

TORONTO POLICE SERVICE NEWS RELEASE

40 COLLEGE ST, TORONTO, ON M5G 2J3

WWW.TORONTOPOLICE.ON.CA



The Toronto Police Service, Ontario Provincial Police, and partners announce Provincial Carjacking Joint Task Force

Broadcast time: 10:01

Date: Monday, October 16, 2023

Unit(s): Organized Crime Enforcement

Phone: 416-808-2500

The Toronto Police Service (TPS) and the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) are pleased to announce the creation of a Provincial Carjacking Joint Task Force (PCJTF), aimed at addressing the rising incidents of violence related to auto crimes in our communities. Whether it be a carjacking, a home invasion, an assault, or other form of intimidation, the level of violence being used in the commission of these offences represents a new and evolving threat to public safety.

Co-led by TPS and the OPP, the task force is a collaboration between police services from across the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), including York Regional Police (YRP), Halton Regional Police Service (HRPS), Durham Regional Police Service (DRPS), Peel Regional Police (PRP) and other external agencies, including Criminal Intelligence Service of Ontario (CISO).

The purpose of the PCJTF is to disrupt the networks responsible for high-risk auto thefts, which increasingly involve violence, firearms and other weapons. Members of the task force will work collaboratively to maximize enforcement efforts against criminal organizations involved in violent vehicle crimes who are operating within the GTA.

The PCJTF will be notified of violent auto crime occurrences taking place in each jurisdiction, which will then be investigated collaboratively by the respective service and the PCJTF.

The PCJTF is being funded by participating police services, and by CISO, through funding provided by the Government of Ontario.

Violent Auto Thefts in the GTA

The incidents of violence related to auto crimes occurring in Ontario has increased over the last several years. For instance, there have been more than 300 carjackings in the GTA in 2023, with over 200 of those occurring in Toronto.

Thieves are stealing vehicles, and then using those vehicles to carry out other crimes, or are shipping them overseas, where they are resold. Alternatively, vehicle identification numbers (VINs) are altered and the vehicles are sold domestically.

Anyone with information about auto thefts in their community is encouraged to call their police service of jurisdiction. To provide a tip anonymously, call 1-800-222-TIPS (6477) or visit ontariocrimestoppers.ca.

Quotes:

“The violence associated with auto thefts in Toronto and across the GTA is a concerning trend, and can be incredibly traumatic for victims and their loved ones. TPS is committed to the safety and well-being of our residents above all else, and we are working around the clock in collaboration with the OPP and our other policing partners to address this issue and hold people who commit these crimes to account.” – Superintendent Steve Watts, Organized Crime Enforcement, Toronto Police Service

“Carjackings are a serious public safety issue, which have resulted in assault and even homicides. To evade police, thieves may drive dangerously and recklessly, putting the lives of pedestrians, other motorists and police in danger. The OPP and partners will investigate and hold anyone who is involved in violent auto theft accountable, through a collaborative and intelligence-led approach.” – Chief Superintendent Paul Mackey, Organized Crime Enforcement Bureau, Ontario Provincial Police

Stephanie Sayer for Superintendent Steven Watts