HAMILTON POLICE SERVICE

INFORMATION REPORT

TO:	Chair and Members Hamilton Police Services Board
BOARD MEETING DATE:	April 25, 2023
SUBJECT:	2023 Hate/Bias Crime Statistical Report
REPORT NUMBER:	24-038
SUBMITTED BY:	Frank Bergen – Chief of Police
SIGNATURE:	

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2023 year end Hate / Bias crime statistical report

INFORMATION

The Hate Crime Unit (HCU) operates as part of the Chief's Office. Established in 2003, their mandate is to investigate incidents where hate or bias has been identified as a precipitating component in the commission of a criminal offence or in an incident affecting the wider community.

The Hamilton Police Hate Crime Statistical Report is an annual report that provides statistical data about criminal offences that are committed against persons or property and are motivated by the victim's race, religion, ethnicity, colour, sexual orientation, mental or physical disability, age, gender identity or expression, or other similar factors.

This report explains the mandate for the HCU and the data based on hate occurrences reported to the Hamilton Police Service from January 1, 2023 to December 31, 2023.

In 2023, there were a total of 220 hate / bias occurrences reported to the Hamilton Police Service. This number represents both the hate / bias incidents and criminal offences.

In comparison to 2022, this represents an increase of 26.4 percent.

Multiple services in Ontario reported a significant increase in the number of reported Hate Crimes in 2022 and the trend continued in 2023.

Vision: To be a trusted partner in delivering public safety.
Mission: To serve and protect in partnership with our communities.
Our Values: Compassionate, Dedicated, Inclusive, Integrity, Innovative, Professional, Teamwork

The HCU encourages the community to report all incidents; however, the Service is aware that not all incidents are reported to police. Police data on hate crimes reflect only those incidents that come to the attention of police and are subsequently classified as hate crimes or hate incidents. Please note, fluctuations in the number of hate-related reported occurrences may be attributed to an increase in hate-related occurrences but may also reflect a rise in reporting due to community outreach efforts or heightened awareness after high profile events.

Please refer to the attached annual report for more detailed analysis of the 2023 hate occurrences.

APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED

Appendix A – 2023 Hate/Bias Statistical Report

FB/J.Callender

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2023
Hate/Bias Statistical Report

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HAMILTON
POLICE SERVICE
Together. Stronger. Safer.

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Executive Summary

The Hamilton Police Hate Crime Statistical Report is an annual report that provides statistical data about criminal offences that are committed against persons or property and are motivated by the victim's race, religion, ethnicity, colour, sexual orientation, mental or physical disability, age, gender identity or expression, or other similar factors.

The report explains the mandate for the Hamilton Police Service Hate Crime Unit (HCU) and the data based on hate occurrences reported to Hamilton Police Service from January 1, 2023 to December 31, 2023.

In 2023, there were a total of **220** hate/bias occurrences reported to Hamilton Police Service. This number represents both suspected hate/bias incidents (overtones) and criminal offences. In comparison to 2022, this represents an increase of **26.4** per cent.

All events were classified by the HCU Investigator based on the information provided by the investigating officer(s) or by the individual(s) directly involved. The classification and breakdown of the 2023 incidents are as follows:

Classification	Number
Hate/Bias Crimes	79
Hate/Bias Incidents (Overtones)	141

The majority of reported occurrences were directly related to racial bias, followed by sexual orientation and religion. In 2023, the Black community, the 2S&LGBTQIA and the Jewish community were the groups most frequently victimized.

In 2023, 15.2 per cent of all hate crimes reported to the Hamilton Police were cleared by either arrest, diversion, accused charges in other jurisdiction or cases where the victim declined to proceed with charges despite a suspect being identified.

Data within the report was gathered from crimes and incidents reported to Hamilton Police. While the HCU encourages the community to report all incidents, the Service is aware that not all incidents are reported to police.

There are several reasons why hate/bias occurrences are not reported. For example, people may feel the crime was not important or the chances of the police apprehending the suspect are low. Some victims see the incident as a personal matter, since it may involve family or colleagues, or there may be a feeling of blame and/or embarrassment about being targeted. Furthermore, the victim may not understand that they have been victimized or they may endeavor to solve the issue themselves. Previous negative experiences with the police and judicial system, whether in Canada or overseas, may also affect the willingness of a victim to report to police.

Reporting hate occurrences is an important step in stopping the cycle of hatred and preventing others from being victimized. It is also important for police to be aware of hate crimes so an analysis can be done to ensure appropriate actions are taken, including assigning appropriate resources to make our community safer.

Building strong, positive relationships between Hamilton Police and Hamilton's diverse communities is important in helping victims feel more comfortable in reporting occurrences to police. In 2023 the HCU, the Community Relations Coordinator and the 2S&LGBTQIA Liaison Officer worked with community partners to address citizens' concerns as well as encourage reporting and information sharing. The outreach will continue in 2024.

Introduction

The HCU operates as part of the Chief's Office. Established in 2003, the HCU investigates incidents where hate or bias has been identified as a precipitating component in the commission of a criminal offence or in an incident.

The HCU's mandate is to:

- Conduct investigations, arrest offenders and prepare cases for court in relation to hate propaganda offences;
- Provide investigative support and specialized skills to officers in all other sections of Hamilton Police Service who are involved in the investigation of hate/bias crimes;
- Collect intelligence and maintain intelligence files to enable the monitoring and tracking of known, active hate groups, and individuals;
- Liaise with other police services to ensure the exchange of relevant information pertaining to hate/bias crimes and groups;
- Work closely with the Community Relations Coordinator and act as a resource to community groups, assisting with education and crime prevention in the area of hate/bias crimes;
- Maintain and track all reported hate/bias incidents for statistical purposes; and,
- Develop and implement internal and external training on hate-based crime.

Hate Crime/Extremism Investigative Team (HCEIT) of Ontario

In 2003, the Hamilton, Guelph, London, Ottawa and Waterloo Regional Police Services, in partnership with the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services, came together and formed the Hate Crime Extremism Investigative Team (HCEIT).

The team has since expanded to include 18 police agencies across Southern Ontario.

The HCU meets quarterly with HCEIT members to discuss trends and concern across the province, discuss new initiatives and exchange intelligence. Member services include:

- Hamilton Police Service
- Brantford Police Service
- Durham Regional Police Service
- Guelph Police Service
- Halton Regional Police Service
- London Police Service
- Niagara Regional Police Service
- Ontario Provincial Police Service
- Ottawa Police Service
- Peel Regional Police
- Stratford Police Service
- Toronto Police Service
- Waterloo Regional Police Service
- Woodstock Police Service
- York Regional Police
- Kingston Police
- Greater Sudbury Police Service
- Windsor Police Service

Statistical Overview

Over the past 13 years, the average number of reported hate/bias occurrences is approximately **133** per year.

In 2023, the HCU received and classified a total of 220 hate/bias related occurrences.

The overall number of police-reported hate/bias occurrences increased from 174 to 220, which represents an increase of 26.4 per cent over the previous year. Of this total number of reported occurrences, 79 were crimes that fell within the parameters of a hate/bias crime as defined below.

Reported events were classified according to the following definitions:

Hate/Bias Crime
Includes any criminal offence where there is evidence to prove that the offence was motivated solely, or in part, because of a bias or prejudice, based on the victim's race, national or ethnic origin, language, colour, religion, sex, age, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or any other similar factor. Includes all Hate Propaganda offences.

Hate/Bias Incident (Overtones)
Can include any incident that involves hate or bias towards any member of the public because of their race, national or ethnic origin, language, colour, religion, sex, age, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or any other similar factor. These incidents cannot be proven to have been motivated solely or in part because of the person's bias/prejudice towards the victim, but include some type of hateful overtone.

Total Event Classification Breakdown

The reported event types were broken down by category for hate/bias motivated crimes and hate/bias incidents (overtones). Event types included identified offences in the Criminal Code of Canada, and non-criminal call types to which the Hamilton Police Service responded for service *(Figure 1)*.
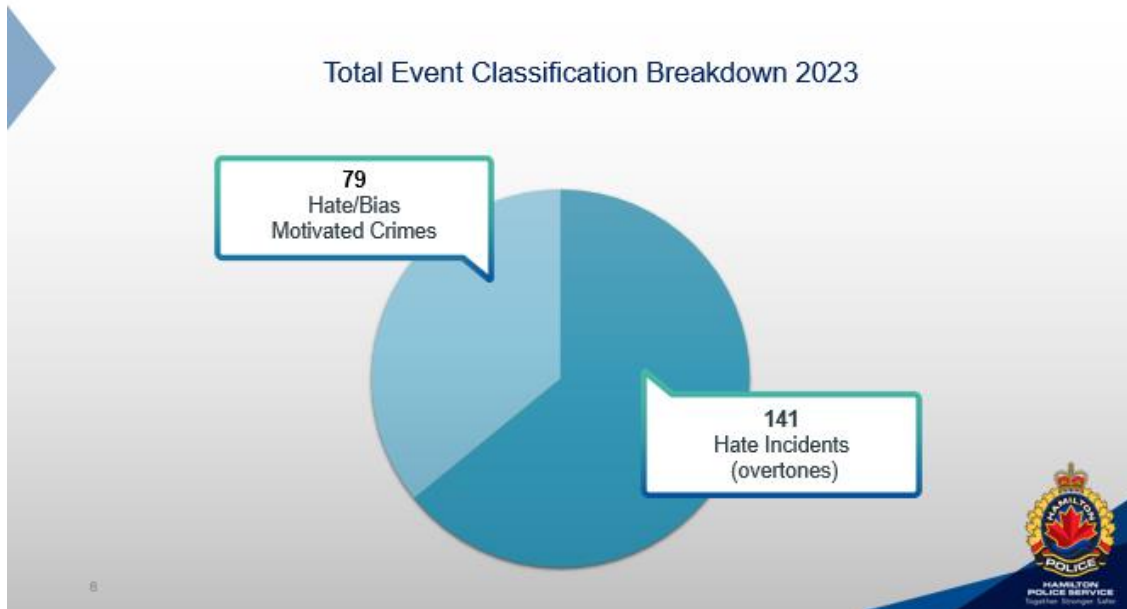

Figure 1

Table 1: 2023 – Total occurrence Breakdown by Type and Category

All Categories

Category	Hate/Bias Overtones	Hate/Bias Motivated Crimes	Total
Age (AG)	0	0	0
Disability (DI)	0	0	0
Language	1	0	1
Gender Identity (GI)	5	3	8
Sex (SE)	0	1	1
Sexual Orientation (SO)	18	37	55
Similar Factor (SF)	0	0	0
Racial Bias (RA)	75	21	96
Religion (RE)	42	17	59
Total	**141**	**79**	**220**

The highest numbers of reported occurrences were directly related to racial bias.

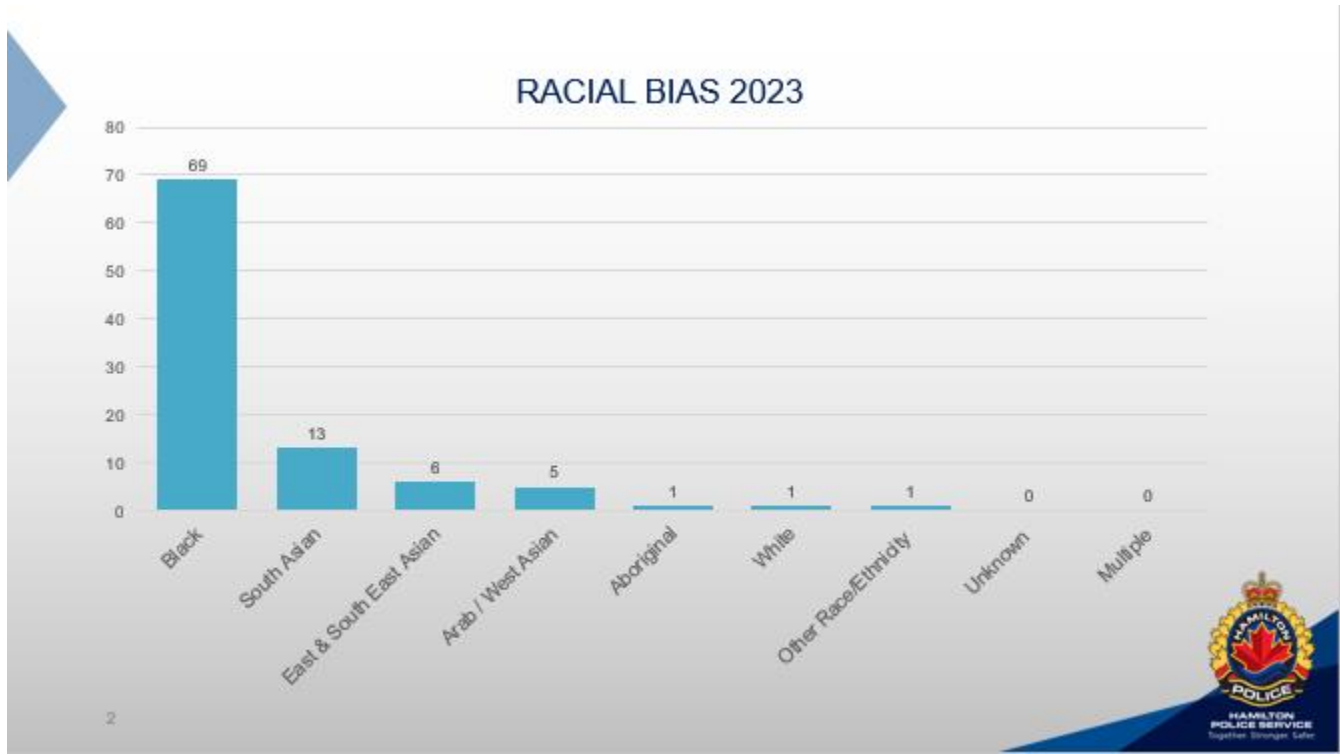# Total Occurrences Breakdown – Victimization by Group

Racial Bias

Figure 2

The chart above displays reported hate/bias occurrences broken down by race/ethnicity *(Figure 2)*. In 2023, the Black community was the most targeted group with 69 occurrences followed by the South Asian community with 13 occurrences. In comparison, there were 65 hate/bias occurrences targeting the Black community and 9 occurrences targeting members of the South Asian community in 2022.

Of the total occurrences targeting the Black community, 42 per cent were graffiti-related.
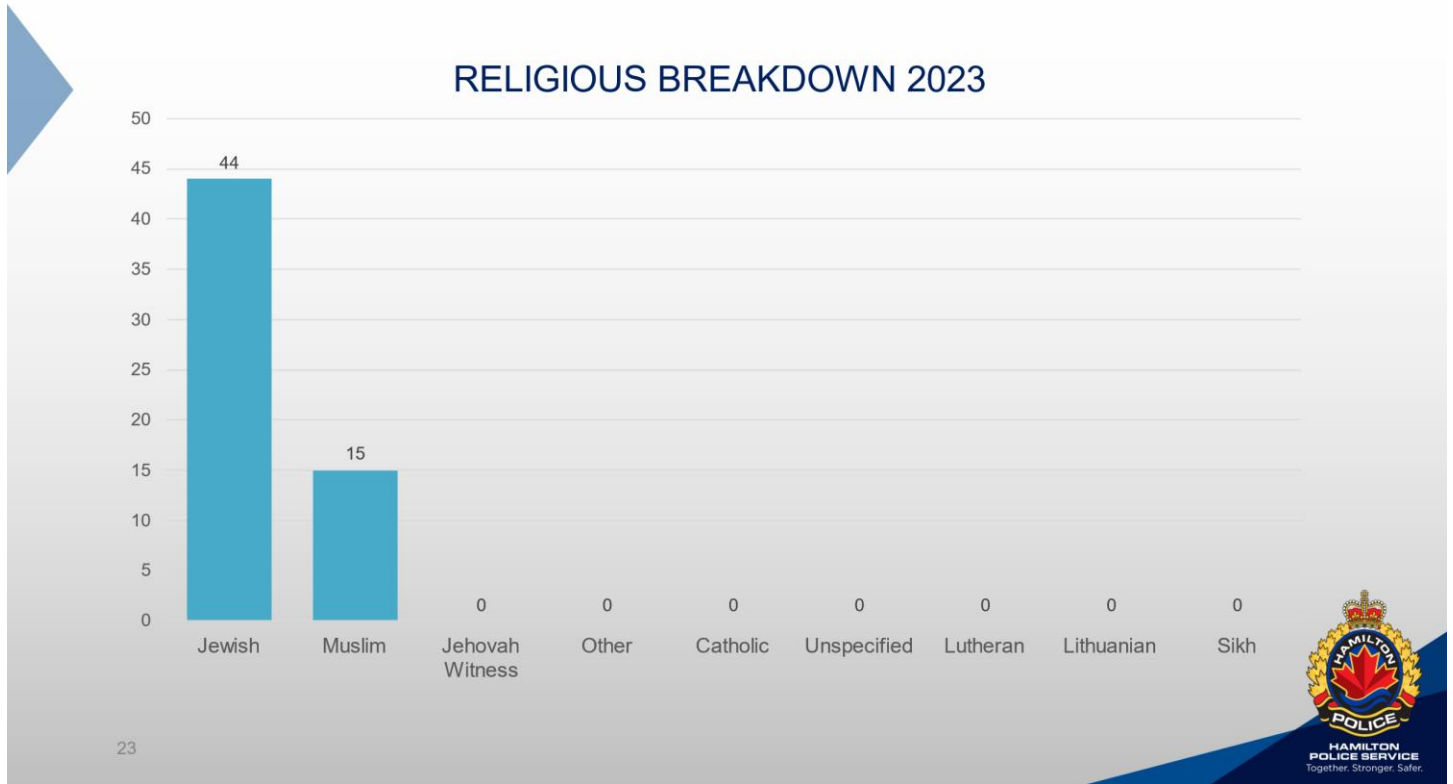
Religion

Figure 3

The chart above displays reported hate/bias occurrences broken down by religion *(Figure 3).* In 2023, members of the Jewish community were the most targeted group in the religious category with 44 occurrences, followed by members of the Muslim community with 15 occurrences. In 2022, there were 42 hate/bias occurrences targeting the Jewish community and 5 occurrence targeting members of the Muslim community.

Of the total occurrences targeting the Jewish community, 77.2 per cent were graffiti-related.

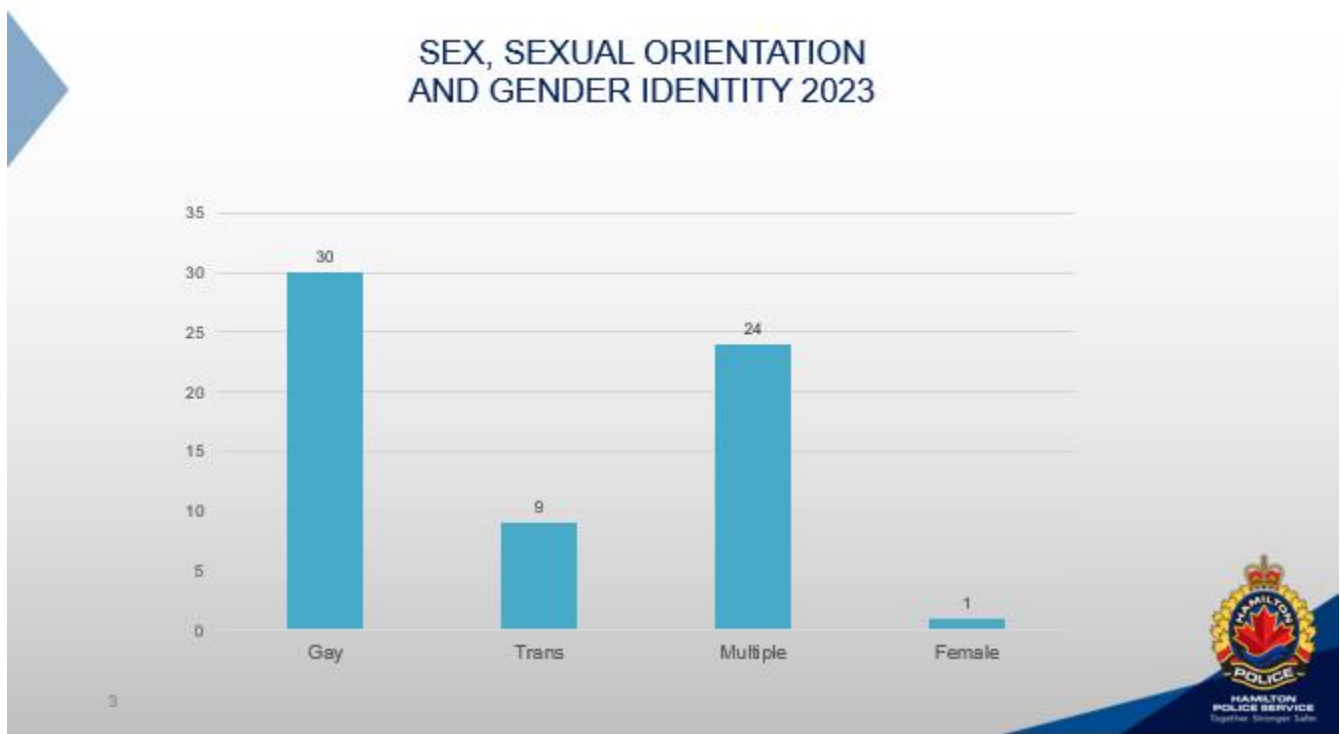# Sex, Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (Self-Identification)

Figure 4

The chart above displays reported hate/bias occurrences broken down by sexual orientation and gender identity *(Figure 4)*. In 2023, members of the 2S&LGBTQIA community, specifically with individuals self-identified as gay, were the most targeted group with 30 occurrences. There were 9 occurrences involving members of the transgender community. In 2022, the number of hate/bias occurrences targeting the 2S&LGBTQIA community, specifically with individuals self-identified as gay, were 22. The number of occurrences targeting community members that self-identified as transgender was 10.

Additionally, in 2023 there were 24 occurrences targeting PRIDE flags. These occurrences have been displayed as multiple in Figure 4.

Divisional Breakdown – Hate/bias crimes and incidents (Total)
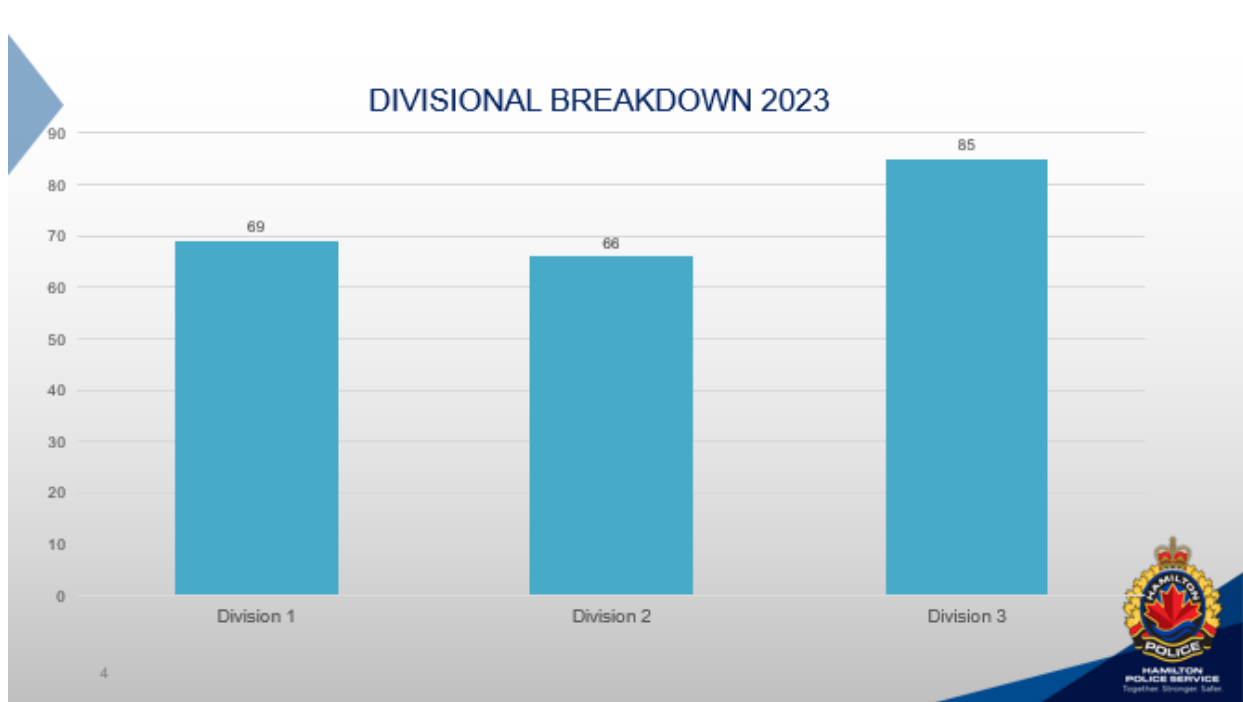

Figure 5

In 2023, 69 hate/bias occurrences (crimes and incidents) were recorded in Division One, 66 in Division Two and 85 in Division Three *(Figure 5)*.

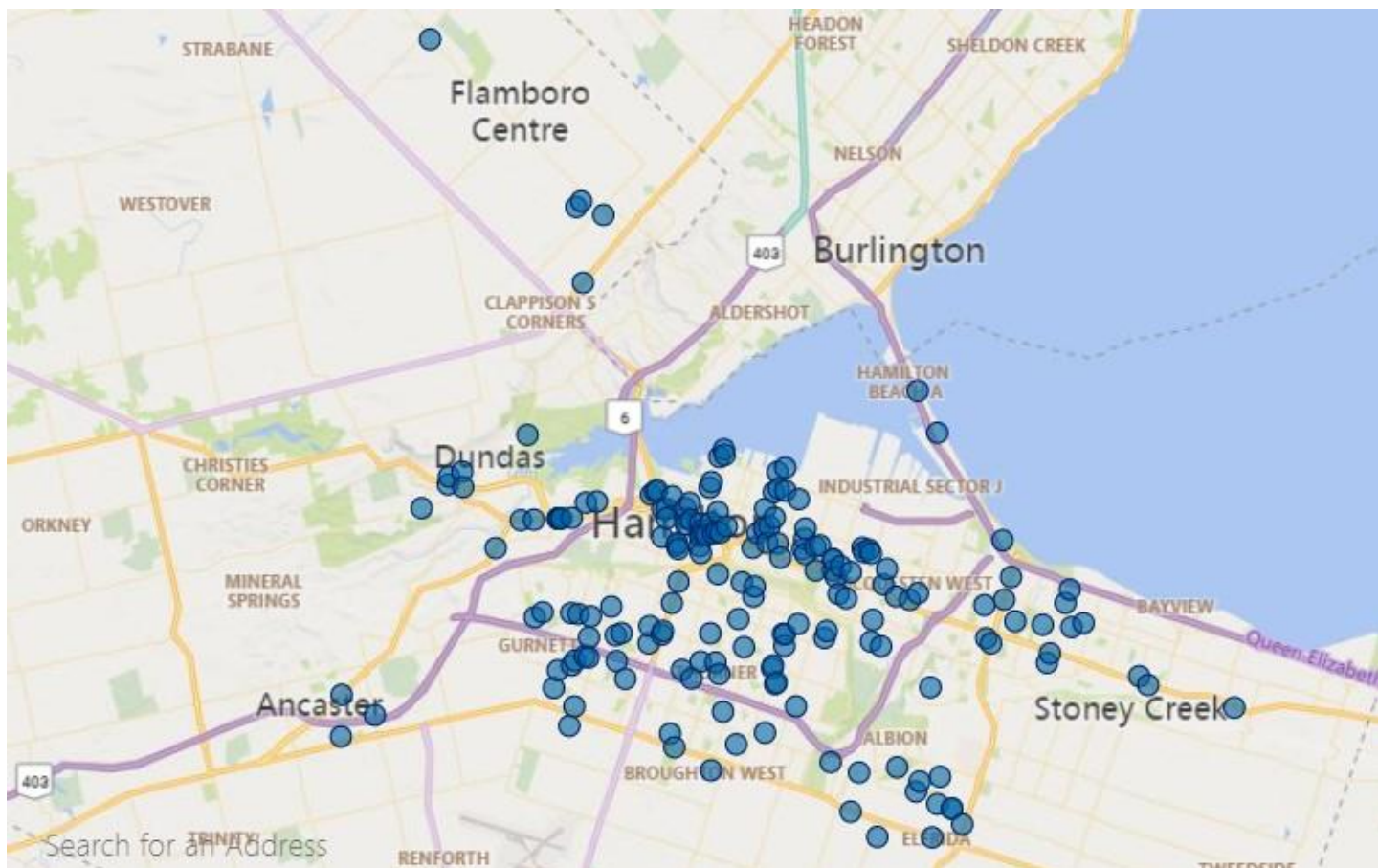# Geographical Distribution of Hate-Related Occurrences

Figure 6

The majority of all reported hate-related occurrences were random in nature, with no definable pattern, and were believed to have been committed by individuals and not by organized groups.

Police data on hate occurrences reflect only those incidents that come to the attention of police and are subsequently classified as hate crimes or hate incidents. Please note, fluctuations in the number of hate-related reported occurrences may be attributed to an increase in hate-related occurrences but may also reflect a rise in reporting due to community outreach efforts or heightened awareness after high profile events.
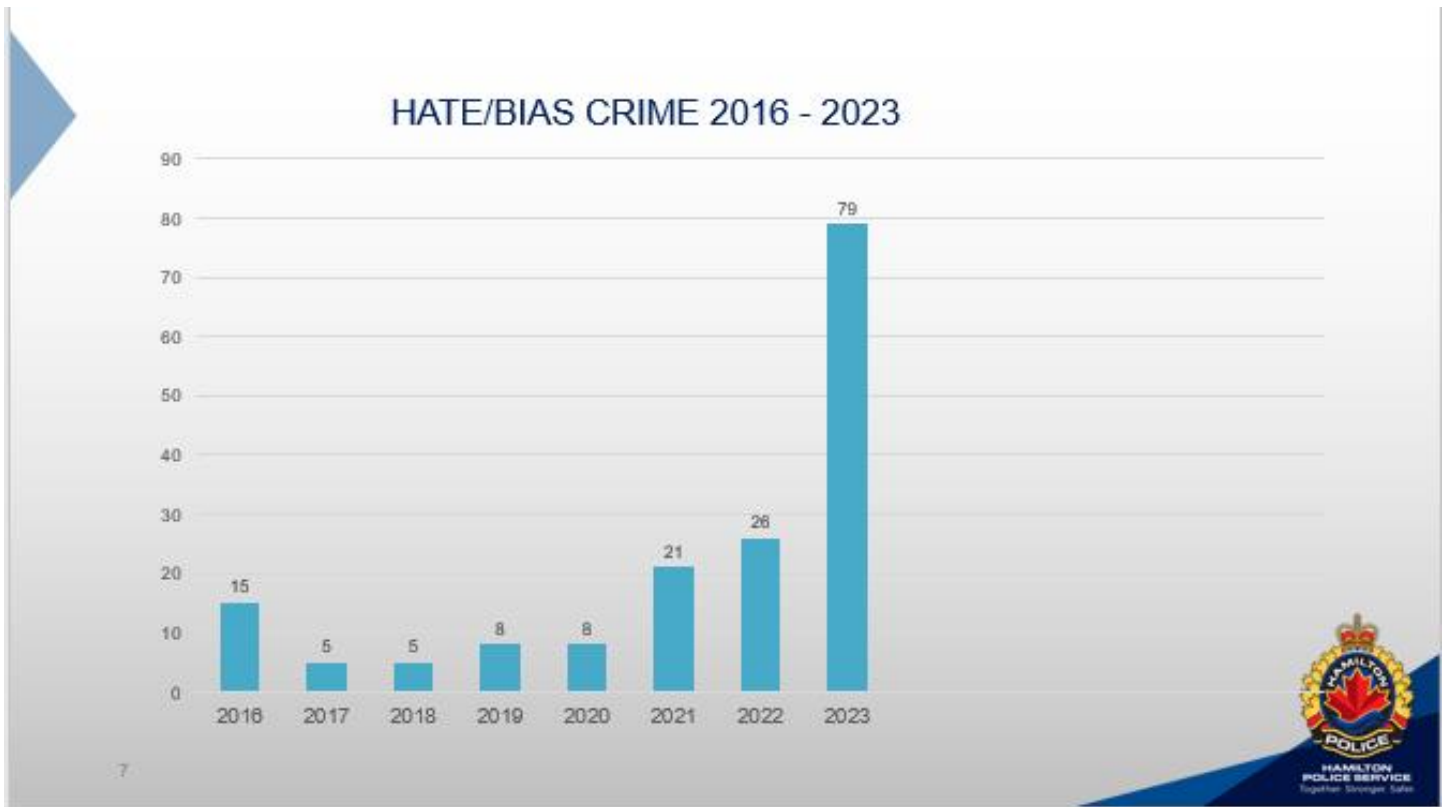
Hate/Bias Motivated Crime

Figure 6

Seventy-nine of the total reported events involved offences that were classified as hate/bias motivated crimes. The chart shows the number of hate/bias crimes reported annually over the last eight-year period (*Figure 6*).

The chart below breaks down the seventy-nine 2023 hate/bias motivated crimes by type and category *(Table 2)*.

Table 2

Identified Hate Crime Breakdown by Type and Category									
Offence	AG	DI	SE	GI	SO	SF	RA	RE	Total
Assault Police							1		**1**
Assault 1			1		4		5		**10**
Assault with Weapon							1		**1**
Break and Enter					1				**1**
Cause Disturbance									
Criminal Harassment								1	**1**
Dangerous Operation of MV									
Domestic									
Harassing Calls									
Neighbour Dispute									
Mischief (Graffiti)				1	10		9	9	**29**
Mischief Under					6		1	1	**8**
Sexual Assault									
Suspicious Circumstance									
Theft Over									
Theft Under					17			1	**18**
Trespass									
Utter Threats					1		4	2	**7**
Public Mischief				1					**1**
Other								2	**2**
Total			**1**	**2**	**39**		**21**	**16**	**79**

Legend

AG - Age

DI - Disability

GI – Gender Identity

SE - Sex

SO – Sexual Orientation

SF – Similar Factor

RA – Race/Ethnicity

RE – Religion

Divisional Breakdown – Hate/Bias Crimes

The following chart outlines a breakdown of hate/bias crimes by Division.
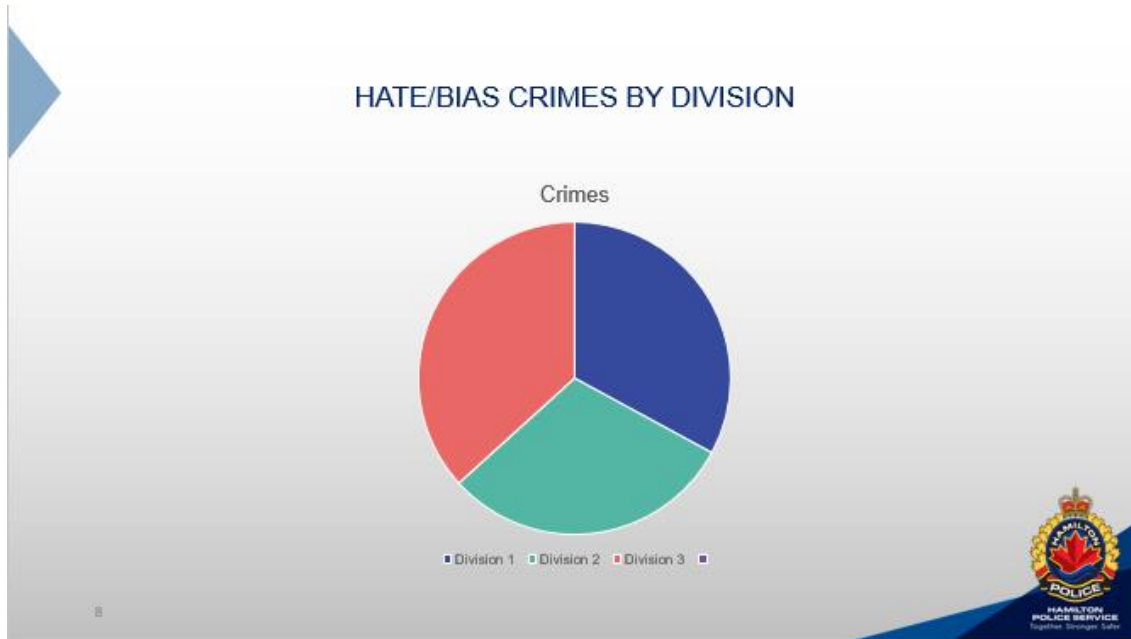

Figure 7

In 2023, 26 hate/bias criminal offences were recorded in Division One, 24 in Division Two and 29 in Division Three *(figure 7).*

Hate/Bias Crime Clearance Rates

	Arrests	Diversion	Suspect Charged in other Jurisdiction	Victim Declined to proceed with Charges	Total
Occurrences Cleared	**11**	-	-	**1**	**12**
Occurrences Not Cleared	-	-	-	-	
Total	**11**			**1**	**12**

Figure 8

In 2023, Hamilton Police were able to clear 15.2 per cent of all Hate Crimes reported to police by either arrest, diversion, accused charges in other jurisdictions or cases where the victim declined to proceed with charges despite a suspect being identified *(Figure 8).*

Hate Crime Prevention and Community Supports:

The HCU encourages the community to report all incidents; however, the Service is aware that not all incidents are reported to police. Recognizing this, Hamilton Police have implemented a number of proactive and strategic steps to prevent hate-related occurrences, encourage reporting and provide support for victims.

These areas include:

Education/Community Engagement

- Presented to community groups to increase awareness about hate occurrences and reporting.
- Attendance at community events with representation from a member of the Community Relations or Hate Crime Unit. This engagement was geared to building trust and relationships with diverse communities, which encourages reporting.
- Responded to community concerns and worked with communities to issue special attentions that offer reassurance of safety to communities.
- Enhanced support to victims of hate through follow-up with HPS Victim Services
- Conducted focus groups with communities for the Hate Crime Case Review Team (HCCRT) with the 2SLGBTQIA, Black, Indigenous, Jewish, Muslim, South Asian community to identify community concerns
- The Hamilton Police Victim Services in partnership with the Hate Crime Unit hosted a Hate Crime Symposium – inviting both, community and Police to discuss issues surrounding hate related occurrences.

Training

- Provided training to all new recruits on understanding, identifying, and investigating hate occurrences.
- Delivered anti-racism, anti-discrimination training to all sworn officer through BLOCK training program.
- Delivered cultural competency training to civilian members.
- Attended various conferences and seminars related to hate prevention, investigations, and support for communities. The Hate Crime Investigator, 2S&LGBTQIA Liaison Officer, EDI Specialist and Community Relations Coordinator, joined these seminars.

Data Collection

- Developed the Hate Crime Dashboard, which provides real time data regarding hate crimes and occurrences in Hamilton. Analytic data provided by the dashboard aids with the identification of areas of concern and trends, which can help in focused prevention measures.

Reporting

- Ensured accessibility by providing multiple avenues to report such as online, over the phone or in person.

Next Steps:

- In March 2024, we conducted a town Hall, facilitated by an independent third party, to establish and formalize the HCCRT.

- Review applications for the HCCRT and establish the Review Team.
- Train the HCCRT members in anti-racism, anti-discrimination, legislation, hate crime and hate incidents, coding, and HPS policies and procedures.
- HCCRT reviewing hate occurrences to identify gaps in reporting, training, policies, and procedures.
- Develop a public facing Dashboard, which provides data regarding hate crimes and occurrences in Hamilton.

Conclusion

In 2023, the Hamilton Police Service Hate Crime Unit recorded an increase in hate/bias occurrences and an increase in the number of hate/bias motivated crime.

15.2 per cent of all Hate Crimes reported to police were cleared by either arrest, diversion, accused charges in other jurisdictions or cases where the victim declined to proceed with charges despite a suspect being identified.

Hamilton Police continue to establish a HCCRT in response to hate-motivated crimes in Hamilton, which is currently in the application process. The goal will be to work collaboratively to develop comprehensive recommendations to improve outcomes for hate crime victims. Similar to the Sexual Assault Community Review Team (SACRT), the scope of the review will include an internal and external analysis of hate crime investigations, as well as looking at policies, procedures, and training.

Hamilton Police Service recognizes that hate crime has a devastating, long-lasting impact on victims and communities. The impact of hate crime is far reaching, extending beyond the physical and emotional trauma to the victim. The HCU is committed to investigating hate/bias motivated crimes and incidents to ensure Hamilton remains a safe place to live and work.

Reporting hate crimes and incidents is an important step in stopping the cycle of hatred and preventing others from being victimized.

Hamilton Police encourage the community to report hate/bias crimes and incidents to ensure actions are taken, including assigning appropriate resources to make our community safer. Together, we can make a difference in stopping the cycle of hate.