



EDMONTON POLICE SERVICE

REPORT TO THE EDMONTON POLICE COMMISSION

DATE: 2020 DEC 29

SUBJECT: Residential Review and Compliance Unit (June 2020 - December 2020)

RECOMMENDATION(S):

- 1) That this Residential Review and Compliance Unit (R2CU) Semi-annual report is provided for information to the Edmonton Police Commission.
- 2) That since the Residential Review and Compliance Unit (R2CU) has become a formal program within the Edmonton Police Service (EPS) over the past several years; and the City of Edmonton with the EPS has developed a Problem Properties Working Group to examine best practice and develop the city-wide Problem Properties program; which will report back to City Council regularly that this R2CU Semi-Annual Report – January 2021, will be the final semi-annual report to the Edmonton Police Commission.

INTRODUCTION:

This report will summarize and update the status of the Residential Review and Compliance Unit (R2CU).

R2CU continues to develop internal partnerships within each of the six patrol divisions; working closely with Crime Suppression Teams and divisional Beat Teams/patrol. R2CU continues to operate as an important liaison between the EPS membership and the external partners of the Residential Living Governance Committee (RLGC).

Within the past year the members of the partner agencies that conduct inspections became known as the Residential Inspection Safety Compliance Team (RISC Team). This team has been conducting joint inspections utilizing a joint notification letter which they developed. As mentioned in previous reports the scope and pace of the work being done now, under this new model, is at a significantly higher volume. The RISC Team is not a new entity, but rather a new name used to identify this improved organization of the collaborating agencies.

BACKGROUND:

Formalized inspections to ensure minimum housing standards are met began in the spring of 2018. The formalized Risk Assessment Model began in May 2018 and the

signed off MOU was in place by August 1, 2018 with all seven participating agencies and departments represented.

This multi-agency committee includes leadership and frontline staff from Alberta Health Services (AHS), Edmonton Police Service (EPS), the Government of Alberta (Both OH&S and the Sheriffs), and from the City of Edmonton: Edmonton Fire Rescue Services (EFRS), Safety Codes Compliance, Development Compliance, Community Standards, and Housing and Homelessness. The structure follows the Hub Model for Community Safety with formalized roles and responsibilities at the Steering, Centre of Responsibility, and Situation Table levels.

The RISC Team has been conducting joint inspections throughout the city for over two years. In addition to inspections, the team has participated in numerous community engagement events. Members of the RISC Team have attended 'Coffee with a Cop' sessions, Safer McCauley Community Meetings, and presented at the Canadian Institute of Public Health Inspectors. As the frontline face of the RLGC, the RISC Team has continued to develop credibility within the community as an effective and coordinated group to assist with identified high risk properties. The team's effectiveness is not in the process or tools developed, but in an integrated approach to solving issues.

YEAR TO DATE INSPECTIONS:

This model has allowed the team to be able to conduct inspections and subsequent follow-up inspections at a greatly increased rate. Despite the COVID-19 pandemic affecting workload, in the past six months the RISC team has accomplished the following:

- Assessed the risk of 100 new properties
- Conducted 311 RISC team inspections, including follow-up inspections
 - Agency Visit Count: 315 (total number of agencies involved in the 315 inspections)
- Successfully concluded and classified 106 properties, meeting minimum standards
- Participated in and presented their work at community stakeholder events

Outside this model the R2CU Sergeant continues to be responsible for coordinating with all the divisions by collecting potential problematic addresses and arranging any additional resources needed to facilitate the inspections. Through continued work alongside divisional resources, and the development of unofficial liaison members within most divisions, the RISC Team has been an effective resource in problem solving and crime reduction.

Inspection examples June to December 2020:

As in past reports, consideration must be given to the volume of inspections currently being conducted. Providing a breakdown of each division and or a summary of all inspections, would be extremely cumbersome to contain within one document. There is

the potential for future reports to include some of the developing data captured by the GIS Mapping system. Below are three examples from the last period that are representative to the RISC Team's continued focus of problematic rental, multi-family, and commercial accommodations.

1) South East Division problem house

- This location was brought forward to R2CU via South East Beats members as well as community complaints.
- High volume police presence, drug activity, broken windows, unsightly exterior lot, known offenders residing in suites, and transient traffic.
- The building consisted of 2 separate suites with varying degrees of deficiencies relating to building code inspections
- The address was submitted to the RISC Team and the first inspection occurred on September 23, 2020.
- RISC team members from AHS, EFRS, Community Standards, Development Compliance, Safety Codes, and both R2CU and EPS South East Beat members conducted the inspection
 - The Team noted many issues, including but not limited to, broken windows, damaged and broken doors and walls, inoperable fire alarm system, and several building code issues with the illegal secondary suite in the basement.
 - The basement has a very well-known female problem offender which is where most of the issues are arising from.
 - In a span of one year, police have dealt with this female 52 times.
- The homeowner, who was on scene, was advised of all the deficiencies and complaints linked to drug activity and the problematic female tenant in the basement suite.
- Instructions to address the issues were laid out and the homeowner stated he would fix the issues.
- A second RISC Team inspection was scheduled for October 27, 2020.
- While waiting for this secondary inspection, police conducted several drives past the property and observed the same type of activities still occurring. The problematic female tenant was often high on drugs in the backyard, screaming profanities and creating a scene.
- It was evident this was bothering neighboring residences as police were approached several times by neighbors who were begging for help to get rid of the female.
- On October 27, 2020 the RISC team returned to this property and conducted the follow up inspection.
 - The homeowner had successfully evicted the problematic female tenant who left without causing any further issues.

- The illegal and unpermitted basement suite was decommissioned and will not be used ever again according to the homeowner.
- The general condition of the exterior of the residence is still being repaired but in due time it will be fixed.
- A discussion was had with the owner who said that he was taken by surprise that someone (the female tenant) could do so much damage to his house (both inside and out).
- The homeowner was coached on proper ways to find a good tenant and said he will take those suggestions into consideration if he ever decides to rent again.
- Community complaints and EPS calls for service have been considerably reduced.
- Monitoring is ongoing

2) South West Division Single Family Home

- o The residence in question, a subject of numerous complaints from community
- o Complaints led to an investigative file opened by SW Beats and Bylaw surrounding suspected stolen bikes and other property in backyard
- o Bikes and other property were creating a large mess in backyard.
- o RISC Team became aware of the location from community complaints and EPS calls for service.
- o 20JUL23 RISC team conducted their first inspection and SW beats attended.
 - Various rooms (5) were being rented out without a proper permit
 - Basement contained multiple bike parts - suspected chop shop
 - Various individuals observed in the house appeared to be on extended stays but not living there.
 - Main tenants have an extensive criminal record pertaining to property related offences and have also be associated to another RISC property within the city.
- o 20SEP03 - RISC Team Inspection:
 - Even more bike parts located within the basement and in the backyard.
 - A Sea Can was now put on the property and upon opening, police located a small bike chop shop inside with several suspected stolen power tools.
 - Owner of property was on site and was completely unaware of any of these issues.
 - Owner believed the property manager had everything under control.
 - Owner fired property manager and hired a new company to take over.
- o 20OCT13 - RISC Inspection

- o RISC team re attended the property, noting some of the issues were partially fixed but the cameras remained on the power poles.
- o The property was closely monitored by SCAN (Safer Communities and Neighborhoods) who noted lots of drug activity.
- o In July of 2020, a new property manager took over this location and on July 16, 2020 they attended a re inspection with the RISC team.
 - During this inspection, the tenant was very aggressive and hostile towards police and the new property manager became scared to have him as a tenant in this property.
 - Property manager served tenant with a 30-day eviction notice.
 - Tenant refused to comply with eviction and disputed it at the Queen's bench.
- o RISC team attended the location on September 10, 2020 however all tenants refused to allow anyone entry to the residence and the inspection was not completed.
- o RISC team re attended this location on October 8, 2020 where the tenant was still refusing to move out and refused entry to any of the RISC team members.
 - After negotiations with the tenant, he permitted one police member and one AHS member into the house to conduct their inspection.
 - Various safety concerns were still present which was noted by AHS and a list of issues were provided to the property manager who tried to gain entry to the location to fix the issues but was refused entry by the tenant.
- o North East.Beats kept the RISC Team updated with the on-going issues that continued after our initial inspection, which included:
 - Heavy traffic of individuals frequenting the house at various hours of the day and night on bicycles and foot
 - Arrests of identified offenders committing property and drug offences. Several warrant executions
 - Individuals observed living in the garage
 - Community discontent

Update:

- o Eviction executed - main renter vacated
- o House is vacant and the owner has plans to bulldoze the property and rebuild a single-family home.
- o Location to be monitored until owner complete destruction of property.

UPCOMING:

With the inception of Vision 2020 and the Crime Suppression Team, R2CU initiated the development of a partnership with the new team. Several problem properties are in the Crime Suppression zones so a strong working partnership with the teams will strengthen the ability to hold problem property owners accountable.

The three Crime Suppression Zones are supervised by three sergeants with a team of constables assigned to an area in each zone. On-going communication and the sharing of information will make for a more efficient process. The RISC Team members were also introduced to the Crime Suppression Team to afford resources and strategies the different agencies can supply.

R2CU continues to utilize different approaches to inform EPS frontline members the benefits of our unit when it comes to dealing with problem properties in the divisions. This includes presenting at recruit classes, squad parades, and possibly being a part of GDM training. We will continue to invite members from Beats, Crime Suppression, and patrol to our inspections to not only assist us with information to the property but to give divisional members a true sense of how the RISC Team can help reduce calls for service at problem properties.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ATTACHED:

SUBMITTED BY:

Constable Lucas BRAITHWAITE, Residential Review and Compliance Unit (R2CU)

Lucas Braithwaite

REVIEWED BY:

Sergeant Paul LOOKER, Collaborative Police Unit

[Signature]

REVIEWED BY:

Inspector Darin BALANIK, Youth Support Branch

2021 JAN. 04
As per recommendation #2; since R2CU is an EPS formal program, working with the City of Edmonton, yearly or ad hoc reports will be submitted to City Council with EPS input.

REVIEWED BY:

Superintendent Nicole CHAPDELAIN, Integrated Community Safety Division

With the Problem Properties Working Group reporting back to City Council at minimum, yearly or when requested, having this report provided to EPC would be redundant. EPS sits with this group at an Inspector level and will ensure accurate reporting is completed. Moving forward, a copy of any reports from this group can be provided to the EPC. I support the recommendation that the Residential Review & Compliance Report no longer comes forward to the Commission and that this report serves as the final report direct from EPS.

APPROVED
By Nicole Chapdelaine at 1:30 pm, Jan 04, 2021

REVIEWED BY:

Chief Officer Enyinnah OKERE, Community Safety and Well-being Bureau

[Signature]

Chief of Police, Dale McFee

Supportive of discontinuing this report since it's redundant due to problem properties working group.

Date:

[Signature]

TO C.C. January 8, 2021