



# Winnipeg Police Service Flight Operations Unit

2015

**Operation Report** 

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# Winnipeg Police Service Flight Operations Unit

**OPERATION REPORT 2015** 

# **1. REPORT SUMMARY**

The following document presents an operation report of the Winnipeg Police Service Flight Operations Unit (FOU) for the period of January 1 – December 31, 2015.

# 2. OPERATION

#### **Police Helicopter:**

On December 6, 2010, the Service publicly unveiled the EC120B helicopter, delivered by Eurocopter Canada Limited, which became Airbus Helicopters Canada Limited as of January 31, 2014. The EC120B is a popular platform for Canadian law enforcement air support units and has become a benchmark for police operations.

The five-seat, 1.6-ton single-engine EC120B has the latest generation technologies, featuring high maneuverability, excellent visibility, a large cockpit and a low noise signature. The EC120B features a quiet main rotor system with all composite blades and a shrouded Fenestron tail rotor which is very reliable, safe and quiet. Flying over at 1,000 feet above ground level (agl), the EC120B has a perceived noise of 68 dB, which means it is difficult to detect. It is the quietest helicopter in its class, with low levels of pollutants in its engine emissions.

#### **Mission Equipment:**

FLIR (Forward Looking Infrared)	This unit consists of a gyroscopically stabilized camera with zoom as well as the thermal imagery which tracks people or evidence by heat signatures.			
Nightsun (Spotlight)	Provides for effective search with a 30 million candle power light that can be slaved to the thermal imagery camera.			
Police radios	Allow for communications with all agencies and frequencies.			
Moving Maps	GPS-based Augmented Reality mapping system that lets Tactical Flight Officers know where they are so as to give accurate directions to ground resources.			

Public Address System	Powerful loudspeaker to address public gatherings.			
Rear View Monitor	Allows those in the rear to see exactly what the Tactical Flight Officer sees, used for training and strategic ride-alongs.			
Dual Controls	Permits flight training to occur within the aircraft.			
Video Downlink	Enables transmission of live aerial video feeds to a police or fire department supervisor on the ground.			

#### CONTRACTS

#### Engine: Turbomeca Canada

The Winnipeg Police Service entered into a "Support by the hour" (SBH) services contract with Turbomeca Canada, which is an engine insurance plan to ensure there is a fully operational engine in the airframe regardless of the issue. The EC120B has a Turbomeca Arrius-2F engine which is completely overhauled every 3000 hours of operation, resulting in an engine that is virtually new. December saw the Arrius-2F S/N 34535 engine arrive at the end of its lifecycle. As a result in January 2016 Arrius-2F S/N 34061 will be installed in AIR1. The Unit remains under the SBH services contract.

#### Maintenance: Novex Helitrades Incorporated

At the end of 2014, RFP 905-2014 competition was conducted for the provision of aircraft maintenance services for up to five years. As a result of the bid process, a contract was awarded again to Novex Helitrades Incorporated from Edmonton, Alberta. The one year contract comes with the option for up to 4 one year extensions. The current contract is due for renewal May 29, 2016.

#### Fuel: Kelly Western Services Ltd., in partnership with the Province of Manitoba

Bid Opportunity for Supply and Delivery of Aviation Fuel (JetA1) in the amount of 200,000 litres for the period of October 1, 2015 – September 30, 2017 was conducted in 2015. As a result of this process, the fuel contract was awarded to Kelly Western Services Ltd.

#### Unit Office and Hangar: 17 Wing Winnipeg

In October 2010, the Winnipeg Police Service entered into an agreement with the Department of National Defense 17 Wing Winnipeg that established a cooperative working arrangement for rental space of hangar and office to house the police helicopter and Flight Operations Unit. A one year lease agreement was signed with additional one year renewals. This lease was renewed until October 15, 2016.

### Insurance

As organized through the City of Winnipeg Insurance Branch, the insurance underwriter for the Flight Operations Unit provides coverage of \$2,640,000 USD for the customized EC120B helicopter. This insurance has been secured through November of 2017. As a result of a change in underwriters, a consistent record of safe operation and timely policy renewal, the FOU again saw their insurance premium for 2016 reduced by 50.27 percent.

# STAFFING

Under the Command of the Inspector and Staff Sergeant, Division 50 Operational Support, the staffing complement for the Flight Operations Unit is:

- Unit Supervisor (Patrol Sergeant) one
- Chief Pilot (permanent civilian employee) one
- Pilots (1 civilian employee and 1 sworn police employee) two
- Tactical Flight Officers (TFO) (police Constables) four
- Aircraft Maintenance Engineer (AME) (under contract) one

The minimum operational "flight crew" consists of one TFO and one Pilot.

# Tactical Flight Officer (TFO)

In the Spring of 2014, the FOU successfully graduated three TFOs from the in-house training program. As a result, for the entirety of 2015, the Unit operated at full staffing levels.

# Pilots

In 2015, the WPS Police Pilot completed his commercial rotary wing license. After completing his EC-120B type endorsement, emergency procedures and night rating, he undertook and completed the in-house Police Helicopter Tactics course and mentored flight under the direction of the Chief Pilot. By June, the new pilot was cleared for solo patrol operations. With the completion of training by the police pilot, the FOU returned to a full complement of operational pilots in June of 2015.



# TRAINING

# Pilots

The Chief Pilot and both Line Pilots attended Canadian Helicopter-HNZ Group in Penticton, British Columbia for annual recurrent training on the EC120B, where they were exposed to and tested on a series of in-flight emergency procedures. The Chief Pilot and one Line Pilot attended the ALEA Canadian Regional Safety Seminar.

# Tactical Flight Officer (TFO)

In 2014, the FOU ran its largest TFO training course, resulting in certification of five members, including the Unit Commander. To further develop the tactical flight officer skills and knowledge base, three TFOs received training from Canadian Helicopter-HNZ Group for inflight emergency procedures and hover exit manoeuvres.

In September 2015, the Senior TFO attended the Airborne Law Enforcement Association (ALEA) Canadian Regional Safety Seminar.

# Flight Crew (Pilot & TFO)

K9 transport and deployment was developed and jointly exercised with the WPS K9 Unit, including several training missions to rural areas and airports outside the City. Aircrews also participated in the Division 50 Joint Training Day with the Tactical Support Team, Crisis Negotiators and Incident Commanders.

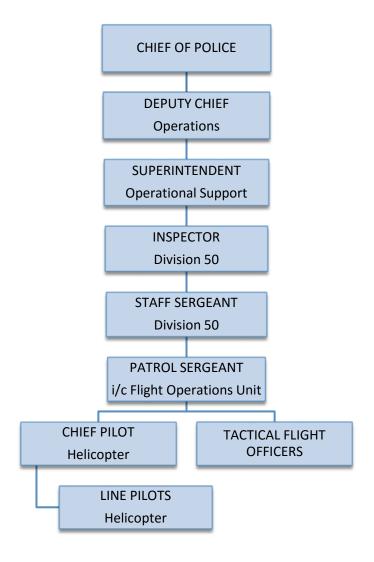
In partnership with the Canadian Forces Air Force Training Centre, AIR1 and K9 assisted in non-standard mission search training in a forested, wilderness environment.

In conjunction with the Winnipeg Fire Paramedic Service, Flight Crews completed water rescue interoperability scenario training on the Red and Assiniboine rivers.

# Unit Supervisor

The Unit Supervisor completed the Canadian Forces Flight Safety Course, becoming the second FOU member qualified as a CF Flight Safety Officer.

#### UNIT ORGANIZATION CHART



#### FLIGHT OPERATIONS UNIT OBJECTIVES

The primary purpose of the Flight Operations Unit is to support all operational and investigative Service units in the detection of criminal acts, apprehension of suspects and searching for missing persons, as well as offering assistance to other agencies. The Unit has budgeted to fly 1000 hours a year on missions with a variety of scopes. Flight crews are able to provide assistance with the following, weather permitting:

- response to crimes in progress for aerial containment and investigation
- infrared searches for suspects and evidence, and co-ordination of ground response
- tracking and surveillance of suspect vehicles during police pursuits and subsequent co-ordination of ground resources
- illumination of crime scenes, collision scenes, vehicle stops, search areas, disturbances, and foot pursuits

- aerial searches for missing or lost persons
- aerial reconnaissance and photography or videotaping of crime scenes, traffic collisions, high-risk incidents or remote areas
- aerial platform for Emergency Services for major fires, environmental disasters, or other major incidents
- Forward Looking Infrared (FLIR) scans to provide evidence of illegal grow operations relating to drug investigations
- rapid deployment of K9 Unit members to remote locations under exigent circumstances

#### SAFETY

The issue of Flight Safety is taken very seriously by the Winnipeg Police Service. The location of the Unit on Canadian Forces Base 17 Wing has ingrained a safety culture since inception. The Winnipeg Police Service and 17 Wing Winnipeg work together to ensure the highest safety standards are followed and participate collaboratively in the Wing Commanders Safety Program.

Both the Chief Pilot and the Unit Supervisor have qualified as Flight Safety Officer and Basic Investigator Level II as designated by the Royal Canadian Air Force. These designations, achieved after successful completion of the Flight Safety Officer Course at 17 Wing Winnipeg, combined with industry experience, provide meaningful oversight of the Flight Safety Program.

Due to the ongoing and collaborative nature of the working relationship between FOU and 17 Wing, the Service anticipates additional training in various aspects of Flight Safety on an ongoing basis. By gleaning the institutional knowledge from the Royal Canadian Air Force, in combination with a robust internal safety culture, FOU works to identify risk in advance, thereby preventing incidents and continuing an accident free operation.



**RCAF FLIGHT SAFETY PATCH** 

# LASER INCIDENTS

Nav Canada conducted an operational analysis between September 2009 – August 2012 of laser attacks on aircraft within 20 nautical miles of either landing or departing airports in Canada. The top ten airports reported 451 incidents that created a hazard for aircraft and passengers, with Winnipeg reporting 22. The frustrating reality for pilots in these incidents is they did not have the ability to track the source of the attack.

Prior to the launch of AIR1, there was no local capability to address the problem of lasers or other forms of projected bright light being shone at aircraft arriving or departing from the Winnipeg area. As a result of the Winnipeg Police Service working with Nav Canada and Transport Canada, new protocols have been implemented to streamline all stakeholder response to reports of aircraft, including AIR1, being struck by lasers.

As a result of this partnership, AIR1 has successfully directed ground units to locate and identify suspects who violate the Air Regulations and Aeronautics Act of Canada, and create hazardous flying conditions for pilots.

Since inception in 2011 through the end of 2015, AIR1 was targeted 28 times, with ten suspects identified and apprehended.

Transport Canada logged a total of 650 aircraft struck by laser incidents nationwide in 2015, seven of which were reported through the Winnipeg James Armstrong Richardson International Airport (CYWG). Five of those seven incidents targeted AIR1.

#### Summary of LASER Incidents 2015

On June 18, 2015 while preforming an orbit in the North End, the AIR1 cockpit was briefly illuminated by a green laser that came from the area of Alfred Avenue and Andrews Street. Upon identifying the location of origin, a systemic area search was undertaken; however, a suspect was not located. No direct eye contact was made with the laser beam by either crew member and control of the aircraft was maintained throughout the incident.

That same evening, while performing an orbit in the West End, the aircraft cabin was illuminated by a green laser that came from the area of Sherbrook Street and Cornish Avenue. The laser strike was brief and did not contact any of the crew members' eyes. No search for the source occurred as AIR1 was engaged in a call for service at the time.

On June 21, 2015 at the scene of an unrelated incident at the Red River Exhibition Grounds, a green laser was briefly aimed at the aircraft on four successive occasions. Each blast from the laser lasted between 2-6 seconds. The aircraft was immediately turned away from the source and the TFO attempted to locate the suspect using the FLIR. No lasting effect was felt on either the pilot's or the TFO's eyes, and aircraft control was maintained throughout the incident. The suspect entered a vehicle which departed the area. AIR1 maintained visual containment of the vehicle and directed ground units to the vehicle. A suspect was taken into custody. On December 21, 2015 the suspect was convicted as a result of the incident.

On August 4, 2015 while in flight in the vicinity of Gertrude Avenue and Daly Street on a call for service, a green laser was directed 2-3 times at the aircraft. The strikes lasted approximately two seconds each. AIR1 cleared from the call to attempt to locate the suspect, but was unsuccessful in doing so. No injuries occurred to either the Pilot or the Tactical Flight Officer.

On November 14, 2015 in the early morning hours in the vicinity of Nassau Street and McMillian Street, AIR1 was targeted by a green laser. The beam struck the Tactical Flight Officer directly in the left eye. As a result of the laser strike, the eye immediately began to water and the officer experienced extreme discomfort. The discomfort was such that the aircraft immediately returned to base. As the pilot was not affected by the laser strike, control of the aircraft was maintained throughout.

## **NOISE COMPLAINTS**

Tracking and addressing citizen noise complaints was identified as an important issue for the Flight Operations Unit. All citizen complaints that are reported to the WPS are directed to the Unit Supervisor to research and arrange for a member of the Unit to personally speak with the reporting person.

By providing an explanation of operational activity, educating citizens on the Flight Operations Unit mission and mandate, along with making operational adjustments, complaints have been reduced.

- In 2011, 20 separate complaints were made by 17 reporting persons.
- In 2012, 10 noise complaints were received.
- In 2013, 4 noise complaints were received.
- In 2014, 3 noise complaints were received.
- In 2015, 5 noise complaints were received.

Of the five noise complaints received in 2015, one was determined to have occurred at times when AIR1 was not flying.



#### **OPERATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS**

#### PURSUIT

In January, while on routine patrol, AIR1 took over a pursuit which had commenced in the downtown area. Police members attempted to stop a vehicle for traffic violations. When the vehicle fled from police, AIR1 assigned itself, quickly located the vehicle and assumed responsibility for the pursuit. Police ground units made multiple attempts to slow the vehicle using stop sticks, all of which were unsuccessful.

AIR1 maintained observation of the vehicle which came to a stop in the 1800 block of Burrows. AIR1 proceeded to direct General Patrol Members to the vehicle and occupant. The driver was taken into custody and subsequently charged with multiple breaches of court orders, assaulting police, and numerous driving offences.

#### Assistance to the RCMP OAKBANK DETACHMENT

In January, members of the Oakbank RCMP requested the assistance of the WPS in relation to a commercial break in progress at a scrapyard located in the vicinity of Grassie Boulevard and Plessis Road. RCMP advised two suspects had fled on foot from the scene.

Units from the WPS including K9, General Patrol members from East District, and AIR1 attended. Working in a coordinated fashion with RCMP members, an extensive ground search resulted in the apprehension of both suspects. AIR1 was able to focus the search for the suspect based on information provided by ground units and was instrumental in directing officers to the second suspect hiding within a pipe.

#### **EMOTIONALLY DISTURBED YOUNG PERSON**

On a March evening, AIR1 attended the West End in relation to a male youth who had left his residence, in an intoxicated state, threatening to harm himself. AIR1 located the youth in the vicinity of his residence and maintained observation until a ground unit was available. Once General Patrol members were in the area, AIR1 directed them to the teenager. By arriving promptly and locating the male, AIR1 was able to eliminate the need for a protracted search by units on the ground and obtain medical assistance for the youth.

#### DISTRAUGHT FEMALE IN WOODED AREA

On an April early evening, AIR1 attended to Assiniboine Forest in relation to a report of a female threatening to harm herself at that location. The vast nature of the area, along with the numerous mature trees, made the prospect of locating the female using ground units a harrowing task.

Using the FLIR camera, AIR1 searched the wooded area and was able to locate the female within the woods, perched in a tree. Due to the dense bush, it was difficult to provide verbal directions to officers on the ground; however, by using the Night Sun spotlight, the flight crew identified the female's location and provided a reference for ground units to successfully locate the female in a timely fashion, and transport her for treatment.

#### HIDING PURSUIT SUSPECT LOCATED

Although AIR1 cannot attend every pursuit, its presence post pursuit can be a critical game changer. In April, AIR1 attended the North End after a dangerous driver, who was a suspect in an aborted pursuit, discarded the vehicle and sought to make good his escape on foot. Once in the area, AIR1 began a system search in support of ground units and police K9. A short time later, the suspect was located hiding on a rooftop and taken into custody by K9 and officers on the ground. The male was charged with a variety of offences, including flight from police and impaired driving.

#### MALE LOCATED IN ASSINIBOINE RIVER

In May, AIR1 responded to the area of the Queen Elizabeth Bridge and Main Street in response to a report of a male who had jumped into the Assiniboine River. Using the FLIR camera, AIR1 quickly located the male floating in the river and directed the Winnipeg Fire Department Water Rescue members to the male using the Night Sun. The Illumination assisted firefighters in safely retrieving the male from the water.

#### SUSPECT JUMPS FROM WINDOW TO AVOID ARREST

One of the key roles of AIR1 is to provide over-watch for police officers on the ground. In March, members of the Street Crime Unit requested the assistance of AIR1 in the arrest of a violent drug trafficker known to be hiding inside a local hotel. As ground unit members entered the premises, AIR1 provided aerial coverage of the establishment.

The suspect male, alert to the presence of police within the hotel, sought to make good his escape via a window. The culprit jumped out of his room and landed on the roof of the hotel. The fall resulted in the male sustaining serious injuries; however, AIR1 was able to direct ground units and the Winnipeg Fire Paramedic Service to the injured suspect, who received emergency care before being taken into custody.

#### REPORT OF AN ARMED MALE

In June, AIR1 responded to a weapons incident in St. Vital. A suspect male had pointed a gun at another male and multiple police units were assigned to search the area. AIR1 was able to identify a vehicle matching the description of the suspect vehicle in a parking lot and directed units to its location. The driver was located and subsequently arrested for Possession of Cocaine for the purpose of trafficking and possessing proceeds of crime.

In this instance, the helicopter's ability to rapidly check multiple locations for the vehicle in rapid succession minimized the amount of ground resources tied up searching for the vehicle.

#### Assistance to CN Police

In August, CN Police came upon two suspects actively breaking into facilities on their property. CN Police requested the assistance of AIR1. While providing support to officers on the ground with the Night Sun, AIR1 continued to search the area using the infrared camera. As a result of that search, one of the suspects was located hiding in some dense brush adjacent to the property. The suspect, located at the scene, was charged with break and enter.

#### HOME INVASION SUSPECTS APPREHENDED

The ability for AIR1 to arrive rapidly at the scene of an incident in progress is a substantial benefit for police officers and public.

In November, AIR1 responded to an address in the West End following the reports of a home invasion. Arriving quickly, AIR1 observed multiple suspects exit the home into an awaiting vehicle which promptly departed the area. AIR1 maintained observation of the suspect vehicle, updating ground units as the vehicle sought to elude police. After damaging multiple police and civilian vehicles with their reckless driving, the suspects were eventually apprehended on the North Perimeter and subsequently charged in relation to the events within the dwelling house.

#### **MISSING PERSONS**

In 2015, AIR1 assisted with 18 missing person calls, including missing youth, elderly and Alzheimer's patients, and persons with intellectual disorders. The Police helicopter assisted in successful location of four subjects.

AIR1 is an excellent asset/tool in area searches, as it can cover a significant area with both visual and infrared searches in a timely and effective fashion. This broad area search capability allows ground resources to focus their checks on areas more suited to vehicular travel and on foot searches.

# ASSISTANCE TO OUTSIDE AGENCIES

Since inception, AIR1 has supported and assisted a number of internal and external stakeholders, both operationally and in training. AIR1 has worked with the Department of National Defense, Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), Manitoba Justice and Winnipeg Fire Paramedic Service, as well as Project Lifesaver Manitoba.

### **PUBLIC DISPLAYS**

- Winnipeg Police Service Half Marathon
- Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) Run
- Steinbach Flying Club

#### PRESENTATIONS

- Several internal presentations to Winnipeg Police Service Units, including shift briefings
- Winnipeg Police Board

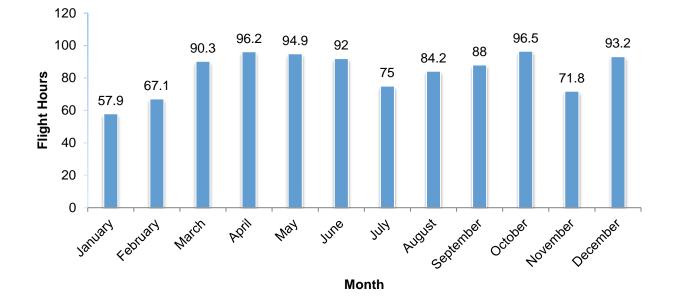


# 3. PERFORMANCE

# **QUARTERLY SUMMARY OF FLIGHT HOURS**

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2015
Total	215.3	283.1	247.2	261.5	1007.1

# FLIGHT HOURS BY MONTH



Throughout 2015, the Flight Operations Unit logged 1007.1 flight hours. While the above table illustrates the distribution of flight hours by month, the Unit achieved a monthly average of 83.93 flight hours.

During January, hours of flight time were reduced due to the camera being out for maintenance.<sup>1</sup> Weather conditions impacted the flight hours during February and November. A combination of weather and maintenance events affected the July results.

Despite the four months of lower than average flight hours, the Unit achieved over 1000 hours of flight time for the first time since inception.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Request to purchase a new FLIR camera submitted to the City of Winnipeg/Province of Manitoba in the Fall of 2015.

Factor	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2015
Weather	12.5	11.5	16.5	31	71.5
Maintenance	27	12	13	7	59
Staffing <sup>2</sup>	2	1	0	4	7
Total	41.5	24.5	29.5	42	137.5

# QUARTERLY SUMMARY OF FLIGHT TIME LOST (BY DAY)



<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Staffing shortages first tracked in 2012.

# SUMMARY OF INCIDENT TYPE BY ACTIVITY JANUARY 1, 2015 TO DECEMBER 31, 2015

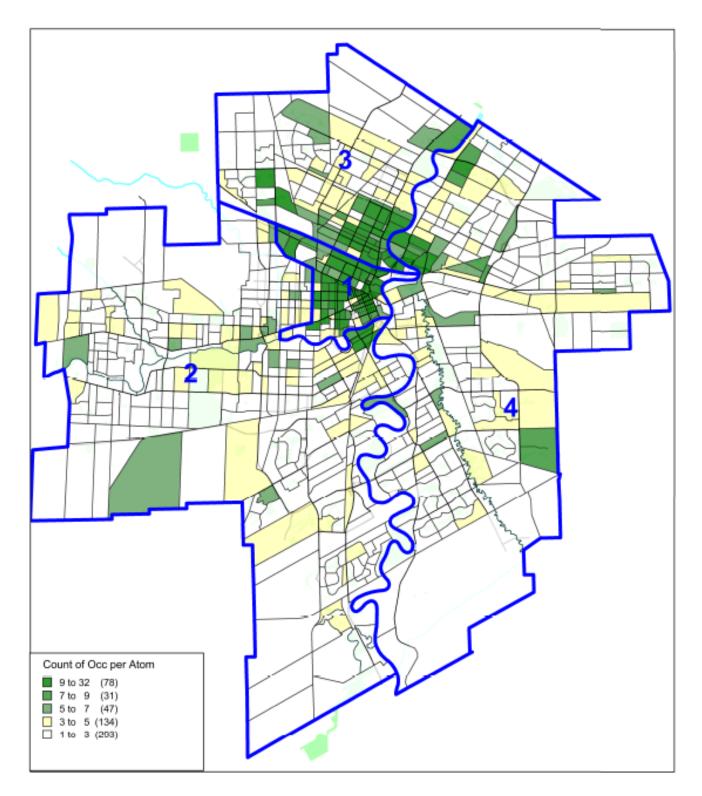
The following table contains a summary of the most frequently dispatched incident types:

WELLBEING	238
TRAFFIC STOP	236
SUSPICIOUS PERSON	200
DOMESTIC DISTURBANCE	176
BREAK AND ENTER – ALL TYPES	146
ALARM – ALL TYPES	123
ASSAULT	106
DISTURBANCE	105
FIGHT	99
WEAPON	63
SUICIDE THREAT	62
GUN SEEN	59
DANGER	55
TRAFFIC	53
FAMILY TROUBLE	50
SHOTS FIRED	43
ROBBERY COMMERCIAL	42
STABBING REPORTED	42
ROBBBERY PERSON	41
FOLLOW	36
ASSAULT WITH WEAPON	32
MOTOR VEHICLE COLLISION	30
DAMAGE	27
IMPAIRED DRIVING	25
FIRE	22
MISSING PERSON ASSIST	20
SPECIAL ATTENTION	20
TRAFFIC PURSUIT	20
MEDICAL CALL	19
STOLEN VEHICLE	19
THREAT REPORTED	19
GUN KNOW	16
WARRANT	14

ASSISTANCE REQUIRED		13
SERVE		13
SEXUAL ASSAULT		13
SPI HOTSPOT		12
THEFT		12
SUBJECT STOP		11
PHYSICAL ABUSE - CHILD		10
PROWLER		10
DISPUTE		9
SUBJECT PURSUIT		9
GUN SHOT WOUND		8
BREACH		7
SPI SUBJECT		5
ANIMAL		4
BOMB THREAT		3
INSECURE		3
SPECIAL		3
STOLEN VEHICLE LOCATED	)	3
INDECENT		2
NOISE		2
OFFICER		2
SPI COM		2
VICE		2
WARRANT EXECUTION		2
E911 HANGUP		1
GRAFFITI		1
MENTAL HEALTH ACT		1
PABUSE		1
PANHANDLER		1
SUDDEN DEATH		1
SHOPLIFTER		1
	TOTAL	2425

## AIR1 FLIGHT ACTIVITY - DENSITY OF OCCURRENCES BY ATOM

January 1, 2015 to December 31, 2015



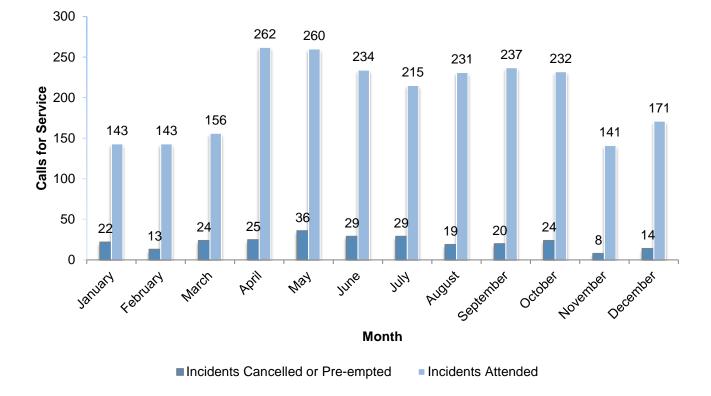
# Overview of AIR1 density of occurrences in Winnipeg (795 Atoms total)

• 212 Atoms had zero calls for service where AIR1 was dispatched

# QUARTERLY SUMMARY OF INCIDENTS DISPATCHED

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2015
Total	443	757	683	544	2425

### TOTAL INCIDENT VOLUME BY MONTH



Note: Total dispatched incidents (2425) includes all calls that AIR1 attended (2162) as well as the total events that were cancelled or pre-empted (263) prior to arriving on scene.

#### **CALLS FOR SERVICE**

AIR1 continues to have a dramatic influence on the outcome of calls for service. As detailed above, the helicopter attended 2162 events. As a direct result of this presence, AIR1 was instrumental in identifying/apprehending 347 persons of interest. If it were not for AIR1, these apprehensions could not occur at the time, resulting in further investigative resources on the ground to complete the calls for service. Of the 347 parties identified to ground resources, 112 parties were taken into custody for criminal offenses at the time due to the support of AIR1.

# PURSUITS

## Pursuits 20 Dispatched

- AIR1 Dispatched, involved 18
- AIR1 Dispatched, not involved 2

#### Follows 36 Dispatched

- AIR1 Dispatched, involved 27
- AIR1 Dispatched, not involved 9

#### FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 2011 Flight Operational Unit costs billed to the Province of Manitoba = \$1,196,693.90
- 2012 Flight Operational Unit costs billed to the Province of Manitoba = \$1,327,590.33
- 2013 Flight Operational Unit costs billed to the Province of Manitoba = \$1,515,820.85
- 2014 Flight Operational Unit costs billed to the Province of Manitoba = \$1,752,514.89
- 2015 Flight Operational Unit costs billed to the Province of Manitoba = \$1,804,522.84



2015

# Operation Report

# Winnipeg Police Service

P.O. Box 1680 Winnipeg, Manitoba R3C 2Z7

www.winnipeg.ca/police