for allowing Officer Oliveira to spend considerably more time inside the school on other programs in addition to DARE classes. Officer Oliveira and I have both noticed how much more comfortable the children are with the presence of the police officers in their uniforms when we stop by at the school. Because of our increased presence at the school, neither the children nor the staff feels that there is some type of problem at the school just because there is an officer in attendance. I would be remiss if I did not also thank Chief Lambert and the Fire and Rescue Department for the input and assistance they provided for the School Safety Plan.

On December 8, 2007 we also had our annual visit from Santa Claus, which took place at the Old Town Hall next to the police department. According to the feedback I have received from persons in attendance at the Santa visit, I once again can say that this event was a huge success. Without the incredible efforts of North Hampton's Recreation Director Diane Wheeler, and volunteers from the Recreation Commission, this visit from the North Pole probably would not be as successful as it is year after year. With the known number of children who actually met with Santa, we can once again feel confident that this event exceeded the attendance of 2006.

As always, I would again like to take this opportunity to thank the residents of North Hampton for their never-ending support, and also to remind them to call us if they see anything they consider dangerous or suspicious. The success of any police agency relies greatly on the eyes and ears of the public so please do not hesitate to call and make us aware of your concerns. We would prefer to receive your call, and find that there was not a crime being committed, than to not get a call and then discover that there was a crime committed and we were unable to intervene while it was in progress.

Brian P. Page
Chief of Police