

Police cruisers will have computer terminals

Halton regional police officers were getting stuck in traffic too often for their liking, so they've done something about it.

The force hasn't been putting more cops on Halton's intersections and they haven't taken to flashing lights and wailing sirens to bull their way through red lights. In fact, it wasn't that kind of congestion that was hampering cops. It was radio traffic.

The force decided to buy 55 mobile digital terminals at Thursday's police commission meeting. The devices, essentially mini-computer terminals with VDT screens, will be installed in police cruisers.

Information will flash from central offices to constables in the field in a fraction of the time now used to convey messages. This is because rather than listening to a dispatcher police officers will be able to scan a small television screen full of data.

"It will free up the radio for the protection of those in the field," said Fred Oliver, a police commissioner and former regional force deputy chief.

At present radio air time is a premium commodity. Radio traffic is heavy in the area and jammed with competing frequencies, officers explained. The new terminals operate on wavelengths differing

from standard communications. Also, the solid-state software can process a television screen full of information from headquarters to officers in half a second. Such communications, done verbally, can take 15 seconds or more of valuable air time, officers explained.

The units will be capable of delivering various identification checks quickly, and can be upgraded with new programs in the future. Officer training time for the machines is expected to be only one day. The devices are manufactured by Mobile Data Incorporated of British Columbia. The cost to the force is approximately \$894,000.

Funds are in place for the acquisition this fiscal year. The devices are expected to be installed in cars by October.

"I take great pleasure in making this motion" (to recommend purchase) police chief James Harding said. "It's long overdue. It will do nothing but improve efficiency."

In related news, the boating public may breathe easier in Halton this summer but the boozing boating public better watch out.

That's because the regional police force is beefing up their boat patrol as of May with the addition of a 28-foot cruiser.

Approval for the \$128,186 acquisition

virtually sailed through the police commission. That was no surprise, since \$100,000 came from private source funding.

While officers remained tight-lipped, as per an earlier commitment, concerning who had supplied the \$100,000, they did so with tongues

firmly in cheeks. It is less than an open secret that Torstar Corp. is the contributor.

The craft is manufactured by Mark Ellis Sales of Oakville. It will be based out of Bronte Harbor. The force is expected to spend approximately \$15,000 in extras such as sirens and lights. The boat will sup-

plant an 18-foot Boston whaler now patrolling the harbor.

Chief Harding said the new craft will make Halton's marine search and rescue (capabilities) second to none on the lake.

Officer is reprimanded after high speed chase

BY LISA TALLYN

An eight-year veteran of the Halton Regional Police force working out of the Milton station has had his knuckles rapped for engaging in a high-speed police pursuit through a section of residential Milton.

Inspector Les Graham, in charge of 12 Division, would not release the name of the officer involved in the pursuit of a teenager on a dirt bike that occurred in the James, Mary and Bell St. section of town on January 18.

The chase reached speeds of no more than 80 km according to Inspector Graham. The speed limit in the area of the chase is 50 km.

The officer received a reprimand

in the form of a loss of eight hours pay, from his sergeant the day after the pursuit occurred.

The officer used poor judgement, said Inspector Graham. "He should not have been pursuing anyone, unless it was a life threatening situation. We are fortunate that no one was injured."

Inspector Graham says the officer in question recognized that the pursuit was out of line, and did take responsibility for his actions.

The incident occurred at approximately 3:10 p.m. Monday afternoon. Inspector Graham says that the officer noticed the youth on the dirt bike when he failed to stop at the

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What is
SUNDAY LUPPER?
See Page 13

Loblaws CORRECTION

In our flyer, effective Monday, February 1st to Saturday, February 6th, 1988, Heinz Dipping Sauce is advertised at \$1.48 and the Heinz Tomato Juice is at \$1.79. These prices were reversed and should read Heinz Dipping Sauce, \$1.79 and Heinz Tomato Juice, \$1.49. Loblaws apologizes for any inconvenience this may have caused its customers.

5 The Canadian Champion, Wed., Feb. 3, 1988

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