



SASKATOON POLICE SERVICE

TO: Shirley Greyeyes, Chairperson
Board of Police Commissioners

FROM: Dave Haye
Office of the Chief

DATE: 2024 May 05

SUBJECT: Contact Interview Policy & Audit- 2023

FILE #: 2001-1

ISSUE:

This audit report summarizes compliance with the Saskatoon Police Service’s policy on contact interviews for 2023.

RECOMMENDATION:

This report be received as information.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY:

This initiative assists the Saskatoon Police Service (SPS) in meeting its goals to;

- Ensure accessibility and enhance communication with the public to maintain transparency and public trust, and
- Enrich the relationships between the SPS and the many diverse communities it serves, as stated in the Strategic and Business Plans.

BACKGROUND:

In late 2018, the Saskatchewan Police Commission disseminated new provincial policy regarding contact interviews, along with a training video from the Saskatchewan Police College; these items were presented to SPS members in November and December of that year. Internal training was subsequently developed to explain the new policy and provide guidance on how contact interviews should be properly conducted. Members assigned to Patrol and Criminal Investigations received this instruction during in-service training days in March and April of 2019.

It was determined that an annual audit of contact interviews would occur and the results would be prepared in a report for the Board of Police Commissioners.

DISCUSSION:

Contact interviews are defined as a contact with the public that has been initiated by a member of the SPS for the purpose of obtaining information. During a contact interview the purpose of obtaining the information is not related to a specific incident or offence and must be more than general information common to the community.

Contact Interview Authorization

SPS Policy provides three authorized reasons for initiating a contact interview.

1. The lack of any apparent reason for the person to be in a particular area.
2. The person's actions, behavior or demeanor raise a concern regarding his/her purpose or safety.
3. The person appears lost, confused, frightened or in need of assistance.

Contact Interview Prohibition

SPS Policy prohibits the initiation of a contact interview solely based on a person's presence in an area known to experience high levels of criminal activity and/or victimization. Contact interviews may not be conducted on a random or arbitrary basis.

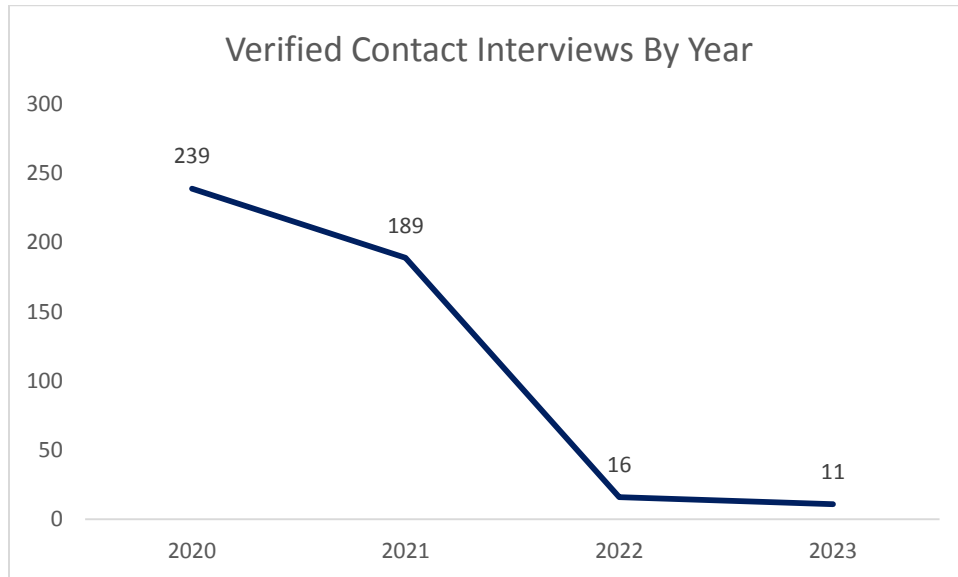
Contact interviews may only be conducted in a manner that respects and protects the rights of the public as defined by Canadian and Provincial human rights legislation. These include but are not limited to a person's race, colour, religion, gender, gender identity, physical disability, mental disability or socio-economic status.

Policy describes appropriate conduct of a contact interview, stressing the overall concern for Charter compliance, the voluntary nature of contact interviews, and the applicability of contact interviews to community safety. Policy also notes that officer demeanor and communication skills are highly related to the ability to appropriately conduct a contact interview, and that all such interviews must be noted and submitted to the police database, listing the required points of notation to include date and time, location, identity of the person, description, duration of contact, and the information gathered.

Statistical Review / 2023 Submitted Contact Interviews

Total Contact Interview Submissions		
26	Reports Submitted as Contact Interviews	
11	Reports Verified to be Contact Interviews	42%
15	Reports Not Deemed to be Contact Interviews	58%

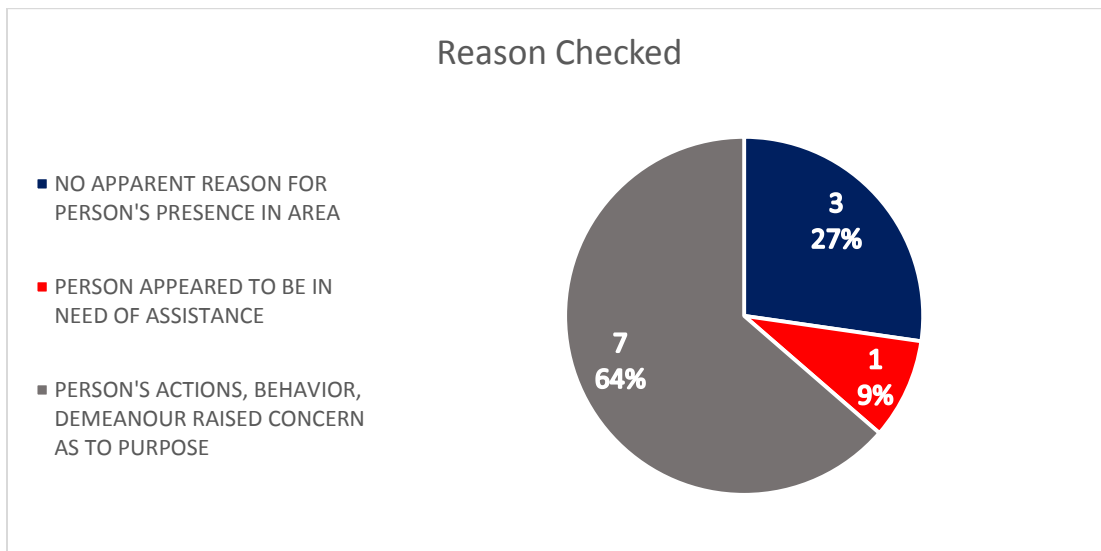
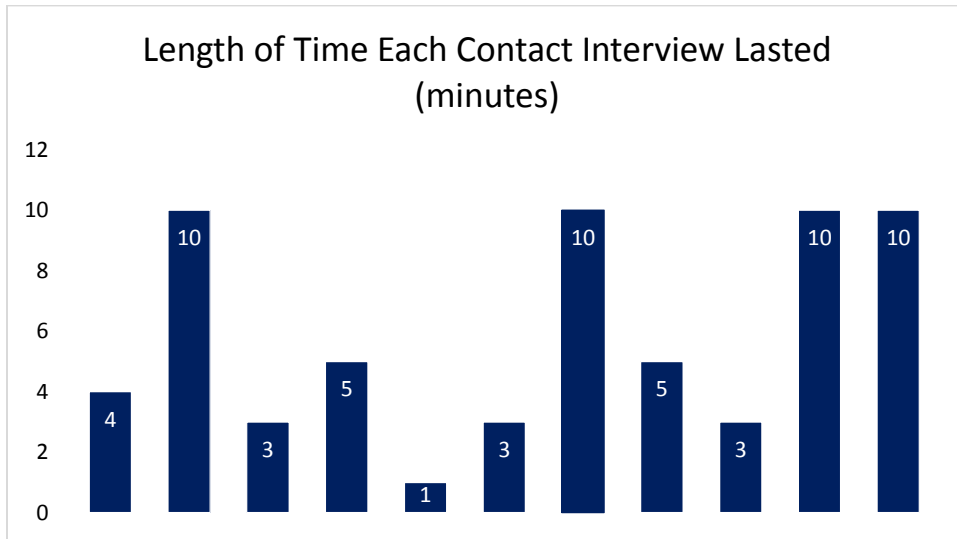
Reports Not Deemed to be Contact Interview		
2	No Contact Made with Subject	8%
2	Clerical error	8%
3	Active Investigation or Call Response	12%
8	Statutory Authority to Contact the Subject	31%



Key Findings:

- 2023 saw a slight reduction from 16 to 11 verified contact interviews.
- 58% of reports submitted as contact interviews were deemed to not fit the requirements. This is a reduction in comparison to 2022 where 72% were deemed to not fit the requirements.
- The majority of reports that are excluded continue to be attributed to members having statutory authority to contact the subject (31%) but this is also a reduction in comparison to 2022 (44%).

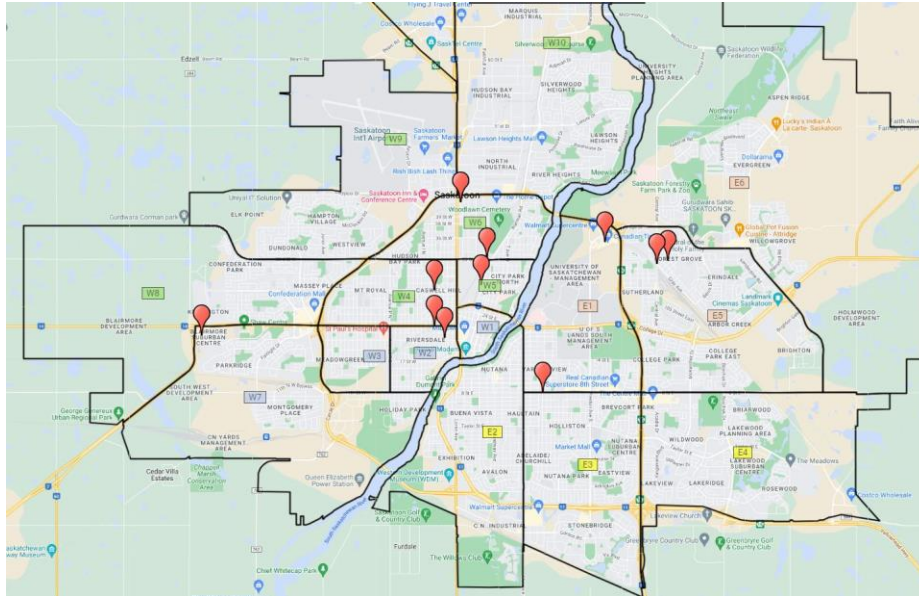
Contact Details



Key Findings:

- In the majority of contact interviews, the manner of contact consists of officer(s) speaking with a single individual, on foot.
- Almost 2/3rd of the contact interviews were made due to a person’s actions, behaviour or demeanor raising concern as to their purpose.
- The average amount of time that a contact interview lasted was 5.8 minutes, with none of the contact interviews lasting more than 10 minutes.

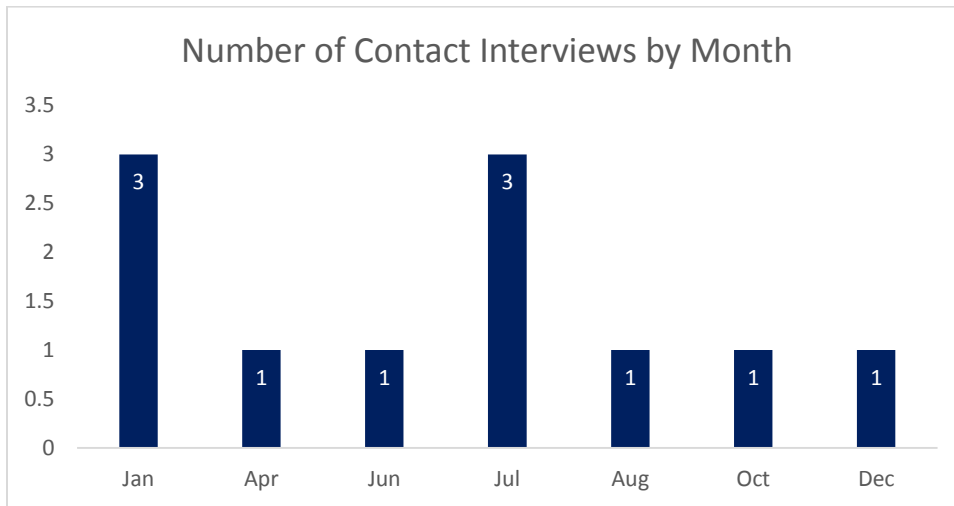
Geographic Distribution

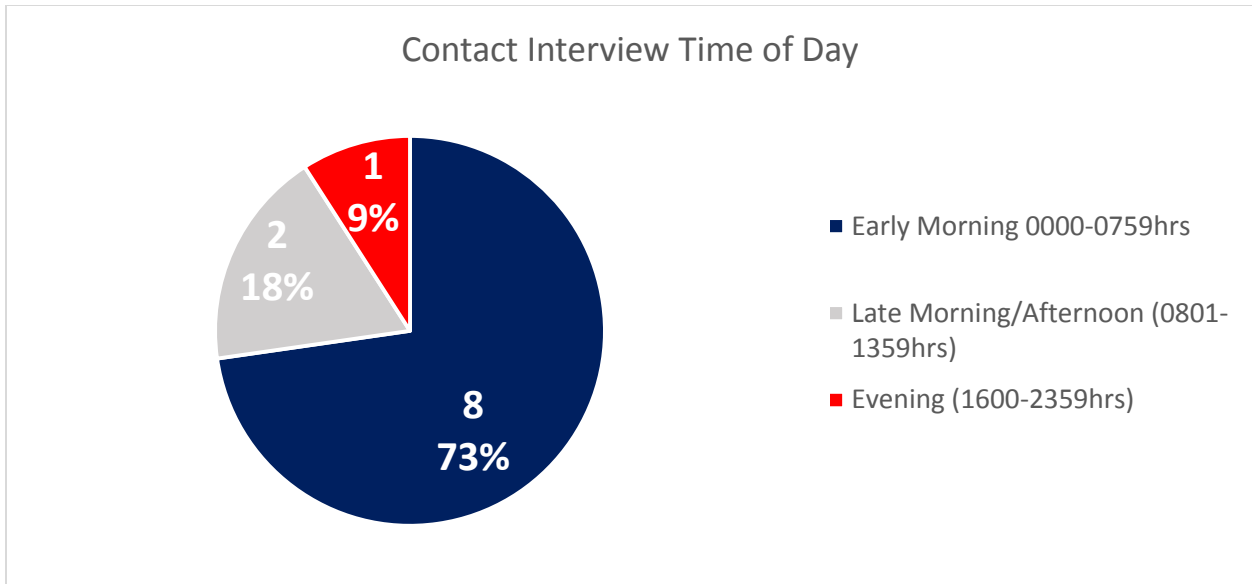


Key Findings:

- Contact interviews are distributed over different neighbourhoods and police patrol districts.
- No identifiable trend.

Temporal Distribution





Key Findings:

Contact Interviews are distributed throughout the year, with only July and January showing three per month while either one or zero contact interviews occurred during the remaining months. The vast majority of contact interviews happen between midnight and 8am.

Bias Assessment & Policy Audit Process

Each contact interview submitted from January 1, 2023 to December 31, 2023 was reviewed to ensure the submission constituted a contact interview. As previously noted, 15 submissions were deemed to not constitute a contact interview due to clerical errors, instances where officers had statutory authority to have contact or that the officer’s involvement was a result of a call from the public, or were engaged in an active investigation.

Those submissions verified as contact interviews were further reviewed to ensure the reports were compliant with SPS Policy and Procedure and the interaction were consistent with the three types of approved contacts and that details were provided to support those contacts.

In October of 2023 members of Patrol were provided Contact Interview Training that included a discussion of the Provincial legislation, definitions, prohibitions and authorizations.

Key Findings:

- One instance was noted where insufficient information on the reason for the contact was provided.
- None of the contact interviews were conducted on prohibited grounds.

Bias Assessment

Contact interviews were reviewed to ensure compliance relating to any apparent explicit or implicit bias, exclusive language or offensive terms. None of the Contact interviews were conducted on prohibited grounds.

CONCLUSION:

Saskatoon police officers remain active in conducting contact interviews and compliance to policy remains high. However, the total numbers of contact interviews being conducted has continued to decline following the implementation of current policy.

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