



EDMONTON POLICE SERVICE

REPORT TO THE EDMONTON POLICE COMMISSION

DATE: 2020 Oct 14

SUBJECT: 2020 Street Check File Reviews

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That this report be received for information.

BACKGROUND:

The purpose, practice and process used by police agencies to collect and store street level intelligence are continuously scrutinized by the public, social agencies, media, and varying levels of government. The Edmonton Police Service (EPS) strives to maintain trust and transparency with the public and in 2016 self-initiated and completed a comprehensive Street Check Review (SCR) on its policies, practices, and processes. The 2016 Street Check Review made 10 recommendations all of which have been adopted.

In 2018 the Edmonton Police Commission (EPC) engaged an external consultant to conduct a further review and audit designed to examine the use of Street Checks by the EPS amidst concerns of biased policing. This resulted in 17 recommendations focused on specific Street Check processes as well as broader suggestions such as increasing the diversity of EPS. All the recommendations have been adopted into the practices and processes of the EPS.

An EPS committee of civilian and sworn members assessed compliance on 190 randomly selected SCR's on the collection of information absent of assumptions and opinions; the use of language containing bias and/or prejudice; and the use of SCR's as the correct reporting mechanism. The August 2020 Street Check Review noted that descriptors, which could be beneficial for police work, were being omitted from SCR's. The same observation was noted in the October 2019 Street Check Review. Of note, a project has been initiated to create an updated glossary for appropriate and inclusive descriptors, which would provide consistent, appropriate language for officers to use when completing a SCR.

The scope of the August 2020 review included SCR submissions made between January 1, 2020 and June 30, 2020. Overall there has been a decline of SCR submissions each year from 2016 through 2020. Of the 190 SCR submissions, two were determined to be cancelled, resulting in 188 submissions assessed against SCR approval criteria. In total, 173 SCR's were determined to be compliant. The largest reason for non-compliance was that the information collected should have been documented on a different reporting format. This occurred in eight SCR submissions. Of the remaining seven non-complaint SCR's, three were identified as containing implied bias and/or using non-compliant race descriptors (i.e. Aboriginal vs. Indigenous); in three SCR's the investigator made assumptions and/or included opinions outside of factual knowledge; and 1 SCR included irrelevant criminal history. No SCR's were determined to contain explicit bias nor were any found to have been conducted as a result of bias.

The EPS has done considerable work over the past several years related to policy, practices, and training with respect to Street Checks.

The EPS has conducted Street Check Reviews annually since 2016 and will continue to conduct annual reviews to ensure oversight and maintain public confidence.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ATTACHED:

Attachment 1 – 2020 Street Check Review Report

Written By: A/Insp. Mitchell Flaman
Equity and Inclusion Branch



Reviewed By: Lori Solon, Director, Strategy Branch
Enyinnah Okere, Executive Director, Value and Impact Division



Chief of Police:  _____

Date: Oct 23, 20

Edmonton Police Service

2020 Quarter 1 & 2 Street Check Report Review



Contributing Author:	Sgt. Ryan Newell Intelligence Operations Section
Date:	August 25, 2020
Title:	EPS Street Check Report Review Quarters 1 and 2, 2020
Version Number:	1.0

Handling Instructions and Document Control

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Acknowledgement

The content of this document has been a collaborative effort developed through the contributions of numerous Edmonton Police Service members.

Document Control

Reviewed and approved by:

Name	Title	Signed
Kelly Rosnau	Staff Sergeant Intelligence Operations Section	
Christa Pennie	Inspector OICC	
Dean Hilton	Superintendent Operation Command Division	<i>Dean Hilton</i>

Introduction

As per the mandate of the Street Check Review Committee, a review of EPROS Street Check Report (SCR) submissions was conducted on August 13, 2020.

Background

In 2016, a review of Edmonton Police Service street check practices, procedures, and policies was conducted internally by EPS. The report dated February 26, 2016 contained 10 recommendations to improve the functional use of the Street Check reporting function as well as the administration and management of data recorded within the submissions. One of the recommendations was the implementation of a bi-yearly audit of the SCR submissions.

Scope

The scope of this submission review includes Quarters 1 & 2, 2020 (January 1, 2020 to June 30, 2020), and was conducted on August 13, 2020.

Review Objective

The objective of this review is to provide assurance that all SCR submissions are conducted in accordance with EPS policy and procedure.

Risks

Adequate controls, such as oversight, policies & procedures over Street Checks assist with:

1. Identifying consistent organizational wide trends related to SCR submissions.
2. Identification of specific issues or incidents of concern for individual SCR submissions.
3. Investigative excellence through improved SCR data quality.
4. Reduction of organizational risk (financial, legal, reputational, operational) through adequate oversight of SCR's.
5. Higher trained officers due to enhancement of training or development of new organizational training for identified needs.
6. Alignment of SCR production with other organizational goals.
7. Revising Policy and Procedure as necessary.
8. Improved decision making through the review of quantifiable submission review results.

9. Establishing ongoing communication for frontline members and investigators regarding Street Check process and SCR submissions.

Submission Review Criteria

The criteria for the review were to determine:

- a. SCR Use – The assessed SCR was appropriately submitted and was not used to submit information that should have been reported in an *Occurrence Report, Intelligence Report* or a *Source Report*.
- b. SCR Collection – The reason for conducting the Street Check was articulated and does not contain assumptions or opinions, and contains relevant information.
- c. Bias – The Street Check and SCR was not based on bias, nor contained information prejudicial or inflammatory towards the subject.

Methodology

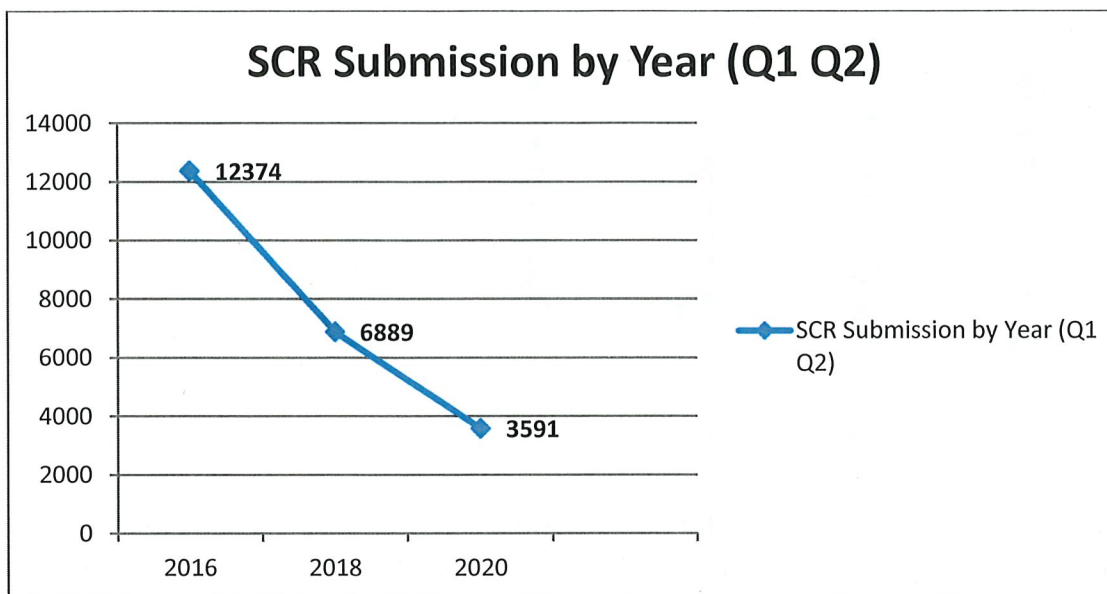
Facilitation of this review included:

1. Establishing a review team with the required competencies. This team included the following EPS employees:
 - a. A/Inspector Mitch Flaman – Equity and Inclusion Branch
 - b. Eathan Lindsay – ALERT Criminal Intelligence Analyst
 - c. Yasin Cetin – Community Relations Coordinator
 - d. Sgt. Ryan Newell – Intelligence Operations Section
 - e. Constable Andrew Roy – Field Intelligence Officer, West Division

**Attempts were made to have members of the review team return to ensure consistency with the audit process. For this audit, Sgt. Ryan Newell and Criminal Intelligence Analyst Eathan Lindsay are returning members from previous audits.
2. Evaluation of the review criteria and the work plan including the *Street Check Report Submission Audit Guide* and the *Audit Assessment Form*.
3. Review of EPS policies; specifically Street Checks and Street Check Reporting Procedure OP10-9PR.
4. Analysis of a data extract of 3591 SCR'.
5. Evaluation of a select random sample of 190 Street Check Reports.
6. Review of the information and/or documentation to support the Street Check Reports to determine if it was in accordance with EPS policy and procedure.
7. Formulating an overall rating of compliant vs. non-compliant.

SCR Submissions

EPS members submitted 3591 SCR's from January 1, 2020 to June 30, 2020 as opposed to 6889 SCR documents for the same timeframe in 2019. This represents 3298 less SCR submissions, equating to a 47.9% reduction in the total number of SCR submissions¹. From 2016 to present, there has been an overall decrease of 8783 submissions, or -71%.

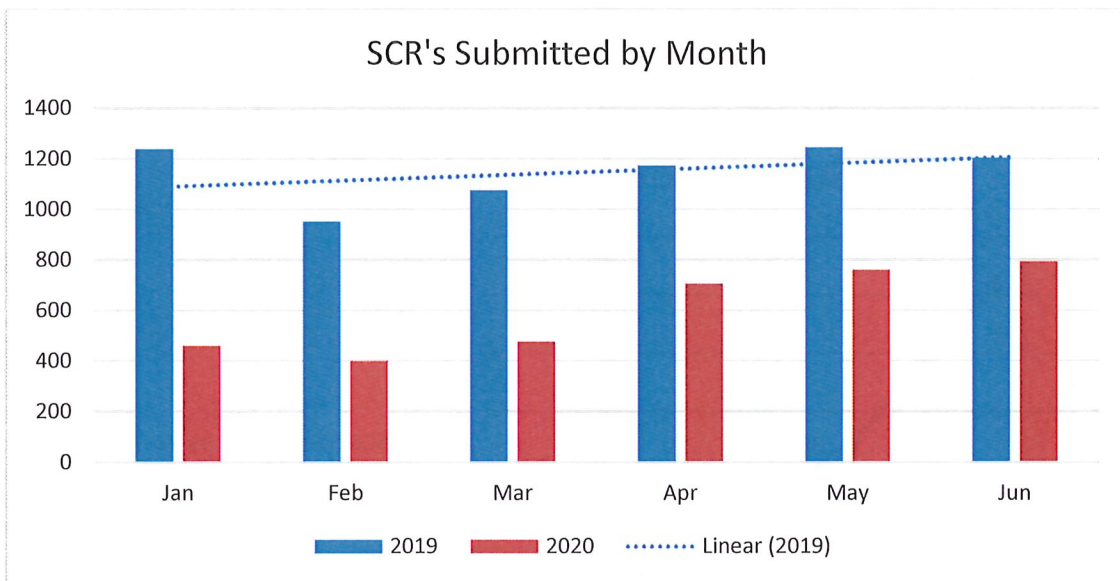


There has been a decline in overall SCR submissions for each year from 2016 through to 2020. There have been several identified factors contributing to the decrease that originated from the 2016 Street Check Report review:

- The centralized review and oversight by the Criminal Intelligence Unit (CIU). The oversight and approval guidelines have effectively reduced the number of inappropriate SCR submissions that would have previously been approved by frontline supervisors;
- The uncertainty of some frontline members of acceptable racial and descriptor terminology has led to members fearful of mislabeling an individual causing either de-policing or not reporting interactions that previously would be captured
- Covid-19 has had a significant impact on policing response within Edmonton. A comparison was conducted for the SCR's submitted by month for this audit period, compared to the same time period of 2019. The trend generally line follows along the same for the two years with 2020 being reduced numbers for each month. In 2020 the numbers per

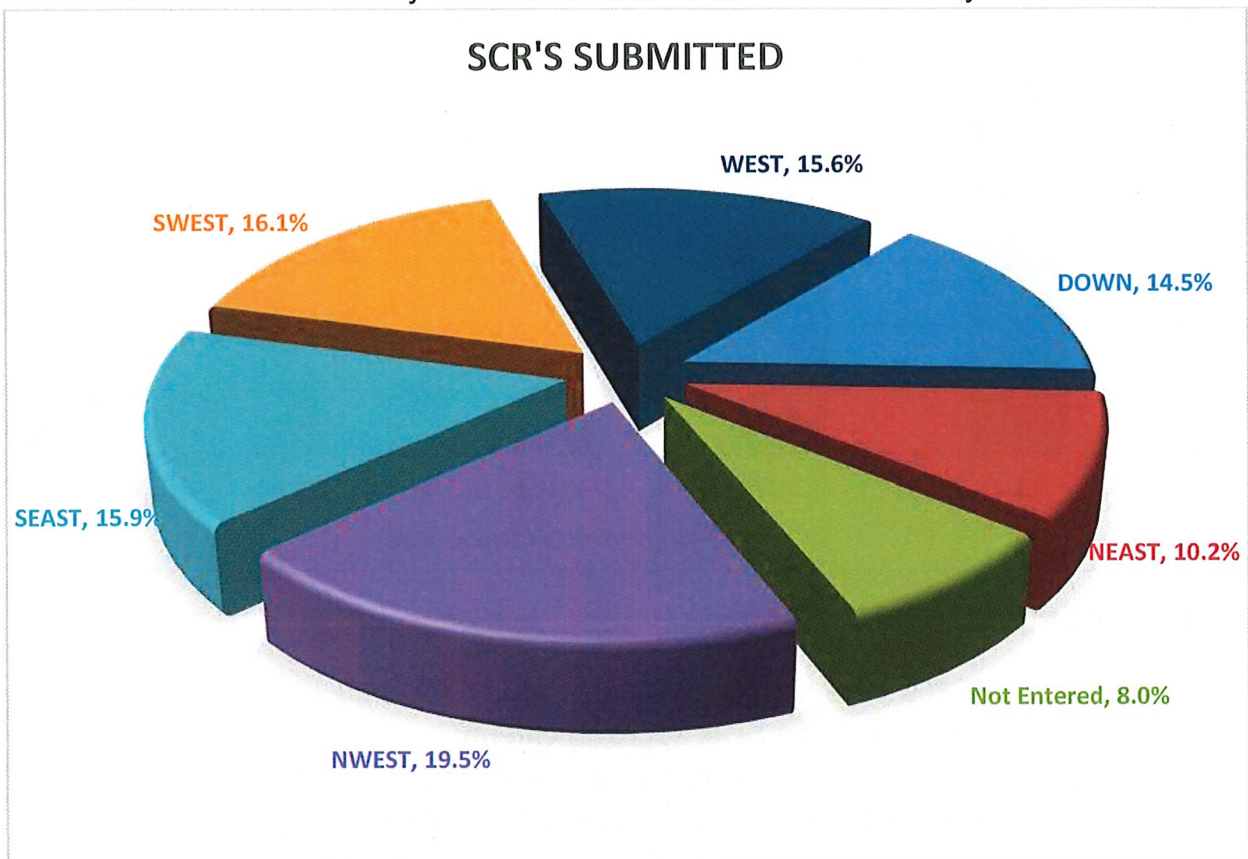
¹ Cognos Report B20-206, data as of August 11, 2020, 23:59 hours

month start increasing each month in March 2020, the same time as the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic and related lockdown measures.



The number of SCR's submitted by each of the six Community Policing Bureau Divisions for Quarter 1 and Quarter 2 of 2020 varies. Historically Downtown Division has been identified previously as the largest contributor to SCR submissions due to their robust Beat Foot Patrol program. During the Vision 2020 reallocation of personnel from Downtown Division to other areas of the Edmonton Police Service

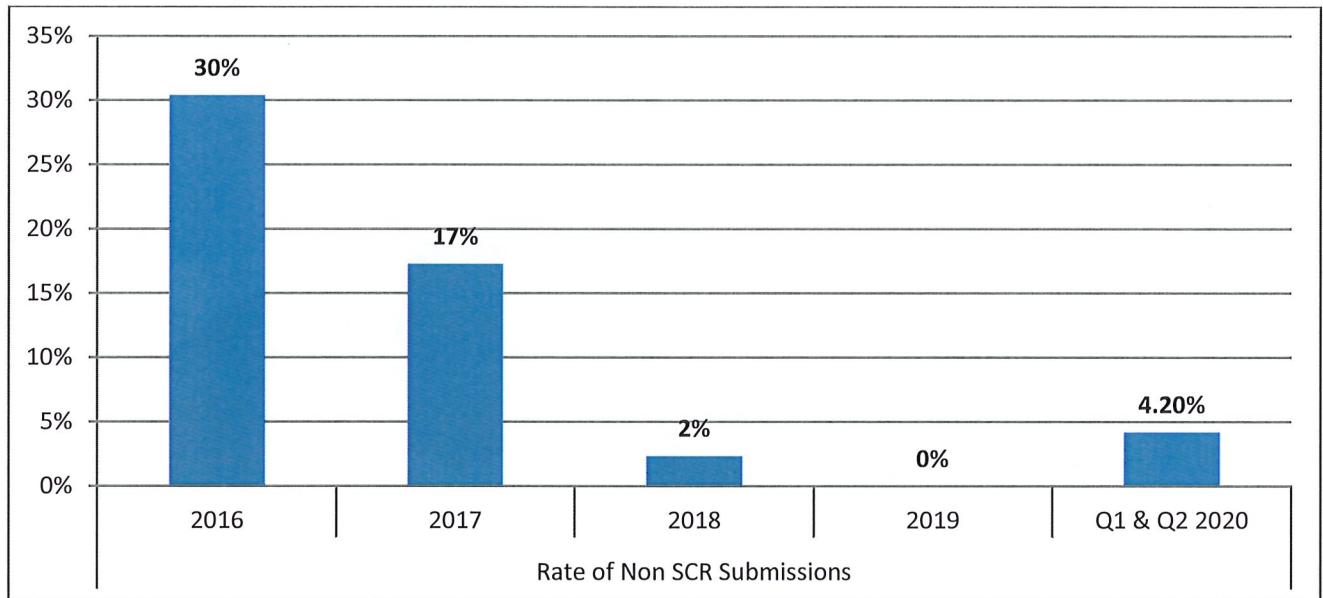
has resulted in a more evenly distribution of the SCR submissions by Division.



**One noted anomaly is the existence of SCR entries which are categorized as 'Address not entered' or "unknown". This occurs when members do not record a specific 'X Y' coordinate to their SCR, but rather use a commonplace name or generalized location. This equates to 6.3% of the total number of submissions.

Overall Review Findings

Of the 190 SCR's reviewed, eight were found to be containing information that should have been documented on some other form of report rather than an actual Street Check Report representing 4.2% of the sample size. This number is down significantly from the 30.4% identified in 2016 and has been maintained at less than 5% since 2018. In the 2019 SCR audit, 0 SCR's were identified as should be documented on. The largest mitigating factor for this continues to be the centralized SCR approval model.



Of the 190 SCR's reviewed, the team noted the following:

- a. 2/190 SCR's were identified as cancelled SCR's with 188 remaining compared against the SCR approval criteria
- b. 173/188 were deemed compliant within the approval guidelines.
- c. Although compliant in nature, 1 SCR was identified by the review team as having no perceived value to the information captured.
- d. 7/188 SCR's were deemed non-compliant for the following reasons:
 - i. 3 SCR's were identified as containing an implied bias and used racially based terminology that was identified by that review panel as inappropriate ("Aboriginal or African Male") versus a physical description.
 - ii. 3 SCR's appeared to make assumptions (the SCR contained assumptions or opinion outside of observation or fact), such as "transient house" and "bad teeth from meth use"
 - iii. 1 SCR was identified have improperly included irrelevant criminal history relating to the subject.

	2016	2017	2018	2019	Q1 & Q2 2020
Compliant	90.4%	84.7%	95.9%	95.7%	92.0%
Canceled	1.9%	1.2%	3.0%	2.6%	1.1%
Articulation	3.8%	7.0%	0.0%	0.5%	0.0%
Assumptions Made	1.9%	1.2%	2.4%	2.1%	1.6%
Irrelevant Information	0.0%	4.1%	0.5%	0.0%	0.5%
Implied Bias	1.9%	0.3%	1.0%	1.6%	1.6%

In review of previously identified reasons for non-compliance, the following was noted and highlighted:

- i. All SCR's had the reason for the Street Check properly articulated (the review team could easily determine the reason the member conducted the Street Check or lawful placement of the Police Officer).
- ii. One SCR was found to contain irrelevant information (irrelevant or unrelated to the reason for the SCR).
- iii. No SCR submissions were deemed to contain explicit bias, or the Street Check itself was conducted as result of a bias. Of the SCR submissions that were flagged for terminology, each could be interpreted or perceived externally as implied bias although agreed upon by the review team to be lacking explicitness.

This was the seventh SCR submission audit performed. Prior to this review period, the Criminal Intelligence Unit (CIU), assumed centralized approval of all SCR's on August 7, 2017. Within this review period all SCR submissions would have been subjected to consistent centralized review. The consistent and improved variance in numbers can be attributed to employing a standardized critical assessment process that is now accepted across the organization.

Between January 1, 2020 and June 30, 2020, the CIU was responsible for the approval of all EPS SCR submissions. The following statistics were reported for this period in comparison with the previous review.

	Q1 & Q2 2019	Q1 & Q2 2020
Approved	4288	2803
Reworked	1021 – 23.8%	707 – 25.2%
Canceled	47 – 1.1%	18 – 0.6%

**The SCR audit submission numbers and SCR approval numbers will differ. The statistics for CIU approvals were based on number of approvals made during Q1 and Q2 2020 in comparison to the audit which identified SCR submissions only during the same time frame.

The number of reworked SCR's has risen slightly from 23.8% in Q1 & Q2 2019 to 25.2% in Q1 & Q2 2020. This is still a lower rework rate than identified through previous SCR audits. CIU, the centralized approval team, continues to work on identifying common reasons for the reworked SCR's and implement strategies to reduce the deficiencies while maintaining a high compliance rate.

Recommendations

1. *Continued centralized review and approval of SCR submissions.*

The results of this and previous audits demonstrates the importance of a centralized approval process. The centralized approval process has shown how changes to the implementation of the approval criteria can be done in a significantly short time period while maintaining control over the compliance rates. With a decentralized approval process, implementing change would be significantly slower and labour intensive with a risk for inconsistencies relating to approval criteria.

2. *Communicate and educate the general membership on appropriate terminology*

During the SCR audit, inappropriate or dated terminology was used when describing physical or racial descriptors for subjects. Even amongst the review panel, no set terminology could be agreed upon. This has been identified as a commonality amongst the general membership and has caused some members to stop attempting to provide descriptors for fear of using the wrong terminology.

This was identified during previous audits and as a result a working group was created consisting of members from across the EPS to work on creating an inclusive terminology glossary to provide appropriate training for the membership.

3. *Develop a SCR form report within EPROS to replace the SCR Narratives in free text fields*

This is a pre-existing recommendation being carried forward within this review period. This requires significant technical adjustment to the existing RMS and is currently on hold pending the RMS review under way.

Conclusion

The results of this SCR review did not identify any significant instances or concerns related to the perception that members are conducting Street Checks based upon bias. Where a SCR was identified containing an assumption, it was only identified due to incomplete information provided or articulation of the grounds at hand. This is highly subjective and is indicative of an author and approver's experiences in comparison to those of the members' of the review panel. In some cases the identified assumption may be purely perceived and only a result of the author's writing style. The adoption and

implementation of the recommendations provided will help with the correct use of terminology moving forward.

SCR audits have been conducted since the inception of the 2016 SCR Review. To date seven audits have been conducted and have shown compliance rates consistently over the past three audits exceeding 95%. Additionally, the misuse of identified SCR's has been reduced from 30% in 2016 and maintained under 5% since. Based on these factors the purpose of the SCR audit has been met, to identify and document the impact of the SCR Review recommendations.

Edmonton Police Service

2020 Quarter 1 & 2 Street Check Report Review



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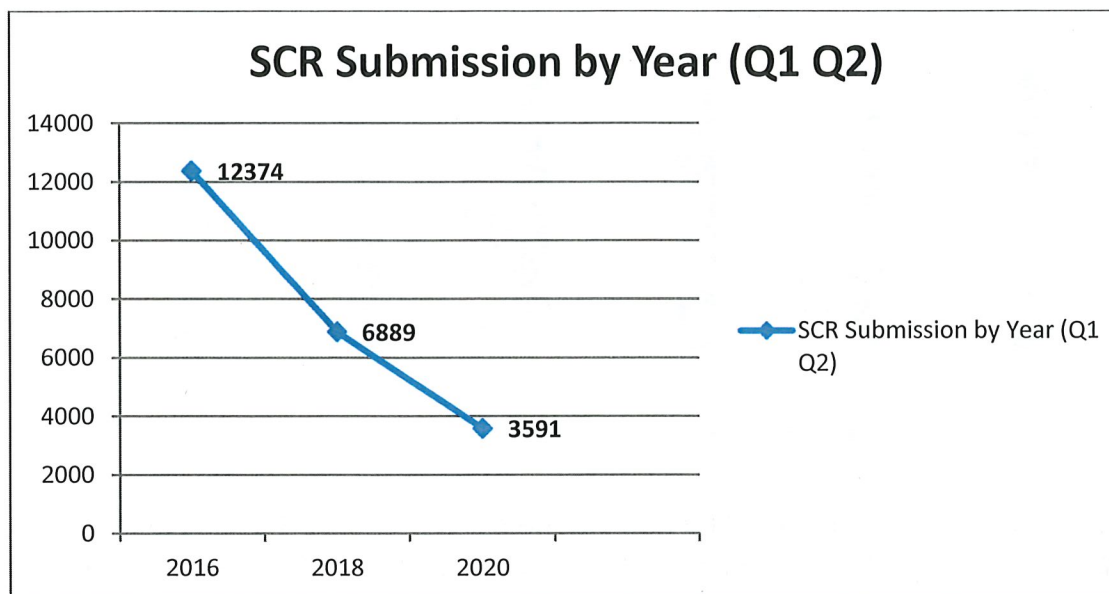
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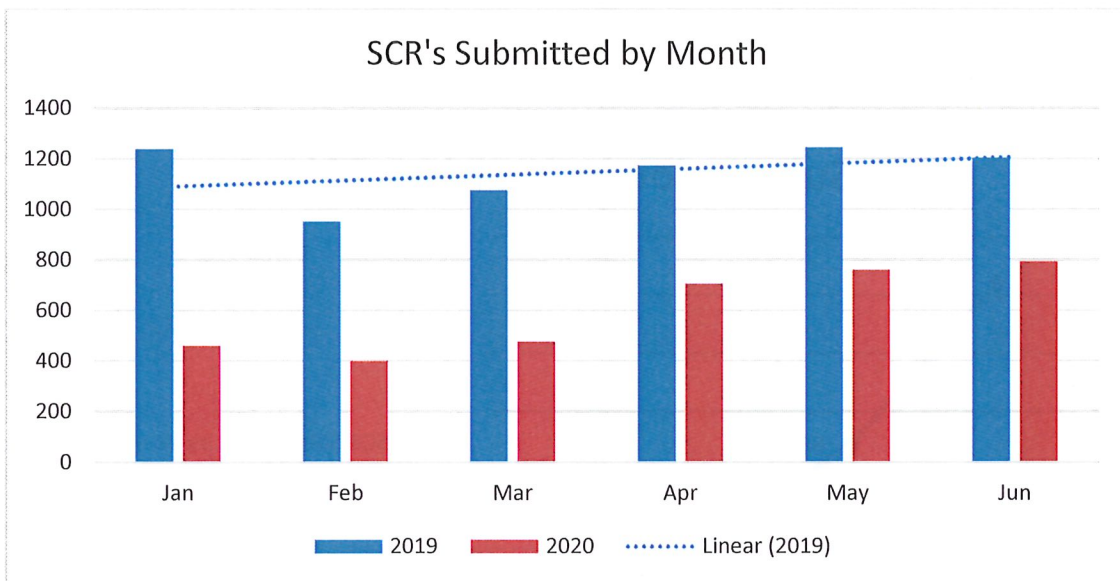


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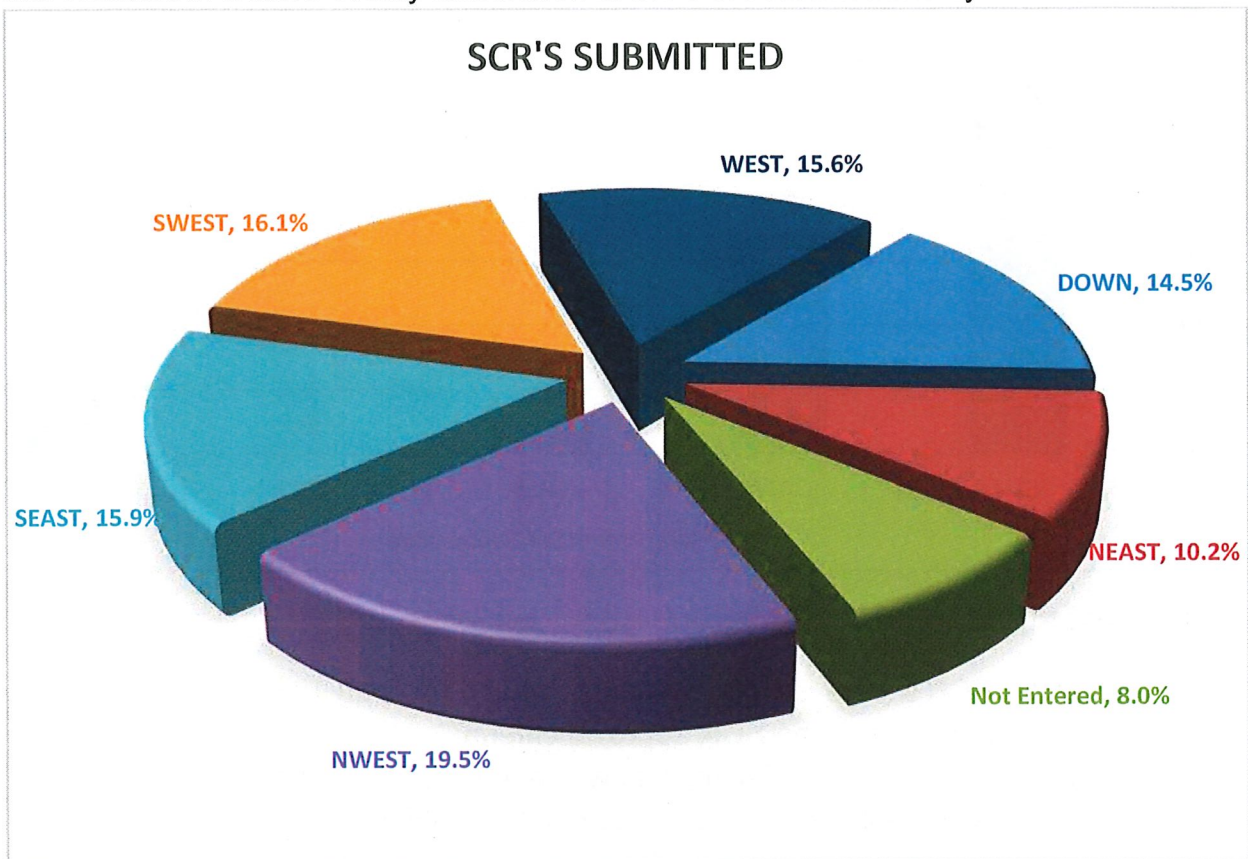
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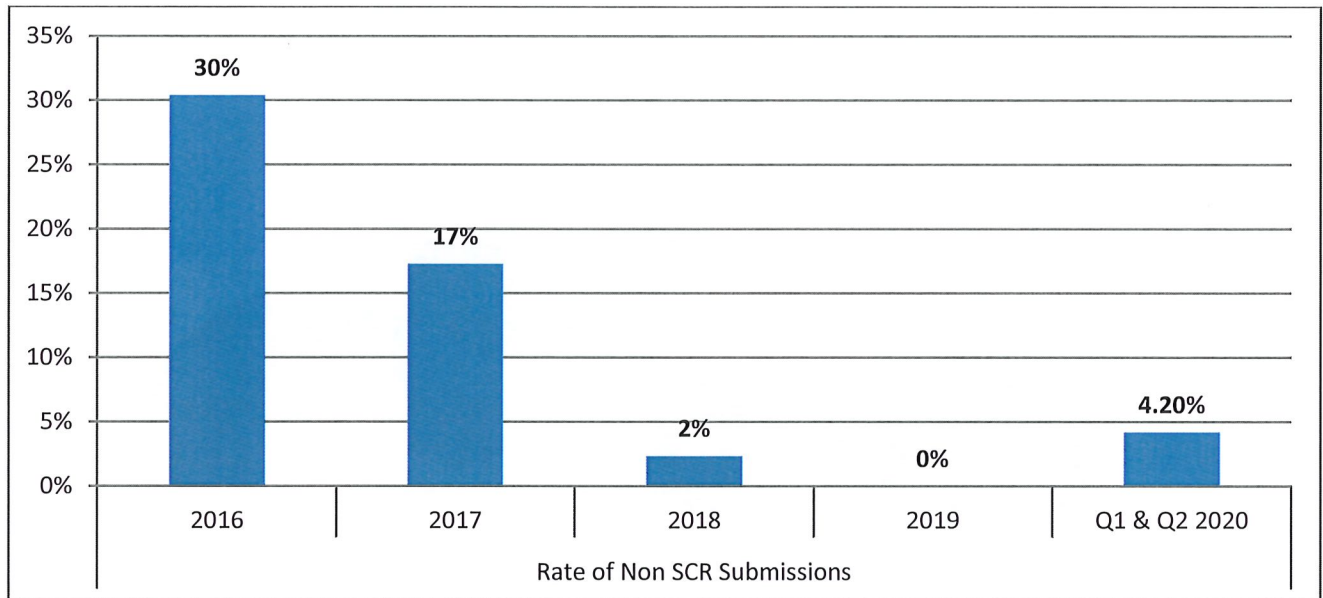
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