

# Charges involving police officers rose in 1988

A Halton Regional Police report released recently says convictions on charges involving police officers rose an average 26 per cent over the last year.

The Feb. 9 report says convictions of police charged by citizens is up 22 per cent over 1987 while internal convictions - charges laid under the Police Act of Ontario - are up 30 per cent over the same period.

The number of charges laid against police by citizens in 1988 was 52. Of those, there were 23 con-

victions. This compares to the 1987 figure where there were 18 convictions in the 47 charges laid.

But the report adds that figures for 1988 are not final because there are two charges still pending.

There were 37 convictions under the Police Act of Ontario in 1988, a 30-per-cent jump over the 26 convictions of 1987. All charges under the Police Act led to reprimands, said Staff Sgt. Ted Waller.

Police say the most common complaint by citizens was improper conduct, which indicates anything related to how an officer speaks or acts while on duty. These complaints made up half of all charges against Halton police in 1988.

The next most common complaint was inadequate service. Staff Sgt. Waller said these charges are often a result of "a breakdown in communication" and can sometimes be resolved by sitting down with the officer and the citizen lodging the complaint.

There were seven complaints by citizens who alleged police used excessive force in carrying out their duties, the report says.

"This could mean anything from handcuffs that are too tight, to being held too tightly, to being

"roughed up," said Staff Sgt. Waller.

The most serious complaint from a citizen in 1988 involved a Burlington constable who was convicted on assault charges. He resigned from the police force and was dealt with in criminal court, say police.

Charges laid by police against police under the Police Act of Ontario show a 30-per-cent increase over last year from 1987. There were 37 charges laid in the Region last year while there were 26 in

1987. Staff Sgt. Waller said all charges under the Police Act lead to some form of reprimand. The most severe case in the last year was a Burlington constable who resigned from the police force, said Sgt. Paul Welsh.

Charges under the Police Act can be anything from an officer not wearing his hat, to being late for court or parade, to not finishing a report on time. It can also cover more serious infringements, said Staff Sgt. Waller.

Generally, say police, reprimands range from minor punishment to forfeiture of time off.

Although figures for all charges show an increase in convictions over the last year, police say there is no significance in the figures. An increase in charges could be the result of population growth, they say.

The 1988 average "is slightly above the numbers from 1987," said Sgt. Welsh, but he adds "it's nothing serious."

## Man faces multiple charges

A Georgetown man, 19, faces multiple charges after he was arrested Feb. 22 for allegedly trying to cash a stolen cheque.

Halton Regional Police say the man was arrested at a local credit union after a clerk noticed the name signed on the cheque did not match the suspect.

Further police investigation revealed that the same man was a suspect in other local crimes, including the theft of a 1987 pick-up truck from a hotel where he was residing.

Police have also charged the Georgetown man with break and enter in connection with the theft of \$250 worth of bottled liquor from a Guelph Street hotel meeting hall.

The same man will face charges of impersonation in connection with a Feb. 6 incident where a customer used stolen identification to obtain a cheque cashing card at a Guelph Street grocery store.

The Georgetown man will face further charges including possession of stolen property following the January break-in at a Mississauga hotel. Police say a briefcase containing company cheques, identification and credit cards belonging to a British Columbia man staying at the hotel were taken from the premises.

A credit card belonging to the BC man was used at a Georgetown restaurant Feb. 20. Police have charged the 19-year-old Georgetown man with using a stolen credit card.

The man will also face three counts of uttering a false document and three counts of impersonation in connection with the cashing of three illegal cheques, ranging from \$300 to \$500, in the last month in Georgetown.

The accused appeared for a hearing Monday.

## Back problems can begin at the feet

(NC)—Over the years, the effective treatment and prevention of low back pain has proven difficult and costly, but recent medical studies indicate that there is a relationship between low back pain and heel strike—data which may give new ammunition in the treatment of this condition, affecting up to 80% of the adult population.

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Studies indicate that the continuous pounding of the heel on hard surfaces as we walk causes the heel to act as a

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