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March 31, 2010

To: Members,
Board of Police Commissioners

Re: Year-End Crime Statistics Comparison 2000-2009

BACKGROUND

Twice each year the Regina Police Service (RPS) provides an analysis of reported crime over the previous ten-year period. This report compares data compiled from January 1 to December 31 for the period of 2000 through 2009.

DISCUSSION

Measuring crime statistics and their changes over time is an effective method of identifying patterns or trends. The RPS gathers data in the same manner each year, allowing for reliable analyses of crime within the city over time. Absolute crime counts¹, rather than crime rates, are the basis of this analysis. This report analyzes crime patterns within Regina over a ten-year period. These statistics are not intended for comparison with other jurisdictions that may use different methodologies or have different reporting criteria. The Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics (CCJS) provides a comparative analysis of major Canadian centers in July of each year.

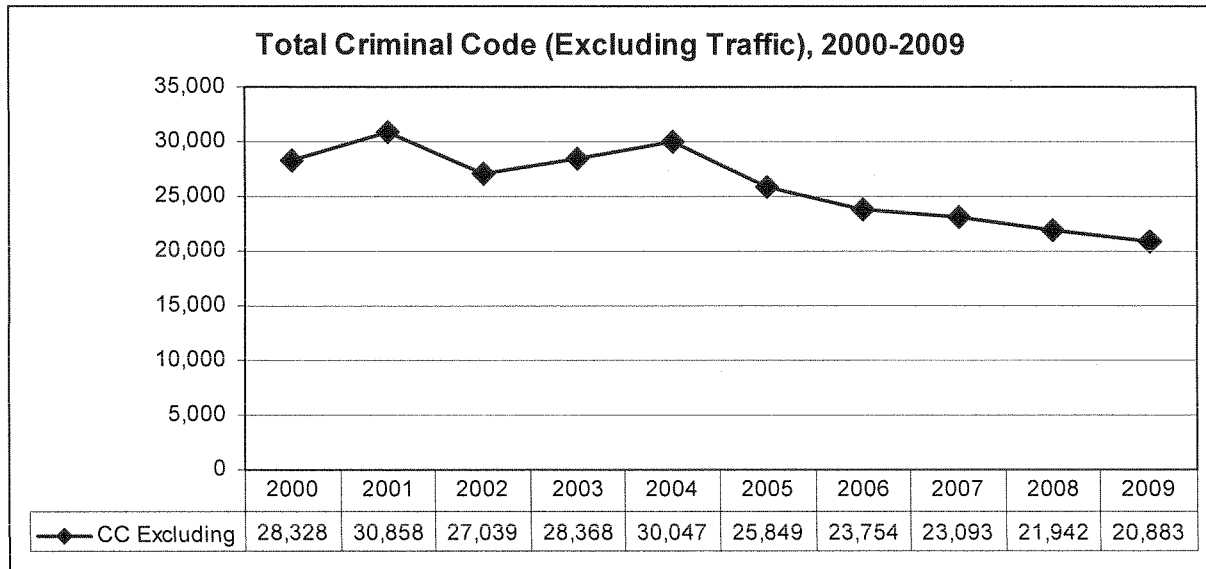
OVERVIEW

Overall reported crime in Regina continued to trend downwards in 2009 with a 26.3% reduction since 2000 and a 4.8% reduction since 2008. Property Crimes in particular have reduced over the last ten years, including significant reductions in Motor Vehicle Thefts, Break and Enters, and Thefts. Reported Property Crimes that increased over the course of the decade include Mischief / Willful Damage and Arson. Crimes Against the Person, or Violent Crimes, also decreased over the past decade, including reductions in Common Assaults, Assaults with a Weapon or Causing Bodily Harm, and Sexual Offences. Crimes Against the Person that increased over the past decade include Aggravated Assaults and Robberies.

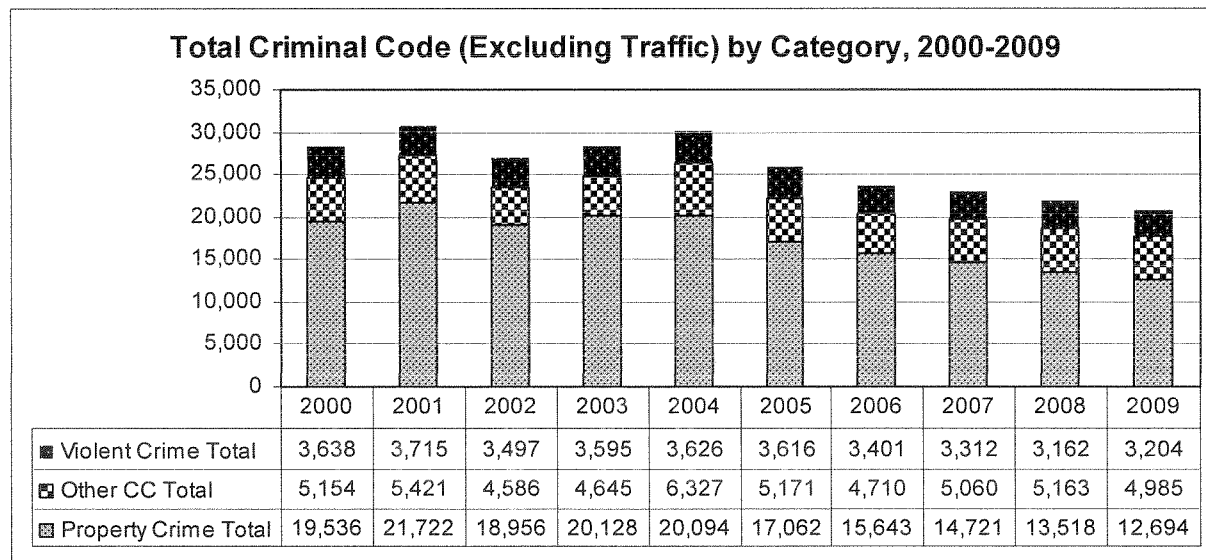
¹ For consistency, the crime counts for this report were drawn from the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) tables, as developed for Statistics Canada. This is an occurrence-based crime tracking system which counts the most serious offence rather than the total number of crimes and/or number of victims. This differs slightly from previous practice that took numbers directly from our year-end Statistical Extract which contains a mix of statistics based on UCR criteria and straight counts of all occurrences. Data sources other than the UCR tables are utilized for some tables when appropriate.

Total Crime

There was 4.8% less total reported crime in 2009 than in 2008 and 26.3% less than in 2000. According to CCJS data, the number of crimes reported to RPS in 2009 was the lowest since 1980.

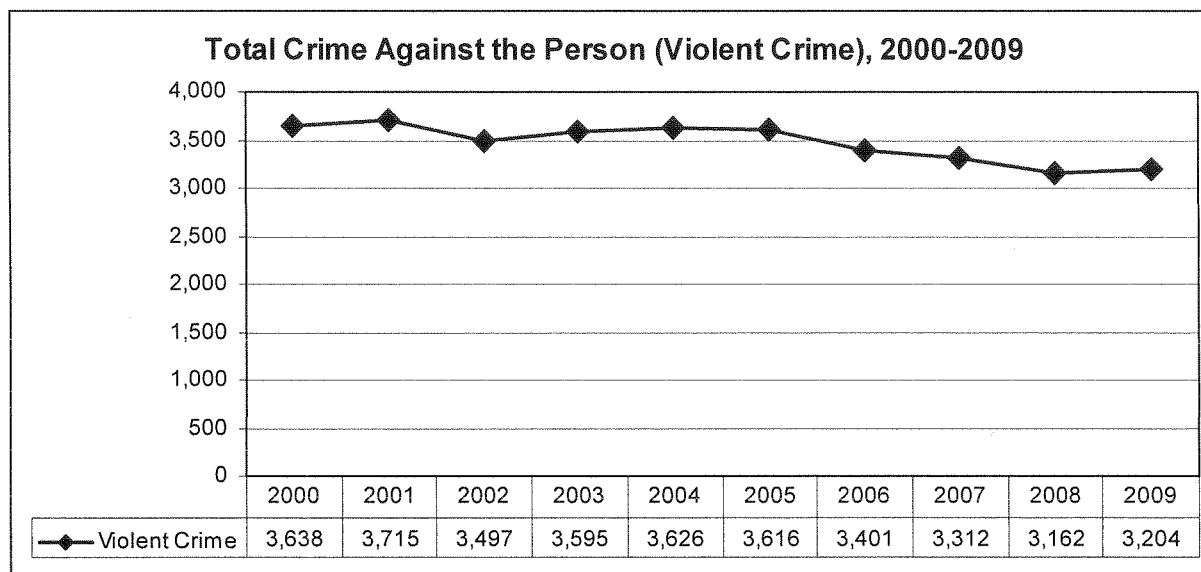


Total Crime includes all Crimes Against the Person (Violent Crime) and Crimes Against Property, as well as those reports generated by the RPS in relation to procedural and other enforcement-related categories (Other Criminal Code Violations). It does not include Criminal Code traffic offences or the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act.

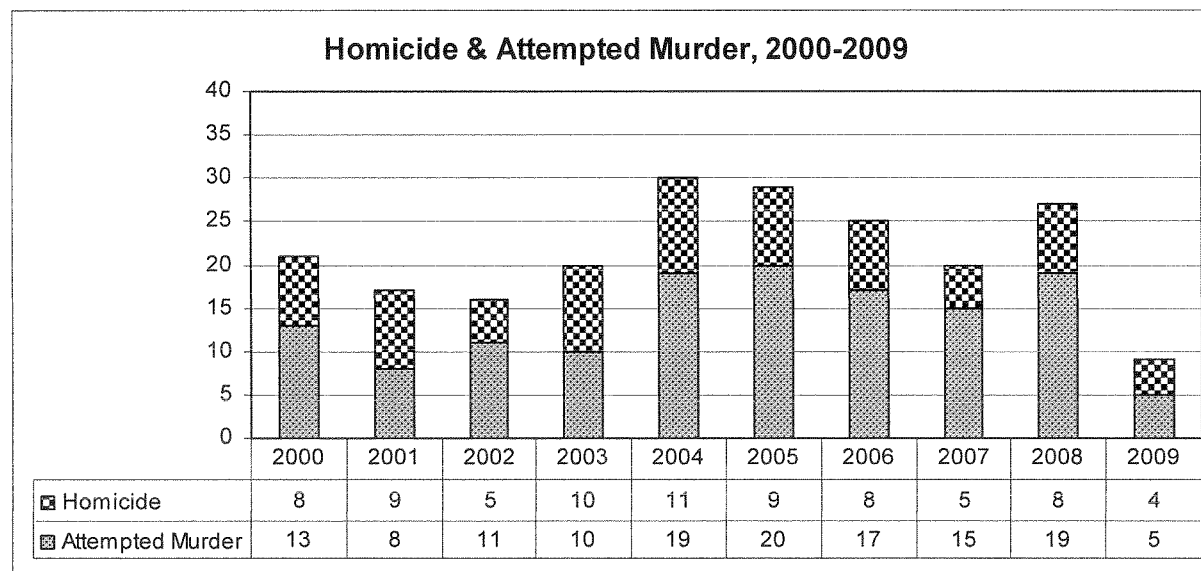


Crime Against the Person (Violent Crime)

The total number of reported Crimes Against the Person increased by 1.3% from 2008 to 2009, but there were 11.9% fewer in 2009 than in 2000.



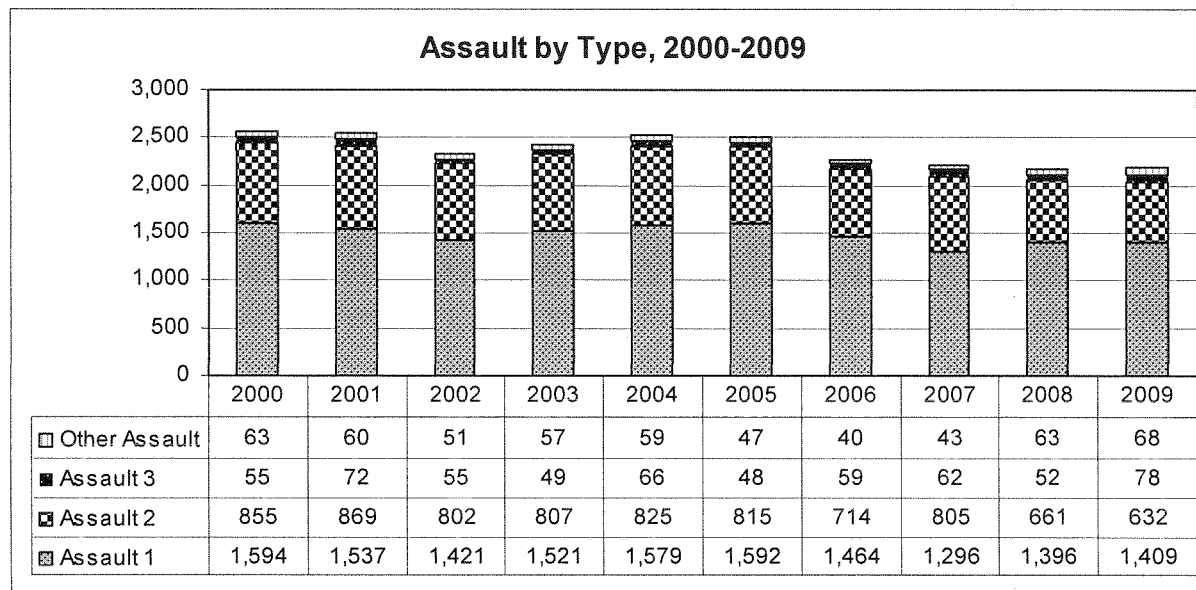
There were four Homicides² and five Attempted Murders reported in 2009, which is the lowest amount for either offence in the past ten years.³ The average number of Homicides per year over this period was 7.7 and the average number of Attempted Murders was 13.7.



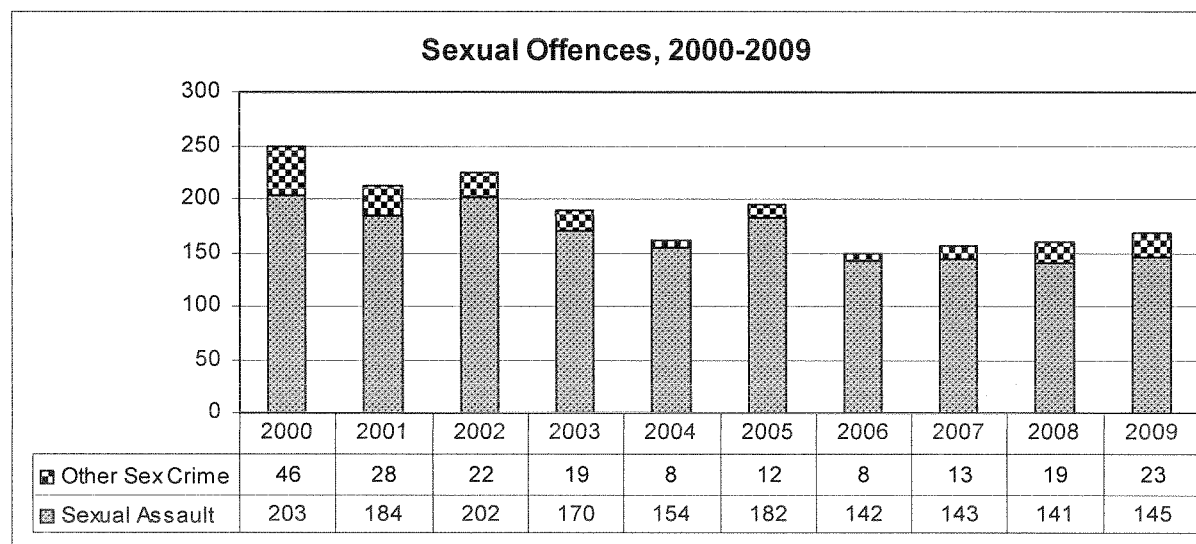
² One of the four homicides in 2009 was previously categorized as a suspicious death and was not concluded as a homicide until March 2010. The year-end statistics for 2009 provided in January 2010 still indicated that there were three homicides that year. Less than 1% of incidents are eventually re-categorized based on new information or evidence from further investigation. These changes can cause some disparity on crime counts tabulated on different dates, which can be conspicuous in crime categories with low counts such as homicide.

³ Since Regina has relatively few homicides or attempted murders in any given year, a slight change in the count would be represented by a dramatic *percentage* change that would only exaggerate the difference. Percentage changes will therefore not be utilized in this report when discussing crime types with relatively low counts.

Total reported Assaults have decreased by 14.8% since 2000. There were less occurrences of each of Assault 1 (Common Assault) and Assault 2 (Assault with a Weapon or Causing Bodily Harm) in 2009 than in 2000, though Assault 1 began to increase again in 2008. Assault 3 (Aggravated Assault) and Other Assault⁴ are at their highest in the past ten years, though the trends had peaks and valleys over the course of the decade.



Sexual Assaults⁵ decreased from 2000 to 2009 by 28.6 %. There were half as many Other Sexual Crimes⁶ in 2009 as there were in 2000, though the pattern for that category has been erratic due to the relatively low number of occurrences in a given year.

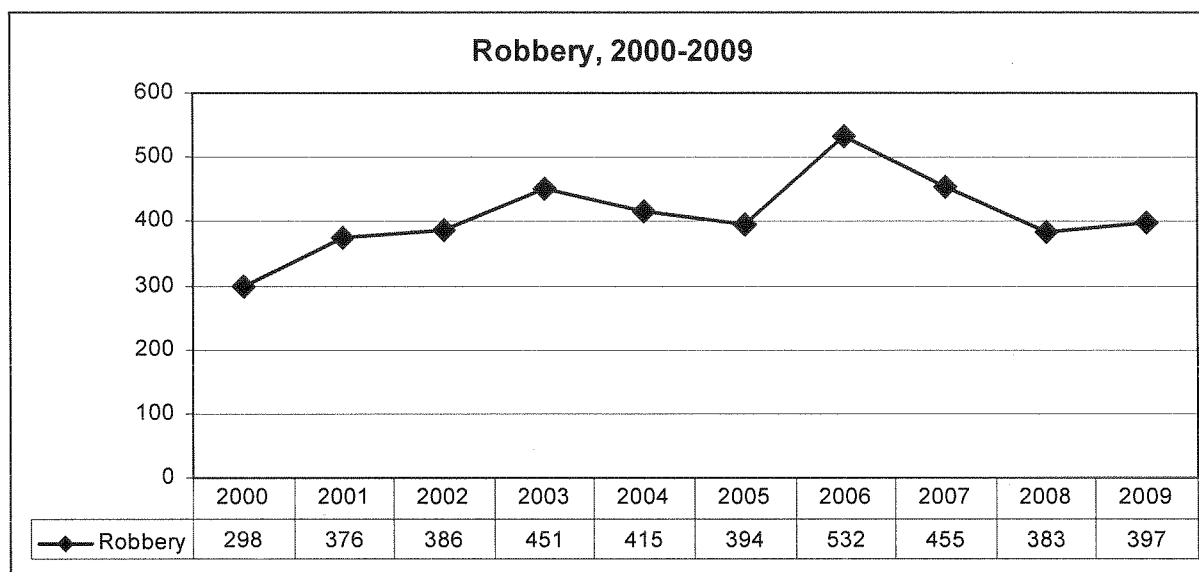


⁴ Over the last ten years, 73% of all Other Assaults have been Assaults Against Peace / Public Officer, though this proportion varied from year-to-year. The number of Assaults Against Peace / Public Officer per year over the last ten years has ranged from a low of 34 in 2006 to a high of 47 in 2004. There were 45 in 2009.

⁵ The crime category Sexual Assault includes: sexual assault, sexual assault with a weapon, and aggravated sexual assault.

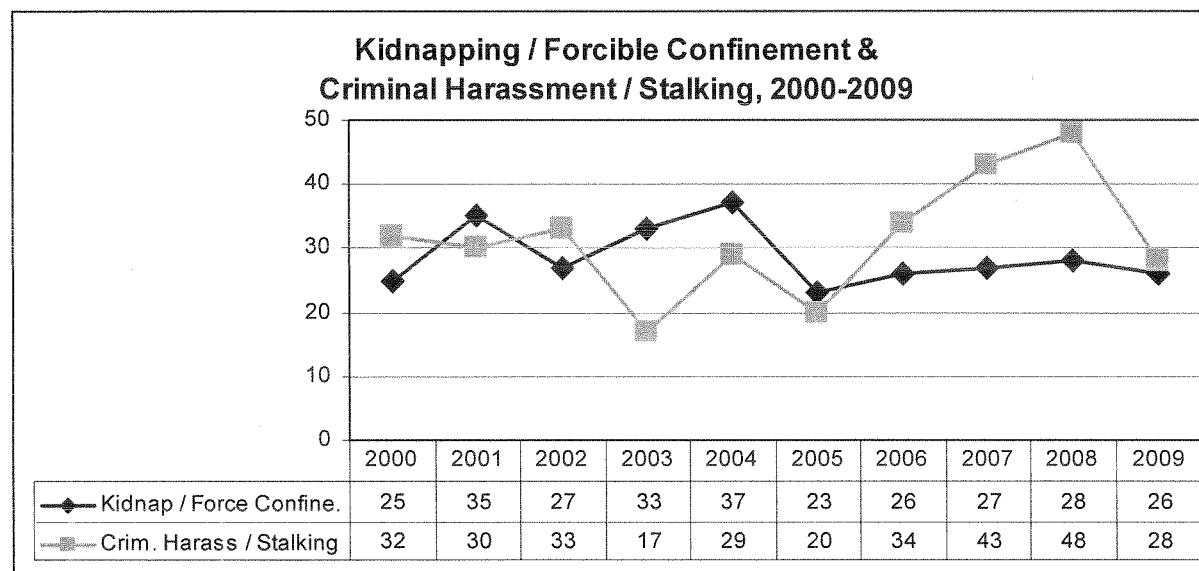
⁶ The crime category Other Sexual Crime includes (though this is not an exhaustive list): sexual interference, invitation to sexual touching, luring a child via a computer, and voyeurism.

The number of reported Robberies in 2009 was 33.2% greater than in 2000 and 3.7% greater than in 2008. Robberies continue to be a noted issue for the RPS and several targeted initiatives have been implemented in the continuing strategy to address the problem.



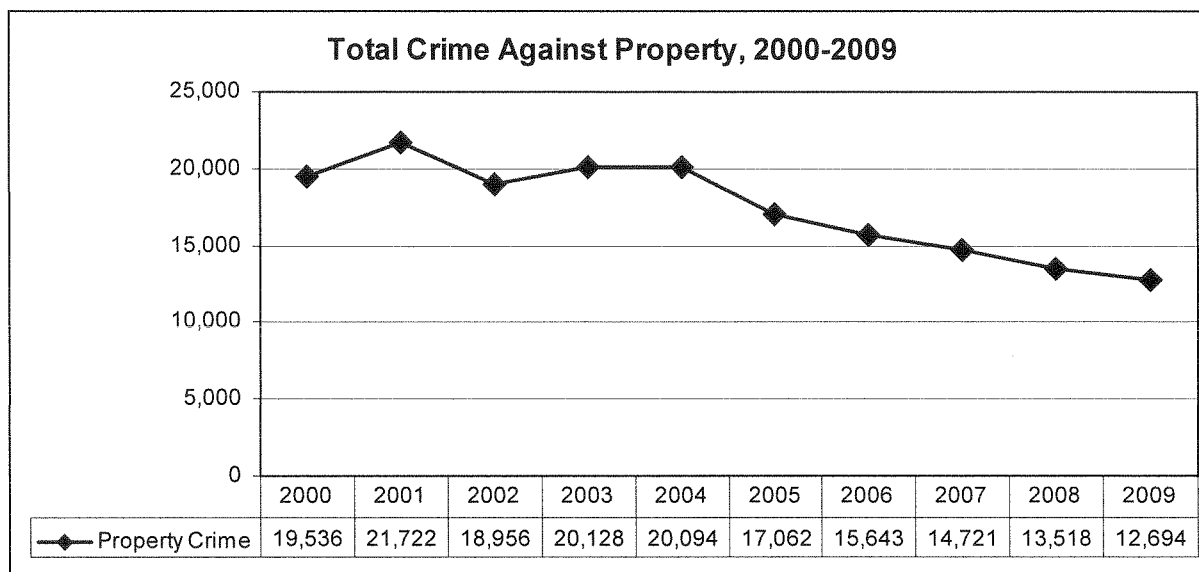
The category of Kidnapping / Forcible Confinement was relatively stable over the past decade, with a count of 23 to 28 occurrences in seven of the ten years.

Following a four-year increase in reported occurrences of Criminal Harassment / Stalking from 2005 to 2008, the count dropped by 20 from 2008 to 2009. The previous increase would have been partially attributable to the proactive investigative work by the Regina Police Service's Domestic Violence Co-ordinator. The Domestic Violence Co-ordinator has, since 2006, focused on repeat domestic incidents and, when appropriate, has worked with the victim and Family Services Regina to lay charges of harassment / stalking in attempts to protect victims from further abuse.

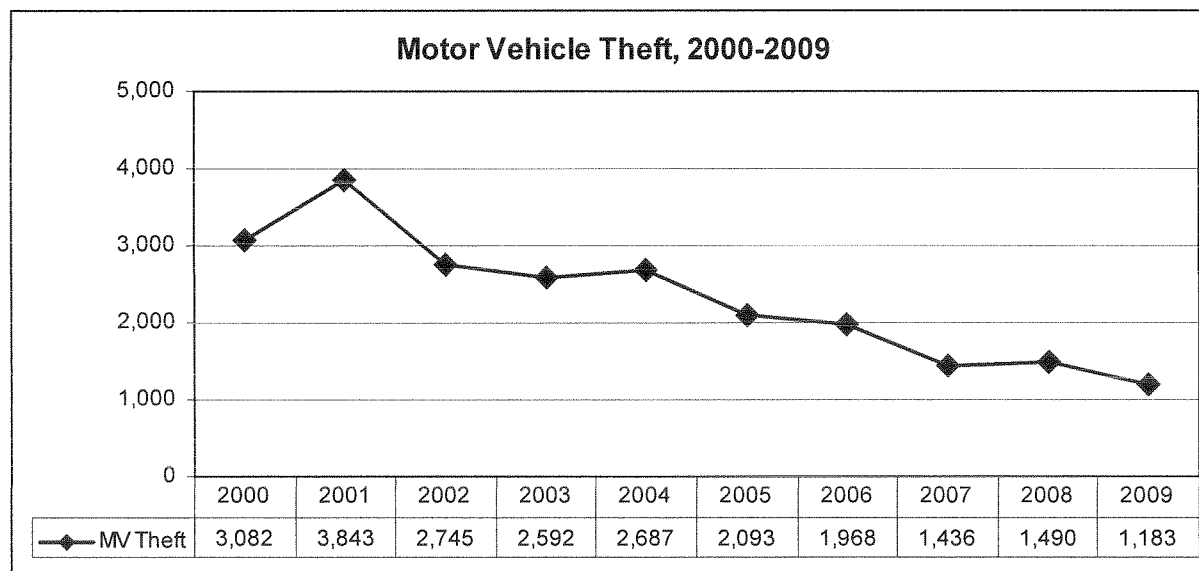


Crimes Against Property

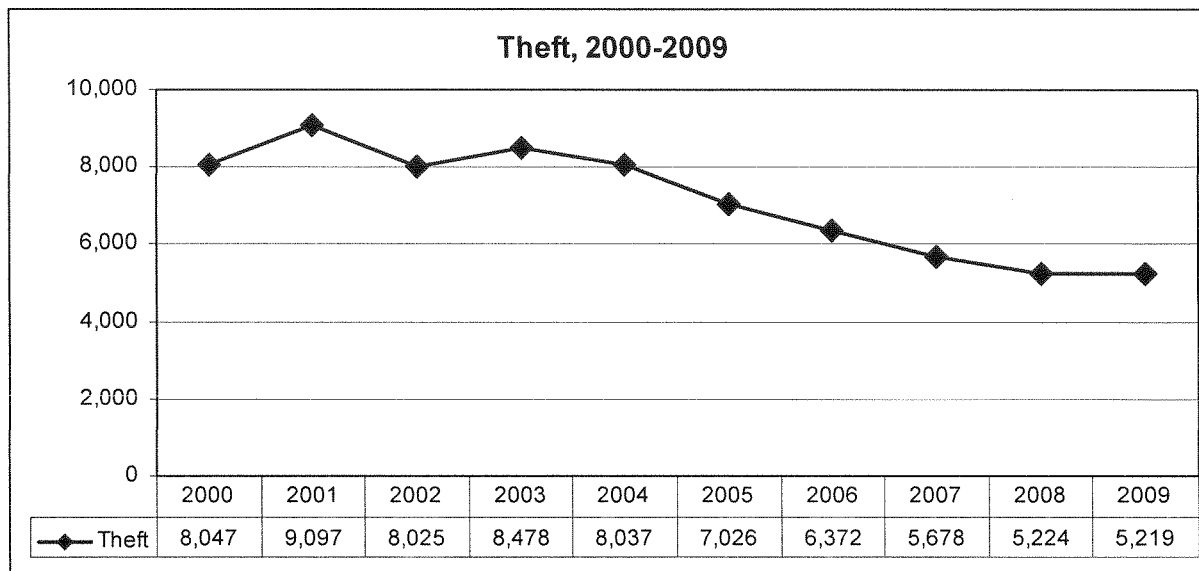
Reported Crimes Against Property continue to decline. There were 35.0% fewer Property Crimes in 2009 than in 2000 and 6.1% fewer than in 2008.



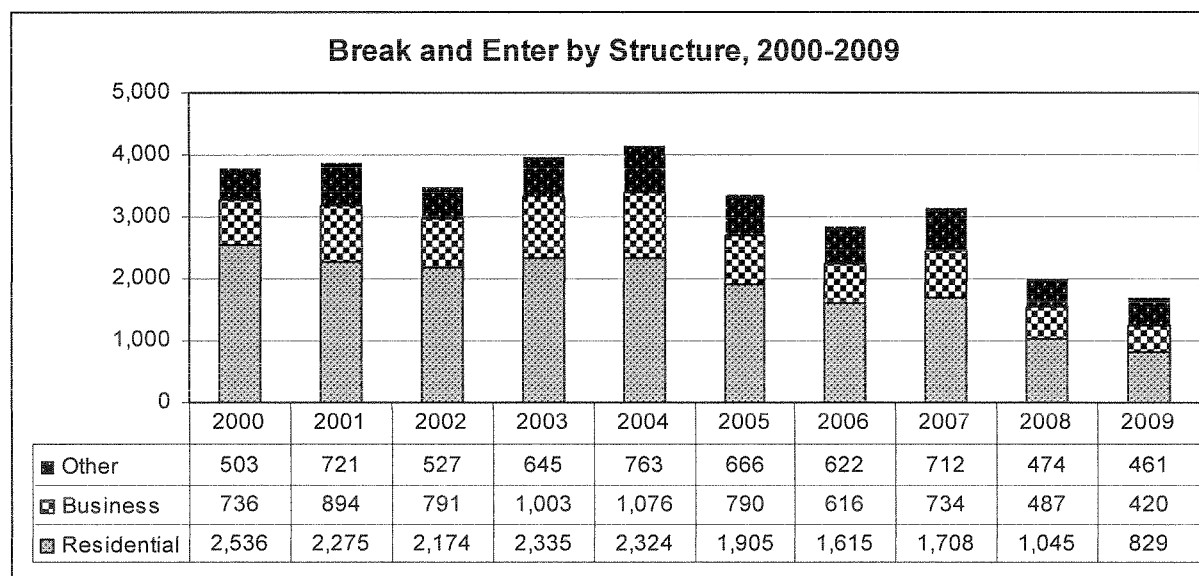
There were 61.6% fewer reported Motor Vehicle Thefts in 2009 than in 2000, 69.2% fewer than the peak in 2001, and 20.6% fewer than in 2008. This trend demonstrates the continuing success of the Regina Auto Theft Strategy.



There were 35.1% fewer reported Thefts⁷ in 2009 than in 2000. There was essentially no change from 2008 to 2009.

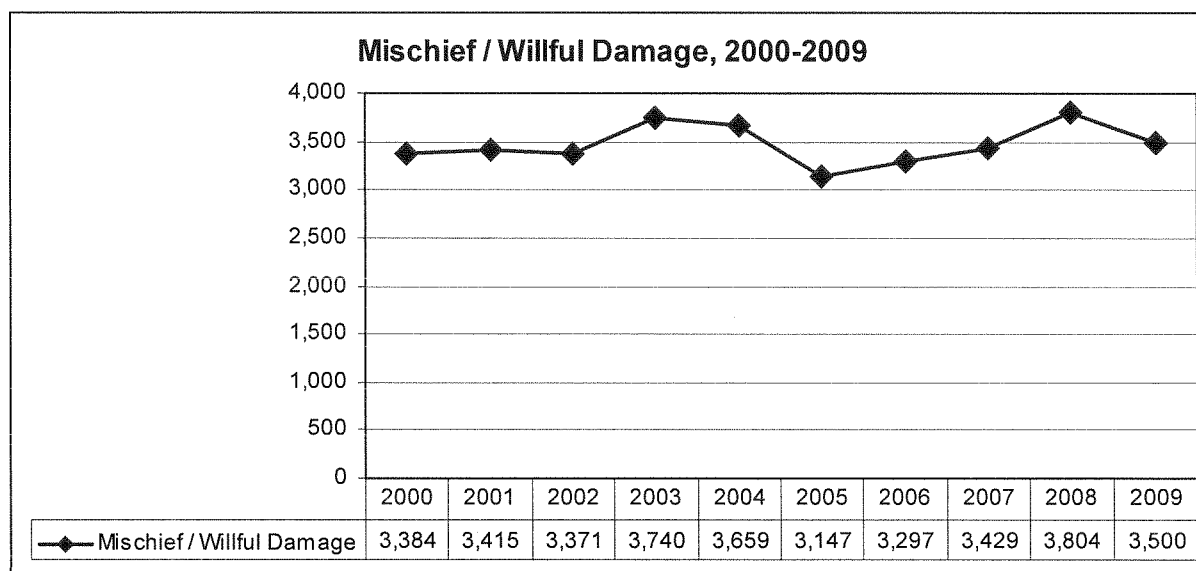


There have been significant reductions in the number of Break and Enters over the past decade, particularly to residences and businesses: total Break and Enters decreased by 54.7%, Residential Break and Enters decreased by 67.3%, Business Break and Enters decreased by 42.9% and Break and Enters to other structures decreased by 8.3%. Moreover, there were fewer Break and Enters of all three types in 2009 than in 2008. A reduction strategy, modeled after the Regina Auto Theft Strategy, was implemented following the increase in Break and Enters from 2006 to 2007.

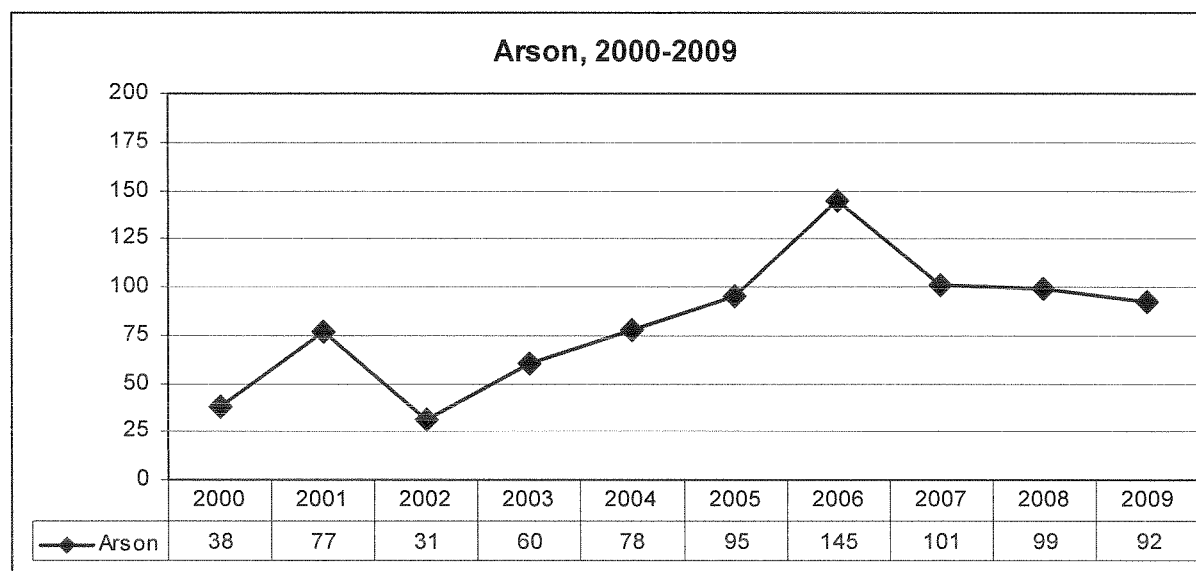


⁷ The crime category Theft includes: Theft Over/Under \$5,000, Shoplifting Over/Under \$5,000, and Theft from Auto Over/Under \$5,000.

There were 3.4% more reported occurrences of Mischief / Willful Damage in 2009 than in 2000, despite an 8.0% decrease since 2008. There was a steady increase from 2005 to 2008 before the drop in 2009. This previous increase may have been partially attributable to the initiatives of the City of Regina and the RPS to encourage public reporting of Graffiti.⁸



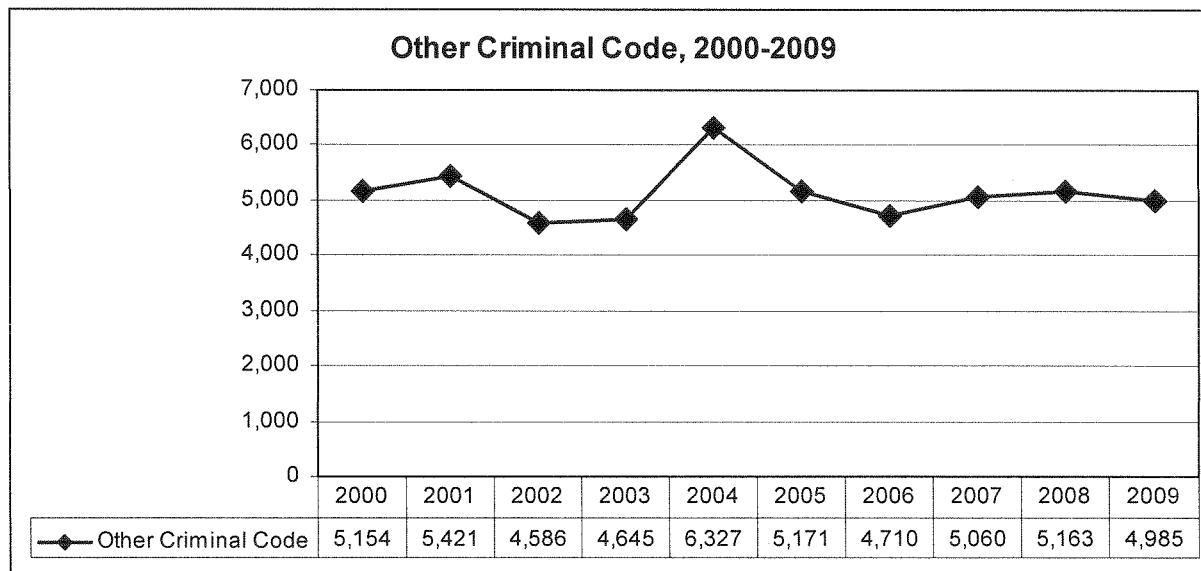
There were 54 more reports of Arson in 2009 than in 2000, though 2009 had the lowest count since 2004. One offender was responsible for most of the Arson occurrences in the peak year of 2006.



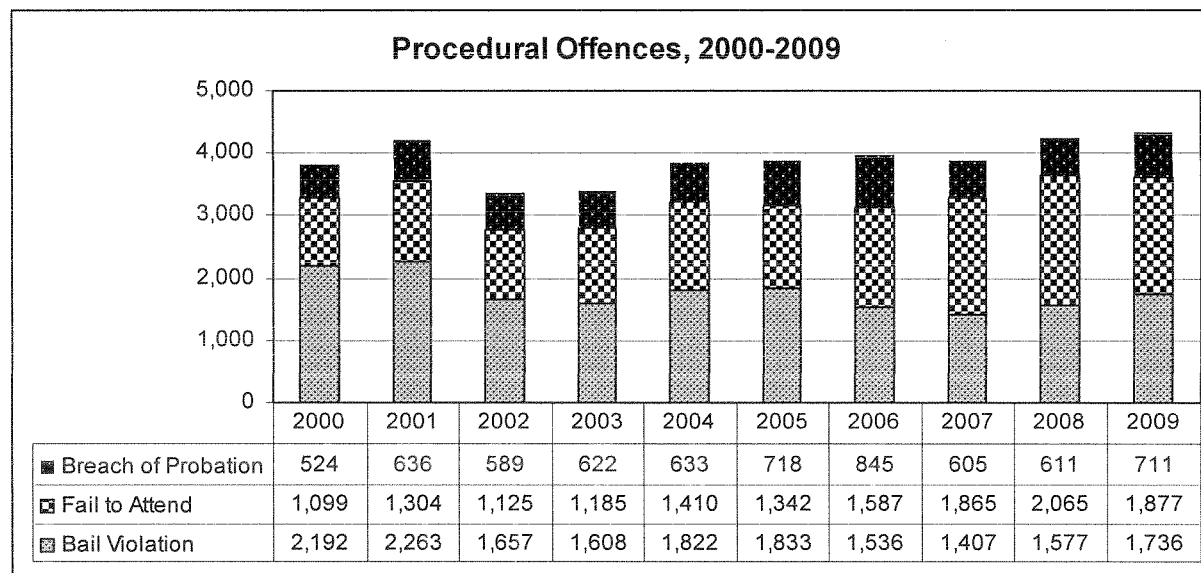
⁸ According to IEIS, roughly 15% of the reported Mischief / Willful Damage in 2009 were graffiti.

Other Criminal Code Violations

With the exception of 2004⁹, Other Criminal Code Violations¹⁰ were fairly stable over the past decade. There were 3.3% fewer in 2009 than in 2000 and 3.4% fewer than in 2008.



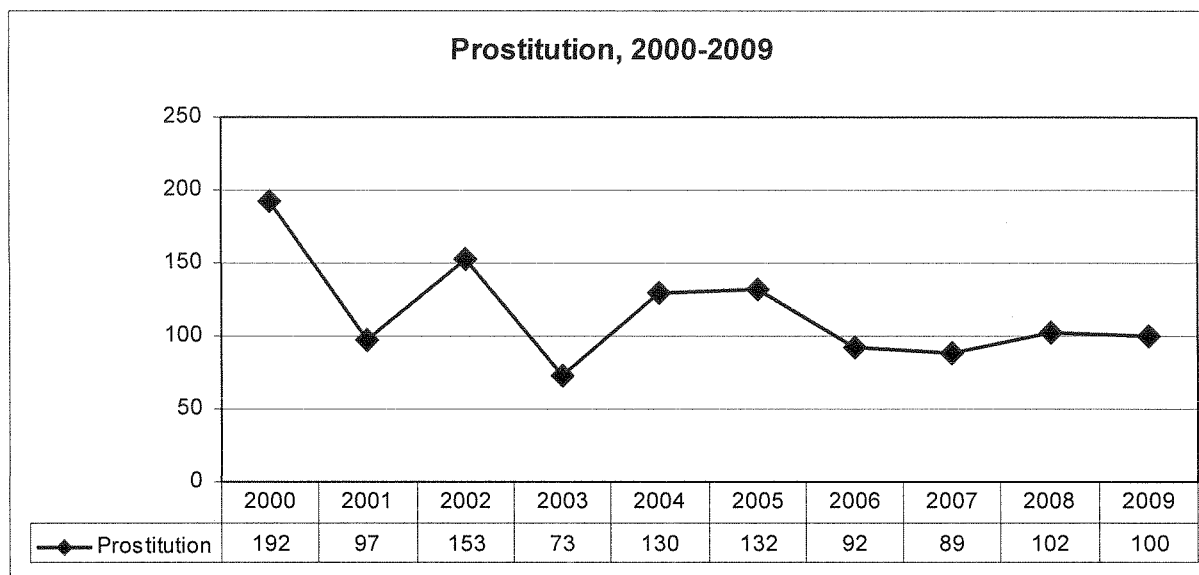
Procedural offences make up a large portion of Other Criminal Code Violations and that proportion is becoming greater. Breach of Probation, Fail to Attend Court, and Bail Violations combined to account for 86.7% of all Other Criminal Code Violations in 2009, which is a higher proportion of the total than in any previous year. The increase in procedural offences can partly be explained by the usage of curfew checks on select offenders as part of the strategies to reduce Auto Thefts and Break and Enters.



⁹ The peak in 2004 is a result of a relatively large number of counterfeiting currency occurrences in that year.

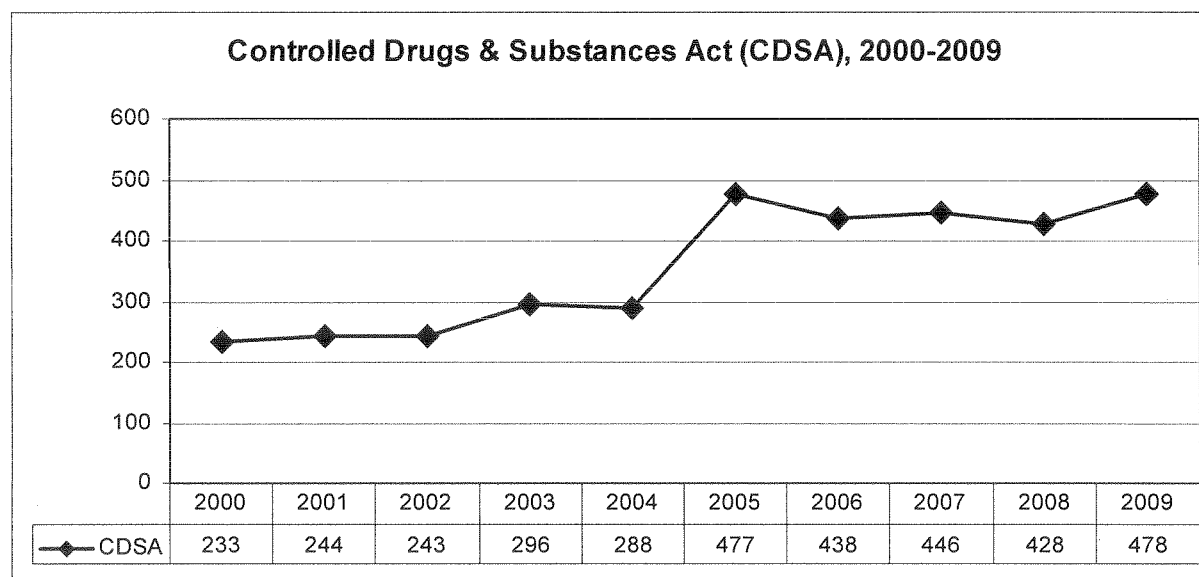
¹⁰ The crime category Other Criminal Code Violations includes: procedural violations, offensive weapons violations, prostitution, counterfeiting currency, and gaming and betting.

There were 100 Prostitution¹¹ occurrences in 2009, less than the annual average over the past ten years (116.0). There were 92 fewer occurrences in 2009 than in 2000.



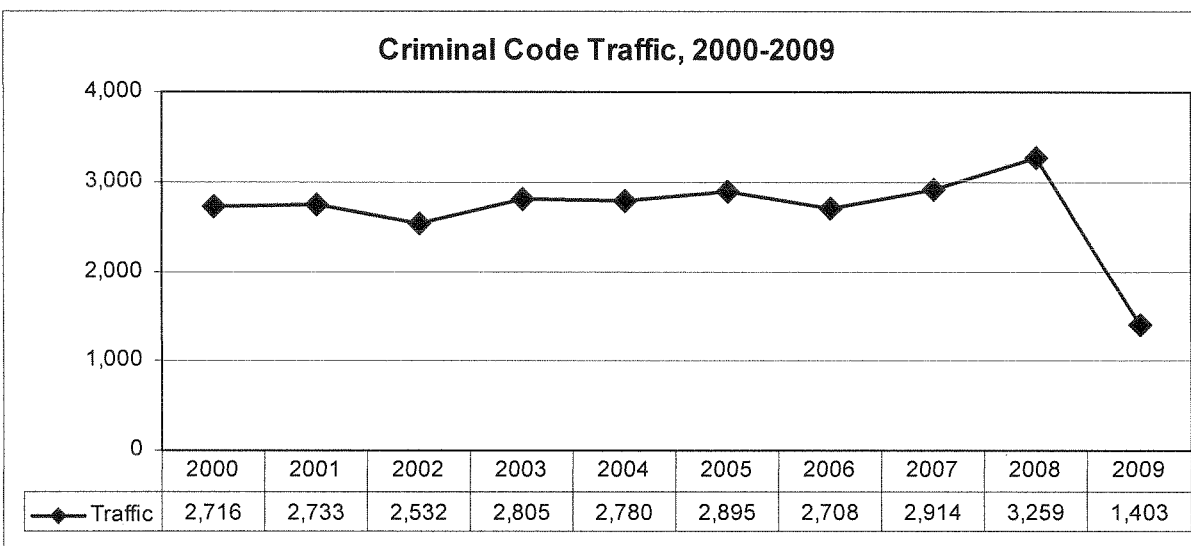
Controlled Drugs & Substances Act (CDSA) & Traffic

There was a 105.2% increase¹¹ in occurrences under the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act (CDSA) from 2000 to 2009. The first five years and the final five years of the decade were each relatively stable with a sharp increase from 2004 to 2005.

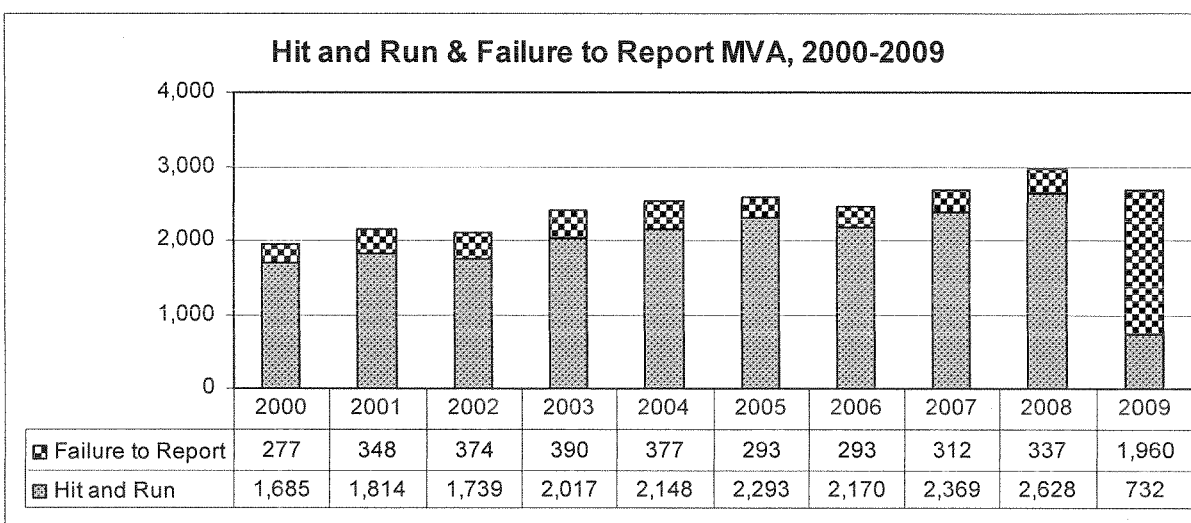


¹¹ The December Statistical Extract from each year was utilized to count the occurrences of prostitution and CDSA instead of the UCR tables. The UCR tables report the most serious offence in an occurrence. Offenders who receive prostitution or drug charges tend to also be charged with procedural violations. Such occurrences would be categorized under the procedural violations in the UCR tables and, therefore, the total prostitution and CDSA occurrences would appear artificially low.

The number of Criminal Code Traffic offences had been on a fairly steady increase over the decade until 2009. The sharp decrease is a result of changes in how RPS processes complaints of unexplained vehicular damage (i.e., dents, scrapes, scratches, or dings). Previous to 2009, these reports were taken as the Criminal Code offence 'Failure to Stop or Remain' (Hit and Run). Following a best practices review and consultation with SGI, RPS now classifies such reports as the Saskatchewan Highway Traffic & Safety Act offence 'Failure to Report Motor Vehicle Accident (MVA) / Property Damage,' or in some cases as a Mischief, unless evidence exists of intent to flee the scene of a vehicular collision.



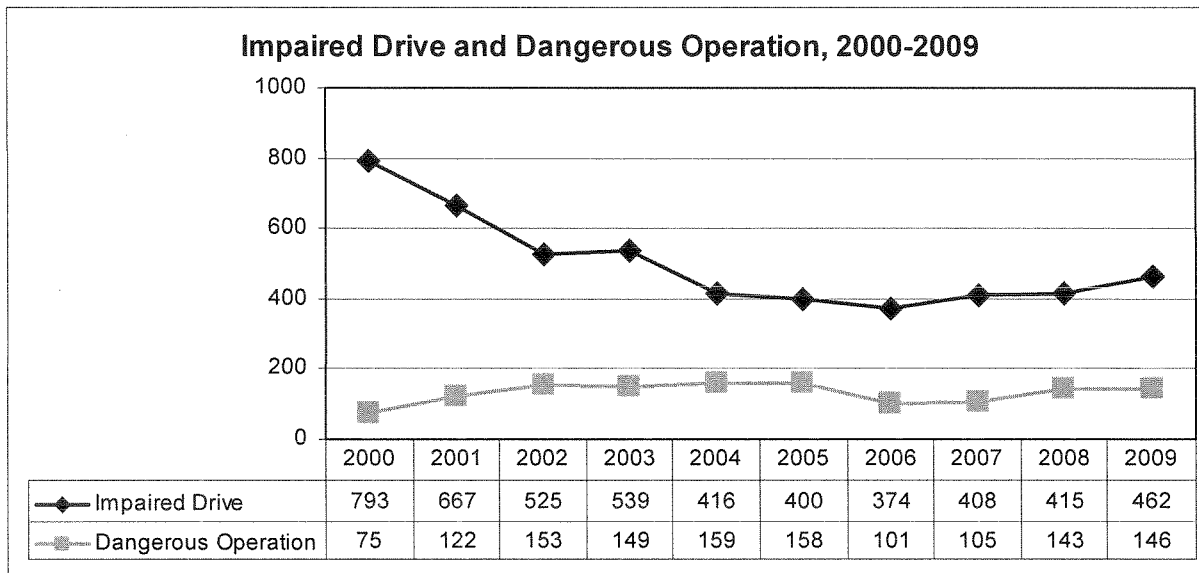
RPS received 37.2% more reports of unexplained vehicular damage in 2009 than in 2000 that were classified either as a Failure to Stop or Remain (Hit and Run) or as a Failure to Report MVA.¹² In 2000, 85.9% of the 1,962 reports were classified as Criminal Code offences whereas 27.2% of the 2,692 reports taken in 2009 were classified as Criminal Code offences.



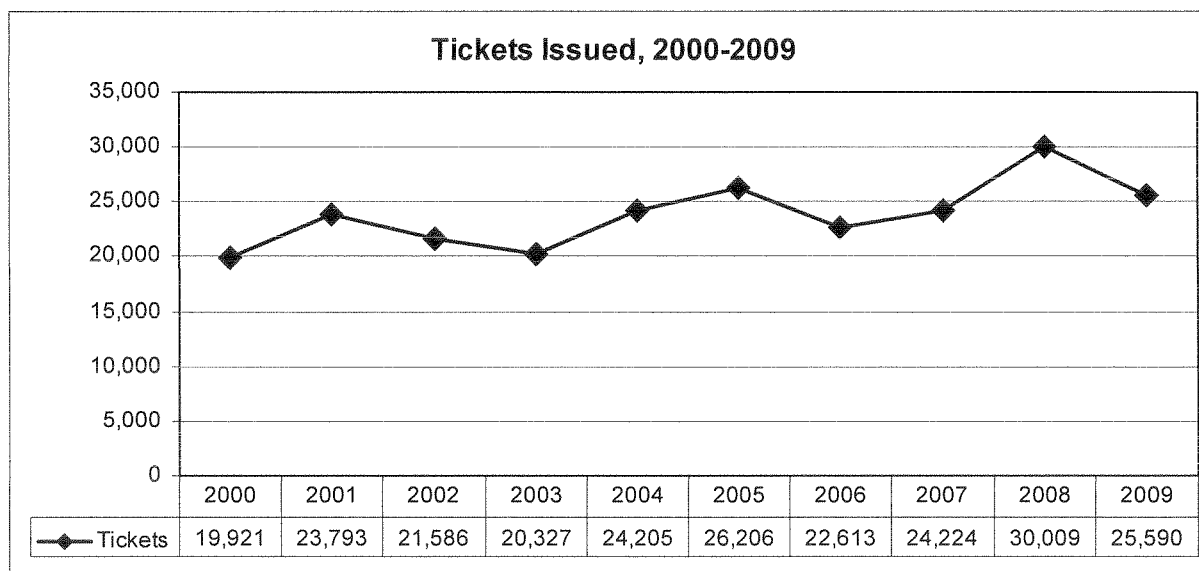
¹² Only reports classified as either Failure to Stop or Remain or Failure to Report MVA/Property Damage were included. Unexplained vehicular damage could be classified in other ways, such as a Mischief if the damage does not appear to have been caused by a vehicular collision.

There were 41.7% fewer Impaired Drive occurrences in 2009 than in 2000, though the number of occurrences increased in each of the last three years.

The 146 Dangerous Operation occurrences in 2009 were more than the annual average over the past ten years of 131.1. There were 71 more offences in 2009 than in 2000.



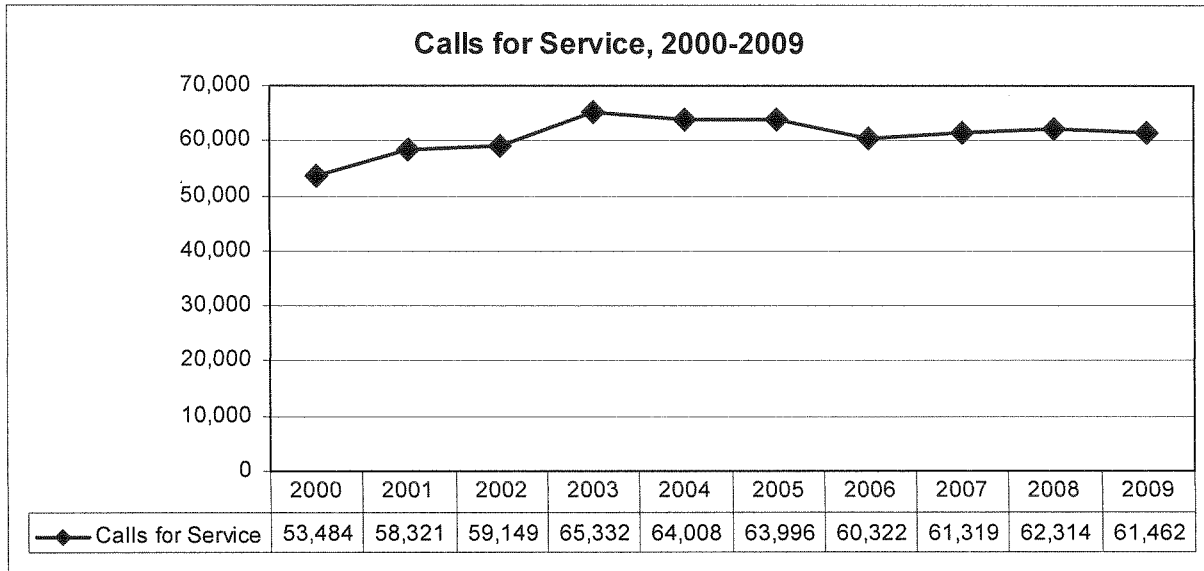
The number of Traffic Tickets Issued¹³ in 2009 was 28.5% greater than in 2000. There were 14.7% fewer Tickets Issued in 2009 than in 2008, which was the peak year in the decade.



¹³ The category Tickets Issued excludes: Inspection Tickets and 24 Hour, 30 Day, and 90 Day Suspensions.

Calls for Service

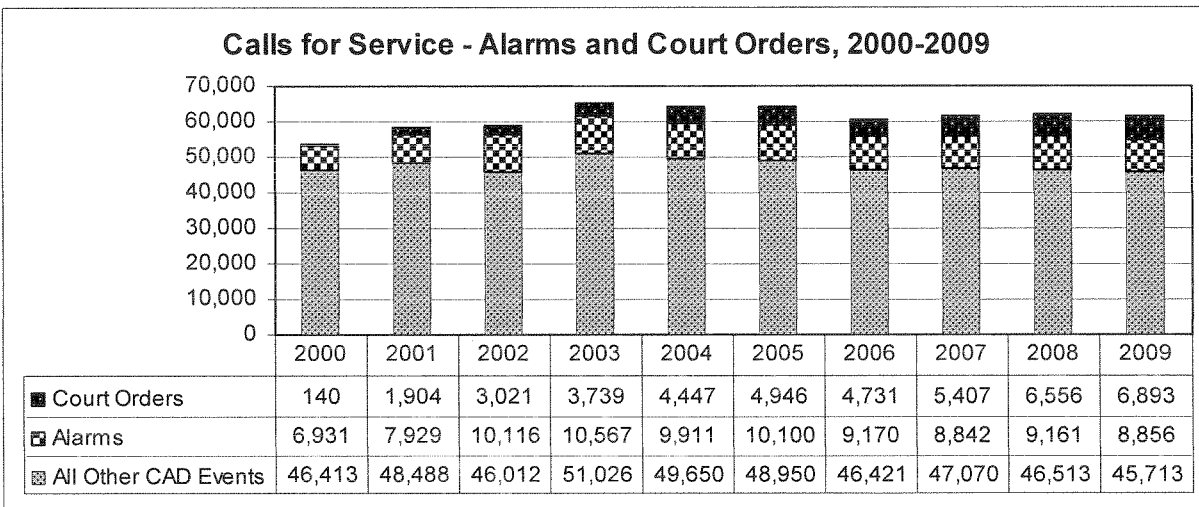
There were 14.9% more Total Calls for Service in 2009 than in 2000 and 1.4% less than in 2008.



The two most frequent call types are Alarms and Court Orders. Between 2000 and 2009, Alarm calls have increased by 27.8%. However, since legislation regarding responsible alarm use was brought into force in 2005, the number of Alarm calls declined by 12.3%.

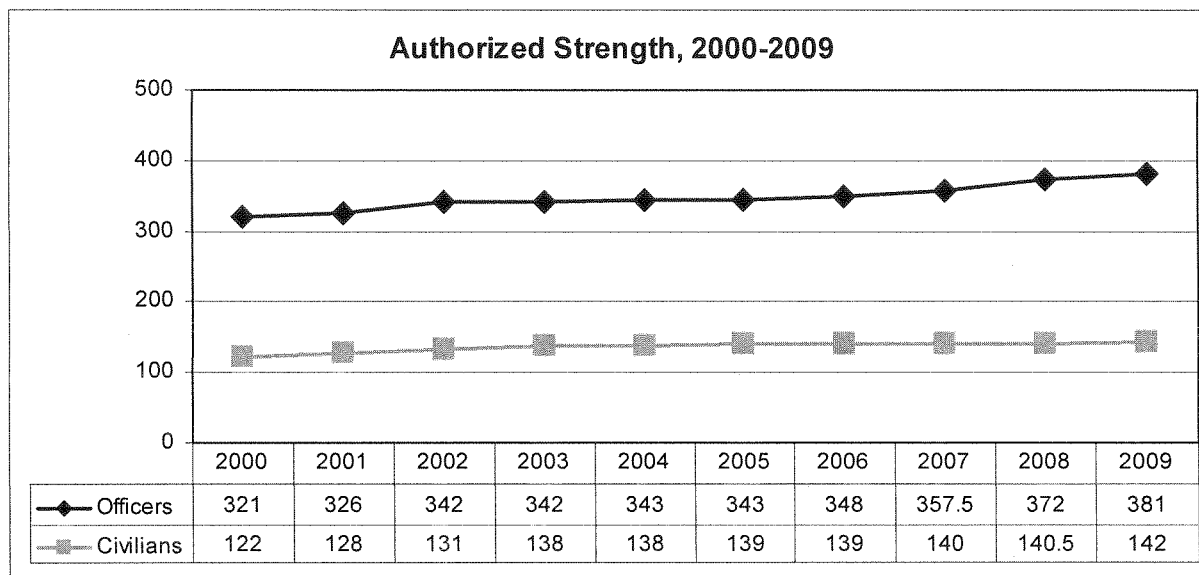
The use of Court Orders, or daily curfew checks, increased a great deal when they became a part of the strategies to reduce Auto Thefts and Break and Enters. Court Orders have gone from 140 calls in 2000, which was less than 3 of every 1,000 calls for service that year, to 6,893 in 2009, which was more than 1 of every 10 calls for service.

Of the remaining call types, there were fewer calls for service in 2009 than in any other year in the past decade.



Authorized Strength

Over the last ten years, the authorized strength for sworn officers increased by 18.7% and the authorized strength for civilian positions increased by 16.4%.



Population

Regina, along with other areas of Saskatchewan, has experienced a recent population increase. In the 2001 Census, the city of Regina had a population of 178,225. This rose slightly to 179,246 in the 2006 Census. In recent years, though, Regina's population has increased at a faster rate than previously. The province in general – and Saskatoon and Regina in particular – became a more attractive destination for inter-national and inter-provincial migrants as the recession had greater negative effects on other areas of the country and across the globe. From July 2006 to July 2009, the population of Regina and the surrounding metropolitan area had an average annual population growth of 1.3%;¹⁴ the City of Regina's population was estimated to be 191,000 in 2008.¹⁵ The growing population within the city and surrounding area, as well as shifting socio-economic demographics, opens up new challenges for policing now and into the future.

¹⁴ Source: Statistics Canada Quarterly Demographic Estimates, 91-002.

¹⁵ Regina's 2008 population is an estimate by Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

None with respect to this report.

COMMUNICATION PLAN

None with respect to this report.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

None with respect to this report.

CONCLUSION

Regina's total reported crime in 2009 is at its lowest point in the past ten years. Crimes Against Property have had significant reductions over that time. Initiatives taken by RPS and their partners towards reducing Motor Vehicle Thefts and Break and Enters have had a positive impact. Violent Crime has also decreased, though less substantially than Property Crime. Over the last ten years, there has been a relatively gradual decrease in Assaults and an overall increase in Robberies.

RECOMMENDATION

Receive and file.

Respectfully submitted,



Troy Hagen,
Chief of Police

