

8. Public Safety

One of the major concerns for people after their economic well being, physical and mental health, is security and safety. People want to know that they can generally count on the police, fire fighters, paramedics and other emergency services like search and rescue if they get ‘into trouble.’ They want to know that help will be on the way in a timely fashion if and when they call 911. In our 2009 report we included only policing in our public safety section. This time, following a public consultation in March 2013 we decided to include fire, ambulance and emergency services to the public safety section.

8.1 Police (-)

North Island 911 Service Call Volume (-)

“There were 8,856 police officers in British Columbia as of May 15, 2013, a rate of 193 per 100,000 population.” [BC Stats, 2014] Because of changes to reporting systems, it’s not always possible to carry over trends in particular indicators over time. In our 2009 report we noted that in 2007 the Valley had 62 active regular RCMP members, 21 support staff, guards, casual employees, reservists, and numerous volunteers. [CVSPS, 2009, p. 73] In 2011 there were 61 RCMP members, 42 for the City of Courtenay and the Town of Comox and 19 for the rest of the CVRD. [BC Ministry of Justice, 2013a] Member workload was reported to be 107 criminal code offences in [CCOs] 2007 but in 2011 it 69, 12% lower than the previous year. In 2012 the caseload in Courtenay was 76 but in Comox only 36. [BC Ministry of Justice, 2013a]

In 2007 the Courtenay Detachment handled 90,150 files and there were 67,279 911 calls. In 2013 the file count dropped to 73,360 and the number of 911 calls was down to 62,244. So, it seems that the RCMP are handling a lot fewer files and that’s reasonable given the drop in crime rates. What this means is the RCMP can respond more fully and carefully to complaints and reports of criminality from the public. The number of 911 calls aimed at the ambulance or fire services are included in the overall number [62, 244]. [North Island 911, 2014]

8.2 Crime Rates (-)

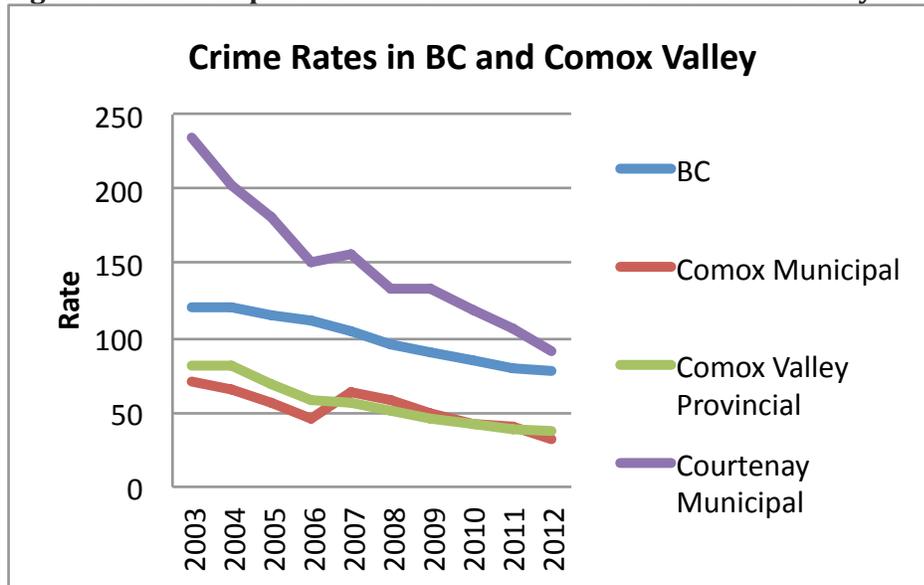
Overall crime rates in Canada for virtually all offence categories have declined in Canada over the past 20 years or so and are at a 40-year low in the case of homicide rates. (Perreault, 2013) The same trends occurred in British Columbia for the same time period. As you can see from Figure 8, the crime rate has been declining in the Valley too. There is a table in Appendix 4 with the same data for those who are reading this in print form. If you are reading this on a computer you can wave your cursor over the trend lines on the figure to get the actual rates. Courtenay has historically had a much higher crime rate than Comox and the Comox Valley Provincial area, which includes regional district electoral areas and Cumberland. For instance, in 2003 Courtenay had a crime rate of 234.7, close to twice the provincial average whereas in Comox, the rate of 70.5 is much lower than the provincial average. (BC Ministry of Justice, 2013) It’s important to point out here that the high crime rate reported for Courtenay could be misleading. In Appendix 2 we include a statement by Samuel Perreault, from the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics who cautions us about how to read policing statistics. The four points below should give us reason to be cautious in the case of Courtenay’s crime rates:

- It may be that Courtenay is a magnet for people who undertake criminal activity because of the density of activity there.
- The statistics indicate only where the offence happened and not where the offender lived at the time.
- Higher crime rates do not always mean unsafe communities. Often crimes are targeted or are restricted to a specific group of people. Violence around drug offences is usually contained in the ‘drug community.’
- Estimates are that only about 30% of crimes are actually reported to police.

Crime rates are one of two ways of measuring the incidence of crime. The crime rate does not tell us

everything about the severity of criminal offences. Obviously homicide is extremely severe, but homicides represent a very small proportion of violent offences in Canada. The Crime Severity Index (CSI) measures the severity of crime as well as the incidences and rates of crime. (Perreault, 2013) It was developed in 2009 by the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics. It uses a system whereby offences are 'weighted' according to their severity. Homicide has a high rating whereas the very common level 1 assault crime has a low severity. There are 4 severity indexes: The Overall CSI, the Violent CSI, the Non-Violent CSI and the Youth CSI. The Ministry of Justice Police Services Division reports that crime in BC is declining in severity as well as in numbers. (BC Ministry of Justice, 2013)

Figure 8: Police-reported Crime Rates in BC and the Comox Valley 2003-2012



Source: Compiled from BC Ministry of Justice Police Services Division Data at: (BC Ministry of Justice, 2013)

8.3 Violent Crime [-]

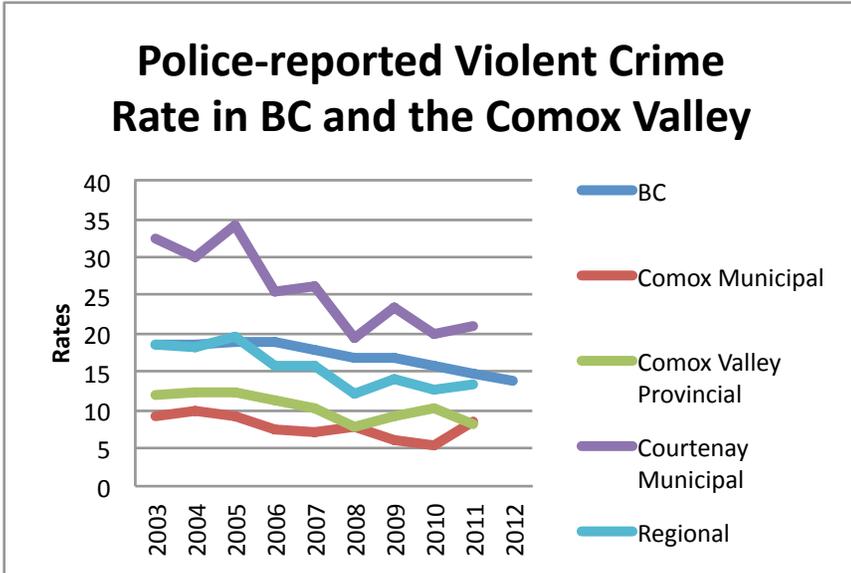
According to the BC Ministry of Justice:

Violent crimes include the offences of homicide, attempted murder, sexual and non-sexual assault, sexual offences against children, abduction, forcible confinement or kidnapping, robbery, criminal harassment, extortion, uttering threats, and threatening or harassing phone calls. (BC Ministry of Justice, 2013)

It's clear from Figure 8.1 below that the rate of violent crime is decreasing in British Columbia and the Comox Valley. In fact it's decreasing in all of Canada. (Perreault, 2013) . There is a lot of speculation about why this is so, but one probable reason in the change in the distribution of the population. There are fewer males (and females) in the 19 to 30 age group than ever before as a percentage of the total population. Because this age group is the most likely to be involved in street crime and drug offences, it's not surprising that there is a decrease in the overall numbers of police-reported offences. As Figure 8.1 clearly shows, aside from the odd blip here and there, the rate of violent crime is down very substantially in the last 10 years. It's especially evident in Courtenay where the rate has dropped by over 35%. In the Valley as a whole (regional) the rate dropped by 26% over the same time period. There is also the possibility that increased targeted enforcement is having an effect. The Comox Valley RCMP Detachment has seen a reduction in caseload per member.³⁵

35 "A caseload of 69 *Criminal Code* offences per member was recorded for the CVRD in 2011. This was almost 12% lower than the caseload of 78 recorded in 2010." (BC Ministry of Justice 2011)

Figure 8.1: Police-reported Violent Crime Rate in BC and the Comox Valley 2003-2012.

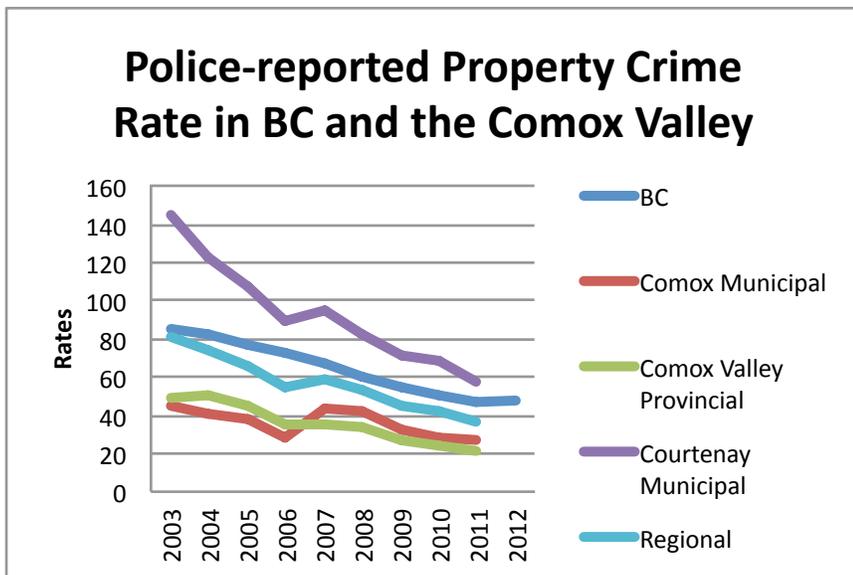


Source: Compiled from BC Ministry of Justice Police Services Division Data at: (BC Ministry of Justice, 2013)

8.4 Property Crime [-]

Property crimes include motor vehicle theft, break and enter, fraud and possession of stolen property. Figure 8.2 shows that the property crime rate is following the same trend as for violent crime. The most obvious reduction of reported property crime was in Courtenay where it dropped over 53% in 10 years. It dropped 37% in the Valley (regional) as a whole. Keep in mind that this is reported crime. The ‘real’ number is much higher because people fail to report crimes for a number of reasons.

Figure 8.2: Police-reported Property Crime Rate in BC and the Comox Valley 2003-2012.



Source: Compiled from BC Ministry of Justice Police Services Division Data at: (BC Ministry of Justice, 2013)

8.5 Youth Crime (12-17 years of age) (id)

The problem with deriving statistics from various geographical areas is that they aren't always comparable. The Local Hospital Area (LHA 71) is pretty much equivalent to the CVRD in area. As you will read below in 8.1.8, 2008 marked the creation of the CVRD when the Comox-Strathcona Regional District (CSRD) was divided in two. To give you a sense of how different the numbers can be, Table 8 below can be contrasted with Table 8.1 in terms of juvenile non-cannabis charges. For the whole of the CSRD the rate was 38.6. For the Comox Valley, the rate was 21.7. This suggests that a lot of the non-cannabis youth drug charges are happening north of the Oyster River. The Comox Valley rate is about half of the BC rate. However for serious violent crimes, the youth rate in the Comox Valley is slightly higher than the provincial average, but much lower than in Vancouver City Centre at 7.9.

Table 8: Youth Crime (12-17 years) Rates. Average 2009-2011

	LHA 71	BC
Serious Violent crime	2.6	2.3
Serious Property crime	1.7	1.2
Total	4.3	3.5
Non-Cannabis drug charges (per 100k aged 12-17)	21.7	40.4

Source: BC Stats, Socio-Economic Profiles. (BC Stats, 2012)

8.6 Restorative Justice (-)

The Comox Valley Community Justice Centre Society (CVCJCS) has been in operation since 1998. Our last quality of life report in 2009 used information from the CVCJCS's 10th Annual Report. This year we find ourselves reporting on their 14th Annual Report. The Centre's role is to provide an alternative way of resolving the harm done during criminal activity and to divert offenders from the courts to a restorative system. Half of the files referred to the Centre are for property theft. Eighteen percent are for breaking and entering and 14% for mischief.

In addition to its work in Restorative Justice, the Community Justice Centre also is active working in the areas of countering racism, hate crime, and homophobia. It led the creation of the Comox Valley Critical Incident Response Protocol, signed in 2009, and has partnered with over fifty local organizations and agencies in presenting over 22 community dialogues, arts projects, and inter-faith events all focused on enhancing cross-cultural understanding and reducing racism and hate. In 2013, the Community Justice Centre's 150 volunteers were recognized by the Government of BC with the Nesika Award for Excellence in Diversity.

From the CVCJCS 2011/12 Annual Report:

Mission & Purpose of the Comox Valley Community Justice Centre

- 1) to promote, advance and implement the principles of restorative justice in the Comox Valley
- 2) to educate, engage and involve residents in activities and processes that seek non-violent solutions to criminal and other hurtful conduct.
- 3) to develop safe, neutral and contextually sensitive environments and processes in which all parties to disputes can meet to:
 - i) discuss the unacceptable behaviour and understand its real impacts on the individuals, their families and supporters, and the community as a whole
 - ii) respond to the emotional, physical, financial and other needs experienced by those hurt
 - iii) assist those causing the hurt to accept responsibility and accountability for their behaviour and to undertake those actions which may prevent a recurrence
 - iv) assist those involved to participate in healing themselves and the divisions between them.
 - v) promote, support and encourage harmonious living together throughout the Comox Valley. (CVCJCS, 2013)

Table 8.1: Community Justice Centre Annual Statistical Report by Results

Results	2009/10		2010/11		2011/12	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Unsuccessful resolution conferences	1	.7	2	1.7	13	14.3
Files partially successful	3	2.2	4	3.3	1	1.1
Files successfully completed	120	86.3	97	80.1	62	68
Cases carrying forward to following year	15	10.8	7	5.8	14	15.4
Total	139		121		91	

Source: CVCJCS Annual Report 2011/2012. (CVCJCS, 2013)

Although there are widely fluctuating numbers of files from year to year (85 in 2005/6, 82 in 2006/7, 70 in 2007/8) there is a decrease overall in the files going to the Justice Centre. We surmise that this is as much to do with the downward trend in crime generally as anything else, but that's speculation. There is no evidence to provide a definitive reason for the drop in referrals to the Centre. We can say that the success of the Centre seems to remain steady at around 80% of the files. It's worth a look at the CVCJCS's website to see what other projects and activities in which the organization is engaged.³⁶

8.7 Sexual Assaults (id)

In our 2009 report we included a table (#24) that outlined the number of sexual assaults reported to the police from 2004 to 2007. The numbers declined from 70 in 2004 to 30 in 2007. (CVSPS, 2009, p. 79) However we also noted that there had been changes in the reporting system that prevented comparisons to earlier counts. Well, that's true again. Currently, sexual assaults are included in violent assaults and are not 'broken out' of the broader category. See section 8.1.3 above, Violent Crime.

We know that in British Columbia in 2011 there were 3,449 sexual assaults³⁷ and 3,278 in 2012 for a decrease of 5.5%. (BC Ministry of Justice, 2013a)

8.8 Spousal Assaults (id)

In 2009 we reported that there was a 2.5 per 100,000 population crime rate in the Comox Valley, 3.3 in Campbell River and 1.7 in Vancouver averaged over the 2003 to 2005 period. (CVSPS, 2009, p. 80). That's not easy to figure out in actual numbers of assaults. According to the RCMP, in 2013 in the Comox Valley there were 146 assaults resulting in 90 charges, 494 domestic conflict resulting in 11 charges and 289 other domestic offences (mischief, breaches, etc.) resulting in 87 charges for a total of 929 cases and 188 charges.

The Comox Valley is fortunate to have a very strong commitment from the RCMP to respond to spousal assaults and domestic violence. The Domestic Violence Unit is very busy and its enforcement efforts may actually make the numbers of domestic assaults seem higher here than in other places. People may feel more comfortable reporting incidents if they sense that they will be heard and their issues dealt with. The incidence of reported domestic assaults varies widely depending on several factors including enforcement efforts. It's hard to pinpoint the exact number of assaults that occur in the Valley, but we know that there are enough in the Valley to keep a number of people busy at the RCMP detachment, Community Based Victims Services (administered by the Comox Valley Family Services Society), the Transition Society, and the Probation office.

36 <http://www.cjc-comoxvalley.com/index.html>

37 "Sexual offences include sexual assault level 3 (aggravated), sexual assault level 2 (weapon or causing bodily harm), sexual assault level 1 (common sexual assault), and sexual violations against children." (BC Ministry of Justice 2013a)

8.9 Drug Trends (-)

In our 2009 Quality of Life report we published a table exactly like Table 8.2 below but for 2004/2006 averages. It's unfortunate that BC Stats has not yet recognized the division of the Comox/Strathcona Regional District into the Comox Valley Regional District and the Strathcona Regional District. That said, it does permit the comparison of data from our 2009 report to data in this 2014 report. In 2009 we reported a rate of 169.4 Non-Cannabis drug offences. The rate of 125.8 is substantially lower (-25.7%). This rate is also about 25% lower than the BC rate. The Juvenile rate of 32.6 in our last report is closer to the rate for the 2009/2010 average but only by 15.5%. The death rate is of concern. Our last report indicated a 0% rate as compared to a 9.9% rate, 22.2% higher than the BC rate.

Table 8.2 Indicators of Serious Drug Crime – Average 2009-2011

	Comox-Strathcona	BC
Non-Cannabis Drug Offences (per 100,000 pop.)	125.8	170.3
Juvenile Non-Cannabis Charges (per 100,000 pop. Age 12-17)	38.6	40.4
Illicit Drug Deaths - Average 2008-2010 (per 100,000 pop. Age 19-64)	9.9	7.7

Source: BC Stats: Regional Social and Economic Profiles (BC Stats, 2012)

As noted, the problem with these numbers is that they cover most of the North Island and not just the Comox Valley. A more detailed review of drug offence³⁸ statistics is offered in Table 8.3. From the table you can see that the Town of Comox has the lowest rates now and since 2003. Its rate in 2012 is half the provincial rate. The City of Courtenay's 2012 rate of 8.11 is lower than Campbell River's 8.56 rate but that's marginal and still lower than the rate for the City of Duncan with its 10.05 rate. These rates are all higher than the BC rate of 5.5 for 2012. The rates of drug offences are fairly stable over time while other criminal code offences are generally down. This may be due to a number of factors and does not necessarily reflect real drug use 'out there.' It's worth remembering here that these rates are for police-reported crimes and not for all crimes, most of which are never reported. It's probably safe to say that drug use in the Valley is not out of hand, but is worth serious concern especially when it leads to personal tragedy. Drug and alcohol frontline workers as well as the police and paramedics will tell you that the effects of substance abuse are underreported and severely affect the quality of life for many families and communities in the Valley.

³⁸ According to the Ministry of Justice, drug offences include possession, trafficking, production, and distribution of cannabis, cocaine, heroin and other drug offences. These are not included in the Total Criminal Code offences. (BC Ministry of Justice 2013)

Table 8.3: Number of Drug Offences (CDSA) for BC, the Comox Valley, Campbell River and Duncan, 2003 to 2012

	Year									
	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
BC Number	24611	26904	25878	25630	28472	27032	23948	26980	27167	25415
Rate	5.92	6.40	4.92	6.04	6.61	6.17	5.37	5.96	5.94	5.50
Comox Mun. Number	37	40	33	34	33	31	27	15	27	29
Rate	3.08	3.27	2.62	2.72	2.58	2.34	2.01	1.10	2.00	2.15
Comox Valley Prov. Number	132	143	112	178	131	123	114	134	152	135
Rate	5.08	5.48	4.24	7.02	5.13	4.71	4.31	5.08	5.77	5.11
Courtenay Mun. Number	229	282	223	340	279	231	181	125	187	205
Rate	11.04	13.23	10.10	15.05	11.88	9.63	7.47	5.09	7.49	8.16
CV Total Number	398	465	368	552	443	385	322	274	366	369
Rate	6.78	7.80	6.03	9.13	7.17	6.08	5.02	4.24	5.64	5.67
Campbell R. Number	205	199	221	239	228	251	216	233	247	273
Rate	6.87	6.64	7.25	7.95	7.49	8.10	6.89	7.38	7.77	8.56
Duncan Number	77	97	84	86	104	121	171	193	208	147
Rate	5.57	6.94	5.91	6.11	7.35	8.43	11.82	13.20	14.25	10.05

Source: BC Ministry of Justice. (BC Ministry of Justice, 2013)

Related indicators: health, mental health services

8.9 Crime Prevention Programs

Many communities have crime prevention programs. They usually use volunteers in the community to keep an eye out in the hope of reducing crime or lessening its negative effects.

The crime prevention 'landscape' hasn't changed much since our 2009 report was released. A number of organizations and programs occupy this landscape including Comox Valley Crime Stoppers, Block Watch, Citizens on Patrol Society (COPS), and Police-based Victim Services (since 2010 under the auspices of the Comox Valley Transition Society).

Comox Valley Crime Stoppers, as we reported in 2009, is a program that encourages people to submit anonymous tips about any kind of criminal activity. Cash rewards are available for tips that lead to an arrest or conviction. They have a website with lots of information about people wanted by the police at any given time, there is a crime map on the site that documents what kinds of crimes are being committed in the Valley and where:

<http://www.comoxvalleycrimestoppers.bc.ca>

Block Watch

Formerly Neighbourhood Watch, Block Watch is a program that encourages neighbours to look out for each other. The program now involves 11 Captains/co-captains and about 180 residents throughout the Valley from Courtenay to Comox and to the Municipal Marina.

Block Watch is also developing interesting ties with the Citizens on Patrol Society (COPS). Some insurance companies will honour a discount on the premium in a BlockWatch area. (Turo, 2014)

Citizens on Patrol

From their website, the Comox Valley Citizens on Patrol state that

- They are extra eyes & ears for the local RCMP department in their effort to combat crime.
- They are a group of citizens concerned about your area.
- They patrol from Fanny Bay to Oyster River documenting vehicles and watching for suspicious activity. (C.O.P.S., 2014)

Our 2009 report says that COPS had 66 volunteers in 2008 and clocked 61,670 kilometres. In 2013 COPS reports a contingent of 40 volunteers who spent 13,456 hours clocking 53,246 kilometres on their patrols.

8.10 Ambulance (n)

The Comox Valley has two major ambulance stations, one in Courtenay on Cliffe Avenue and another in Cumberland on Dunsmuir Avenue while a third service, the Denman Island BCAS got a new building in 2013 with crew quarters and a Quonset hut for vehicles. A ribbon cutting ceremony was featured in the Comox Valley Echo in a press release from the BC Ambulance Service (BCAS) on August 21st, 2013. (BC Ambulance Service, 2013) The article reported that the 10 local paramedics responded to 119 calls in 2012, 71 of which required emergency lights and siren response. The Hornby Island fire department has a 2000 Crestline ambulance as one of its 4 vehicles and publishes its callout numbers yearly. (Hornby Island Fire Department, 2014) Since 2011 there has also been a satellite station (an annex) in Comox that operates 4 days



a week. An article in the Comox Valley Echo reported that according to Bob Gallaher, director of operations for the BCAS: "From 2012 to 2013, the call volume of the ambulance service has increased by 20 per cent, equating to 1,177 emergency calls that they've attended." (Briones, 2014) These are both good news stories. They're not all like that.

Writing these reports we don't often get a sense of what interpersonal or corporate relations exist within the organizations on which we report. That's not the case with the BC Ambulance Service. On March 5th 2014 Peter Thorpe, the interim Chief Operating Officer of the BC Ambulance Service published a letter in response to an earlier letter to the editor by an anonymous paramedic very unhappy with the BCAS. (Thorpe, 2014) Virtually every point Mr. Thorpe makes is contradicted in the 29 subsequent comments to the online article by paramedics or friends of paramedics. The only comment Mr. Thorpe makes that is not contradicted is the one where he states: "In Courtenay, the volume of 911 calls rose seven per cent between 2010/11 and 2012/13, but our response times improved by four per cent. Similarly, in Comox, there was a 20-per-cent increase in 911 calls, but our response times have improved by 10 per cent over the same period." The Ambulance Paramedics Union is Canadian Union of Public Employees local 873. For sometime now it has called for an overhaul of the BC Ambulance Service. Its contract with the BCAS expired on March 31st, 2014. That said, there is no doubt that paramedics will always respond in a professional manner to all emergencies and we can all feel secure in the knowledge that if we get into 'trouble' with our health that first responders from the fire department and an ambulance will be on the scene in very short order.

8.11 Fire (n)

The Comox Valley has fire departments in Comox, Courtenay and Cumberland and the CVRD has fire halls on Denman and Hornby Islands, in the Black Creek/Oyster Bay areas and in Fanny Bay. These are all volunteer or paid-on-call departments although there is paid staff at the administrative level. There's a new model for fire services delivery in the CVRD which took effect in 2013. The fire chiefs on Hornby and Denman islands, in Fanny Bay and Black Creek/Oyster Bay are now employees of the CVRD. In 2009, a report noted that there were 36 firefighters in the Black Creek/Oyster Bay department, 16 in Fanny Bay, 18 on Denman Island and 22 on Hornby Island. (CVRD, 2009, p. 5)

All fire departments report to the elected councils in each municipality they serve but there is not necessarily any consistency in what their various councils expect them to report. On the Village website we find: "The Cumberland Fire Department provides fire prevention and protection services to the residents of Cumberland. It is a volunteer department with 22 active members and 4 junior members. The Fire Department also issues outdoor burning permits for yard waste fires, campfires, and industrial fires." (Village of Cumberland, 2014) According to Chief Mike Williamson, the Cumberland Fire Department was called out 208 times in 2013. The City of Courtenay has a contingent of 42 career and paid-on-call members. It reports monthly on its activities. For instance in May 2013 the department responded to 52 incidents, 13 of them vehicle related. Comox has approximately 30 career and volunteer firefighters. It offers a number of services and specializes in training, when it's not responding to emergency calls, of course. Many of its courses are accredited with the Justice Institute of BC.

Firefighters can often be seen in our communities not only putting out fires and attending to emergency calls of all kinds, they also:

- conduct fire inspections of various types of buildings to help prevent fires from happening;
- engage in fire safety education to a wide cross section of people from pre-school to Seniors;
- put up fire safety displays at many public events throughout the Valley;
- conduct fire safety house visitations for all the grade three students in the Valley;
- put on a Fire and Life Safety Expo for all the grade seven students in the Valley;
- have the Comox Valley Fire Chiefs Association which meets regularly to discuss issues common to the Valley on how to better help our citizens;
- conduct Fire Camp Boot Camp every two years for grades 10-12 students in the Valley;
- offer Smoke alarm programs where Fire Departments will inspect, test, and replace smoke alarms if needed in homes throughout the Valley; and
- provide first aid support to various events in the Valley such as the Snow to Surf, YANA Bike Ride, etc.

The BC Fire Commissioner's office produces an annual report detailing the numbers of fires in BC, where they were located, the extent of the damage, etc.



This photograph depicts the statue of a fire-fighter in full uniform erected on the grounds of the Legislature in Victoria in February of 2013. The statue is a memorial to all fire-fighters lost in the line of duty in BC. photo credit: Jim Lariviere.

In the 2012 Annual Report, the Commissioner reported that there were no fires in Comox or Cumberland in 2012 but 13 in Courtenay. (Office of the Fire Commissioner, 2013) It's clear from the above that putting out fires is just a part of what fire departments do. Catastrophic, out of control fires have nearly disappeared in recent decades in Canada thanks to a commitment we have to strong firefighting capacity. Big fires still happen like at Lac Mégantic in Québec following the massive train derailment, but we can be confident that firefighters will be there to deal with them if and when they happen but they will also be there to provide education to students and the general public to help prevent fires and ongoing training for firefighters.

8.12 Emergency Services (n)

Residents of the Comox Valley are well served when it comes to emergency services. A fire truck, ambulance or police cruiser are never too far away in an emergency. But other services are also on guard to assist when we get into trouble in the back country, on the ski slopes, on the water or in case of natural disasters. From the CVRD website: There are currently five different community organizations that provide valuable public safety services to residents and visitors in the Comox Valley. On average in a given year, these organizations are deployed close to 300 times to incidents that include water safety, missing persons and vehicle accidents." (CVRD 2013) Aside from the 3 municipal fire departments that each have rescue units, there is the Comox Valley Ground Search and Rescue[1] organization and Comox Valley Marine Rescue.[2]

The Comox Valley Emergency Program has a number of training activities available for volunteers who would be called to set up an Emergency Reception Centre. Their website includes a lot of material including what's necessary to draw up your own emergency plans: <http://www.comoxvalleyemergencyprogram.com/index.html>

In summary, we find that the Valley is well served in terms of police, fire, ambulance and emergency services although it's obvious that the farther you live from a police detachment, fire hall or ambulance station, the longer it will take crews to get to you in times of emergency. We are fortunate to have great search and rescue services here. Crime rates are generally down, but the people who have to see to domestic and sexual assaults are busy and that's not good. Restorative justice is working well here diverting people away from prison life.