

NEWS RELEASE

2019 LAW ENFORCEMENT REVIEW AGENCY ANNUAL REPORT RELEASED

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Complaints Down from 2018: Commissioner

In 2019 a total of 87 formal complaints were received, down from 98 a year earlier. The most common complaint is the use of unnecessary violence or excessive force followed closely by being discourteous or uncivil.

Andrew Minor, Commissioner of The Law Enforcement Review Agency (LERA) said that the average timeframe for completion of an investigation remained at 6 months, the same as in 2018.

LERA does not investigate criminal matters or service complaints, as they focus on the way municipal police officers conduct themselves on duty, promoting a high standard of professional conduct among officers and providing citizens with an independent investigation and review of conduct complaints when they arise. Criminal matters presently must be referred to the Crown for investigation by the police and service complaints fall under the authority of the Chief of Police. Manitoba's civilian-led Independent Investigation Unit (IIU) conducts transparent and independent investigations of all serious incidents involving police.

The 87 formal complaints registered in 2019 included allegations as follows:

- making an arrest without reasonable or probable grounds;
- using unnecessary violence or excessive force;
- using oppressive or abusive conduct or language;
- being discourteous or uncivil; and
- discrimination.

Complaints can be concluded by referral to a Provincial Court Judge for a hearing; admission of a disciplinary default by an officer; or resolution through an informal mediation process. Of the 153 files opened in 2019, 66 were resolved at intake or following preliminary enquiries, while others were abandoned by the complainant or closed as there was insufficient evidence to justify referral to a hearing.

The complete report will be posted shortly on the agency's website at www.gov.mb.ca/justice/lera.

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