

Racial disparities in British Columbia police statistics: A preliminary examination of a complex issue

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Introduction

The over-representation of Indigenous, Black and other people of colour (IBPOC) in the criminal justice system has emerged as one of the most important and controversial issues facing North American police services. IBPOC communities frequently allege that they are the victim of biased police practices that contribute to the criminalization of racialized populations—and ultimately reduce social and economic opportunities. By contrast, police and government officials often respond by denying the existence of racial bias within law enforcement or by claiming that allegations of bias are exaggerated. Unfortunately, very little Canadian research has examined the representation of different racial groups in police activities. This report attempts to shed light on the existence of racial disparities within policing by examining data from five British Columbia jurisdictions: Vancouver, Surrey, Prince George, Duncan/North Cowichan, and Nelson. The report addresses the following research questions:

1. To what extent are different racial groups represented in police arrests or chargeable incidents?
2. To what extent are different racial groups represented in police mental health-related incidents?
3. To what extent are different racial groups represented in police strip searches?
4. Does the representation of different racial groups in police statistics vary by gender and type of offence?
5. Do racial disparities vary by type of case outcome?

We believe that this study is one of the most ambitious—if not the most ambitious—explorations of the relationship between race and police activity ever conducted in British Columbia. The research findings, discussed at length in the sections below, reveal profound racial disparities with respect to police arrests or chargeable incidents, mental health incidents, and strip searches. In general, across the jurisdictions examined in this report, Indigenous, Black, Hispanic and Arab/West Asian people are significantly over-represented in police statistics. These results suggest that the relationship between race, crime, and policing deserves far more policy attention than these issues have traditionally received. While this report is about data and numbers, it is critical to acknowledge that the data is about individuals—particularly Indigenous, Black and other racialized individuals who experience significant and long-term harm, intergenerational trauma, and mental health impacts as a result of police interactions and becoming involved in the criminal justice system.

Report outline

The methodology section of the report reviews the data request developed by British Columbia's Office of the Human Rights Commissioner (BCOHRC). This section also describes the data received from various police services and the methodology used to examine the issue of racial

disparity. The bulk of the report explores race-based data from five police jurisdictions: Vancouver, Surrey, Prince George, Duncan/North Cowichan, and Nelson. The conclusion of the report summarizes major research findings, discusses data limitations, and explores various theories that might help explain the profound racial disparities documented by the study. Unfortunately, the nature of the data, and the extremely short research timelines for this study, preclude a thorough empirical testing of competing explanations. However, it will be argued that the profound racial disparities identified below reinforce the need for further research and monitoring. The observed disparities also highlight the need for significant improvements in the collection, analysis, and dissemination of race-based data within policing and the broader justice system. The report concludes by arguing that while the data cannot “prove” racial bias within British Columbia policing the results reveal that the issue deserves much more research attention. Recommendations for future research and monitoring are briefly outlined.

Methodology

In April 2021, BCOHRC requested data from the Vancouver Police Department, the Nelson Police Department and three RCMP detachments: Surrey, Prince George, and Duncan/North Cowichan. The Commissioner chose these police services as they represent different sized communities in distinct parts of the province with varying demographic populations. The Commissioner requested demographic data for a 10-year period for mental health/well-being checks, arrests and detentions and strip searches. A copy of the original data request is provided in Appendix A.

The Vancouver Police Department and Nelson Police Department provided BCOHRC with the data on June 7, 2021. Data from the three RCMP detachments was provided on June 28, 2021.

Study period

Data from the five police jurisdictions were requested for a 10-year period: January 1, 2011 to December 31, 2020. However, only the Vancouver Police Department (VPD) was able to provide the requested data for this entire period. Due to the tight research timelines and different data retention practices, the RCMP were only able to provide data for 2019 and 2020. The Nelson Police Department only provided arrest data for 2019 and 2020. However, they were able to provide data on mental health incidents from 2016 to 2020, and data on strip searches from 2011 to 2020. While the Nelson Police Department had data for the 10-year period covered by the Commissioner's request, it is a small and busy police department that didn't have capacity to compile the requested data in the timeframe provided. The RCMP generously offered to compile the data for Nelson and did so mostly using the same parameters it used to compile the RCMP data.

During the study period, the RCMP explained why they could only provide two years of data. The Commissioner and Commissioner's staff learned that all RCMP records have different data retention schedules depending on the record. For example, the retention period for a well-being and street checks records is 24 months. The RCMP purges files from its operational data warehouse after a file is closed and the retention period has concluded, which means that those records are no longer available to the RCMP for research and study purposes. This is a serious limitation with respect to studying demographic patterns and crime trends.

Using the example of well-being check records, if the RCMP were to run a report for well-being check data that is older than their 24-month retention period, the data would be incomplete. Thus, due to data purging practices, the longer the data request (beyond 24 months), the greater the number of missing records and missing data fields. In order to provide the Commissioner with complete datasets, including the requested demographic information, the RCMP was only able to provide two years of data from each of the identified detachments. Unlike other RCMP divisions in Canada, British Columbia does not have a historical data warehouse yet. Other RCMP divisions have a historical data warehouse in place where they retain information that has been stripped of personal information and approved through a federal privacy impact assessment. What this means is that the largest police agency in British Columbia does not currently retain data for research purposes beyond the retention periods established by the national RCMP, which, in some cases, is 24 months.

Unavailable data

The police services involved in the study were able to provide most of the data requested. For example, all services provided data capturing the demographic characteristics (age, gender and racial background) of those arrested, involved in a mental health incident, or subjected to a strip search. However, none of the police services were able to provide the requested data on how accused persons were released after being detained, charged² and/or arrested. As a result, in this report, we cannot determine whether an accused person was released at the scene, taken into temporary police custody, or held for a remand hearing. The research team was informed that the unavailable data was either not collected, or housed in another (non-police, court-based) data system. We were informed that the extraction of this data would involve hours of manual labour that was not possible within the study timelines. Data limitations are discussed further in the conclusion section.

Acknowledgement of police cooperation

The research team would like to thank the RCMP, the Vancouver Police Department, and the Nelson Police Department for their cooperation in this project. We believe that all services tried their best to provide the requested data, on short notice, over a very short period. We also want to thank the services' data analysts for their willingness to answer questions about the data, data fields, and variable codes. We acknowledge that it was difficult—if not impossible—for some police services to provide detailed data for the entire 10 year study period. We also acknowledge that some of the requested data was not readily available and that the inability to provide certain information was not a deliberate attempt to avoid examination.

A note on police arrest data

At this point we want to highlight that the arrest data provided by the Vancouver Police Department is somewhat different than the arrest data provided by the RCMP and Nelson Police Department.

The concept of “arrest” within the policing literature can be elusive. Some studies refer to an arrest as any occasion in which the police charge, or recommend a charge, against a civilian. Other studies only consider it an arrest when the civilian has been detained or taken into police custody. In British Columbia, the police can only recommend a charge or charges against an accused person. Only Crown Counsel, after reviewing the evidence, can lay a formal charge. Therefore, in this report, when we refer to police charges or charging practices, we are actually referring to occasions in which the police have only recommended a charge or charges against a civilian.

² The term “charged” is used to describe situations in which the police have “recommended” a charge or charges against an accused person. In British Columbia, the police can only recommend charges. People can only be “charged” by the Crown.

It must also be stressed that “arrests” do not always involve police charges or police charge recommendations. At times a person can be arrested, taken into custody and investigated. Ultimately, at the end of the investigative process, the police may decide not to recommend charges and may release the individual without further repercussion.

Previous research indicates that there are three major types of police “arrest” or “charge” incidents. In the first type of arrest incident, the accused person is temporarily detained by the police, charged with an offence, and released on the street (i.e., given a summons to appear in court). In the second type of incident, a civilian is detained by the police, charged with an offence, and taken into temporary police custody. Accused persons may be taken into temporary police custody to facilitate future investigation or for additional processing. Additional processing may involve the taking of photographs, fingerprinting, warrant searches, etc. In temporary custody arrests, accused persons are only detained for a short period of time. They are usually released after a few hours without being jailed overnight. In the third type of incident, the civilian is detained by the police, charged with an offence, and jailed or held in a detention facility. Individuals may be jailed overnight, or over the weekend, for public safety reasons or until a remand or show cause hearing can be arranged. A judge may ultimately decide to detain or jail an accused person until trial or release the accused with or without pre-trial release conditions. Clearly the third type of arrest incident is the most intrusive.

Communication with VPD officials indicates that, due to time constraints, the arrest data provided to BCOHRC only includes the second and third types of arrest situation. In other words, the VPD data used in the following analysis only includes arrests that resulted in accused persons being taken into police custody and transported to jail for further investigation, processing, or pre-trial incarceration. The data provided by the VPD does not include incidents in which charges were recommended against an accused, but the accused was not taken into police custody or transported to jail (i.e., released at the scene). The research team acknowledges that the VPD tried their best to accommodate BCOHRC’s data request. Furthermore, using the narrow “police custody” definition of arrest, they were able to provide a decade’s worth of VPD arrest data. The VPD did indicate that, with more time, they could have provided data on all incidents in which a civilian had charges recommended against them. However, this data was only available for a two-year period and not the whole study period. Ultimately, BCOHRC decided to move ahead with the available arrest data from 2011 to 2020.

While the VPD provided data on arrest incidents in which the accused person was taken into custody, the RCMP and Nelson Police Department provided data on all “chargeable incidents.” A chargeable incident refers to an interaction in which the police: have confirmed that one or more offences has been committed; and have identified a person who could be charged with an offence (i.e., a suspect or accused). This does not mean that charges were ultimately recommended against the offender—only that a person is “chargeable.” According to RCMP and NPD sources, the police often use their discretion and decide not to recommend a charge against the suspects involved in these cases. It must also be stressed that these incidents involve both cases in which the police took the alleged offender into police custody, as well as cases in which the accused person was released at the scene. As discussed above, we cannot determine with the current data whether an accused person was taken into custody or not. Finally, it should be stressed that these incidents do not include cases in which an offence was reported by the public

but not confirmed by the police. The data also does not include cases in which an offence was confirmed by the police but the offender was not identified.

The different definition of “arrests” used by the Vancouver Police Department versus the RCMP/Nelson Police Department should be kept in mind when reviewing the findings below. In sum, when talking about the VPD data, arrests only include cases in which the accused was taken into police custody. By contrast, throughout this report, RCMP and NPD arrests refer to “chargeable incidents.” These “chargeable incidents” include cases in which the accused person was released at the scene and cases in which they were taken into custody.

Measuring racial disparities

The primary purpose of this report is to identify racial disparities in arrests, mental health incidents, and strip searches. The findings pertaining to each jurisdiction—Vancouver, Nelson, Surrey, Prince George, and Duncan/North Cowichan—are provided in separate sections of the report.

The race, gender and age of individuals involved in police interactions—including accused persons, victims, witnesses, and complainants—is documented by the PRIME information system used by the police services involved in the current study. In most cases, racial information reflects the perceptions of the police officers involved, perception of witnesses and people who call 9-1-1. However, there are times when police officers, if uncertain, will ask civilians to self-identify their racial or ethnic backgrounds. Within PRIME, there is a specific field for recording race/ethnicity. The drop-down menu options include:

- Asian (this includes those sometimes classified as East Asian)
- Black
- Caucasian/White
- Hispanic
- Indigenous (PRIME groups First Nations, Métis and Inuit people into a single category)
- Middle Eastern
- South Asian
- Other
- Unknown

Race-based population estimates were derived from the 2016 Canadian Census (Statistics Canada 2016). It should be noted that census racial categories do not align perfectly with the racial categories used by the police in British Columbia. Therefore, in this report, population estimates for people of “Asian” background include people classified as East Asian, Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, and Korean. Similarly, people of Middle Eastern background include those classified as Middle Eastern, Arab, or West Asian. People of Hispanic descent include those classified as either Hispanic or Latin American. Population estimates for the Indigenous population include people who are First Nations, Métis and Indigenous. Finally, estimates for the White population were calculated by taking the total population estimate for each jurisdiction and deducting the total visible minority population and the total Indigenous population.

Two measures of racial disparity were used to determine the representation of specific racial groups in law enforcement activities. Firstly, odds ratios were calculated by dividing the per cent of all incidents involving a particular racial group by their per cent representation in the general population. An odds ratio approaching 1.00 indicates that a racial group is neither over-represented, nor under-represented in police activity. An odds ratio less than 1.00 indicates that the group is under-represented in police statistics. An odds ratio greater than 1.00 indicates that the group is over-represented.

For example, an odds ratio of 2.00 indicates that a group is twice as prevalent in police statistics as they are in the general population. By contrast, an odds ratio of 0.50 indicates that a group is 50 per cent less represented in police statistics than their proportion of the general population would predict.

There is no set standard for determining when racial disproportionality (i.e., the over or under-representation of a particular racial group with respect to a specific social outcome) is cause for concern. For example, in the Ottawa Traffic Stop study, the authors used the 20 per cent rule (or an odds ratio of 1.20 or higher) to determine when a group was significantly over-represented with respect to involuntary police contact (Foster et al, 2016). For the purposes of this study, however, we have used a higher threshold of 50 per cent. In other words, for the purposes of the present analysis, an odds ratio of 1.50 or higher will be used to determine whether racial disproportionality is noteworthy or not. Furthermore, at times we will also discuss the notion of “gross” racial disparity. For the purposes of this report, a gross racial disparity exists when the level of over-representation is 200 per cent or greater (i.e., as indicated by an odds ratio of 3.00 or higher). In these cases, a particular racial group would be three times more prevalent in police statistics than their presence in the general population would predict.

The second racial disparity measure used in the current analysis is the group’s rate per 100,000. A group’s rate (per 100,000) was calculated by dividing the total number of cases, per racial group, by their population estimate and then multiplying that figure by 100,000. The rate indicates the number of people per 100,000 population that were involved in police activity during the study period. This case rate allows us to directly compare the experiences of different racial groups of varying size. For example, if Group A has an arrest rate of 10 per 100,000 and Group B has a rate of five per 100,000 we can state that the members of Group A are twice as likely to become involved in an arrest incident than the members of Group B.

Vancouver data: Racial disparities in Vancouver Police Department (VPD) statistics

Arrest statistics

The concept of “arrest” within the policing literature can be elusive. Some studies refer to an arrest as any occasion in which the police charge, or recommend a charge, against a civilian. Other studies only consider it an arrest when the civilian has been detained or taken into police custody.

As discussed above, in British Columbia, the police can only recommend a charge or charges against an accused person. Only the Crown Counsel, after reviewing the evidence, can lay a formal charge. Therefore, in this report, when we refer to police charges or charging practices, we are actually referring to occasions in which the police have only recommended a charge or charges against a civilian.

It must also be stressed that “arrests” do not always involve police charges or police charge recommendations. At times a person can be arrested, taken into custody and investigated. Ultimately, at the end of the investigative process the police may decide not to recommend charges and release the individual without further repercussion.

Previous research indicates that there are three major types of police “arrest” or “charge” incidents. In the first type of arrest incident, the accused person is temporarily detained by the police, charged with an offence, and released on the street (i.e., given a summons to appear in court). In the second type of incident, a civilian is detained by the police, charged with an offence, and taken into temporary police custody. Accused persons may be taken into temporary police custody to facilitate future investigation or for additional processing. Additional processing may involve the taking of photographs, fingerprinting, warrant searches, etc. In temporary custody arrests, accused persons are only detained for a short period of time. They are usually released after a few hours without being jailed overnight. In the third type of incident, the civilian is detained by the police, charged with an offence, and jailed or held in a detention facility. Individuals may be jailed overnight or over the weekend for public safety reasons or until a remand or show cause hearing can be arranged. A judge may ultimately decide to detain or jail an accused person until trial or release the accused with or without pre-trial release conditions. Clearly, the third type of arrest incident is the most intrusive.

Communication with VPD officials indicates that due to severe time constraints the arrest data provided to BCOHRC only includes the second and third types of arrest situation. In other words, the VPD data used in the following analysis only includes arrests that resulted in accused persons being taken into police custody and transported to jail for further investigation, processing or pre-trial incarceration. The data provided by the VPD does not include incidents in which charges were recommended against an accused but the accused was not taken into police custody or transported to jail (i.e., released at the scene). The research team acknowledges that the VPD tried their best to accommodate BCOHRC’s data request. Furthermore, using the narrow “police custody” definition of arrest, they were able to provide a decade’s worth of VPD arrest data. The VPD did indicate that with more time they could have provided data on all

incidents in which a civilian had charges recommended against them. However, this data was only available for a two-year period and not the whole study period. Ultimately, BCOHRC decided to move ahead with the available arrest data from 2011 to 2020.

Nonetheless, this study's focus on VPD "taken into custody" arrests will likely have a significant impact on the types of crimes and offenders captured by the data. The data likely over-represent arrests involving serious crimes and/or offenders with long criminal histories. By contrast, the data likely under-represent arrests or "chargeable incidents" involving minor crimes and/or first-time offenders. For example, based on our analysis, the data provided by the VPD include only 379 single-charge drug possession arrests over a ten-year period (about 38 per year). Although these low numbers may reflect VPD leniency with respect to simple drug possession incidents, we strongly feel that the figures would have been much larger if the data would have included drug possession cases in which the accused person was released at the scene. Indeed, other research reveals that, pre-legalization, Canadian police laid hundreds of thousands of charges for cannabis possession. However, the accused in these cases were rarely taken into police custody. In other words, VPD cannabis possession incidents are likely greatly under-represented in the current study because of the nature of the "arrest" data.

The VPD provided BCOHRC with data on 130,800 arrest incidents that took place between 2011 and 2020. However, offender race was available for only 114,018 cases (87.2 per cent of the sample). It is these cases that are the focus of the current analysis.

The data indicate that both Indigenous and Black people are grossly over-represented in Vancouver Police arrest data (see Table 1.1). Although Indigenous people represent only 2.2 per cent of Vancouver's population, they were involved in 24.5 per cent of all arrests captured by the VPD data (Table 1.1). In other words, Indigenous people are 11.1 times more likely to appear in VPD arrest data than their presence in the general population would predict. Furthermore, the average annual Indigenous arrest rate (20,081 per 100,000) is 10 times greater than the White rate (2,009 per 100,000) and 11 times greater than the city average (1,805 per 100,000).

Although Black people represent only 1.0 per cent of Vancouver's population, they were involved in 5.3 per cent of all arrests captured by the VPD data (Table 1.1). In other words, Black people were 5.3 times more likely to appear in the VPD arrest data than their presence in the general population would predict. Furthermore, the average annual Black arrest rate (9,502 per 100,000) is 4.7 times greater than the White rate (2,009 per 100,000) and 5.3 times greater than the city average (1,805 per 100,000).

Hispanic civilians (odds ratio=2.00) and Arab/West Asian civilians (odds ratio=1.72) are also significantly over-represented in VPD arrest data (see Table 1.1). The presence of White people in VPD arrest statistics is about equal to their presence in the general Vancouver population (odds ratio=1.11).

By contrast, both Asians and South Asians are significantly under-represented in VPD arrest statistics (Table 1.1). Although they represent 38.1 per cent of Vancouver's population, Asians were identified as the offenders in only 5.4 per cent of all VPD arrests (odds ratio=0.14). The average annual Asian arrest rate (257 per 100,000) is 78 times lower than the Indigenous rate

(20,081 per 100,000), 37 times lower than the Black rate (9,502 per 100,000), and eight times lower than the White rate (2009 per 100,000).

Similarly, although they represent 5.9 per cent of Vancouver's population, South Asians were identified as the offenders in only 5.0 per cent of all VPD arrests (odds ratio=0.85). The average annual South Asian arrest rate (1,548 per 100,000) is 13 times lower than the Indigenous rate (20,081 per 100,000), six times lower than the Black rate (9,502 per 100,000), and 30 per cent lower than the White rate (2009 per 100,000).

It might be argued that the population benchmarking used to calculate racial disparities should be expanded from the City of Vancouver to the Vancouver Metropolitan Area (VMA). After all, people from the broader Metropolitan Area may visit the City of Vancouver on a frequent basis for work, education, or leisure, and thus will be subject to VPD practices.

Table 1.2 recalculates odds ratios and arrest rates using population estimates from the greater Vancouver Metropolitan Area (VMA). The results reveal that racial disparities remain strongly significant when the population base is expanded. For example, the average annual Indigenous arrest rate (4,543 per 100,000) is still 9.2 times greater than the White rate (493 per 100,000) and 9.8 times greater than the regional average (463 per 100,000). Similarly, using population estimates from the greater Metropolitan Vancouver Area, the average annual Black arrest rate (2,021 per 100,000) remains 4.1 times greater than the White rate (493 per 100,000) and 4.4 times greater than the regional average (463 per 100,000).

Using broader census estimates, Hispanic or Latin American people also remain over-represented in VPD arrest statistics (odds ratio=2.43). The representation of both White and Arab/West Asian people, however, approximates their presence in the general VMA population (see Table 1.2). By contrast, Asians and South Asians remain significantly under-represented in VPD arrest statistics.

Gender, race, and arrests

Men were identified as the offenders in 85.3 per cent of all arrests documented by the VPD between 2011 and 2020. Indigenous men, Black men and Indigenous women are grossly over-represented in VPD arrest statistics (see Tables 1.3 through 1.5).³

Although they represent only 1.1 per cent of Vancouver's population, Indigenous males were involved in 19.0 per cent of all arrests conducted by the VPD between 2011 and 2020. In other

³ The gender of civilians involved in police incidents is also reported by officers using PRIME. There is a drop-down menu that provides the following options: Male, Female, Diverse and Unknown. Across the police jurisdictions involved in this study, very few civilians were identified as "Gender Diverse." For example, with respect to the ten years of arrest data received by the Vancouver Police Department, 96.6% of accused persons were identified as either male (82.4%) or female (14.2%). The remaining 3.4% of accused persons were listed as "Unknown." By contrast, only 8 of 130,800 accused persons were clearly identified as "gender diverse." Thus, due to very low numbers, and the lack of clarity with respect to the gender of those in the "unknown" category, this report only focusses on male/female distinctions. A study of the proportion of police activity that involves "gender diverse" populations cannot be conducted with the current data.

words, Indigenous males are 17.3 times more likely to be arrested than their presence in the general Vancouver population would predict. The average annual arrest rate for Indigenous males (32,651 per 100,000) is 9.6 times greater than the rate for White males (3,386.8 per 100,000) and 18 times greater than the city average (1,805 per 100,000).

Although they represent only 0.5 per cent of Vancouver's population, Black males were involved in 4.8 per cent of all arrests conducted by the VPD between 2011 and 2020. In other words, Black males are 9.6 times more likely to be arrested than their presence in the general population would predict. The average annual arrest rate for Black males (15,979 per 100,000) is 4.7 times greater than the rate for White males (3,387 per 100,000) and 8.9 times greater than the city average (1,805 per 100,000).

Although they represent only 1.1 per cent of Vancouver's population, Indigenous females were involved in 5.3 per cent of all arrests conducted by the VPD between 2011 and 2020. In other words, Indigenous females are 4.8 times more likely to be arrested than their presence in the general population would predict. The average annual arrest rate for Indigenous females (8,318 per 100,000) is 2.5 times greater than the rate for White males (3,387 per 100,000), 15.2 times greater than the rate for White females (548 per 100,000), and 4.6 times greater than the city average (1,805 per 100,000). The annual average arrest rate for Indigenous females is higher than the arrest rates for males from all other racial groups (see Figure 1.1). Hispanic males (odds ratio=3.10) and Arab/West Asian males (odds ratio=3.22) are the only other groups that are grossly over-represented in VPD arrest statistics (see Table 1.5).

The representation of Black females in VPD arrest statistics is equal to their proportion of the general population (odds ratio=1.00). Importantly, women from all other racial groups are significantly under-represented in VPD arrests. The average annual arrest rate for Black women (1,959 per 100,000) is 3.6 times greater than the rate for White women (548 per 100,000), 9.3 times greater than the rate for South Asian women (211 per 100,000), and 29 times greater than the rate for Asian women (67 per 100,000). In fact, the arrest rate for Black women is 4.1 times greater than the rate for Asian men (481 per 100,000).

Charges per arrest

Justice critics have previously argued that racialized offenders are more likely to be subjected to over-charging. In other words, they experience a higher number of charges, per arrest incident, than White offenders. There is no evidence of that form of bias in the VPD arrest data. In fact, White accused face a slightly higher number of charges per arrest incident (mean=1.98 charges) than Black (mean=1.87 charges), Indigenous (mean=1.84 charges), or other racialized accused (see Figure 1.2).

The impact of unique individuals

It is important to examine the impact that unique individuals may have on observed racial disparities in VPD arrest statistics. Individuals who have been subjected to multiple arrests could drive up the numbers for the racial group to which they belong. Fortunately, the data provided by the VPD assigned a unique person identification number (PIN) to individuals involved in each arrest. This allowed the research team to identify individuals involved in more than one arrest.

Our results indicate that 36,096 unique individuals were responsible for 114,018 arrests for which there was racial data. This works out to an average of 3.16 arrests per individual in the VPD arrest dataset. The number of arrests per unique individual ranges from one to 496 separate incidents. However, it must be stressed that 60.8 per cent of the unique individuals in the arrest dataset were involved in only one arrest incident. An additional 14.1 per cent of the sample were involved in only two incidents. Only 10.0 per cent of the unique individuals in the VPD arrest dataset were involved in ten or more arrest incidents during the ten-year study period.

Table 1.6 recalculates arrest-based racial disparities counting unique individuals only once. This strategy eliminates the impact of statistical outliers who have been involved in multiple enforcement incidents. The results reveal that controlling for the impact of unique individuals does somewhat reduce overall racial disparities—particularly racial disparities involving Indigenous peoples. For example, the proportion of VPD arrest incidents involving Indigenous people drops from 24.5 per cent to 15.9 per cent after controlling for individuals who were arrested on multiple occasions.

Nonetheless, after counting unique individuals only once, the Indigenous arrest rate (4,121 per 100,000) is still 6.5 times higher than the White arrest rate (635 per 100,000) and 7.0 times greater than the city average (588 per 100,000). Indigenous people are still 7.2 times more likely to appear in VPD arrest statistics than their presence in the general population would predict.

After controlling for unique individuals, the proportion of Black people involved in VPD arrests drops only slightly from 5.3 per cent to 4.8 per cent. In other words, counting unique individuals only once, Black people are still 4.8 times more likely to appear in VPD arrest statistics than their presence in the general population would predict. Furthermore, the Black arrest rate (2,752 per 100,000) remains 4.3 times greater than the White rate (635 per 100,000) and 4.7 times greater than the city average (588 per 100,000).

After controlling for the impact of unique individuals, Hispanic (odds ratio=3.35) and Arab/West Asian people (odds ratio=2.33) also remain significantly over-represented in VPD arrest statistics. Furthermore, after controlling for the impact of unique individuals, South Asian people move from being slightly under-represented in VPD arrests (odds ratio=0.85), to being slightly over-represented (odds ratio=1.35). However, Asian people are significantly under-represented in VPD arrests, both before (odds ratio=0.14) and after controlling for unique individuals (odds ratio=0.23).

Figure 1.3 presents the mean number of arrest incidents, per unique individual, in the VPD arrest dataset. The results reveal that Indigenous people, in the VPD arrest dataset, averaged 5.01 arrests per unique individual, followed by Hispanic individuals (mean=4.27 arrests), Black individuals (mean=3.77 arrests), White individuals (mean=3.31 arrests), Arab/West Asian individuals (mean=2.38 arrests), South Asian individuals (mean=1.92 arrests), and Asian individuals (mean=1.77 arrests). These racial differences are statistically significant. Overall, these findings support the argument that a few unique individuals are driving up the VPD arrest rate for all Indigenous people. However, such outliers do not appear to have a significant impact on the arrest rates for all other racial groups.

In summary, although individuals arrested on multiple occasions do increase the overall Indigenous arrest rate, Indigenous peoples remain grossly over-represented in VPD arrest statistics after the impact of unique individuals has been taken into statistical account.

District of arrest

The Vancouver Police Department has established four distinct patrol districts. The analysis presented in this section examines whether racial disparities vary by these geographic designations.

District One includes the neighbourhoods of the West End, Yaletown, Coal Harbour and the Central Business District of Vancouver. The residential population of District One consists of approximately 80,000 people. However, due to work, education, tourism and leisure activities, the population can increase to over 300,000. District Two includes the neighbourhoods of Strathcona, Grandview-Woodlands, Hastings-Sunrise and the Downtown Eastside. District Three includes the neighbourhoods of Sunset, Renfrew-Collingwood, Mount Pleasant, Killarney, Victoria-Fraserview and Kensington-Cedar Cottage. The district is a diverse mix of people, incomes, industries, and businesses. District Four is the largest of the patrol districts. It includes Point Grey, Kitsilano, Fairview, Dunbar-Southlands, Arbutus Ridge, Shaughnessy, South Cambie, Riley Park, Musqueam, Kerrisdale, Oakridge and Marpole. The Musqueam Nation is located in the southwest corner of District Four. The VPD provide policing services to the Musqueam Nation.

Table 1.7 provides a breakdown of VPD arrests by Patrol District. The results reveal that 41.9 per cent of all VPD arrests, between 2011 and 2020, took place in District Two—a region that includes the Downtown Eastside. An additional third of arrests (30.7 per cent) took place in District One—an area that includes the Downtown Central Business District. The final third of arrests took place in either District Three (15.3 per cent) or District Four (12.1 per cent).

Table 1.8 breaks down VPD arrests within each patrol district by the race of the accused. The results reveal that regardless of patrol district, Indigenous and Black people are grossly over-represented in VPD arrest statistics. For example, although Indigenous people represent only 2.2 per cent of Vancouver's general population, they were involved in 52.3 per cent of arrests within District Two, 22.4 per cent of arrests within District One, 15.7 per cent of arrests within District Three and 9.6 per cent of arrests within District Four. Similarly, although Black people represent only 1.0 per cent of the general population, they were involved in 6.0 per cent of arrests within District Two, 5.6 per cent of arrests within District One, 4.1 per cent of arrests within District Three and 3.6 per cent of arrests within District Four.

Persons of both Hispanic and Arab/West Asian background are also significantly over-represented in arrests within each patrol district. South Asians are under-represented in arrests within Districts Two and Four and slightly over-represented in arrests within Districts One and Three. Asians are significantly under-represented in arrests across all four VPD patrol districts.

During the study period, the research team tried to determine the racial composition of the population within each patrol district. We also tried to retrieve information on the racial

composition of smaller geographical units within Vancouver including federal electoral districts and census dissemination areas. Unfortunately, we were not able to retrieve this information within the tight timelines afforded this project. We hope to provide a more detailed analysis in future reports. Nonetheless, the sheer magnitude of the racial disparities documented within each patrol district make it highly unlikely that racial disparities would disappear—or even be greatly reduced—if we were able to identify the racial composition within specific neighbourhoods and benchmark local population estimates with local arrest statistics. For example, Indigenous peoples represent only 2.2 per cent of Vancouver’s population. That figure may rise in some neighbourhoods—including the Downtown Eastside. However, the resident Indigenous population in other areas of Vancouver is likely significantly less than 2.2 per cent. The fact that Indigenous people make up at least 10 per cent of the arrests across all regions demonstrates that racial disparities in arrest cannot be explained by the concentration of Indigenous peoples in specific communities. Indeed, previous research reveals that racial disparities in arrests and other police outcomes are often greatest in predominantly White, low-crime communities. This issue should be explored in future research (see Gaston et al. 2020).

Type of offence

BCOHRC’s research team requested information about all criminal charges associated with each arrest incident. According to the data provided, the number of charges per incident ranges from one charge to fifty-six charges. Ideally, each charge would be described in its own variable or field. Unfortunately, the VPD provided all charges associated with each arrest incident in a single field or variable. This created extreme challenges with respect to data coding and analysis. For example, the original data included 22,248 unique charge descriptions. A thorough coding process would require the reading and recoding of each charge contained within each of these 22,248 entries. The research team did not have the time or resources to perform such a monumental task during the very short study period. We hope that we will have the time and resources in the future—or that we will have the opportunity at some point to work with the VPD to uncover a more efficient way of examining offence-based information.

However, further analysis revealed that almost seventy per cent of all arrest incidents (69.1 per cent) involved only one charge. Furthermore, there were only 3,651 unique charge descriptions associated with these 90,336 single-charge cases. It was felt that a recoding of these 3,651 charge descriptions was feasible. Thus, the analysis presented in this section of the report is restricted to arrests that only involved one charge.

Even after restricting our analysis to single-charge arrests, questions emerged about the quality of the charge data provided by the VPD. For example, in 8,347 of the 90,336 single charge cases (9.2 per cent of the sample), the charge is simply described as “new charge.” No other details about the type of offence are provided. With these data limitations in mind, the charge-related findings presented below should be interpreted with caution.

Table 1.9 compares the representation of each racial group in the general Vancouver population with their presence within eighteen different offence categories. The results indicate that both Indigenous and Black people are grossly over-represented in VPD arrest statistics involving a wide array of offences.

For example, although they represent only 2.2 per cent of Vancouver’s population, Indigenous people were involved in 41.5 per cent of arrests for public intoxication and 27.4 per cent of arrests for administration of justice violations (i.e., breach of probation or parole conditions, failure to appear, etc.). Similarly, Indigenous people represent over 20 per cent of those arrested for weapons offences, assault, theft, break and enter, and mischief.

Furthermore, although they represent only 1.0 per cent of Vancouver’s general population, Black people were involved in 10.9 per cent of all robbery-related arrests, 10.1 per cent of sexual assaults, and 9.7 per cent of all immigration offences. Similarly, Black people represent over five per cent of those charged with weapons offences, assault, homicide/manslaughter, uttering threats, drug possession, drug trafficking and administration of justice violations.

Table 1.10 provides the odds ratios for each of the eighteen offence types, by the race of the offender. Please recall that, if a group has an odds ratio of 3.00 or greater, we consider them to be “grossly” over-represented in arrest statistics. If a group has an odds ratio between 1.50 and 3.00 we consider them to be “significantly” over-represented.

The results indicate that Indigenous people are grossly over-represented in all offence categories—with the exception of immigration-related charges. Indigenous odds ratios range from 18.86 for public intoxication to 5.32 for fraud. Indigenous people are significantly under-represented in the immigration offence category—indicating that almost all Indigenous offenders are either Canadian born or permanent residents.

The results indicate that Black people are grossly over-represented in all eighteen offence types. Odds ratios for Black people range from 10.90 for robbery to 3.40 for mischief. Hispanic people are grossly over-represented in both immigration-related offences (odds ratio=15.82) and drug trafficking (odds ratio=3.12). They are also significantly over-represented in VPD arrests for armed robbery, weapons offences, assault, homicide/manslaughter, uttering threats, public intoxication and mischief. Arab/West Asian people are grossly over-represented in VPD arrests for immigration-related offences, sexual assault and uttering threats. They are also significantly over-represented in arrests for robbery, weapons offences, assault, fraud, drug possession, and drug trafficking.

South Asian people are not grossly over-represented in any offence category. However, they are significantly over-represented with respect to arrests for homicide/manslaughter and sexual assault. South Asian people are also significantly under-represented in several offence categories including robbery, weapons offences, assault, break and enter, theft, drug possession, mischief and administration of justice violations. Asian people are significantly under-represented in all offence categories captured by the VPD arrest data.

For most offence categories, the presence of White people in the VPD arrest data approximates their presence in the general population. However, White people are significantly under-represented with respect to homicide/manslaughter, sexual assault, public intoxication and immigration-related offences.

Overall, the arrest data suggest that the gross over-representation of Black and Indigenous people in VPD arrest statistics cannot be explained by their over-involvement in a few select offences. Black and Indigenous peoples are over-represented in a wide variety of violent and property crimes as well as drug-related offences, public order offences, and administration of justice violations. An interpretation of the observed racial disparities—and how they may relate to biased policing practices—is provided in the discussion section of this report.

Type of police response

The data provided by the VPD identified the type of police response that led to the arrest incident. Two major categories were identified: a call for service (i.e., a civilian, government agent, or police officer called for police assistance); and on-view (a police officer observed a crime, disturbance, or suspicious activity while on patrol and responded using their own discretion).

The data indicate that 53.7 per cent of all arrests stemmed from a call for service. An additional 33.4 per cent of arrests stemmed from a police response to observed behaviour. Unfortunately, type of police response is missing for the remaining 10.7 per cent of police arrests.

Critics have argued that, since the police must respond to calls for service, these types of interaction are less likely to be influenced by individual officer discretion or bias. The results indicate that racial disparities exist with respect to both “calls for service” and “on-view” responses. Black and Indigenous people are grossly over-represented in both categories of police response (see Table 1.11). However, Black people are slightly more over-represented in on-view cases (5.8 per cent) than calls for service (5.1 per cent). This finding is consistent with the argument that Black people are subjected to higher levels of surveillance by patrol officers and are thus more likely to be flagged for illegal behaviour than people from other racial groups.⁴ However, the difference is only slight (less than one per cent). Furthermore, White people are also more highly represented in on-view (proactive policing cases) than call for service cases. Indigenous civilians, by contrast, are more highly represented in incidents that stem from a call for service. These facts challenge allegations of police racial bias. Unfortunately, it is impossible to determine if the findings would have changed if we had information on the 11 per cent of cases that were missing data on type of police response.

Identification of mental health and substance use issues

The VPD arrest data also indicate whether, according to the police, the offender had a substance use substance use or mental health issue at the time of arrest. The results indicate that 22.0 per cent of offenders were flagged for an issue with alcohol or drug use substance use, 1.8 per cent were flagged for a possible mental health issue, and 3.3 per cent were flagged for problems with both substance use and mental health. Three-quarters of arrests (72.9 per cent) did not identify either a substance use or mental health issues.

⁴ All differences in the data are “significant.” They are based on the entire population of VPD arrest incidents, not a probability sample. As a complete population, comparisons are not restricted to the types of inferential statistics associated with samples.

The results indicate that Indigenous and Black people are grossly over-represented in all types of arrests. However, the over-representation of Indigenous people is especially high in cases in which substance use issues were identified. Although Indigenous people represent only 2.2 per cent of the Vancouver population, they were involved in 17.0 per cent of arrests involving a mental health issue, 30.4 per cent of arrests involving a substance use issue, and 32.1 per cent of arrests involving both a substance use and a mental health issue.

By contrast, the representation of Black people is highest amongst arrests in which substance use and mental health issues were not flagged (see Table 1.12). Although they represent only 1.0 per cent of Vancouver's population, Black people were involved in 5.9 per cent of arrests in which a mental health or substance use issue was not noted, 5.5 per cent of cases in which a mental health issue was noted, 3.7 per cent of cases in which a substance use issue was noted, and 4.7 per cent of cases in which both substance use and mental health concerns were raised. All other racial groups are less represented in substance use/mental health-related arrests than arrests in which such issues were not flagged.

Race of victims

The VPD arrest dataset also includes information on the race of the victim (see Table 1.13). However, race of the victim was only available for 21.8 per cent of the arrest incidents. It is quite likely that many arrests did not involve a specific victim (i.e., they were victimless offences).

Indigenous and Black people are over-represented among both offenders and crime victims. However, the data indicate that the over-representation of Indigenous and Black people is greater among offenders than victims. For example, although Indigenous people were identified as the offender in 24.5 per cent of all VPD arrests, they represent only 13.5 per cent of crime victims. Similarly, Black people represent 5.3 per cent of offenders, but only 2.8 per cent of crime victims.

By contrast, Asian and South Asian people are more likely to appear as victims than offenders in the VPD arrest data. For example, Asian people represent 13.5 per cent of crime victims, but only 5.4 per cent of offenders.

Previous research indicates that most criminal offending is intra-racial (i.e., the offender and the victim are from the same racial group (see Stacey et al. 2017). However, perhaps due to small population size, the current data reveal that racial minorities are more likely to be victimized by an offender from another racial group than by an offender from their own racial background. By contrast, White and Indigenous people are more likely to be victimized by a person from their own racial background (see Figure 1.4). 72.7 per cent of Black victims were victimized by someone from another racial group. Only 27.3 per cent of Black victims were victimized by another Black person. By contrast, 62.2 per cent of White victims were victimized by a White offender and 60.2 per cent of Indigenous victims were victimized by an Indigenous offender.

The data on victim-offender relationships raises the issue of possible racial bias amongst civilians and how it may impact police activity. The police must, for example, respond to calls for service from victims or complainants. This leads to an important question: Are people more

likely to call police if alleged perpetrators are from a different racial group? For example, are White people more likely to report a disturbance to the police if the alleged offenders are Black or Indigenous than if they are White? This same question could be asked of all other racial groups. If racial bias exists with respect to civilian police reporting practices, this bias would ultimately be reflected in police arrest statistics.⁵

Mental health incidents

In addition to arrests, BCOHRC's research team requested data on all mental health incidents recorded by the Vancouver Police Department over the past ten years. The VPD provided BCOHRC with data on 54,854 mental health incidents that took place between 2011 and 2020. However, race of civilian subjects was available for only 50,313 cases (91.7 per cent of the sample). These 50,313 cases are the subject of the following analysis.

As with arrests, the data indicate that both Indigenous and Black people are grossly over-represented in Vancouver Police mental health incidents (see Table 1.14). Although Indigenous people represent only 2.2 per cent of Vancouver's population, they were involved in 15.2 per cent of all mental health incidents captured by the VPD data (Table 1.14). In other words, Indigenous people are 6.9 times more likely to appear in VPD mental health incidents than their presence in the general population would predict. Furthermore, the average annual Indigenous mental health incident rate (5,514 per 100,000) is 5.3 times greater than the White rate (1,040 per 100,000) and 7.0 times greater than the city average (793 per 100,000). It should be noted that the over-representation of Indigenous people is more pronounced in VPD arrest incidents than VPD mental health incidents: 24.5 per cent of all arrests involve Indigenous people, compared to 15.2 per cent of mental health incidents.

Although Black people represent only 1.0 per cent of Vancouver's population, they were involved in 3.8 per cent of all mental health incidents captured by the VPD data (Table 1.14). In other words, Black people were 3.8 times more likely to appear in VPD mental health incidents than their presence in the general population would predict. Furthermore, the average annual mental health incident rate for Black people (3,017 per 100,000) is 2.9 times greater than the White rate (1,040 per 100,000) and 3.8 times greater than the city average (793 per 100,000). As with Indigenous people, the over-representation of Black people is more pronounced in VPD arrest incidents than VPD mental health incidents: 5.3 per cent of all arrests involve people identified as Black, compared to 3.8 per cent of mental health incidents.

Arab/West Asian civilians (odds ratio=1.67) are also significantly over-represented in VPD mental health incidents (see Table 1.14). The presence of White people (odds ratio=1.30) and Hispanic people (odds ratio=1.29) in VPD mental health incidents is only slightly higher than their presence in the general Vancouver population.

⁵ Some may argue that if an IBPOC person calls the police to report an IBPOC offender, the incident can't be viewed as biased. However, I would argue that the racial data must be disaggregated before drawing that conclusion. For example, if an Asian person calls the police on a Black or Indigenous person, the incident could very well reflect anti-Black or anti-Indigenous sentiments. Indeed, an increasing body of scholarship reports that considerable anti-Black and anti-Indigenous bias within the Asian and South Asian communities (see Yellow Horse et al. 2021).

As with arrests, both Asians and South Asians are significantly under-represented in VPD mental health incidents (Table 1.14). Although they represent 38.1 per cent of Vancouver's general population, Asians were identified as the subjects in only 9.9 per cent of all VPD mental health incidents (odds ratio=0.26). The Asian mental health incident rate (207 per 100,000) is 27 times lower than the Indigenous rate (5,514 per 100,000), 15 times lower than the Black rate (3,017 per 100,000), and five times lower than the White rate (1,040 per 100,000). Similarly, although they represent 5.9 per cent of Vancouver's population, South Asians were identified as the subjects in only 3.7 per cent of all VPD mental health incidents (odds ratio=0.63). The South Asian mental health incident rate (500 per 100,000) is 11 times lower than the Indigenous rate (5,514 per 100,000), six times lower than the Black rate (3,017 per 100,000), and two times lower than the White rate (1,040 per 100,000).

Gender, race, and mental health incidents

Men were identified as the subjects in 60.9 per cent of all mental health incidents documented by the VPD between 2011 and 2020. Women are much more highly represented in VPD mental health incidents (39.1 per cent) than VPD arrest incidents (14.7 per cent).

As with arrests, Indigenous men, Black men, and Indigenous women are grossly over-represented in VPD mental health incidents (see Tables 1.15 through 1.17). Although they represent only 1.1 per cent of Vancouver's population, Indigenous males were involved in 8.1 per cent of all VPD mental health incidents recorded between 2011 and 2020. In other words, Indigenous males are 7.4 times more likely to be involved as a subject in a mental health incident than their presence in the general population would predict. The average annual mental health incident rate for Indigenous males (6,162 per 100,000) is 4.8 times greater than the rate for White males (1,293 per 100,000) and 7.8 times greater than the city average (793 per 100,000).

Although they represent only 1.1 per cent of Vancouver's population, Indigenous females were involved in 7.1 per cent of all mental health incidents recorded by the VPD between 2011 and 2020. In other words, Indigenous females are 6.5 times more likely to be involved in a VPD mental health incident than their presence in the general population would predict. In fact, Indigenous women have the second highest mental health incident rate, right behind Indigenous males. The mental health incident rate for Indigenous females (4,915 per 100,000) is 3.8 times greater than the rate for White males (1,293 per 100,000), 6.4 times greater than the rate for White females (773 per 100,000), and 6.2 times greater than the city average (793 per 100,000).

Although they represent only 0.5 per cent of Vancouver's population, Black males were the subject in 3.6 per cent of all mental health incidents recorded by the VPD between 2011 and 2020. In other words, Black males are 4.80 times more likely to be involved in a mental health incident than their presence in the general population would predict. The average annual mental health incident rate for Black males (3,524 per 100,000) is 2.7 times greater than the rate for White males (1,293 per 100,000) and 4.4 times greater than the city average (793 per 100,000).

Although they represent only 0.5 per cent of Vancouver's population, Black females were identified as the subject in 1.4 per cent of all VPD mental health incidents (odds ratio=2.80). The average annual mental health incident rate for Black women (2,409 per 100,000) is 1.9 times

greater than the rate for White males (1,293 per 100,000), 3.1 times greater than the rate for White women (773 per 100,000), 7.3 times greater than the rate for South Asian women (328 per 100,000), and 12.4 times greater than the rate for Asian women (194 per 100,000). In fact, the mental health incident rate for Black women is higher than the rates for White, South Asian, Asian, Hispanic, and Arab males (see Figure 1.5).

White males (odds ratio=1.63) and West Asian/Arab males (odds ratio=2.44) are the only other groups that are significantly over-represented in VPD mental health incidents recorded between 2011 and 2020. Asian and South Asian males are significantly under-represented (see Table 1.17).

Among women, only Black and Indigenous females are over-represented in VPD mental health incidents. The proportion of White and West Asian females in mental health cases approximates their presence in the general population. Hispanic, South Asian, and Asian females are significantly under-represented in VPD mental health incidents.

The impact of unique individuals

It is important to examine the impact that unique individuals may have on observed racial disparities in VPD mental health-related statistics. Individuals who have been subjected to multiple mental health incidents could drive up the numbers for the racial group to which they belong. Fortunately, the data provided by the VPD assigned a unique person identification number (PIN) to individuals involved in each mental health incident. This allowed the research team to identify individuals involved in more than one mental health incident.

Our results indicate that 22,508 unique individuals were responsible for the 54,854 mental health incidents captured by the VPD data. This works out to an average of 2.4 incidents per unique individual in the VPD mental health dataset. The number of mental health incidents, per unique individual, ranges from 1 to 117 separate incidents. However, it must be stressed that 63.1 per cent of the unique individuals in the mental health dataset were involved in only one incident. An additional 16.9 per cent of the sample were involved in only two incidents. Only 10.0 per cent of the unique individuals in the VPD mental health dataset were involved in four or more incidents during the 10-year study period.

Table 1.18 recalculates mental health-based racial disparities counting unique individuals only once. This strategy eliminates the impact of statistical outliers who have been involved in multiple enforcement incidents. The results reveal that controlling for the impact of unique individuals only slightly reduces overall racial disparities. For example, the proportion of VPD mental health incidents involving Indigenous people drops from 15.2 per cent to 12.2 per cent after controlling for individuals who were involved in multiple incidents. Similarly, the proportion involving Black people drops from 3.8 per cent to 3.5 per cent.

Nonetheless, after counting unique individuals only once, the Indigenous mental health incident rate (1,835 per 100,000) is still 4.4 times higher than the White rate (416 per 100,000). Furthermore, Indigenous people are still 5.5 times more likely to appear in VPD mental health incidents than their presence in the general population would predict. Similarly, counting unique individuals only once, Black people are still 3.5 times more likely to appear in VPD mental

health incidents than their presence in the general population would predict. Furthermore, the Black mental health incident rate (1,157 per 100,000) remains 2.8 times greater than the White rate (416 per 100,000).

After controlling for the impact of unique individuals, Hispanic (odds ratio=2.00) and Arab/West Asian people (odds ratio=1.94) also remain significantly over-represented in VPD mental health incidents. On the other hand, after controlling for the impact of unique individuals, South Asian (odds ratio=0.76) and Asian people (odds ratio=0.35) remain significantly under-represented in VPD mental health incidents. White people, by contrast, are represented in mental health incidents at a level that is consistent with their proportion of the general population (odds ratio=1.26).

Figure 1.6 presents the mean number of mental health incidents, per unique individual, in the VPD mental health dataset. The results reveal that people of Hispanic background averaged 3.24 incidents per unique individual, followed by Black individuals (mean=3.01 incidents), Indigenous individuals (mean=2.94 incidents), White individuals (mean=2.62 incidents), Arab/West Asian individuals (mean=2.27 incidents), South Asian individuals (mean=1.91 incidents), and Asian individuals (mean=1.76 incidents). These racial differences are statistically significant.

In summary, although individuals involved in multiple mental health incidents increase the overall the incident rates for all racial groups, Indigenous and Black peoples remain grossly over-represented in VPD mental health incidents after the impact of unique individuals have been taken into statistical account.

District of mental health incidents

Table 1.19 provides a breakdown of VPD mental health incidents by Patrol District. The results reveal that 36.4 per cent of all VPD mental health incidents, between 2011 and 2020, took place in District Two—a region that includes the Downtown Eastside. An additional quarter of all incidents (24.5 per cent) took place in District One, an area that includes the Downtown Central Business District. Two-fifths of all incidents took place in either District Three (19.1 per cent) or District Four (20.0 per cent).

Table 1.20 breaks down VPD mental health incidents, within each patrol district, by the race of the subject. The results reveal that, regardless of patrol district, Indigenous and Black people are grossly over-represented in VPD mental health incidents. For example, although Indigenous people represent only 2.2 per cent of Vancouver’s general population, they were involved in 50.8 per cent of mental health incidents within District Two, 19.5 per cent of incidents within District One, 17.5 per cent of incidents within District Three, and 12.2 per cent of incidents within District Four. Similarly, although Black people represent only 1.0 per cent of the general population, they were involved in 4.2 per cent of incidents within District Two, 4.0 per cent of incidents within District One, 3.6 per cent of incidents within District Three, and 3.0 per cent of incidents within District Four.

Persons of both Hispanic and Arab/West Asian background are slightly over-represented in mental health incidents that occurred within each patrol district. South Asians are under-

represented in mental health incidents that occurred within Districts One, Two, and Four, and slightly over-represented in incidents that occurred within District Three. Asians are significantly under-represented in mental health incidents across all four VPD patrol districts. White people are slightly over-represented in mental health incidents occurring within Districts One, Two, and Four.

As discussed above, the research team attempted to secure race-based population estimates for each VPD patrol district and smaller geographic units within Vancouver. However, due to short timelines, we were unable to secure this data prior to report deadlines. We hope to provide a more detailed geographic analysis in future reports.

Reason for police response

The VPD mental health dataset includes a variable that describes the reason for the police response. The research team recoded this field into six distinct categories: 1) violent crime; 2) property crime; 3) assist person calls (i.e., calls to provide assistance to civilians, business owners, government officials, or other police officers); 4) general disturbance calls; 5) disturbed person calls (including calls related to suicide attempts); and 6) calls related to the *Mental Health Act* (including mental health apprehensions).

The results reveal that 50.3 per cent of the mental health incidents, documented by the VPD between 2011 and 2020, were related to a disturbed person call (see Table 1.21). An additional 27.8 per cent were related to the enforcement of the *Mental Health Act*. By contrast, only 13.0 per cent were related to an incident of violent offending. Similarly, only a small proportion of cases were linked to general disturbance calls (4.3 per cent), calls for assistance (3.2 per cent), or property crime (1.4 per cent).

The results reveal that Indigenous and Black people are grossly over-represented in all police response categories (see Table 1.22). For example, although Indigenous people represent only 2.2 per cent of the general population, they were involved in 19.7 per cent of mental health incidents that resulted from a disturbance call, 17.4 per cent of incidents that involved a violent offence, 15.9 per cent of calls that stemmed from property crime, 15.0 per cent of disturbed person calls, 14.4 per cent of incidents linked to the *Mental Health Act*, and 11.1 per cent of general assistance calls.

Similarly, although Black people represent only 1.0 per cent of Vancouver's population, they were involved in 5.1 per cent of mental health incidents that stemmed from violent crime, 4.7 per cent of incidents related to the enforcement of the *Mental Health Act*, 4.5 per cent of general disturbance calls, 3.6 per cent of incidents related to property crime, 3.5 per cent of incidents related to assist person calls, and 3.0 per cent of incidents related to disturbed person calls.

Arab and Hispanic people are also significantly over-represented in most police responses that resulted in a mental health incident. White people are only slightly over-represented. Once again, Asian and South Asians are significantly under-represented in all police response categories linked to mental health incidents (see Table 1.22).

Type of police response

The data provided by the VPD also identified the type of police response that led to the mental incident. Two major categories were identified: a call for service (i.e., a civilian, government agent, or police officer called for police assistance); and on-view (a police officer observed a crime, disturbance, or suspicious activity while on patrol and responded using their own discretion).

The data indicate that 91.5 per cent of all mental health incidents stemmed from a call for service. Only 8.5 per cent of incidents stemmed from a police response to observed behaviour. As discussed above, critics have argued that, since the police must respond to calls for service, these types of interaction are less likely to be influenced by individual officer discretion or bias. The results indicate that racial disparities exist with respect to both “calls for service” and “on-view” responses. Black and Indigenous people are grossly over-represented in both categories of police response (see Table 1.23). However, Indigenous people are slightly more over-represented in on-view cases (18.4 per cent) than calls for service (14.9 per cent). This finding is consistent with the argument that Indigenous people are subjected to higher levels of surveillance by patrol officers and are thus more likely to be flagged for mental health problems than people from other racial groups.

Substance use noted by police

The data provided by the VPD indicate whether, according to the responding officers, the subject of the mental health incident suffers from substance abuse. One fifth of mental health incidents (22.2 per cent) were flagged for subject substance use issues.

The results indicate that Indigenous people are particularly over-represented in mental health incidents that involve a police allegation of substance use. For example, although they represent only 2.2 per cent of Vancouver’s population, Indigenous people were involved in 24.2 per cent of mental health incidents in which substance use was noted by the police. By contrast, they were involved in only 12.4 per cent of incidents in which substance use was not noted.

Although Asians and South Asians are significantly under-represented in all VPD mental health incidents, they make up a larger proportion of cases in which subject substance use was not noted (see Table 1.24). All other racial groups—including Black, White, Hispanic, and Arab people—are equally represented in mental health cases that do and do not involve substance use.

Race of victims

The VPD mental health dataset also includes information on the race of the victim in mental health incidents (see Table 1.25). Race of the victim was only available for 40.4 per cent of mental health incidents. It is quite likely that many incidents did not involve a specific victim.

Indigenous and Black people are over-represented among both subjects and victims involved in mental health incidents. However, the data indicate that the over-representation of Indigenous and Black people is greater among subjects than victims. For example, although Indigenous people were identified as the subject in 15.2 per cent of all VPD mental health incidents, they

represent only 6.3 per cent of victims. Similarly, Black people represent 3.8 per cent of subjects, but only 2.6 per cent of victims. By contrast, White, Asian, and South Asian people are more likely to appear as victims than offenders in the VPD mental health data. For example, Asian people represent 13.5 per cent of victims, but only 9.9 per cent of subjects.

The data further reveal that racial minorities are more likely to be victimized by an offender from another racial group than by an offender from their own racial background. By contrast, White and Indigenous people are more likely to be victimized by a person from their own racial background (see Figure 1.7). For example, 82.9 per cent of Black victims were victimized by someone from another racial group. Only 17.1 per cent of Black victims were victimized by another Black person. By contrast, 69.3 per cent of White victims were victimized by a White mental health subject. Similarly, 53.6 per cent of Indigenous victims were victimized by an Indigenous subject.

Strip searches

In addition to arrests, BCOHRC research team requested data on all strip search incidents recorded by the Vancouver Police Department over the past ten years. The VPD provided BCOHRC with data on 1,030 strip searches that took place between August 18, 2012 to December 31, 2020. Race of civilian subjected to strip searches was available for 993 cases (96.4 per cent of the sample). It is these 993 cases that are the focus of the following analysis.

The data suggest that the Vancouver Police Department rarely conducts strip searches. For example, the Toronto Police Service conducted 20,261 strip searches in 2016 alone. By comparison, the VPD recorded only 1,030 strip searches between 2011 and 2020—an average of only 103 searches per year. When comparing the number of arrest incidents with the number of strip searches, it appears that less than one per cent of VPD arrests result in a strip search. By comparison, in 2016, over 43 per cent of Toronto Police arrests resulted in a strip search (McNeilly 2019).

Although overall numbers may be low, the data indicate that both Indigenous and Black people are grossly over-represented in strip searches conducted by the Vancouver Police Department (see Table 1.26). Although Indigenous people represent only 2.2 per cent of Vancouver's population, they were involved in 22.1 per cent of all strip searches captured by the VPD data (Table 1.26). In other words, Indigenous people are 10 times more likely to appear in VPD strip search incidents than their presence in the general population would predict. Furthermore, the average annual Indigenous strip search rate (158 per 100,000) is 11.3 times greater than the White rate (14 per 100,000) and 9.9 times greater than the city average (16 per 100,000).

Although Black people represent only 1.0 per cent of Vancouver's population, they were involved in 12.2 per cent of all strip searches captured by the VPD data (Table 1.26). In other words, Black people were 12.2 times more likely to appear in VPD strip search statistics than their presence in the general population would predict. Furthermore, the average annual strip search rate for Black people (191 per 100,000) is 13.6 times greater than the White rate (14 per 100,000) and 11.9 times greater than the city average (16 per 100,000). The over-representation of Black people is more pronounced in VPD strip searches than VPD arrests or mental health

incidents: 12.2 per cent of all strip searches involve Black people, compared to 5.3 per cent of all arrests and 3.8 per cent of mental health incidents.

Arab/West Asian people (odds ratio=2.50) and Hispanic people (odds ratio=2.35) are also significantly over-represented in VPD strip searches (see Table 1.26). The presence of White people (odds ratio=0.92) and South Asian people (odds ratio=1.29) in VPD strip searches is approximately equal to their proportion of the general Vancouver population.

As with arrests and mental health incidents, Asians are significantly under-represented in VPD strip search incidents (Table 1.26). Although they represent 38.1 per cent of Vancouver's general population, Asians were involved in only 6.4 per cent of all VPD strip searches (odds ratio=0.17). The Asian strip search rate (3 per 100,000) is 53 times lower than the Indigenous rate (158 per 100,000), 64 times lower than the Black rate (191 per 100,000), and 4.7 times lower than the White rate (14 per 100,000).

Gender, race, and strip search incidents

Men were identified as the subjects in 84.9 per cent of all strip searches documented by the VPD between 2012 and 2020. As with arrests, Indigenous men, Black men, and Indigenous women are grossly over-represented in VPD strip search cases (see Tables 1.27 through 1.29). Although they represent only 0.5 per cent of Vancouver's population, Black males were the subject in 11.6 per cent of all strip searches recorded by the VPD between 2012 and 2020. In other words, Black males are 23.2 times more likely to be involved in a strip search than their presence in the general population would predict. The average annual strip search rate for Black males (338 per 100,000) is 14.1 times greater than the rate for White males (24 per 100,000) and 21.1 times greater than the city average (16 per 100,000).

Although they represent only 1.1 per cent of Vancouver's population, Indigenous males were involved in 15.2 per cent of all VPD strip search incidents recorded between 2012 and 2020. In other words, Indigenous males are 13.9 times more likely to be involved in a strip search than their presence in the general population would predict. The average annual strip search rate for Indigenous males (227 per 100,000) is 9.5 times greater than the rate for White males (24 per 100,000) and 14.1 times greater than the city average (793 per 100,000).

Although they represent only 1.1 per cent of Vancouver's population, Indigenous females were involved in 6.9 per cent of all strip search incidents recorded by the VPD between 2012 and 2020. In other words, Indigenous females are 6.3 times more likely to be involved in a VPD strip search than their presence in the general population would predict. In fact, Indigenous women have the third highest strip search rate, behind only Black and Indigenous males. The strip search rate for Indigenous females (94 per 100,000) is 3.9 times greater than the rate for White males (24 per 100,000), 23.5 times greater than the rate for White females (4 per 100,000), and 5.9 times greater than the city average (16 per 100,000).

Arab/West Asian males (odds ratio=4.89), Hispanic males (odds ratio=4.00), South Asian males (2.13), and White males (odds ratio=1.53) are also significantly over-represented in VPD strip search statistics. However, the strip search rates for West Asian males (82 per 100,000) and Hispanic males (64 per 100,000) are more than two times greater than the rate for White males

(24 per 100,000). Asian males are under-represented in VPD strip search statistics (odds ratio=0.36).

Black females were identified as the subject in 0.6 per cent of all VPD strip search incidents. This is about equal to their representation in the general Vancouver population (odds ratio=1.2). Women from all other racial groups are significantly under-represented in VPD strip searches (see Figure 1.8). The strip search rate for Black women (20 per 100,000) is about equal to the strip search rate for White males (24 per 100,000). It is also 5 times greater than the rate for White women (4 per 100,000), 6.7 times greater than the rate for South Asian women (3 per 100,000), ten times greater than the rate of Arab women (2 per 100,000), and 100 times greater than the rate for Asian women (0.2 per 100,000). In fact, the strip search rate for Black women is 3.3 times higher than the rate for Asian males (6 per 100,000).

The impact of unique individuals

As with arrests and mental health incidents, it is important to examine the impact that unique individuals may have on observed racial disparities in VPD strip searches. Individuals who have been subjected to multiple strip searches could drive up the numbers for the racial group to which they belong. Fortunately, the data provided by the VPD assigned a unique person identification number (PIN) to individuals involved in each strip search incident. This allowed the research team to identify individuals involved in more than one strip search.

Our results indicate that 902 unique individuals were responsible for the 1,030 strip searches documented by the VPD data. This works out to an average of 1.14 strip searches per unique individual in the VPD strip search dataset. The number of strip searches, per unique individual, ranges from 1 to 6. The one individual with 6 documented strip searches is a Black male. It must be stressed that 89.1 per cent of the unique individuals in the VPD strip search dataset were involved in only one strip search. An additional 8.8 per cent of the sample were involved in only two incidents. Only 2.1 per cent of the unique individuals in the VPD strip search dataset were involved in three or more strip searches during the ten-year study period.

Table 1.30 recalculates racial disparities in searches counting unique individuals only once. This strategy eliminates the impact of statistical outliers who have been involved in multiple strip search incidents. The results reveal that controlling for the impact of unique individuals only slightly reduces overall racial disparities. For example, the proportion of VPD strip searches involving Indigenous people drops only slightly—from 22.1 per cent to 21.7 per cent—after controlling for individuals who were involved in multiple incidents. Similarly, the proportion involving Black people drops from 12.2 per cent to 11.3 per cent.

After counting unique individuals only once, the Indigenous strip search rate (136 per 100,000) is still 10.5 times higher than the White rate (13 per 100,000). Furthermore, Indigenous people are still 9.9 times more likely to appear in VPD strip search incidents than their presence in the general population would predict. Similarly, counting unique individuals only once, Black people are still 11.3 times more likely to appear in VPD strip searches than their presence in the general population would predict. Furthermore, the Black strip search rate (155 per 100,000) remains 11.9 times greater than the White rate (13 per 100,000).

After controlling for the impact of unique individuals, Hispanic (odds ratio=2.70) and Arab/West Asian people (odds ratio=2.39) also remain significantly over-represented in VPD strip search incidents. After controlling for the impact of unique individuals, the representation of South Asian people in VPD searches is consistent with their presence in the general Vancouver population (odds ratio=1.15). Asian people (odds ratio=0.18) remain significantly under-represented in VPD strip search incidents. Finally, White people, as South Asians, are represented in strip searches at a level that is consistent with their proportion of the general population (odds ratio=0.94).

In summary, although individuals involved in multiple strip search incidents increase the overall strip search rate for all racial groups, Indigenous and Black peoples remain grossly over-represented in VPD strip searches after the impact of unique individuals have been taken into statistical account.

District of strip search incidents

Table 1.31 provides a breakdown of VPD strip searches by Patrol District. The results reveal that almost half of all strip searches (49.1 per cent) stem from incidents that took place in District Two, a region that includes the Downtown Eastside. An additional quarter of all incidents (26.7 per cent) resulted from arrests that took place in District One, an area that includes the Downtown Central Business District. Only 15.0 per cent of strip search incidents originated in District Three and only 9.3 per cent originated in District Four.

Table 1.32 breaks down VPD strip search incidents, within each patrol district, by the race of the subject. The results reveal that, regardless of patrol district, Indigenous and Black people are grossly over-represented in VPD strip searches. For example, although Indigenous people represent only 2.2 per cent of Vancouver's general population, they were involved in 28.4 per cent of strip searches associated District Two, 15.5 per cent of incidents within District One, 19.2 per cent of incidents within District Three, and 10.1 per cent of incidents within District Four. Similarly, although Black people represent only 1.0 per cent of the general population, they were involved in 15.0 per cent of strip search incidents within District Two, 7.6 per cent of incidents within District One, 11.3 per cent of incidents within District Three, and 11.2 per cent of incidents within District Four.

Persons of both Hispanic and Arab/West Asian background are also over-represented in strip searches associated each patrol district (see Table 1.32). South Asians are under-represented in strip searches associated with District Two. However, they are over-represented in the other three districts. Asians are significantly under-represented in strip search incidents across all four VPD patrol districts. Finally, White people are slightly over-represented in mental health incidents occurring within Districts One and Four. By contrast, they are slightly over-represented in strip searches that originated in Districts Two and Three.

Offence related to strip search

The research team requested information on why each strip search was conducted. Due to time constraints, the VPD was unable to identify the specific reason for each strip search. However, the VPD informed the research team, via email, that:

In practice, staff need to have grounds to perform a strip search and they must be legally defensible. The purpose of the strip search is to prevent contraband being smuggled in and the most concerning would be drugs or weapons. The safety of staff is paramount as is the safety of other prisoners and the prisoner who is attempting to bring the contraband in. Drug use within the cell is a massive concern given the poisoned supply of street drugs – we simply do not want anyone dying from drug use if we had the grounds to strip search them and seize the drugs from them. The grounds can't be mere suspicion, the officer needs to have reasonable grounds to believe that there is contraband and these grounds are often formed because the officer feels something askew when they are conducting a pat down search, or the officer sees something at the street level that gives them the belief that the person hid something (e.g., drugs). The strip search has to be authorized by the Jail supervisor who has to be convinced of the grounds.

Although the VPD could not provide the specific justification for each strip search, they were able to provide the Uniform Crime Report (UCR) codes identifying the “most serious” offence facing the accused involved in each strip search case. Although this is not the reason or justification for a strip search, the UCR codes do provide us with some information about the types of offenders who have been subjected to strip searches by the Vancouver Police Department.

The UCR codes linked to each strip search were coded into six different categories: 1) homicide-related (including manslaughter and attempt murder charges); 2) violent crime (including assault, aggravated assault, weapons offences, robbery and sexual assault); 3) property crime (including fraud, theft and break and enter offences); 4) drug possession; 5) drug trafficking; and 6) other crime. The results indicate that 40.6 per cent of all VPD strip searches were conducted on offenders charged with a non-lethal violent offence. An additional 3.8 per cent of offenders were charged with a homicide-related offence, 18.0 per cent were charged with a property offence, 19.0 per cent with drug trafficking and 8.6 per cent were charged with drug possession (see Table 1.33).

Further analysis reveals that both Black and Indigenous offenders are grossly over-represented in strip searches that stem from all six offence types (see Table 1.34). For example, although they represent only one per cent of Vancouver's general population, Black people were involved in 16.2 per cent of strip searches involving homicide, 15.8 per cent of strip searches involving drug trafficking, 12.8 per cent of strip searches involving drug possession, 11.9 per cent of strip searches involving violent crime, and 9.4 per cent of strip searches involving property crime. Similarly, although Indigenous people make up only 2.2 per cent of Vancouver's population, they were involved in 25.3 per cent of strip searches involving a violent offence, 26.7 per cent of strip searches involving property crime, 16.8 per cent of strip searches involving drug trafficking, 10.8 per cent of strip searches involving homicide, and 9.3 per cent of strip searches involving drug possession.

Arab/West Asian people are over-represented in strip searches stemming from violent crime, drug possession and drug trafficking. Hispanic people are over-represented in strip searches stemming from homicide-related offences, violent crime, property crime, and drug trafficking. South Asian people are over-represented in strip searches that stem from homicide, violent crime, and drug trafficking. White people are under-represented in strip searches that involve homicide, violent crime, and drug trafficking. They are slightly over-represented among those charged with a property crime and drug possession. Finally, Asian people are significantly under-represented in all strip searches, regardless of crime type.

Arrest benchmarking

The analysis above benchmark—or compares—the race of those strip searched by the VPD with race-based population estimates, for Vancouver, drawn from the 2016 Canadian Census. The research team believes that this method documents the population impact of strip searches on various racial groups. However, critics would argue that strip searches should not be benchmarked on the general population. Rather, strip searches should only be benchmarked against the population that has actually been arrested. After all, only people who have been arrested can be subjected to a strip search. In an attempt to address this concern, Table 1.35 produces adjusted odds ratios, for each racial group, which compare the per cent arrested with the per cent subjected to a strip search.

The results presented in Table 1.35 reveal that, controlling for the arrested population, Black people are the only group significantly over-represented in VPD strip search statistics. Although Black people were involved in 5.3 of all arrests, they were 12.2 per cent of those subjected to a strip search (adjusted odds ratio=2.30). In other words, Black accused persons were 2.3 times more likely to experience a VPD strip search than their presence in the arrested population would predict. By contrast, White and Indigenous arrestees are slightly under-represented.

Table 1.35 also reveals that less than one per cent of all arrests (0.87 per cent), conducted by the VPD between 2011 and 2012, resulted in a strip search. However, 2.01 per cent of Black arrestees were strip searched, compared to only 0.72 per cent of White arrestees and 0.78 per cent of Indigenous arrestees. Thus, regardless of offender race, very few people arrested by the VPD are subjected to a strip search. However, Black offenders are twice as likely to be strip searched than offenders from other racial backgrounds.

Vancouver tables and figures

**TABLE 1.1: Total arrests by race of accused,
Vancouver Police Department, January 1st, 2011 to December 31st, 2020,
City of Vancouver census population estimates**

Racial group	Population estimate	Per cent of population	Number of arrests	Per cent of arrests	Odds ratio	Average annual arrest rate (per 100,000)
White/European	298,571	47.3	59,994	52.6	1.11	2,009.3
Indigenous	13,905	2.2	27,922	24.5	11.14	20,080.5
Black	6,345	1.0	6,029	5.3	5.30	9,502.0
South Asian	37,130	5.9	5,749	5.0	0.85	1,548.3
Asian	240,435	38.1	6,177	5.4	0.14	256.9
West Asian/Arab	11,595	1.8	3,541	3.1	1.72	3,053.9
Latin American	10,935	1.7	3,876	3.4	2.00	3,544.6
Other	12,570	2.0	730	0.6	0.30	580.7
TOTAL	631,486	100.0	114,018	100.0	1.00	1,805.5

**TABLE 1.2: Total arrests by race of accused,
Vancouver Police Department, January 1st, 2011 to December 31st, 2020,
Metropolitan Vancouver census population estimates**

Racial group	Population estimate	Per cent of population	Number of arrests	Per cent of arrests	Odds ratio	Average annual arrest rate (per 100,000)
White/European	1,216,296	49.4	59,994	52.6	1.06	493.3
Indigenous	61,455	2.5	27,922	24.5	9.80	4,543.5
Black	29,830	1.2	6,029	5.3	4.42	2,021.2
South Asian	291,005	11.8	5,749	5.0	0.45	197.6
Asian	725,820	29.5	6,177	5.4	0.18	85.1
West Asian/Arab	62,440	2.5	3,541	3.1	1.24	567.1
Latin American	34,805	1.4	3,876	3.4	2.43	1,113.6
Other	41,780	1.7	730	0.6	0.35	174.7
TOTAL	2,463,431	100.0	114,018	100.0	1.00	462.8

**TABLE 1.3: Total arrests by race of male accused,
Vancouver Police Department, January 1st, 2011 to December 31st, 2020**

Racial group	Estimated male population	Per cent of male population	Number of arrests	Per cent of arrests	Odds ratio	Average annual arrest rate (per 100,000)
White/European	152,455	49.4	51,633	53.4	1.08	3,386.8
Indigenous	6,650	2.1	21,713	22.4	10.67	32,651.1
Black	3,405	1.1	5,441	5.6	5.09	15,979.4
South Asian	18,875	6.1	5,298	5.5	0.90	2,806.9
Asian	109,170	35.5	5,248	5.4	0.15	480.7
West Asian/Arab	5,370	1.7	3,332	3.4	2.00	6,204.8
Latin American	6,275	2.0	3,489	3.6	1.80	5,560.1
Other	6,315	2.1	603	0.6	0.29	954.9
TOTAL	308,515	100.0	96,757	100.0	1.00	3,136.2

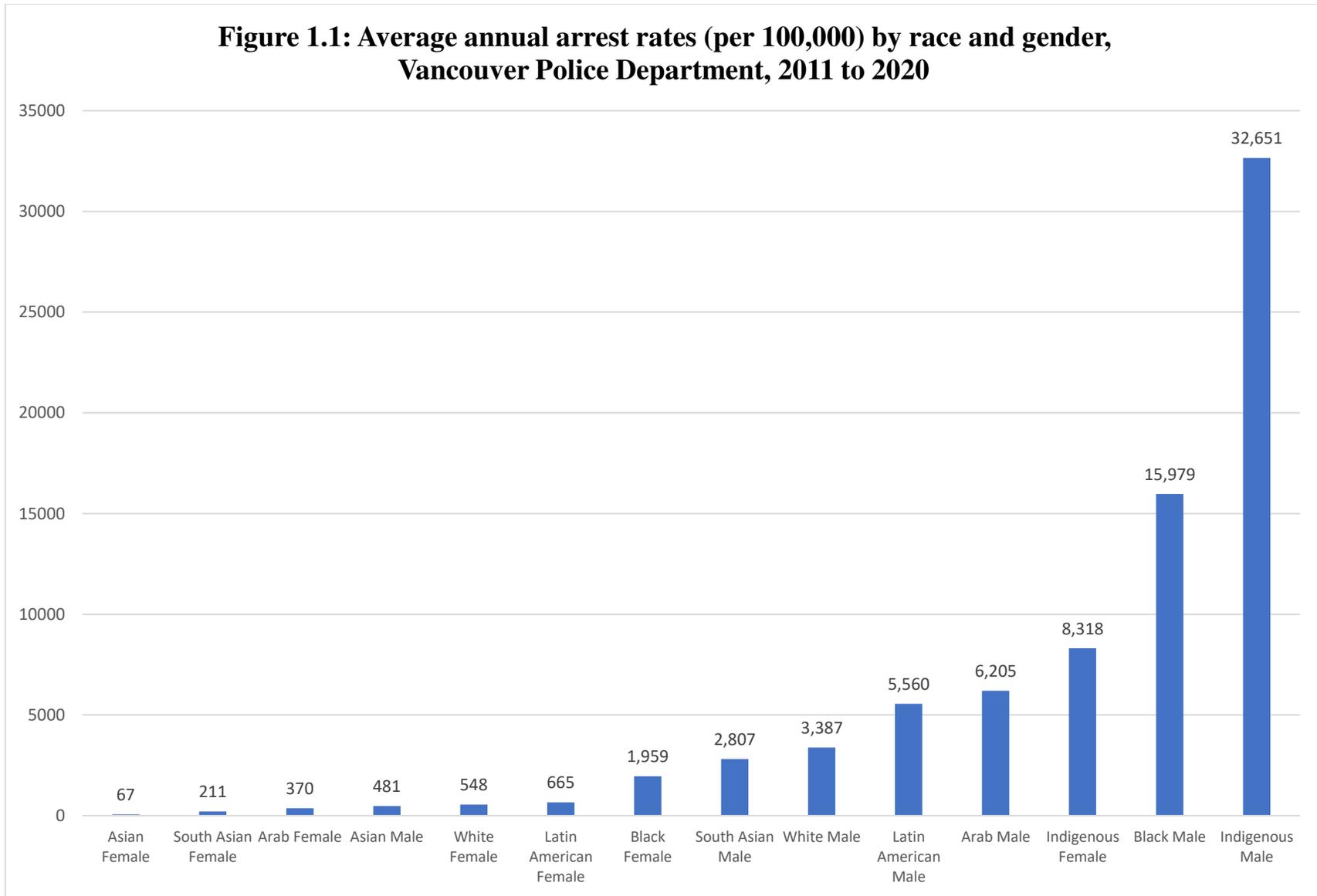
**TABLE 1.4: Total arrests by race of female accused,
Vancouver Police Department, January 1st, 2011 to December 31st, 2020**

Racial group	Estimated female population	Per cent of female population	Number of arrests	Per cent of arrests	Odds ratio	Average annual arrest rate (per 100,000)
White/European	146,120	45.2	8,013	48.4	1.07	548.4
Indigenous	7,255	2.2	6,035	36.5	16.59	8,318.4
Black	2,935	0.9	575	3.5	3.89	1,959.1
South Asian	18,260	5.8	386	2.3	0.39	211.4
Asian	131,270	40.6	885	5.3	0.13	67.4
West Asian/Arab	5,320	1.6	197	1.2	0.76	370.3
Latin American	5,560	1.7	370	2.2	1.29	665.5
Other	6,250	1.9	92	0.6	0.31	147.2
TOTAL	322,970	100.0	16,553	100.0	1.00	512.5

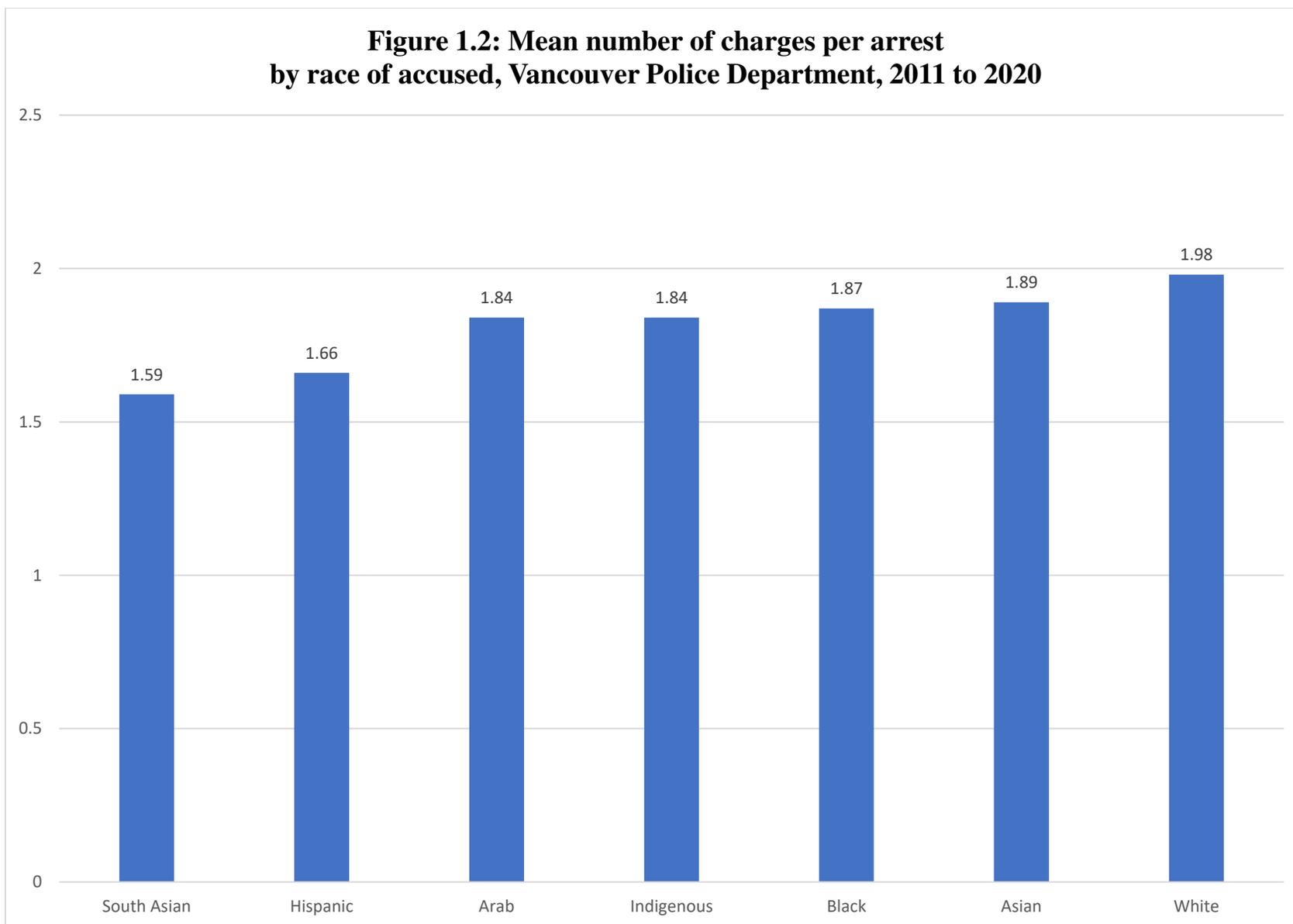
TABLE 1.5: Summary of arrest statistics by race and gender, Vancouver Police Department, January 1st, 2011 to December 31st, 2020

Race/gender group	Per cent population	Per cent arrests	Odds ratio	Average annual arrest rate (per 100,000)
Indigenous Male	1.1	19.0	17.27	32,651
Indigenous Female	1.1	5.3	4.81	8,318
Black Male	0.5	4.8	9.60	15,979
Black Female	0.5	0.5	1.00	1,959
South Asian Male	3.0	4.7	1.53	2,807
South Asian Female	2.9	0.3	0.10	211
Asian Male	17.3	4.6	0.27	481
Asian Female	20.8	0.8	0.04	67
Hispanic Male	1.0	3.1	3.10	5,560
Hispanic Female	0.9	0.3	0.33	665
West Asian Male	0.9	2.9	3.22	6,205
West Asian Female	0.8	0.2	0.25	370
White Male	24.1	45.3	1.88	3,387
White Female	23.1	7.0	0.30	548
Other Male	1.0	0.5	0.50	955
Other Female	1.0	0.1	0.10	147

Figure 1.1: Average annual arrest rates (per 100,000) by race and gender, Vancouver Police Department, 2011 to 2020



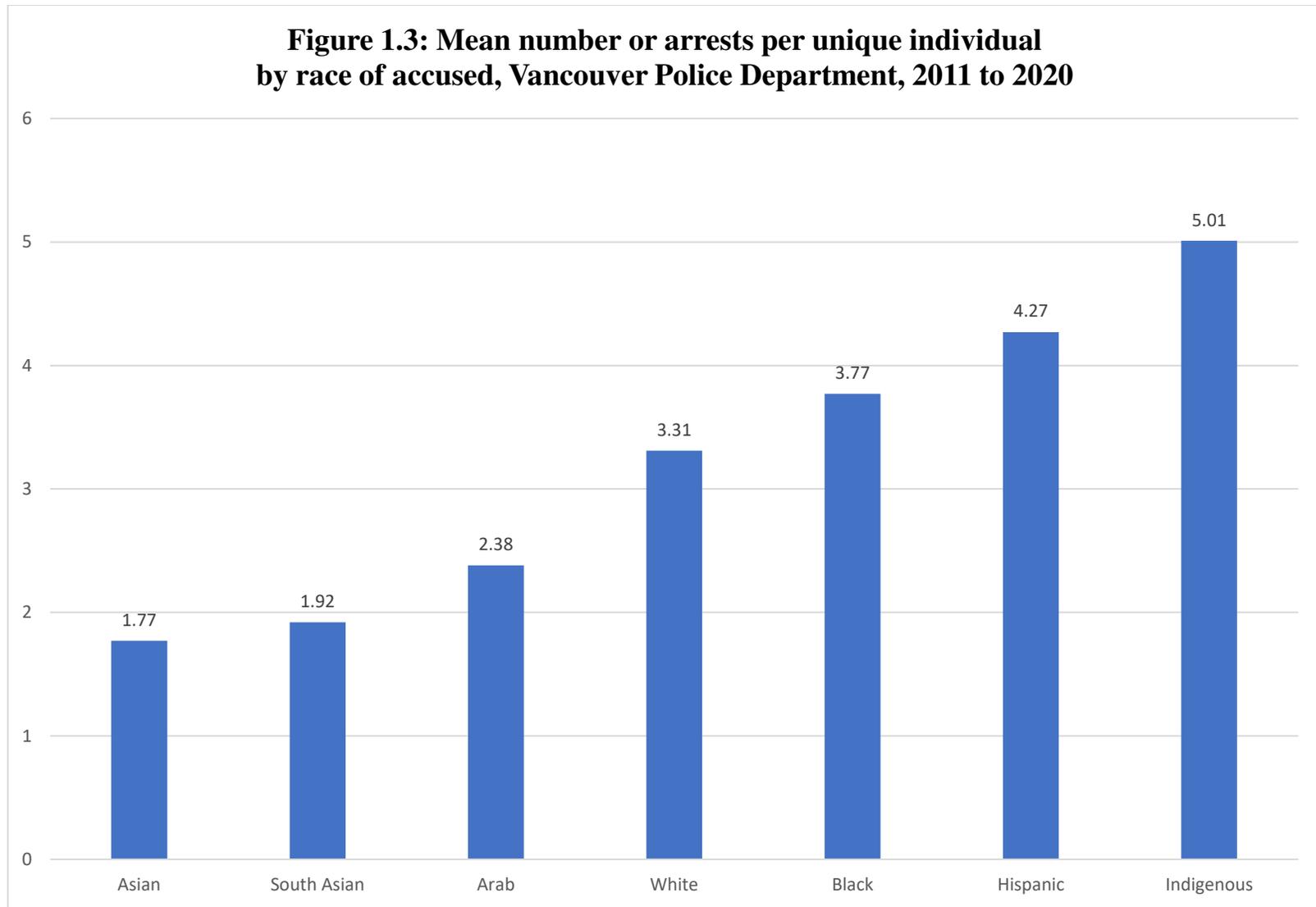
**Figure 1.2: Mean number of charges per arrest
by race of accused, Vancouver Police Department, 2011 to 2020**



**TABLE 1.6: Arrests of unique individuals by race of accused,
Vancouver Police Department, January 1st, 2011 to December 31st, 2020**

Racial group	Population estimate	Per cent of population	Number of arrests	Per cent of arrests	Odds ratio	Average annual arrest rate (per 100,000)
White/European	298,571	47.3	18,946	52.5	1.11	634.5
Indigenous	13,905	2.2	5,731	15.9	7.23	4,121.5
Black	6,345	1.0	1,746	4.8	4.80	2,751.8
South Asian	37,130	5.9	2,879	8.0	1.35	775.4
Asian	240,435	38.1	3,209	8.9	0.23	133.5
West Asian/Arab	11,595	1.8	1,516	4.2	2.33	1,307.5
Latin American	10,935	1.7	2,069	5.7	3.35	1,892.1
TOTAL	613,486	100.0	36,096	100.0	1.00	588.4

Figure 1.3: Mean number of arrests per unique individual by race of accused, Vancouver Police Department, 2011 to 2020



**TABLE 1.7: Number and per cent of arrests by police district,
Vancouver Police Department, 2011 to 2020**

Vancouver police district	Number of arrests	Per cent of arrests
District One	35,471	30.7
District Two	48,501	41.9
District Three	17,739	15.3
District Four	13,971	12.1
TOTAL	115,682	100.0

**TABLE 1.8: Per cent of arrests by race of accused and police district,
Vancouver Police Department, 2011 to 2020**

Race of accused	% Vancouver population	% arrests District One	% arrests District Two	% arrests District Three	% arrests District Four	% all arrests
White	47.3	58.1	49.7	45.1	59.5	52.6
Indigenous	2.2	22.4	52.3	15.7	9.6	24.5
Black	1.0	5.6	6.0	4.1	3.6	5.3
Asian	38.1	4.3	4.2	10.0	6.4	5.4
South Asian	5.9	6.6	2.9	7.8	4.5	5.0
Arab/West Asian	1.8	4.3	2.5	2.6	2.8	3.1
Hispanic	1.7	3.0	3.5	4.4	2.5	3.4
Other	2.0	0.4	0.5	0.7	0.7	0.6
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

TABLE 1.9: Proportion of arrests involving people from different racial groups by type of offence, Vancouver Police Department, 2011 to 2020 (Single charge arrests only)

Offence type	White	Indigenous	Black	Asian	South Asian	Hispanic	Arab/West Asian	Number of cases
% arrested for robbery	55.0	17.6	10.9	6.4	4.3	3.1	2.7	516
% arrested for weapons offences	46.1	27.8	6.5	8.8	4.8	2.8	3.2	862
% arrested for assault	48.1	25.6	5.1	9.1	4.9	3.5	3.7	5,602
% arrested for homicide/manslaughter	38.3	12.1	7.0	21.7	13.0	5.2	2.6	115
% arrested for sexual assault	38.6	18.9	10.1	10.1	9.1	4.9	8.3	386
% arrested for uttering threats	55.2	17.5	5.9	5.4	7.7	2.3	6.1	743
% arrested for theft	63.5	21.2	3.8	4.7	1.9	1.7	1.9	8,227
% arrested for break and enter	64.9	20.8	3.5	5.5	1.2	2.2	1.9	807
% arrested for fraud	58.7	11.7	4.3	13.1	5.7	2.3	4.3	351
% arrested for public intoxication	39.3	41.5	3.8	3.9	5.4	4.6	1.6	6,338
% arrested for drug possession	57.8	19.3	7.1	5.8	3.2	2.4	4.5	379
% arrested for drug trafficking	46.5	16.7	7.9	13.8	5.8	5.3	4.0	796
% arrested for mischief	60.3	27.1	3.4	2.3	1.9	3.0	2.0	1,064
% arrested for administration of justice charges	57.0	27.4	5.5	3.3	2.7	2.1	2.1	10,825
% arrested for breach of peace	47.3	25.9	5.6	4.5	9.1	4.2	3.5	25,520

% arrested on immigration offences	29.1	1.8	9.7	18.2	6.2	26.9	8.2	1,645
% held for other police service	41.0	11.1	7.9	14.0	6.1	14.2	5.8	2,413
% arrested for provincial offences	54.7	25.0	4.3	5.4	5.2	2.7	2.6	2,839
PER CENT VANCOUVER POPULATION	47.3	2.2	1.0	38.1	5.9	1.7	1.8	-----

TABLE 1.10: The representation of different racial groups in arrest statistics (as measured by odds ratios) by type of offence, Vancouver Police Department, 2011 to 2020 (Single charge arrests only)

Offence type	White	Indigenous	Black	Asian	South Asian	Hispanic	Arab/ West Asian
Arrested for robbery	1.16	8.00	10.90	0.17	0.73	1.82	1.50
Arrested for weapons offences	0.97	12.64	6.50	0.23	0.81	1.65	1.78
Arrested for assault	1.02	11.64	5.10	0.24	0.83	2.06	2.05
Arrested for homicide/manslaughter	0.81	5.50	7.00	0.57	2.20	3.06	1.44
Arrested for sexual assault	0.82	8.59	10.10	0.27	1.54	2.88	4.61
Arrested for uttering threats	1.17	7.95	5.90	0.14	1.31	1.35	3.39
Arrested for theft	1.34	9.64	3.80	0.12	0.32	1.00	1.05
Arrested for break and enter	1.37	9.45	3.50	0.14	0.20	1.29	1.05
Arrested for fraud	1.24	5.32	4.30	0.34	0.97	1.35	2.39
Arrested for public intoxication	0.83	18.86	3.80	0.10	0.91	2.71	0.89
Arrested for drug possession	1.22	8.77	7.10	0.15	0.54	1.41	2.50
Arrested for drug trafficking	0.98	7.59	7.90	0.36	0.98	3.12	2.22
Arrested for mischief	1.27	12.32	3.40	0.06	0.32	1.76	1.11
Arrested for administration of justice charges	1.21	12.45	5.50	0.06	0.45	1.23	1.17
Arrested for breach of peace	1.00	11.77	5.60	0.08	1.54	2.47	1.94

Arrested on immigration offences	0.61	0.82	9.70	0.48	1.05	15.82	4.82
Held for other police service	0.87	5.05	7.90	0.37	1.03	8.35	3.22
Arrested for provincial offences	1.16	11.40	4.30	0.14	0.88	1.59	1.44

**TABLE 1.11: Per cent of arrests by race and type of police response,
Vancouver Police Department, 2011 to 2020**

Race of accused	% Vancouver population	% call for service arrests	% patrol (on-view) arrests	% all arrests
White	47.3	52.6	53.7	52.6
Indigenous	2.2	25.3	23.7	24.5
Black	1.0	5.1	5.8	5.3
Asian	38.1	5.7	5.1	5.4
South Asian	5.9	4.9	5.2	5.0
Arab/West Asian	1.8	3.1	3.2	3.1
Hispanic	1.7	3.4	3.4	3.4
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

TABLE 1.12: Per cent of arrests by offender race and police identification of substance use or mental health issues, Vancouver Police Department, 2011 to 2020

race of accused	% Vancouver population	% arrests, substance use noted	% arrests, mental health issue noted	% arrests, both substance use and mental health issue noted	% arrests, nothing noted	% all arrests
White	47.3	57.2	64.7	55.2	51.0	52.6
Indigenous	2.2	30.4	17.0	32.1	22.5	24.5
Black	1.0	3.7	5.5	4.7	5.9	5.3
Asian	38.1	2.5	4.2	2.4	6.7	5.4
South Asian	5.9	2.7	1.2	1.3	6.2	5.0
Arab/West Asian	1.8	1.4	4.9	1.3	3.8	3.1
Hispanic	1.7	2.1	2.5	3.0	3.9	3.4
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

**TABLE 1.13: Race of offender and victims,
Vancouver Police Department, 2011 to 2020**

Race of victims and accused	% Vancouver population	% offenders	% victims
White	47.3	52.6	53.9
Indigenous	2.2	24.5	13.5
Black	1.0	5.3	2.8
Asian	38.1	5.4	13.5
South Asian	5.9	5.0	8.4
Arab/West Asian	1.8	3.1	4.2
Hispanic	1.7	3.4	2.9
Other	2.0	0.6	0.7
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0

FIGURE 1.4: Percent of victims who report being victimized by an offender from a different racial group by victim race

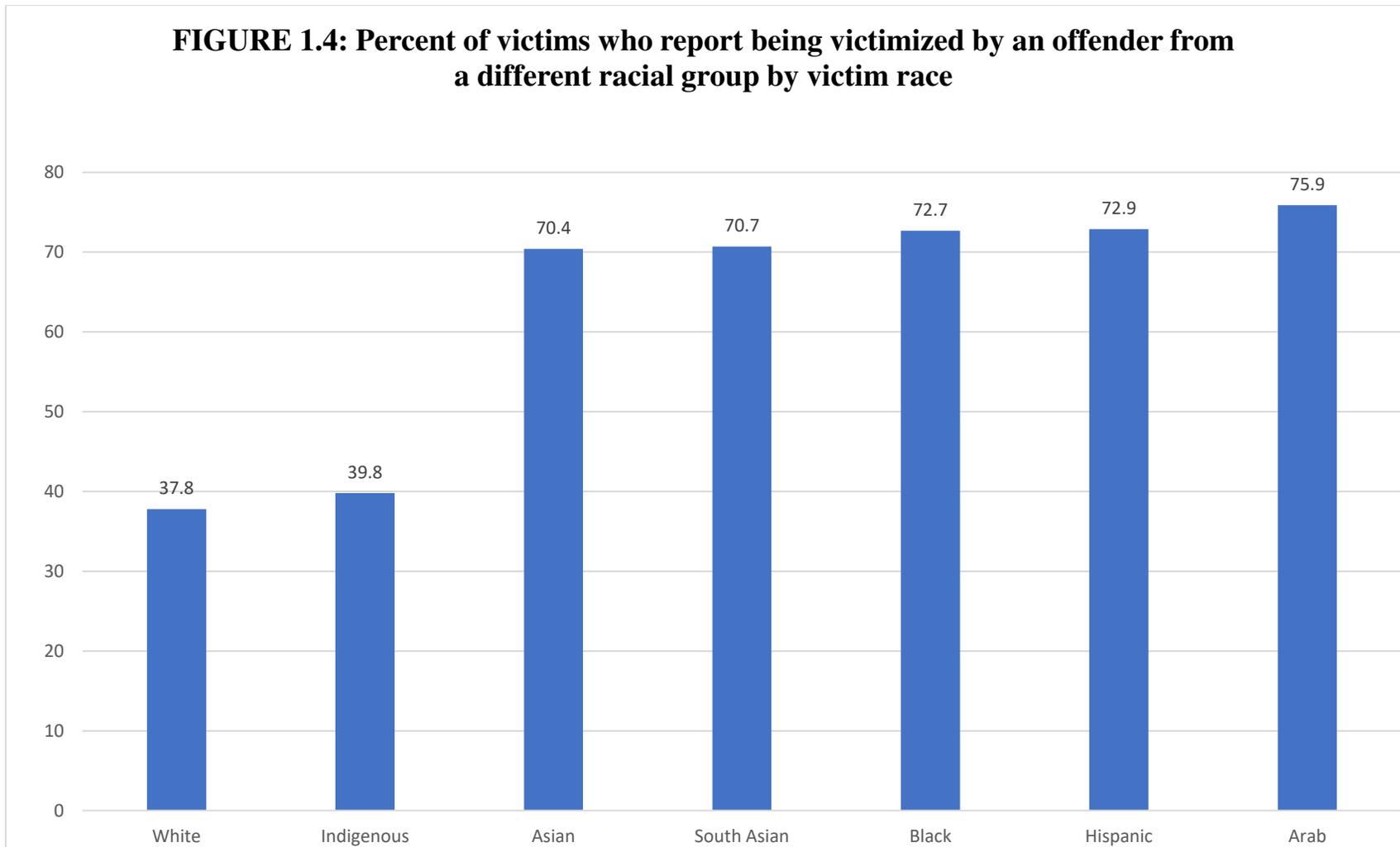


TABLE 1.14: Total mental health incidents by race of civilian subjects, Vancouver Police Department, January 1st, 2011 to December 31st, 2020

Racial group	Population estimate	Per cent of population	Number of mental health incidents	Per cent of mental health incidents	Odds ratio	Average annual mental health incident rate (per 100,000)
White/European	298,571	47.3	31,046	61.7	1.30	1,039.8
Indigenous	13,905	2.2	7,667	15.2	6.91	5,513.8
Black	6,345	1.0	1,914	3.8	3.80	3,016.5
South Asian	37,130	5.9	1,856	3.7	0.63	499.9
Asian	240,435	38.1	4,988	9.9	0.26	207.5
West Asian/Arab	11,595	1.8	1,519	3.0	1.67	1,310.0
Latin American	10,935	1.7	1,109	2.2	1.29	1,014.2
Other	12,570	2.0	214	0.4	0.20	170.2
TOTAL	631,486	100.0	50,313	100.0	1.00	793.35

TABLE 1.15: Total mental health cases by race of male civilian subjects, Vancouver Police Department, January 1st, 2011 to December 31st, 2020

Racial group	Estimated male population	Per cent of male population	Number of mental health incidents	Per cent of mental health incidents	Odds ratio	Average annual mental health incident rate (per 100,000)
White/European	152,455	49.4	19,719	64.3	1.30	1,293.4
Indigenous	6,650	2.1	4,098	13.4	6.09	6,162.4
Black	3,405	1.1	1,200	3.9	3.55	3,524.2
South Asian	18,875	6.1	1,256	4.1	0.67	665.4
Asian	109,170	35.5	2,439	8.0	0.23	223.4
West Asian/Arab	5,370	1.7	1,095	3.6	2.12	2,039.1
Latin American	6,275	2.0	718	2.3	1.15	1,114.2
Other	6,315	2.1	124	0.4	0.19	196.3
TOTAL	308,515	100.0	30,649	100.0	1.00	993.4

TABLE 1.16: Total mental health incidents by race of female civilian subjects, Vancouver Police Department, January 1st, 2011 to December 31st, 2020

Racial group	Estimated female population Female Population	Per cent of female population Female Population	Number of mental health incidents	Per cent of mental health incidents	Odds ratio	Average annual mental health incident rate (per 100,000)
White/European	146,120	45.2	11,301	57.6	1.27	773.4
Indigenous	7,255	2.2	3,566	18.2	8.27	4,915.2
Black	2,935	0.9	707	3.6	4.00	2,408.8
South Asian	18,260	5.8	599	3.1	0.53	328.0
Asian	131,270	40.6	2,547	13.0	0.32	194.0
West Asian/Arab	5,320	1.6	420	2.1	1.31	789.5
Latin American	5,560	1.7	391	2.0	1.18	703.2
Other	6,250	1.9	90	0.5	0.26	144.0
TOTAL	322,970	100.0	21,339	100.0	1.00	660.7

TABLE 1.17: Summary of mental health incident statistics by race and gender, Vancouver Police Department, January 1st, 2011 to December 31st, 2020

Race/gender group	Per cent population	Per cent of mental health incidents	Odds ratio	Average annual mental health incident rate (per 100,000)
Indigenous Male	1.1	8.1	7.36	6,162.4
Indigenous Female	1.1	7.1	6.45	4,915.2
Black Male	0.5	2.4	4.80	3,524.2
Black Female	0.5	1.4	2.80	2,408.8
South Asian Male	3.0	2.5	0.83	665.4
South Asian Female	2.9	1.2	0.41	328.0
Asian Male	17.3	4.8	0.28	223.4
Asian Female	20.8	0.8	0.04	194.0
Hispanic Male	1.0	1.4	1.40	1,114.2
Hispanic Female	0.9	0.8	0.89	703.2
West Asian Male	0.9	2.2	2.44	2,039.1
West Asian Female	0.8	0.8	1.00	789.5
White Male	24.1	39.2	1.63	1,293.4
White Female	23.1	22.5	0.97	773.4
Other Male	1.0	0.2	0.20	196.3

Other Female	1.0	0.2	0.20	144.0
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**Figure 1.5: Mental health incident rate (per 100,000) by race and gender
Vancouver Police Department, 2011 to 2020**

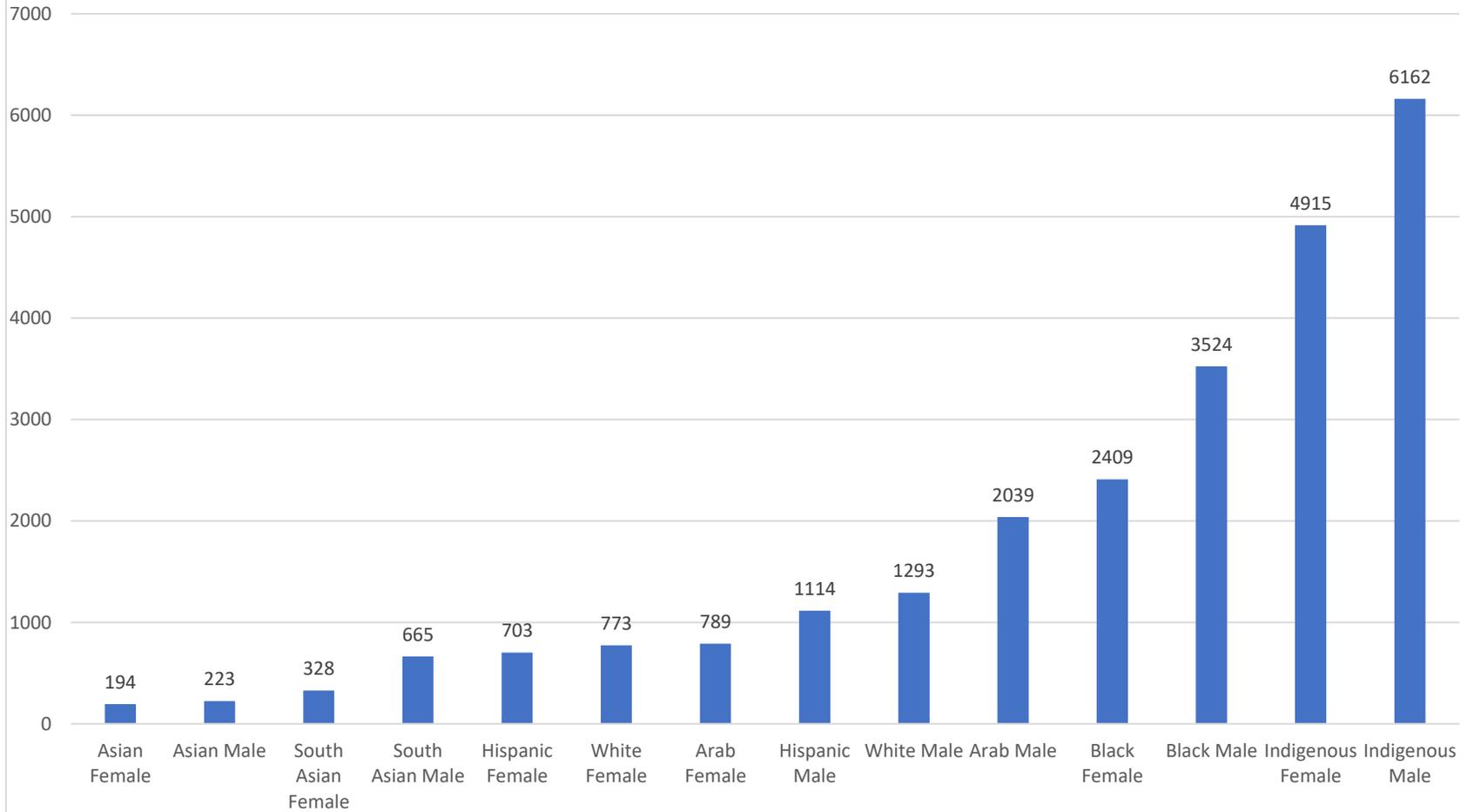


TABLE 1.18: Mental health incidents involving unique individuals by race of civilian subject, Vancouver Police Department, January 1st, 2011 to December 31st, 2020

Racial group	Population estimate	Per cent of population	Number of mental health incidents	Per cent of mental health incidents	Odds ratio	Average mental health incident rate (per 100,000)
White/European	298,571	47.3	12,418	59.4	1.26	415.9
Indigenous	13,905	2.2	2,552	12.2	5.55	1,835.3
Black	6,345	1.0	734	3.5	3.50	1,156.8
South Asian	37,130	5.9	942	4.5	0.76	253.7
Asian	240,435	38.1	2,820	13.5	0.35	117.3
West Asian/Arab	11,595	1.8	737	3.5	1.94	635.6
Latin American	10,935	1.7	712	3.4	2.00	651.1

Figure 1.6: Mean number of mental health incidents per unique individual by race of civilian, Vancouver Police Department, 2011 to 2020

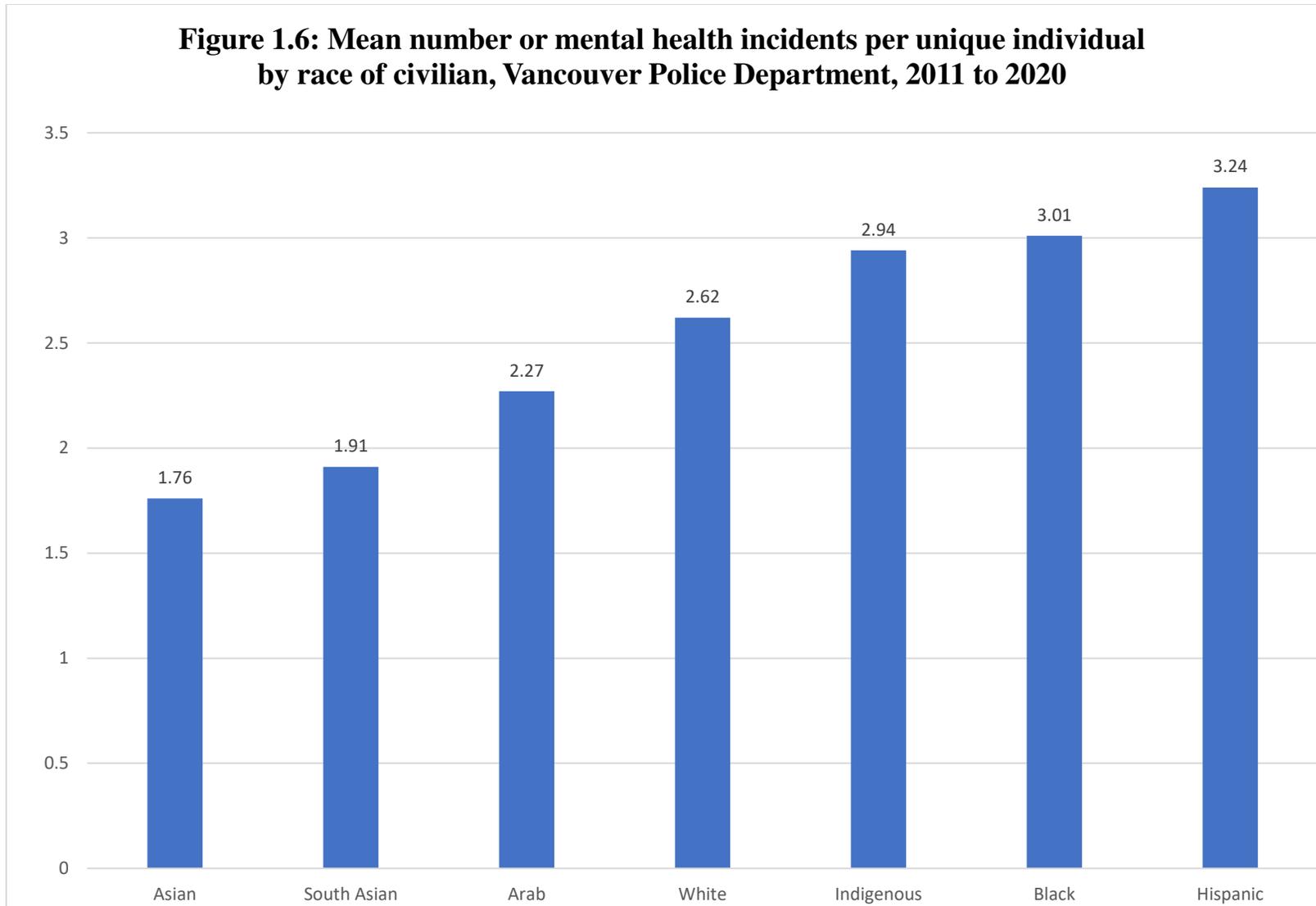


TABLE 1.19: Number and per cent of mental health incidents by police district, Vancouver Police Department, 2011 to 2020

Vancouver police district	Number of arrests	Per cent of arrests
District One	12,315	24.5
District Two	18,250	36.4
District Three	9,569	19.1
District Four	10,062	20.0
TOTAL	50,196	100.0

TABLE 1.20: Per cent of mental health incidents, by race of accused and police district, Vancouver Police Department, 2011 to 2020

Race of accused	% Vancouver population	% mental health incidents District One	% mental health incidents District Two	% mental health incidents District Three	% mental health incidents District Four	% mental health incidents
White	47.3	67.7	62.4	49.1	65.1	61.7
Indigenous	2.2	19.5	50.8	17.5	12.2	15.2
Black	1.0	4.0	4.2	3.6	3.0	3.8
Asian	38.1	5.9	5.9	18.3	13.7	9.9
South Asian	5.9	2.9	2.1	8.0	3.5	3.7
Arab/West Asian	1.8	4.5	2.2	3.0	2.6	3.0
Hispanic	1.7	2.5	1.7	2.8	2.2	2.2
Other	2.0	0.4	0.2	0.7	0.5	0.4
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

TABLE 1.21: Number and per cent of mental health incidents by reason for police response, Vancouver Police Department, 2011 to 2020

Reason for police response	Count	Per cent
Violent Crime Call	7,107	13.0
Property Crime Call	795	1.4
Assist Person Call	1,768	3.2
Disturbance Call	2,367	4.3
Disturbed Person Call	27,585	50.3
<i>Mental Health Act</i>	15,232	27.8
TOTAL	54,854	100.0

TABLE 1.22: Per cent of mental health incidents by race and reason for police response, Vancouver Police Department, 2011 to 2020

Race of accused	% Vancouver population	% violent crime calls	% property crime calls	% assist person calls	% disturbance calls	% disturbed person calls	% mental health calls	% mental health incidents
White	47.3	58.2	62.0	65.8	63.5	60.6	64.8	61.7
Indigenous	2.2	17.4	15.9	11.5	19.7	15.0	14.4	15.2
Black	1.0	5.1	3.6	3.5	4.5	3.0	4.7	3.8
Asian	38.1	8.3	9.4	12.1	3.3	11.7	8.2	9.9
South Asian	5.9	3.7	2.9	3.2	3.5	4.0	3.2	3.7
Arab/West Asian	1.8	4.4	3.6	1.9	3.6	2.8	2.7	3.0
Hispanic	1.7	2.6	2.4	1.6	1.9	2.4	1.8	2.2
Other	2.0	0.3	0.1	0.5	0.1	0.6	0.2	0.4
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

TABLE 1.23: Per cent of mental health incidents by race and type of police response, Vancouver Police Department, 2011 to 2020

Race of accused	% Vancouver population	% call for service incidents	% patrol (on-view) incidents	% all incidents
White	47.3	61.9	59.8	61.7
Indigenous	2.2	14.9	18.4	15.2
Black	1.0	3.8	4.0	3.8
Asian	38.1	10.0	8.8	9.9
South Asian	5.9	3.7	3.1	3.7
Arab/West Asian	1.8	3.0	3.3	3.0
Hispanic	1.7	2.2	2.2	2.2
Other	2.0	0.4	0.4	0.4
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

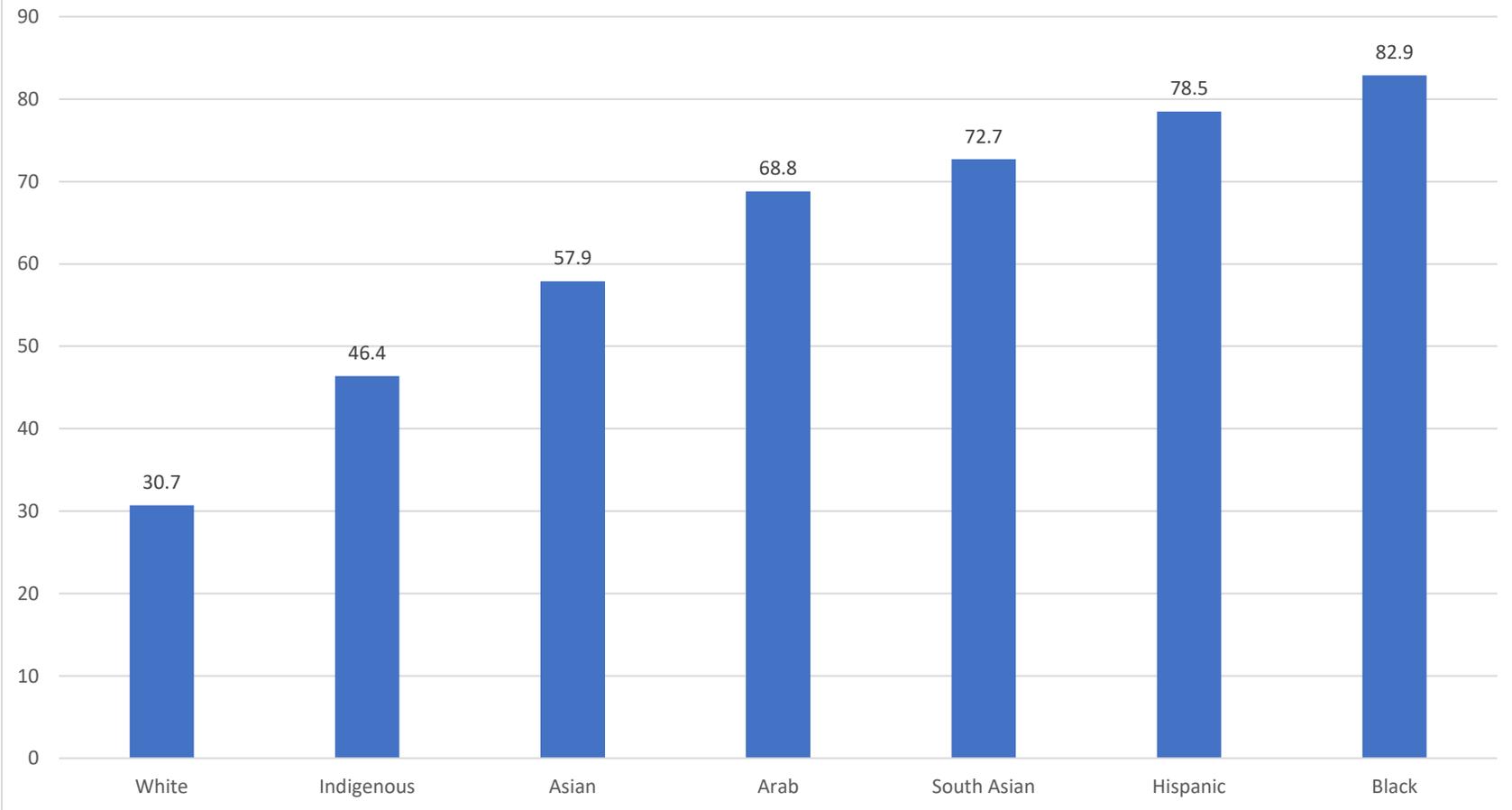
TABLE 1.24: Per cent of mental health incidents by race and whether substance use is noted by police, Vancouver Police Department, 2011 to 2020

Race of accused	% Vancouver population	% mental health incidents noting substance use	% mental health incidents not noting substance use	% all mental health incidents
White	47.3	62.1	61.6	61.7
Indigenous	2.2	24.2	12.4	15.2
Black	1.0	3.5	3.9	3.8
Asian	38.1	3.7	11.9	9.9
South Asian	5.9	2.5	4.1	3.7
Arab/West Asian	1.8	2.2	3.3	3.0
Hispanic	1.7	1.8	2.3	2.2
Other	2.0	0.1	0.5	0.4
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

TABLE 1.25: Race of subjects and victims in mental health incidents, Vancouver Police Department, 2011 to 2020

Race of accused	% Vancouver population	% subjects	% victims
White	47.3	61.7	65.3
Indigenous	2.2	15.2	6.3
Black	1.0	3.8	2.6
Asian	38.1	9.9	13.5
South Asian	5.9	3.7	6.6
Arab/West Asian	1.8	3.0	3.0
Hispanic	1.7	2.2	2.1
Other	2.0	0.4	0.6
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0

FIGURE 1.7: Percent of victims in mental health incidents who report being victimized by an offender from a different racial group by victim race



**TABLE 1.26: Total strip searches by race of accused,
Vancouver Police Department, August 18, 2012 to December 31st, 2020**

Racial group	Population estimate	Per cent of population	Number of strip searches	Per cent of strip searches	Odds ratio	Average annual strip search rate (per 100,000)
White/European	298,571	47.3	431	43.4	0.92	14.4
Indigenous	13,905	2.2	219	22.1	10.05	157.5
Black	6,345	1.0	121	12.2	12.20	190.7
South Asian	37,130	5.9	69	6.9	1.17	18.6
Asian	240,435	38.1	64	6.4	0.17	2.7
West Asian/Arab	11,595	1.8	45	4.5	2.50	38.1
Latin American	10,935	1.7	40	4.0	2.35	36.6
Other	12,570	2.0	4	0.4	0.20	3.2
TOTAL	631,486	100.0	993	100.0	1.00	15.6

**TABLE 1.27: Total strip searches by race of male accused,
Vancouver Police Department, August 18, 2012 to December 31st, 2020**

Racial group	Estimated male population	Per cent of male population	Number of strip searches	Per cent of strip searches	Odds ratio	Average annual strip search rate (per 100,000)
White/European	152,455	49.4	367	43.4	0.88	24.1
Indigenous	6,650	2.1	151	17.9	8.52	227.1
Black	3,405	1.1	115	13.6	12.36	337.7
South Asian	18,875	6.1	64	7.6	1.24	33.9
Asian	109,170	35.5	62	7.3	0.21	5.7
West Asian/Arab	5,370	1.7	44	5.2	3.06	81.9
Latin American	6,275	2.0	40	4.7	2.35	63.7
Other	6,315	2.1	2	0.2	0.09	3.2
TOTAL	308,515	100.0	845	100.0	1.00	27.4

**TABLE 1.28: Total strip searches by race of female accused,
Vancouver Police Department, August 18, 2012 to December 31st, 2020**

Racial group	Estimated female population	Per cent of female population	Number of strip searches	Per cent of strip searches	Odds ratio	Average annual strip search rate (per 100,000)
White/European	146,120	45.2	63	42.9	0.95	4.3
Indigenous	7,255	2.2	68	46.3	21.05	93.7
Black	2,935	0.9	6	4.1	4.55	20.4
South Asian	18,260	5.8	5	3.4	0.59	2.7
Asian	131,270	40.6	2	1.4	0.03	0.2
West Asian/Arab	5,320	1.6	1	0.7	0.44	1.9
Latin American	5,560	1.7	0	0.0	0.00	0.0
Other	6,250	1.9	2	1.4	0.74	3.2
TOTAL	322,970	100.0	147	100.0	1.00	4.5

TABLE 1.29: Summary of strip search statistics by race and gender, Vancouver Police Department, January 1st, 2012 to December 31st, 2020

Race/gender group	Per cent population	Per cent of strip searches	Odds ratio	Average annual strip search rate (per 100,000)
Indigenous Male	1.1	15.2	13.9	227.1
Indigenous Female	1.1	6.9	6.27	93.7
Black Male	0.5	11.6	23.2	337.7
Black Female	0.5	0.6	1.2	20.4
South Asian Male	3.0	6.4	2.13	33.9
South Asian Female	2.9	0.5	0.17	2.7
Asian Male	17.3	6.2	0.36	5.7
Asian Female	20.8	0.2	0.01	0.2
Hispanic Male	1.0	4.0	4.00	63.7
Hispanic Female	0.9	0.0	0.00	0.0
West Asian Male	0.9	4.4	4.89	81.9
West Asian Female	0.8	0.1	0.13	1.9
White Male	24.1	36.9	1.53	24.1
White Female	23.1	6.3	0.27	4.3
Other Male	1.0	0.2	0.20	3.2
Other Female	1.0	0.2	0.20	3.2

**Figure 1.8: Average annual strip search rate (per 100,000) by race and gender
Vancouver Police Department, 2011 to 2020**

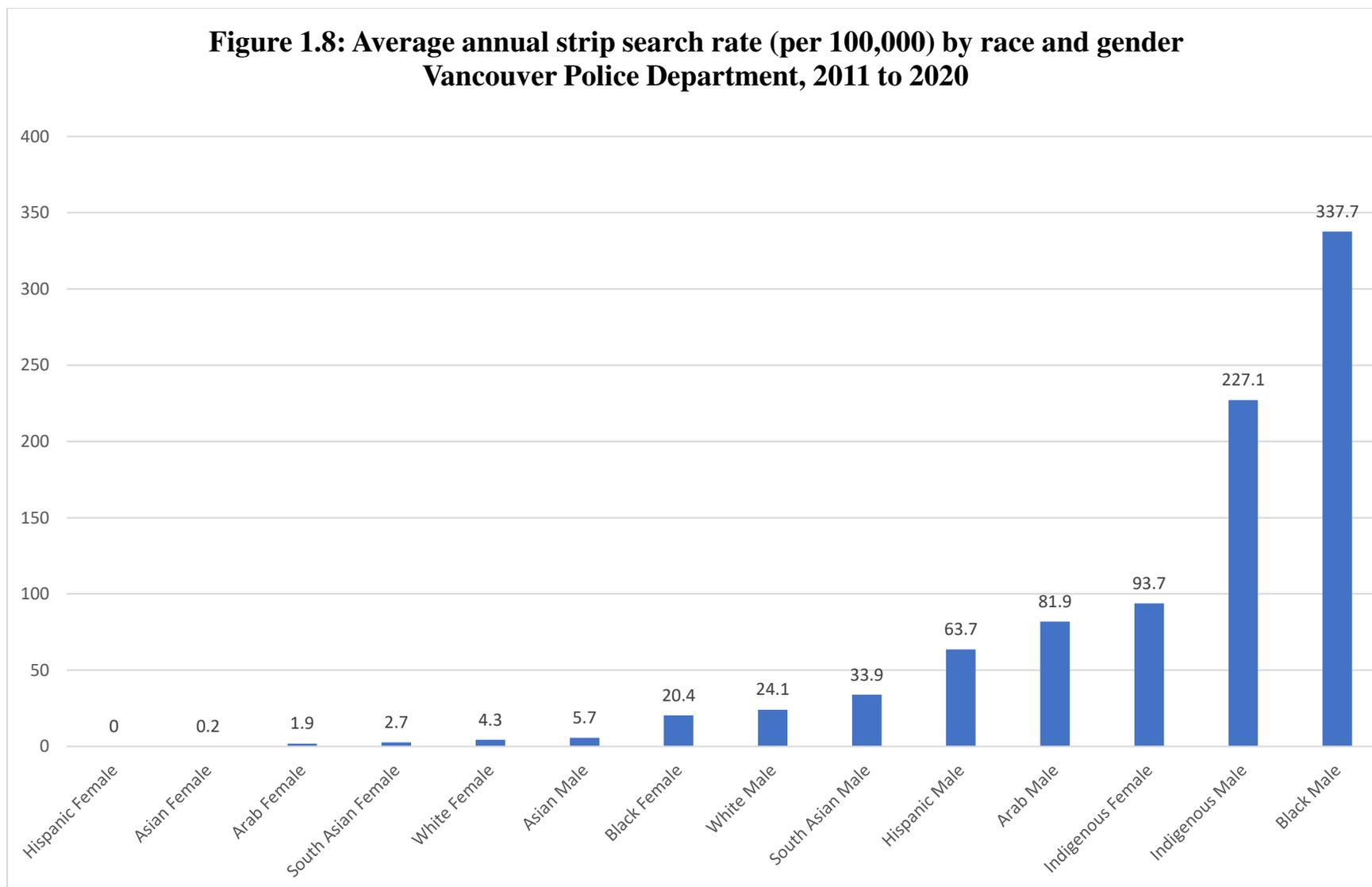


TABLE 1.30: Strip search incidents involving unique individuals by race of civilian subject, Vancouver Police Department, January 1st, 2012 to December 31st, 2020

Racial group	Population estimate	Per cent of population	Number of strip searches	Per cent of strip searches	Odds ratio	Average strip search rate (per 100,000)
White/European	298,571	47.3	385	44.3	0.94	12.9
Indigenous	13,905	2.2	189	21.7	9.86	135.9
Black	6,345	1.0	98	11.3	11.30	154.5
South Asian	37,130	5.9	59	6.8	1.15	15.9
Asian	240,435	38.1	59	6.8	0.18	2.5
West Asian/Arab	11,595	1.8	37	4.3	2.39	31.9
Latin American	10,935	1.7	40	4.6	2.70	36.6
Other	12,570	2.0	2	0.2	0.10	1.6
TOTAL	631,486	100.0	869	100.0	1.00	13.8

**TABLE 1.31: Number and per cent of strip searches by police district,
Vancouver Police Department, 2012 to 2020**

Vancouver police district	Number of strip searches	per cent of strip searches
District One	274	26.7
District Two	504	49.1
District Three	154	15.0
District Four	95	9.3
TOTAL	1,027	100.0

**TABLE 1.32: Per cent of strip searches by race of accused and police district,
Vancouver Police Department, 2012 to 2020**

Race of accused	% Vancouver population	% strip searches District One	% strip searches District Two	% strip searches District Three	% strip searches District Four	% all strip searches
White	47.3	47.7	42.0	38.4	48.3	43.4
Indigenous	2.2	15.5	28.4	19.2	10.1	22.1
Black	1.0	7.6	15.0	11.3	11.2	12.2
Asian	38.1	7.6	3.5	11.9	10.1	6.9
South Asian	5.9	10.2	3.1	10.6	11.2	6.4
Arab/West Asian	1.8	7.2	3.7	2.6	4.5	4.5
Hispanic	1.7	3.4	4.3	4.0	4.5	4.0
Other	2.0	0.8	0.0	1.3	0.0	0.4
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

TABLE 1.33: Number and per cent of strip searches by type of offence, Vancouver Police Department, 2012 to 2020

Type of offence	Number of strip searches	Per cent of strip searches
Homicide-related	39	3.8
Violent Crime	414	40.6
Property Crime	184	18.0
Drug Possession	88	8.6
Drug Trafficking	194	19.0
Other Crime	101	9.9
TOTAL	1,020	100.0

**TABLE 1.34: Per cent of strip searches by race and type of offence,
Vancouver Police Department, 2012 to 2020**

Race of accused	% Vancouver population	% strip searches homicide	% strip searches violent crime	% strip searches property crime	% strip searches drug possession	% strip searches drug trafficking	% strip searches other	% all strip searches
White	47.3	35.1	38.7	50.6	59.3	38.9	46.9	43.4
Indigenous	2.2	10.8	25.3	26.7	9.3	16.8	26.0	22.1
Black	1.0	16.2	11.9	9.4	12.8	15.8	8.3	12.2
Asian	38.1	10.8	6.3	4.4	4.4	8.9	4.2	6.9
South Asian	5.9	21.6	7.6	2.2	4.7	7.9	8.3	6.4
Arab/West Asian	1.8	0.0	5.1	2.2	5.8	6.3	3.1	4.5
Hispanic	1.7	5.4	4.6	3.9	1.2	5.3	2.1	4.0
Other	2.0	0.0	0.5	0.6	0.0	0.0	1.0	0.4
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

**TABLE 1.35: Per cent arrests and per cent strip searches by race of civilian subject,
Vancouver Police Department, January 1st, 2012 to December 31st, 2020**

Racial group	Per cent of population	Per cent of arrests	Per cent of strip searches	Adjusted odds ratio	Per cent of arrests that resulted in a strip search
White/European	47.3	52.6	43.4	0.83	0.72
Indigenous	2.2	24.5	22.1	0.90	0.78
Black	1.0	5.3	12.2	2.30	2.01
South Asian	5.9	5.0	6.9	1.38	1.20
Asian	38.1	5.4	6.4	1.18	1.04
West Asian/Arab	1.8	3.1	4.5	1.45	1.27
Latin American	1.7	3.4	4.0	1.18	1.03
Other	2.0	0.6	0.4	0.67	0.55
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0	1.00	0.87

Surrey data: Racial disparities in Surrey RCMP statistics

Arrest (chargeable incident) statistics

As described in the methodology section, throughout this report the term “arrest” is used to describe an RCMP “chargeable incident.” A chargeable incident refers to an interaction in which the police: 1) have confirmed that one or more offences has been committed; and 2) have identified a person who could be charged with an offence (i.e., a suspect or accused). This does not mean that charges were ultimately recommended against the offender; only that a person is “chargeable.” According to RCMP sources, the police often use their discretion and decide not to recommend a charge against the suspects involved in these cases. It must also be stressed that these incidents involve both cases in which the RCMP took the alleged offender into police custody, as well as cases in which the accused person was released at the scene. As discussed above, we cannot determine with the current data whether an accused person was taken into custody or not. Finally, it should be stressed that these incidents do not include cases in which an offence was reported by the public, but not confirmed by the police. The data also does not include cases in which an offence was confirmed by the police, but the offender was not identified.

It must be stressed that the term “arrest” and “chargeable incident” are used interchangeably throughout the report. It must also be stressed that the definition of arrest used to describe the Vancouver Police Department data differs significantly from the definition used to describe data from the three RCMP detachments (Surrey, Prince George and Duncan/North Cowichan) and data from the Nelson Police Department. Data from the VPD only includes cases in which the accused person was taken into custody by the police and taken to jail. By contrast, the RCMP/NPD data includes all incidents in which a person could be charged with an offence. It includes cases in which accused persons were taken into custody and cases in which accused persons were temporarily detained by the police and released at the scene.

The RCMP provided BCOHRC with data on 41,894 arrest incidents that took place between 2019 and 2020. Offender race was available for 40,618 cases (97.0 per cent of the sample). It is these 40,618 cases that are the focus of the current analysis.

The data indicate that both Indigenous and Black people are significantly over-represented in Surrey RCMP arrest data (see Table 2.1). Although Indigenous people represent only 2.6 per cent of Surrey’s population, they were involved in 6.9 per cent of all arrests captured by the RCMP data (Table 2.1). In other words, Indigenous people are 2.7 times more likely to appear in RCMP arrest data than their presence in the general population would predict. Furthermore, the average annual Indigenous arrest rate (10,427 per 100,000) is 2.2 times greater than the White rate (4,705 per 100,000) and 2.7 times greater than the city’s average (3,922 per 100,000).

Although Black people represent only 1.8 per cent of Surrey’s population, they were involved in 5.0 per cent of all arrests captured by the RCMP data (Table 2.1). In other words, Black people were 2.8 times more likely to appear in the RCMP arrest data than their presence in the general population would predict. Furthermore, the average annual Black arrest rate (10,666 per 100,000) is 2.3 times greater than the White rate (4,705 per 100,000) and 2.7 times greater than the city’s average (3,922 per 100,000).

People of both Hispanic (odds ratio=1.79) and West Asian/Arab descent (odds ratio=1.89) are also significantly over-represented in Surrey arrest data. By contrast, both Asian and South Asian people are significantly under-represented (see Table 2.1). Indeed, the Black and Indigenous arrest rates are approximately ten times greater than the Asian arrest rate and three times greater than the South Asian rate.

The presence of White people in Surrey RCMP arrests approximates their presence in the general population (odds ratio=1.20).

Gender, race, and arrests

Men were identified as the offenders in 80.6 per cent of all arrests documented by the Surrey RCMP between 2019 and 2020. Black and Indigenous men are grossly over-represented in Surrey arrest statistics (see Tables 2.2 through 2.4).

Although they represent only 1.2 per cent of Surrey's population, Indigenous males were involved in 4.6 per cent of all arrests/chargeable incidents conducted by the RCMP between 2019 and 2020. In other words, Indigenous males are 3.8 times more likely to be arrested than their presence in the general Surrey population. The average annual arrest rate for Indigenous males (14,745 per 100,000) is two times greater than the rate for White males (7,265 per 100,000) and 3.8 times greater than the city average (3,921 per 100,000).

Although they represent only 0.9 per cent of Surrey's population, Black males were involved in 4.2 per cent of all arrests conducted by the Surrey RCMP between 2019 and 2020. In other words, Black males are 4.7 times more likely to be arrested than their presence in the general population. The average annual arrest rate for Black males (17,410 per 100,000) is 2.4 times greater than the rate for White males (7,265 per 100,000) and 4.4 times greater than the city average (3,921 per 100,000).

According to the data, Hispanic (odds ratio=3.14) and West Asian males (odds ratio=3.22) are also grossly over-represented in Surrey RCMP arrests (see Table 2.4). White males (odds ratio=1.85) and South Asian males (odds ratio=1.61) are also significantly over-represented in Surrey RCMP arrests—although much less over-represented than Black or Indigenous males. By contrast, Asian males are significantly under-represented in Surrey RCMP arrests. Although they represent 8.8 per cent of the general population, Asian males were involved in only 3.2 per cent of arrests between 2019 and 2020 (odds ratio=0.36). The White male arrest rate (7,265 per 100,000) is five times greater than the arrest rate for Asian males (1,442 per 100,000). Furthermore, the Black male arrest rate is 12 times greater than the Asian male rate and Indigenous male arrest rate is ten times greater.

Indigenous women are also significantly over-represented in Surrey RCMP arrest statistics (odds ratio=1.61). Women from all other racial groups are significantly under-represented. The Indigenous female arrest rate (6,542 per 100,000) is 3.1 times greater than the rate for White females (2,129 per 100,000) and 15 times greater than the rate for Asian females (423 per 100,000).

The impact of unique individuals

It is important to examine the impact that unique individuals may have on observed racial disparities in Surrey RCMP arrest statistics. Individuals who have been subjected to multiple arrests could drive up the numbers for the racial group to which they belong. Fortunately, the data provided by the RCMP assigned a unique person identification number (PIN) to individuals involved in each arrest. This allowed the research team to identify individuals involved in more than one arrest.

Our results indicate that 23,733 unique individuals were responsible for 40,618 arrests for which there is racial data. This works out to an average of 1.7 arrests per unique individual in the Surrey RCMP arrest dataset. The number of arrests, per unique individual, ranges from 1 to 194 separate incidents. It must be stressed that 76.4 per cent of the unique individuals in the Surrey arrest dataset were involved in only one arrest incident. An additional 12.1 per cent of the sample were involved in only two incidents. Only 11.5 per cent of the unique individuals in the Surrey arrest dataset were involved in three or more arrest incidents during the two-year study period.

Table 2.5 re-calculates arrest-based racial disparities counting unique individuals only once. This strategy eliminates the impact of statistical outliers who have been involved in multiple enforcement incidents. The results reveal that controlling for the impact of unique individuals somewhat reduces observed racial disparities. For example, the proportion of Surrey RCMP arrest incidents involving Indigenous people drops slightly from 6.9 per cent to 5.3 per cent after controlling for individuals who were arrested on multiple occasions. Similarly, the proportion of arrests involving Black people drops from 5.0 per cent to 4.4 per cent. After counting unique individuals only once, the odds ratio for Indigenous people drops from 2.65 to 2.04. Similarly, the odds ratio for Black people drops from 2.78 to 2.44. Nonetheless, after controlling for the impact of unique individuals, significant racial disparities persist in Surrey RCMP arrest statistics. For example, the Black arrest rate (5,489 per 100,000) is still 2.2 times greater than the White rate (2,534 per 100,000). Similarly, the Indigenous arrest rate (4,681 per 100,000) is still 1.9 times greater than the White rate (2,534 per 100,000).

Hispanic and West Asian people also remain significantly over-represented in Surrey RCMP arrest statistics. The representation of White and South Asian people approximates their presence in the general Surrey population. By contrast, after controlling for the impact of unique individuals, Asian people remain significantly under-represented in Surrey RCMP arrest statistics.

Figure 2.2 presents the mean number of arrest incidents, per unique individual, in the Surrey RCMP arrest dataset. The results reveal that Indigenous people averaged 2.23 arrests per unique individual, followed by Black individuals (mean=1.94 arrests), and White individuals (mean=1.86 arrests). Asian individuals averaged only 1.27 arrests.

Type of offence

BCOHRC's research team requested information about all criminal charges associated with each Surrey arrest incident. The RCMP were able to provide information on the four most serious charges associated with each arrest incident. Table 2.6 compares the representation of each racial group in the general Surrey population with their presence within 16 different offence categories.

The results indicate that both Indigenous and Black people are over-represented in Surrey RCMP arrest statistics involving a wide array of offences. For example, although they represent only 2.6 per cent of Surrey's population, Indigenous people were documented as the accused person in 11.1 per cent of theft charges, 10.4 per cent of drug possession charges, 10.3 per cent of administration of justice charges (i.e., breach of parole conditions, failure to appear, etc.), 10.0 per cent of charges related to public intoxication, and 9.6 per cent of charges related to major violence (i.e., robbery, aggravated assault, homicide/manslaughter, firearms-related offences, etc.). Similarly, although they represent only 1.8 per cent of Surrey's general population, Black people were documented as the suspect in 6.9 per cent of sex offences, 6.8 per cent of disturbance-related charges, 6.6 per cent of charges for public intoxication, and 6.2 per cent of cases related to major violence.

Table 2.7 provides the odds ratios for each of the sixteen offence types, by the race of the offender. Please recall that, if a group has an odds ratio of 3.00 or greater, we consider them to be "grossly" over-represented in arrest statistics. If a group has an odds ratio between 1.50 and 3.00, we consider them to be "significantly" over-represented.

The results indicate that Indigenous people are grossly over-represented in ten of the sixteen offence categories including public intoxication offences (odds ratio=3.85), administration of justice charges (odds ratio=3.96), major violent crime (odds ratio=3.69), drug possession (odds ratio=4.00), and mischief (odds ratio=3.31). Indigenous people are also significantly over-represented in an additional four charge categories: minor violence, break and enter, fraud, and drug trafficking/distribution. By contrast, Indigenous people are under-represented in only one offence category: driving-related charges (odds ratio=0.92).

The results also indicate that Black people are grossly over-represented in nine of the sixteen offence categories captured by the Surrey arrest data, including minor violence (odds ratio=3.00), major violence (odds ratio=3.44), administration of justice charges (odds ratio=3.44), mischief (odds ratio=3.28), and causing a disturbance (odds ratio=3.78). Black people are also significantly over-represented in seven additional offence categories including drug possession, drug trafficking, theft, and driving under the influence (see Table 2.7).

By contrast, Asian people are significantly under-represented in all sixteen offence categories (see Table 2.7). South Asians are significantly under-represented in nine of the sixteen offence categories including major violence, theft, drug possession and administration of justice charges. Their representation in other offence categories approximates their proportion of the general population. In most cases, the representation of White people approximates their representation in the general population. However, White people are significantly over-represented in six of the sixteen offence categories including fraud, theft, break and enter and drug possession.

Arrest clearance or outcome

The Surrey RCMP provided information on the outcome or “clearance” of each arrest incident. Seven clearance categories were coded: 1) CCJS non-reportable (an occurrence that is not reportable to Stats Canada—usually because it doesn’t involve a violation of law); 2) charges laid by the Crown; 3) charges recommended by police but declined by the Crown; 4) victim withdrew complaint; 5) departmental discretion; 6) alternative measures; and 7) other. According to the RCMP, “departmental discretion” cases include incidents in which charges could have been recommended, but the police themselves decided to drop the charges or avoid the charging process. The “other” category includes cases that are still under investigation.

Table 2.8 reveals that half of all Surrey RCMP arrests (50.3 per cent) resulted in a criminal charge being recommended by the police and confirmed or laid by the Crown. In 3.7 per cent of arrest incidents, charges were recommended by the RCMP, but dropped or withdrawn by the Crown. A third of incidents (33.8 per cent) were cleared by departmental discretion and 7.9 per cent resulted in the complaint being dropped by the victim.

Table 2.9 reveals that both Black and Indigenous people are significantly over-represented in all clearance categories including incidents that resulted in a charge being laid by the Crown. For example, although Black people represent only 1.8 per cent of the Surrey population, they were involved in 4.8 per cent of all arrests that resulted in a formal charge (odds ratio=2.67), 6.0 per cent of cases in which charges were dropped by the Crown (odds ratio=3.33), and 5.0 per cent of cases that were cleared by departmental discretion (odds ratio=2.78).

Similarly, Indigenous people represent only 2.6 per cent of the general population but were involved in 5.3 per cent of all arrests that resulted in a formal charge (odds ratio=2.04), 8.6 per cent of cases in which charges were dropped by the Crown (odds ratio=3.31), and 9.1 per cent of cases that were cleared by departmental discretion.

It is important to note that both Black and Indigenous people are even more over-represented in arrests that were cleared by departmental discretion than cases that resulted in a charge. It is somewhat challenging to interpret this finding. On the one hand, it could be argued that Black and Indigenous people are more likely to be treated leniently by the police. In other words, the police could have recommended a charge in these cases but decided to let the offender off without further repercussions. Critics, however, might argue that these cases represent unnecessary arrests. In other words, these are “low quality” arrests involving weak evidence and little chance of conviction. Thus, the police decided to end the charging process before the case could be reviewed by the Crown. It is also important to note that Black and Indigenous people are highly over-represented in arrest incidents in which charges were recommended by the police but rejected by the Crown. Once again, is this evidence of Crown leniency with respect to Black and Indigenous offenders, or evidence that Black and Indigenous people are more likely to be subject to low quality arrests with little chance of conviction. Clear answers are not possible with the current data—but these issues should be flagged for further investigation.

Both Hispanic and West Asian people are slightly over-represented in all cases outcomes. The representation of White and South Asian people—in all clearance categories—approximates

their presence in the general Surrey population. By contrast, Asians are significantly under-represented across all case outcomes (see Table 2.9).

Identification of mental health and substance use issues

The Surrey RCMP arrest data also indicate whether, according to the police, the offender had a substance use or mental health issue at the time of arrest (see Table 2.10). The results indicate that 14.6 per cent of offenders were flagged for a problem with substance use. Only 1.0 per cent were flagged for a possible mental health issue and an additional 1.3 per cent were cited for a possible issue with both mental health and substance use. The majority of Surrey RCMP arrests (83.0 per cent) did not identify either a substance use or mental health issue.

The results indicate that Indigenous people are significantly over-represented in arrests involving a possible substance use problem or mental health issue (see Table 2.11). Although Indigenous people represent 2.6 per cent of Surrey's population, they were involved in 11.9 per cent of arrests involving an alleged substance use issue (odds ratio=4.58), 12.6 per cent of cases involving a suspected mental health issue (odds ratio=4.85) and 23.7 per cent of cases in which both mental health and substance use issues were flagged (odds ratio=9.11).

Black people are also over-represented in cases involving either a substance use or mental health issue (see Table 2.12). Although they represent 1.8 per cent of Surrey's population, they were involved in 5.6 per cent of arrest incidents involving an alleged substance use problem (odds ratio=3.11) and 8.4 per cent of cases involving a suspected mental health issue (odds ratio=4.66).

White people are also over-represented in arrest incidents that involve possible issues with either substance use or mental health. However, their level of over-representation is far less than that for Indigenous and Black people. Although they represent 39.6 per cent of Surrey's population, they were involved in 57.9 per cent of arrest incidents in which a possible substance use problem was noted (odds ratio=1.46), 67.1 per cent of incidents in which a mental health problem was noted (odds ratio=1.69), and 61.2 per cent of cases in which problems with both mental health and substance uses were noted (odds ratio=1.55).

Both Hispanic and Arab/West Asian people are also slightly over-represented in Surrey arrest incidents that involve suspected issues with addition and/or mental health. By contrast, both Asian and South Asian people are significantly under-represented in such arrest cases. For example, Asian people represent 18.7 per cent of Surrey's resident population, 4.9 per cent of arrests that do not involve mental health or additions issues (odds ratio=0.26), 1.1 per cent of arrests that involve a suspected substance uses issue (odds ratio=0.05), and 1.2 per cent of arrests that involve a suspected mental health problem (0.06).

Arrests involving a mental health apprehension

The data indicate that only 160 of the 40,618 arrest incidents captured by the Surrey RCMP data (0.4 per cent) involved a mental health apprehension (see Table 2.12). However, the data also indicate that Indigenous people are particularly over-represented in this type of arrest incident. Although Indigenous people represent 2.6 per cent of Surrey's resident population, they account for 6.9 per cent of all RCMP arrests (odds ratio=2.65), and 13.1 per cent of arrests that involved

a mental health apprehension (odds ratio=5.04). Both Asian and South Asian people are even more under-represented in mental health apprehension cases than arrests that did not involve such an outcome (see Table 2.13).

Mental health incidents

In addition to arrests, BCOHRC’s research team requested data on all mental health incidents recorded by the Surrey RCMP over the past ten years. At this time, the RCMP were only able to provide BCOHRC with two years of data (2019 and 2020).

The RCMP provided data on 52,992 individuals who were involved in a “mental health-related” incident between 2019 and 2020. These individuals include 21,577 individuals (40.7 per cent of the sample) who were identified as the “subject” of the police interaction (i.e., subject, suspect, emotionally disturbed person, accused person, etc.). An additional 18,804 persons were identified as the “complainant” in these incidents (35.5 per cent), 894 were identified as “witnesses” (1.7 per cent) and 718 individuals were identified as “victims” (1.4 per cent). The role code for the final 10,988 individuals (20.7 per cent of the sample) was simply identified as “other.”

Conversations with RCMP officials revealed that the data, in its current state, cannot always identify the individual experiencing the mental health issue associated with the incident. A clear identification would involve a great deal of manual work that could not be completed within the study timeframe. Thus, in cases in which the police were responding to a crime or disturbance, the person with the mental health issue could be the offender, but could also be the victim, complainant, or witness. The RCMP caution, therefore, that an analysis of the race of people involved in mental health incidents must be interpreted with caution.

Fully recognizing data limitations, the analysis below focuses on the “subjects” associated with RCMP mental health incidents. Subjects include the following role codes associated with mental health incidents: subject, suspect, emotionally disturbed person (EDP), accused, and charged. The research team decided to focus on “subjects” for three reasons. First of all, Black and Indigenous people are more highly represented among the subjects in mental health cases than among complainants, witnesses, or victims. For example, Indigenous people represent 8.4 per cent of the subjects in Surrey RCMP mental health incidents, but only 4.2 per cent of complainants. Secondly, there is considerable evidence to suggest that, in the majority of cases, the subject role code in these incidents is, in fact, the same person experiencing a mental health issue. For example, in 63.8 per cent of all Surrey cases, the primary reason for the police response is listed as enforcement of the *Mental Health Act*. According to the RCMP, it is highly likely that the “subject” in all *Mental Health Act* cases is the same person experiencing the mental health issue associated with the case. Finally, we feel that it is important to examine the race of subjects involved in mental health incidents—even if they are not the person experiencing the mental health issue. After all, these “subjects” are the focus of the RCMP intervention.

The RCMP provided BCOHRC with data on 20,809 mental health incidents that included the race of civilian subjects (see Table 2.14). The data indicate that Indigenous people are grossly over-represented, as subjects, in Surrey RCMP mental health incidents. Although they represent

only 2.6 per cent of Surrey's general population, Indigenous people were identified as the subject in 8.4 per cent of mental health incidents documented by the Surrey RCMP between 2019 and 2020. In other words, Indigenous people were 3.2 times more likely to be involved in a mental health incident than their presence in the general population.

Indigenous people are even more involved in Surrey RCMP mental health incidents (odds ratio=3.23) than arrest incidents (odds ratio=2.65). The average annual mental health incident rate for Indigenous people (6,456 per 100,000) is 2.2 times greater than the White rate (2,909 per 100,000) and 3.2 times greater than the city average (2,009 per 100,000).

Black people are also significantly over-represented in mental health incidents involving the Surrey RCMP. Although they represent 1.8 per cent of Surrey's general population, they were involved in 4.0 per cent of mental health incidents documented by the RCMP between 2019 and 2020. In other words, Black people are 2.2 times more involved, as subjects, in mental health incidents than their presence in the general resident population would predict. However, Black people are less involved in Surrey RCMP mental health incidents (odds ratio=2.22) than Surrey RCMP arrest incidents (odds ratio=2.78). The Black mental health incident rate (4,416 per 100,000) is 52 per cent higher than the White rate (2,909 per 100,00) and 2.2 times greater than the city average (2,909 per 100,000).

Arab/West Asian people are the only other racial group that is significantly over-represented in mental health incidents (odds ratio=1.67). As with arrests, both Asian and South Asian people are significantly under-represented in Surrey RCMP mental health incidents (odds ratios of 0.35 and 0.57 respectively).

Gender, race, and mental health incidents

Men were identified as the subjects in 58.6 per cent of all mental health incidents documented by the Surrey RCMP between 2019 and 2020. However, women are more highly represented in Surrey mental health incidents (41.4 per cent) than arrest incidents (19.4 per cent).

Indigenous men and women are grossly over-represented in mental health incidents documented by the Surrey RCMP between 2019 and 2020 (see Tables 2.15 through 2.17). Although they represent only 1.2 per cent of Surrey's general population, Indigenous males were the subject in 3.9 per cent of all mental health incidents recorded by the RCMP during the study period. In other words, Indigenous males are 3.25 times more likely to be involved in a mental health incident than their presence in the general population would predict. The average annual mental health incident rate for Indigenous males (6,384 per 100,000) is 1.9 times greater than the rate for White males (3,309 per 100,000), and 3.2 times greater than the city average (2,009 per 100,000).

Although they represent only 1.4 per cent of Surrey's population, Indigenous women were identified as the subjects in 6.7 per cent of mental health incidents documented by the Surrey RCMP between 2019 and 2020. In other words, Indigenous females are 3.1 times more likely to be involved in mental health incident than their presence in the general population would predict. The mental health incident rate for Indigenous women (6,521 per 100,000) is 2.6 times greater than the rate for White women (2,506 per 100,000), 11.1 times greater than the rate for Asian

females (589 per 100,000), and 3.3 times greater than the city average (2,009 per 100,000). In fact, the mental health incident rate for Indigenous women is greater than the rate for Indigenous men and the rates for men and women from all other racial groups (see Figure 2.3 and Table 2.17).

Black men (odds ratio=2.89), Arab/West Asian males (odds ratio=2.22), Hispanic men (odds ratio=1.86), White men (odds ratio=1.65), and Black Women (odds ratio=1.55) are all significantly over-represented in Surrey RCMP mental health incidents. The representation of White women and Arab/West Asian women approximates their representation in the general Surrey population. Asian males, Asian females, South Asian males, South Asian females, and Hispanic females are all significantly under-represented in Surrey mental health incidents (odds ratios between 0.29 and 0.71).

The impact of unique individuals

As with arrests, it is important to examine the impact that unique individuals may have on observed racial disparities in Surrey RCMP mental health-related statistics. Individuals who have been subjected to multiple mental health incidents could drive up the numbers for the racial group to which they belong. Fortunately, the data provided by the RCMP assigned a unique person identification number (PIN) to individuals involved in each mental health incident. This allowed the research team to identify individuals involved in more than one mental health incident.

Our results indicate that 10,431 unique individuals were responsible for the 20,809 mental health incidents captured by the Surrey RCMP data. This works out to an average of 1.99 incidents per unique individual in the Surrey mental health dataset. The number of mental health incidents, per unique individual, ranges from 1 to 136 separate incidents. However, it must be stressed that 69.3 per cent of the unique individuals in the mental health dataset were involved in only one incident. An additional 14.8 per cent of the sample were involved in only two incidents. Only 9.8 per cent of the unique individuals in the Surrey RCMP mental health dataset were involved in three or more incidents during the two-year study period (2019-2020).

Table 2.18 recalculates mental health-based racial disparities counting unique individuals only once. This strategy eliminates the impact of statistical outliers who have been involved in multiple mental health incidents. The results reveal that controlling for the impact of unique individuals somewhat reduces—but does not eliminate—observed racial disparities. For example, the proportion of Surrey mental health incidents involving Indigenous people drops from 8.4 per cent to 6.7 per cent after controlling for individuals who were involved in multiple incidents. After counting unique individuals only once, the odds ratio for Indigenous people drops from 3.23 to 2.58. Similarly, the odds ratio for Black people drops from 2.22 to 2.05.

After controlling for the impact of unique individuals, the representation of Indigenous people, Black people, Arab/West Asian people, and Hispanic people—in mental health incidents documented by the RCMP—is still significantly higher than their representation in the general Surrey population (see Table 2.18). After controlling for the impact of unique individuals, people from Asian (odds ratio=0.39) and South Asian background (odds ratio=0.66) remain significantly under-represented.

Figure 2.4 presents the mean number of mental health incidents, per unique individual, in the Surrey RCMP mental health dataset. The results reveal that Indigenous people averaged 2.47 mental health incidents per unique individual in the dataset, followed by Black individuals (mean=2.17 incidents), White individuals (mean=2.07 incidents), and people from other racial minority backgrounds. These racial differences are statistically significant.

Reason for police response

BCOHRC's research team requested information about the cause or reason for each mental health incident. The RCMP were able to provide information on the reason for the police response and/or the four most serious offences associated with each mental health incident. This data was used to determine the factors or behaviours that contributed to the police response that led to the documentation of the mental health incident.

Six out of 10 incidents involved enforcement of the *Mental Health Act* (62.5 per cent). Approximately 12 per cent of all cases involved either a missing person investigation (6.4 per cent) or a Well-Being check (5.6 per cent). Most other cases involved either a general disturbance call (12.7 per cent) or an alleged criminal offence (8.5 per cent). In sum, three-quarters of all mental health incidents (74.5 per cent) involved either the enforcement of the *Mental Health Act*, a missing persons investigation, or a well-being check. This finding, in our opinion, increases confidence that, in most cases, the subject identified in these incidents is indeed the person linked to the mental health issue.

Tables 2.19 and 2.20 document the representation of different racial groups in fifteen categories that describe the reason for the police response. The results reveal that Indigenous people are grossly over-represented (as indicated by an odds ratio of 3.00 or greater) in nine of the eleven categories including missing persons investigations, enforcement of the *Mental Health Act*, disturbance calls, mischief, and administration of justice charges. Indigenous people are also significantly over-represented (as indicated by an odds ratio between 1.50 and 3.00) in the other six categories including well-being checks, major violence, and property-crime.

The results also reveal that Black people are grossly over-represented in four of the response categories including drug crime, administration of justice offences, disturbance calls, and mischief. Black people are significantly over-represented in all other response categories including well-being checks and enforcement of the *Mental Health Act*. White people are significantly over-represented in eight response categories including well-being checks, drug crime and major violence. Their representation in other categories does not surpass the 1.50 threshold. By contrast, both Asian and South Asian people are significantly under-represented in all fifteen response categories.

Incident outcome

Table 2.21 documents the extent to which mental health incidents resulted in either charges being laid against the subject or a mental health apprehension. The results suggest that the representation of subjects varies little by racial background. However, Black and Indigenous people are slightly more represented in cases that resulted in a charge recommendation than

cases that resulted in a mental health apprehension or were resolved in some other manner. For example, Black people represent 1.8 per cent of Surrey's population, 4.0 per cent of all mental health incidents, 4.1 per cent of cases that resulted in a mental health apprehension, and 6.0 per cent of cases that resulted in a charge recommendation.

Similarly, Indigenous people represent 2.6 per cent of the population, 8.4 per cent of all mental health incidents, 8.1 per cent of mental health apprehensions, and 9.2 per cent of incidents that resulted in a charge recommendation. Overall, the results suggest that Black and Indigenous subjects are significantly over-represented in all case outcome categories.

Identification of substance use issues

The Surrey data also indicate whether, according to the RCMP, the subject had a substance use issue at the time of the mental health incident (see Table 2.22). The results indicate that 14.4 per cent of subjects were flagged for a possible substance abuse issue. The results also indicate that Indigenous people are grossly over-represented in mental health incidents involving a possible substance abuse problem (see Table 2.23). Although Indigenous people represent 2.6 per cent of Surrey's general population, they were involved in 17.6 per cent of mental health incidents involving an alleged substance use issue (odds ratio=6.77). Black people (odds ratio=2.61) and White people (odds ratio=1.48) are also significantly over-represented in mental health issues involving possible substance use. By contrast, the representation of both Asian people (odds ratio=0.06) and South Asian people (odds ratio=0.42) are even less represented in mental health incidents involving possible substance use than mental health incidents that do not involve substance use.

Strip searches

In addition to arrests, BCOHRC's research team received data on all strip search incidents recorded by the Surrey RCMP for the past two years. According to the data, the Surrey RCMP conducted 83 strip searches between January 1, 2019 and December 31, 2020. An average of 41.5 strip searches per year over the two-year study period. It should be noted that the Surrey RCMP's documented strip search rate is significantly lower than many other Canadian services. This will be discussed further in the conclusion of the final report.

Sixty-two of the twenty strip searches (74.7 per cent) were conducted on male civilians. Twenty-one were conducted on women (25.3 per cent). Over half of the strip searches (53.0 per cent) conducted by the Surrey RCMP involved White civilians and 24.1 per cent involved people of South Asian descent. Further analysis reveals that Black people are the only group that are grossly over-represented in the Surrey RCMP strip searches. Although they represent only 1.8 per cent of the general population, they were involved in 8.4 per cent of all documented strip searches (odds ratio=4.67).

Hispanic people (odds ratio=2.57) and people of Arab/West Asian descent (odds ratio=2.00) are also significantly over-represented in Surrey RCMP strip searches (odds ratio=2.57). White people (odds ratio=1.34) and people of Indigenous descent (odds ratio=1.39) are only slight over-represented in the strip search statistics. As with both arrests and mental health incidents,

people of Asian and South Asian descent are significantly under-represented in Surrey RCMP strip searches (see Table 2.23).

Although census benchmarking demonstrates the impact of strip searches at the aggregate population level, it might be argued that racial disparities in strip searches should be calculated by comparing the proportion of the population who have been strip searched with the proportion of the population that has been arrested. Further analysis indicates that, once we control or benchmark for the arrested population, Black people are still significantly over-represented in Surrey strip search statistics. Although Black people represent 5.0 per cent of those arrested by the Surrey RCMP, they represent 8.4 per cent of those arrestees who were strip searched (odds ratio=1.68). By contrast, using the arrest benchmarking method, Indigenous people become under-represented in strip search incidents. Although they represent 6.9 per cent of those arrested, Indigenous people account for only 3.6 per cent of those strip searched by the Surrey RCMP (odds ratio=0.52). In sum, using arrest benchmarking, Black people are the only group that emerge as over-represented in Surrey RCMP strip search statistics.

Surrey tables and figures

**TABLE 2.1: Total arrests by race of accused,
Surrey RCMP, January 1st, 2019 to December 31st, 2020**

Racial group	Population estimate	Per cent of population	Number of arrests	Per cent of arrests	Odds ratio	Average annual arrest rate (per 100,000)
White/European	205,157	39.6	19,305	47.5	1.20	4,704.9
Indigenous	13,460	2.6	2,807	6.9	2.65	10,427.2
Black	9,455	1.8	2,017	5.0	2.78	10,666.3
South Asian	168,040	32.4	12,175	30.0	0.93	3,622.6
Asian	96,900	18.7	1,749	4.3	0.23	902.5
Hispanic	7,065	1.4	1,031	2.5	1.79	7,296.5
Arab/West Asian	9,485	1.8	1,367	3.4	1.89	7,206.1
Other	8,315	1.6	167	0.4	0.25	1,004.2
TOTAL	517,877	100.0	40,618	100.0	1.00	3,921.6

**TABLE 2.2: Total arrests by race of male accused,
Surrey RCMP, January 1st, 2019 to December 31st, 2020**

Racial group	Estimate of male population	Per cent of male population	Number of arrests	Per cent of arrests	Odds ratio	Average annual arrest rate (per 100,000)
White/European	102,885	40.1	14,949	45.7	1.14	7,264.9
Indigenous	6,375	2.5	1,880	5.7	2.28	14,745.1
Black	4,845	1.9	1,687	5.2	2.74	17,409.7
South Asian	84,335	32.9	10,702	32.7	0.99	6,344.9
Asian	45,565	17.8	1,314	4.0	0.22	1,441.9
Hispanic	3,395	1.3	892	2.7	2.08	13,137.0
Arab/West Asian	4,865	1.9	1,191	3.6	1.89	12,240.5
Other	4,135	1.6	119	0.4	0.25	1,438.9
TOTAL	256,400	100.0	32,734	100.0	1.00	6,383.4

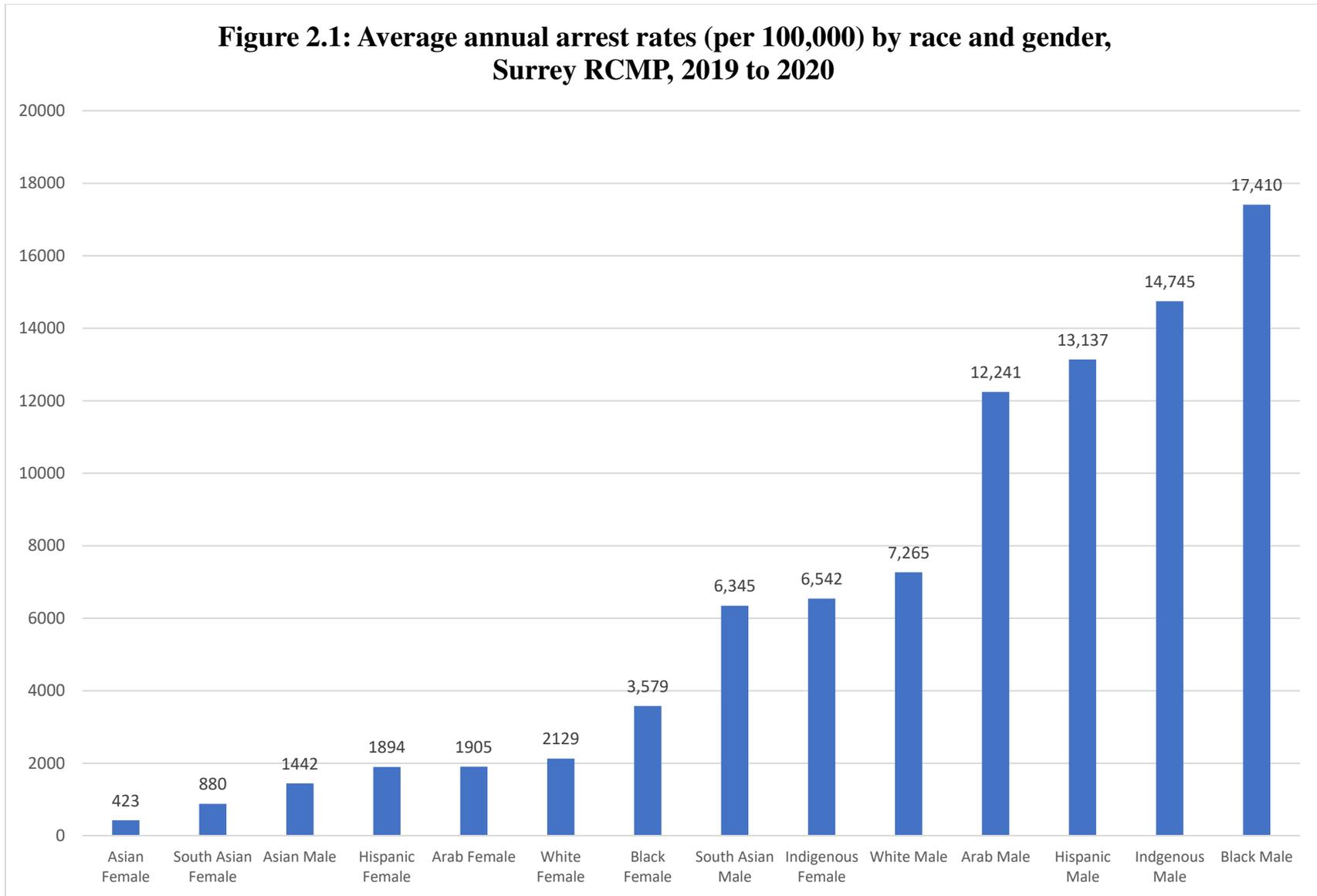
**TABLE 2.3: Total arrests by race of female accused,
Surrey RCMP, January 1st, 2019 to December 31st, 2020**

Racial group	Estimate of female population	Per cent of female population	Number of arrests	Per cent of arrests	Odds ratio	Average annual arrest rate (per 100,000)
White/European	102,280	39.1	4,354	55.2	1.41	2,128.5
Indigenous	7,085	2.7	927	11.8	4.37	6,542.0
Black	4,610	1.8	330	4.2	2.33	3,579.2
South Asian	83,705	32.0	1,473	18.7	0.58	879.9
Asian	51,335	19.6	434	5.5	0.28	422.7
Hispanic	3,670	1.4	139	1.8	1.29	1,893.7
Arab/West Asian	4,620	1.8	176	2.2	1.22	1,904.8
Other	4,180	1.6	48	0.6	0.37	574.2
TOTAL	261,485	100.0	7,881	100.0	1.00	1,507.0

**TABLE 2.4: Summary of arrest statistics by race and gender, Surrey RCMP,
January 1st, 2019 to December 31st, 2020**

Race/gender group	Per cent population	Per cent arrests	Odds ratio	Average annual arrest rate (per 100,000)
Indigenous Male	1.2	4.6	3.83	14,745.1
Indigenous Female	1.4	2.3	1.64	6,542.0
Black Male	0.9	4.2	4.67	17,409.7
Black Female	0.9	0.8	0.89	3,579.2
South Asian Male	16.3	26.3	1.61	6,344.9
South Asian Female	16.2	3.6	0.22	879.9
Asian Male	8.8	3.2	0.36	1,441.9
Asian Female	9.9	1.1	0.11	422.7
Hispanic Male	0.7	2.2	3.14	13,137.0
Hispanic Female	0.7	0.3	0.43	1,893.7
West Asian Male	0.9	2.9	3.22	12,240.5
West Asian Female	0.9	0.4	0.44	1,904.8
White Male	19.9	36.8	1.85	7,264.9
White Female	19.7	10.7	0.54	2,128.5
Other Male	0.8	0.3	0.37	1,438.9
Other Female	0.8	0.1	0.13	574.2

Figure 2.1: Average annual arrest rates (per 100,000) by race and gender, Surrey RCMP, 2019 to 2020



**TABLE 2.5: Arrests of unique individuals by race of accused,
Surrey RCMP, January 1st, 2019 to December 31st, 2020**

Racial group	Population estimate	Per cent of population	Number of Arrests	Per cent of arrests	Odds ratio	Average annual arrest rate (per 100,000)
White/European	205,157	39.6	10,399	43.8	1.11	2,534.4
Indigenous	13,460	2.6	1,260	5.3	2.04	4,680.5
Black	9,455	1.8	1,038	4.4	2.44	5,489.2
South Asian	168,040	32.4	7,948	33.5	1.03	2,364.9
Asian	96,900	18.7	1,380	5.8	0.31	712.1
Hispanic	7,065	1.4	654	2.8	2.00	4,628.5
Arab/West Asian	9,485	1.8	926	3.9	2.17	4,881.4
Other	8,315	1.6	128	0.5	0.31	769.7
TOTAL	517,877	100.0	23,733	100.0	1.00	2,291.4

Figure 2.2: Mean number of arrests per unique individual by race of accused, Surrey RCMP, 2019 to 2020

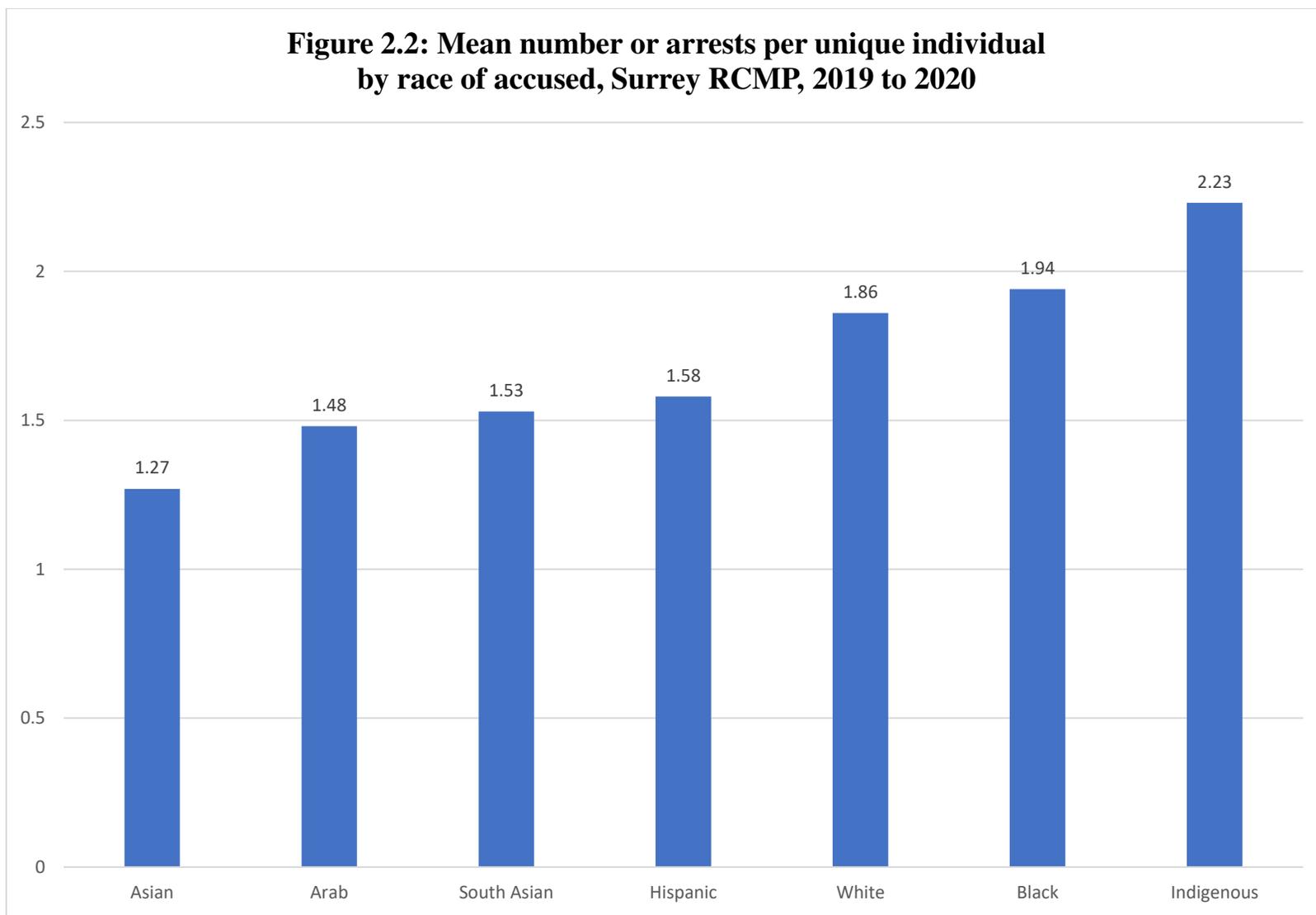


TABLE 2.6: Proportion of arrests involving people from different racial groups by type of offence, Surrey RCMP, 2019 to 2020

Offence type	White	Indigenous	Black	South Asian	Asian	Hispanic	Arab/West Asian	Number of cases
% arrested for minor violence	43.5	7.5	5.4	32.0	4.3	2.6	4.3	5,214
% arrested for major violence	49.1	9.6	6.2	24.2	3.3	2.8	4.3	2,184
% arrested for sex offences	41.3	8.1	6.9	29.5	6.0	3.4	4.1	598
% arrested for fraud	61.1	5.7	6.5	18.0	3.9	2.0	2.2	656
% arrested for theft	63.1	11.1	4.9	13.1	3.1	2.2	2.3	3,868
% arrested for break and enter	76.2	6.3	4.1	7.9	2.4	1.2	1.6	752
% arrested for other property crime	77.7	7.9	4.1	6.6	2.0	0.9	0.5	659
% arrested for drug possession	66.3	10.4	3.0	13.9	2.3	1.4	2.5	1,638
% arrested for drug trafficking/distribution	39.2	4.8	4.2	39.4	4.5	1.9	5.5	988
% arrested for administration of justice charges	52.5	10.3	6.2	22.8	2.8	2.2	3.0	8,130
% arrested for public intoxication	37.0	10.0	6.6	39.0	1.8	4.0	1.2	3,849
% arrested for mischief	59.3	8.6	5.9	17.5	3.7	1.6	2.8	1,369
% arrested for causing a disturbance	55.1	9.2	6.8	21.1	2.0	2.4	3.1	3,622
% arrested for driving-related charges	39.7	2.4	3.6	40.8	6.3	2.6	4.0	15,128
% arrested for driving under the influence	42.6	2.8	3.6	40.1	4.5	3.7	2.3	3,686

% arrested for other violations	48.9	8.2	5.9	26.5	3.9	2.8	3.3	8,669
PER CENT SURREY POPULATION	39.6	2.6	1.8	32.4	18.7	1.4	1.8	517,877

TABLE 2.7: The representation of different racial groups in arrest statistics (as measured by odds ratios), by type of offence, Surrey RCMP, 2019 to 2020

Offence type	White	Indigenous	Black	South Asian	Asian	Hispanic	Arab/West Asian
Arrested for minor violence	1.10	2.89	3.00	0.99	0.23	1.86	2.39
Arrested for major violence	1.24	3.69	3.44	0.75	0.18	2.00	2.39
Arrested for sex offences	1.04	3.11	3.83	0.91	0.32	2.43	2.28
Arrested for fraud	1.54	2.19	3.61	0.55	0.21	1.43	1.22
Arrested for theft	1.59	4.27	2.72	0.40	0.17	1.57	1.28
Arrested for break and enter	1.92	2.42	2.44	0.24	0.13	0.86	0.89
Arrested for other property crime	1.96	3.04	2.44	0.20	0.11	0.64	0.28
Arrested for drug possession	1.67	4.00	1.67	0.43	0.12	1.00	1.39
Arrested for drug trafficking/distribution	0.99	1.85	2.33	1.22	0.24	1.36	3.06
Arrested for administration of justice charges	1.32	3.96	3.44	0.70	0.15	1.57	1.67
Arrested for public intoxication	0.93	3.85	3.67	1.20	0.10	2.86	0.67
Arrested for mischief	1.50	3.31	3.28	0.54	0.20	1.14	1.55
Arrested for causing a disturbance	1.39	3.54	3.78	0.65	0.11	1.71	1.72
Arrested for driving-related charges	1.00	0.92	2.00	1.26	0.34	1.86	2.22
Arrested for driving under the influence	1.07	1.08	2.00	1.24	0.24	2.64	1.28

Arrested for other violations

1.23

3.15

3.28

0.82

0.21

2.00

1.83

**TABLE 2.8: Number and per cent of arrests by type of clearance,
Surrey RCMP, 2019 to 2020**

Type of arrest clearance	Number of arrests	Per cent of arrests
Charged	21,092	50.3
Charge Withdrawn by Crown	1,543	3.7
CCJS Non-reportable	613	1.5
Departmental Discretion	14,153	33.8
Victim Withdrew Charge	3,323	7.9
Alternative Measures	508	1.2
Other	661	1.6
TOTAL	41,893	100.0

**TABLE 2.9: Per cent of arrests, by race of accused and clearance outcome,
Surrey RCMP, 2019 to 2020**

Race of accused	% Surrey population	% charged	% charges withdrawn by crown	% non-reportable	% police discretion	% complaint withdrawn by victim	% alternative measure
White	39.6	44.1	51.0	40.7	50.5	55.8	40.9
Indigenous	2.6	5.3	8.6	5.0	8.6	9.1	7.1
Black	1.8	4.8	6.0	4.6	5.0	5.3	6.4
South Asian	32.4	34.0	25.6	35.9	26.9	20.4	26.4
Asian	18.7	5.0	2.9	6.7	3.3	4.4	8.7
Hispanic	1.4	2.5	2.6	2.1	2.8	1.8	2.8
Arab	1.8	3.8	3.1	4.6	2.6	3.0	6.4
Other	1.6	0.4	0.2	0.3	0.4	0.3	1.1
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

TABLE 2.10: Number and per cent of arrests by whether police note substance use or mental health issues, Surrey RCMP, 2019 to 2020

Police note substance use or mental health issues	Number of arrests	Per cent of arrests
No substance use or mental health issues noted by police	33,729	83.0
Substance use issue noted	5,941	14.6
Mental health issue noted	404	1.0
Both substance use and mental health issues noted	544	1.3
TOTAL	40,618	100.0

TABLE 2.11: Per cent of arrests by race of accused and police notification of mental health and substance use issues, Surrey RCMP, 2019 to 2020

Race of accused	% surrey population	% no substance use or MH issue noted	% substance use noted	% mental health issue noted	% both substance use and mental health issue noted
White	39.6	45.2	57.9	67.1	61.2
Indigenous	2.6	5.7	11.9	12.6	23.7
Black	1.8	4.9	5.6	8.4	1.3
South Asian	32.4	32.6	19.0	5.7	6.3
Asian	18.7	4.9	1.1	1.2	3.9
Hispanic	1.4	2.6	2.4	2.6	2.4
Arab	1.8	3.6	2.1	3.6	2.1
Other	1.6	0.5	0.1	0.5	0.1
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

TABLE 2.12: Number and per cent of arrests by whether arrest resulted in a mental health apprehension, Surrey RCMP, 2019 to 2020

Type of arrest	Number of arrests	Per cent of arrests
No mental health apprehension	40,458	99.6
Mental health apprehension	160	0.4
TOTAL	40,618	100.0

TABLE 2.13: Per cent of arrests by whether the arrest resulted in a mental health apprehension and race of the accused, Surrey RCMP, 2019 to 2020

Race of accused	% Surrey population	% no mental health apprehension	% mental health apprehension
White	39.6	47.5	45.6
Indigenous	2.6	6.9	13.1
Black	1.8	5.0	5.6
South Asian	32.4	30.0	25.6
Asian	18.7	4.3	1.9
Hispanic	1.4	2.5	2.5
Arab	1.8	3.4	4.4
Other	1.6	0.4	1.3
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0

**TABLE 2.14: Total mental health incidents by race of civilian subjects,
Surrey RCMP, January 1st, 2019 to December 31st, 2020**

Racial group	Population estimate	Per cent of population	Number of mental health incidents	Per cent of mental health incidents	Odds ratio	Average annual MH incident rate (per 100,000)
White/European	205,157	39.6	11,937	57.4	1.45	2,909.2
Indigenous	13,460	2.6	1,738	8.4	3.23	6,456.2
Black	9,455	1.8	835	4.0	2.22	4,415.6
South Asian	168,040	32.4	3,844	18.5	0.57	1,143.8
Asian	96,900	18.7	1,362	6.5	0.35	702.8
Hispanic	7,065	1.4	386	1.9	1.36	2,731.8
Arab/West Asian	9,485	1.8	628	3.0	1.67	3,310.5
Other	8,315	1.6	79	0.4	0.25	475.0
TOTAL	517,877	100.0	20,809	100.0	1.00	2,009.1

**TABLE 2.15: Total mental incidents by race of male subjects,
Surrey RCMP, January 1st, 2019 to December 31st, 2020**

Racial group	Population Estimate Male Population	Per cent of Population Male	Number of mental health incidents	Per cent of mental health incidents	Odds ratio	Average mental health incident rate (per 100,000)
White/European	102,885	40.1	6,810	55.8	1.39	3,309.5
Indigenous	6,375	2.5	814	6.7	2.68	6,384.3
Black	4,845	1.9	543	4.5	2.37	5,603.7
South Asian	84,335	32.9	2,528	20.7	0.63	1,498.8
Asian	45,565	17.8	757	6.2	0.35	830.7
Hispanic	3,395	1.3	278	2.3	1.77	4,094.3
Arab/West Asian	4,865	1.9	415	3.4	1.79	4,265.2
Other	4,135	1.6	52	0.4	0.25	628.8
TOTAL	256,400	100.0	12,197	100.0	1.00	2,378.5

**TABLE 2.16: Total mental health incidents by race of female subjects,
Surrey RCMP, January 1st, 2019 to December 31st, 2020**

Racial group	Population Estimate Female population	Per cent of Population Female	Number of mental health incidents	Per cent of mental health incidents	Odds ratio	Average annual mental health incident rate (per 100,000)
White/European	102,280	39.1	5,126	59.5	1.52	2,505.9
Indigenous	7,085	2.7	924	10.7	3.96	6,520.8
Black	4,610	1.8	292	3.4	1.89	3,167.0
South Asian	83,705	32.0	1,315	15.3	0.48	785.5
Asian	51,335	19.6	605	7.0	0.36	589.3
Hispanic	3,670	1.4	108	1.3	0.93	1,471.4
Arab/West Asian	4,620	1.8	213	2.5	1.39	2,305.2
Other	4,180	1.6	27	0.3	0.19	322.9
TOTAL	261,485	100.0	8,610	100.0	1.00	1,646.4

TABLE 2.17:
Summary of mental health incident statistics by race and gender, Surrey RCMP,
January 1st, 2019 to December 31st, 2020

Race/gender group	Per cent population	Per cent of mental health incidents	Odds ratio	Average annual mental health incident rate (per 100,000)
Indigenous Male	1.2	3.9	3.25	6,384.3
Indigenous Female	1.4	4.4	3.14	6,520.8
Black Male	0.9	2.6	2.89	5,603.7
Black Female	0.9	1.4	1.55	3,167.0
South Asian Male	16.4	12.1	0.74	1,498.8
South Asian Female	16.2	6.3	0.39	785.5
Asian Male	8.8	3.6	0.41	830.7
Asian Female	9.9	2.9	0.29	589.3
Hispanic Male	0.7	1.3	1.86	4,094.3
Hispanic Female	0.7	0.5	0.71	1,471.4
West Asian Male	0.9	2.0	2.22	4,265.2
West Asian Female	0.9	1.0	1.11	2,305.2
White Male	19.7	32.7	1.65	3,309.5
White Female	19.7	24.6	1.25	2,505.9
Other Male	0.8	0.2	0.25	628.8

Other Female	0.8	0.1	0.12	322.9
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**Figure 2.3: Mental health incident rate (per 100,000) by race and gender
Surrey RCMP, 2019 to 2020**

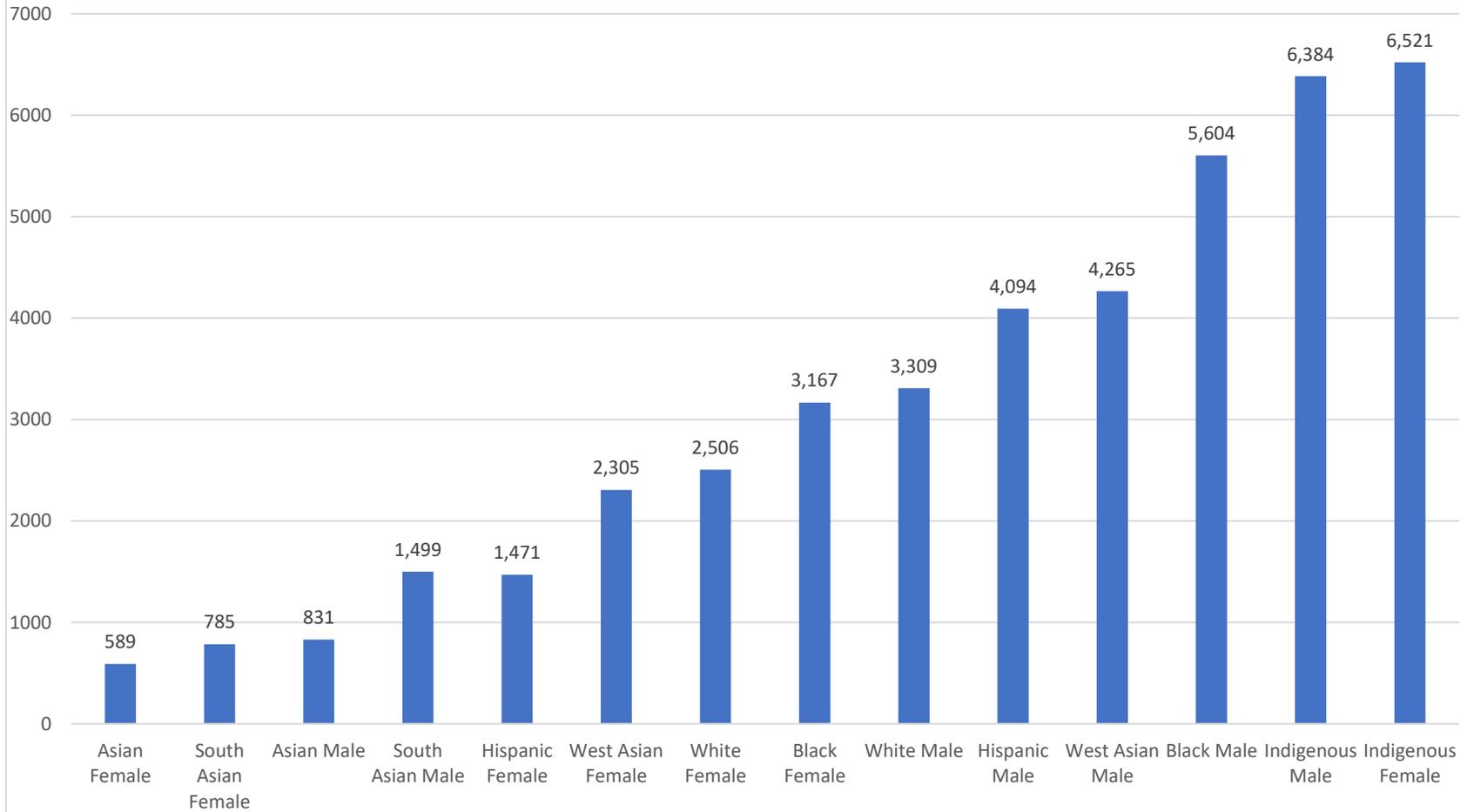


TABLE 2.18: Mental health incidents involving unique individuals by race of civilian subject, Surrey RCMP, January 1st, 2011 to December 31st, 2020

Racial group	Population estimate	Per cent of population	Number of mental health incidents	Per cent of mental health incidents	Odds Ratio	Average annual mental health incident rate (per 100,000)
White/European	205,157	39.6	5,757	55.2	1.39	1,403.1
Indigenous	13,460	2.6	703	6.7	2.58	2,611.4
Black	9,455	1.8	385	3.7	2.05	2,035.9
South Asian	168,040	32.4	2,223	21.3	0.66	661.4
Asian	96,900	18.7	751	7.2	0.39	387.5
Hispanic	7,065	1.4	223	2.1	1.50	1,578.2
Arab/West Asian	9,485	1.8	334	3.2	1.78	1,760.7
Other	8,315	1.6	55	0.5	0.31	330.7
TOTAL	517,877	100.0	10,431	100.0	1.00	1,007.1

Figure 2.4: Mean number of mental health incidents per unique individual by race of civilian, Surrey RCMP, 2019 to 2020

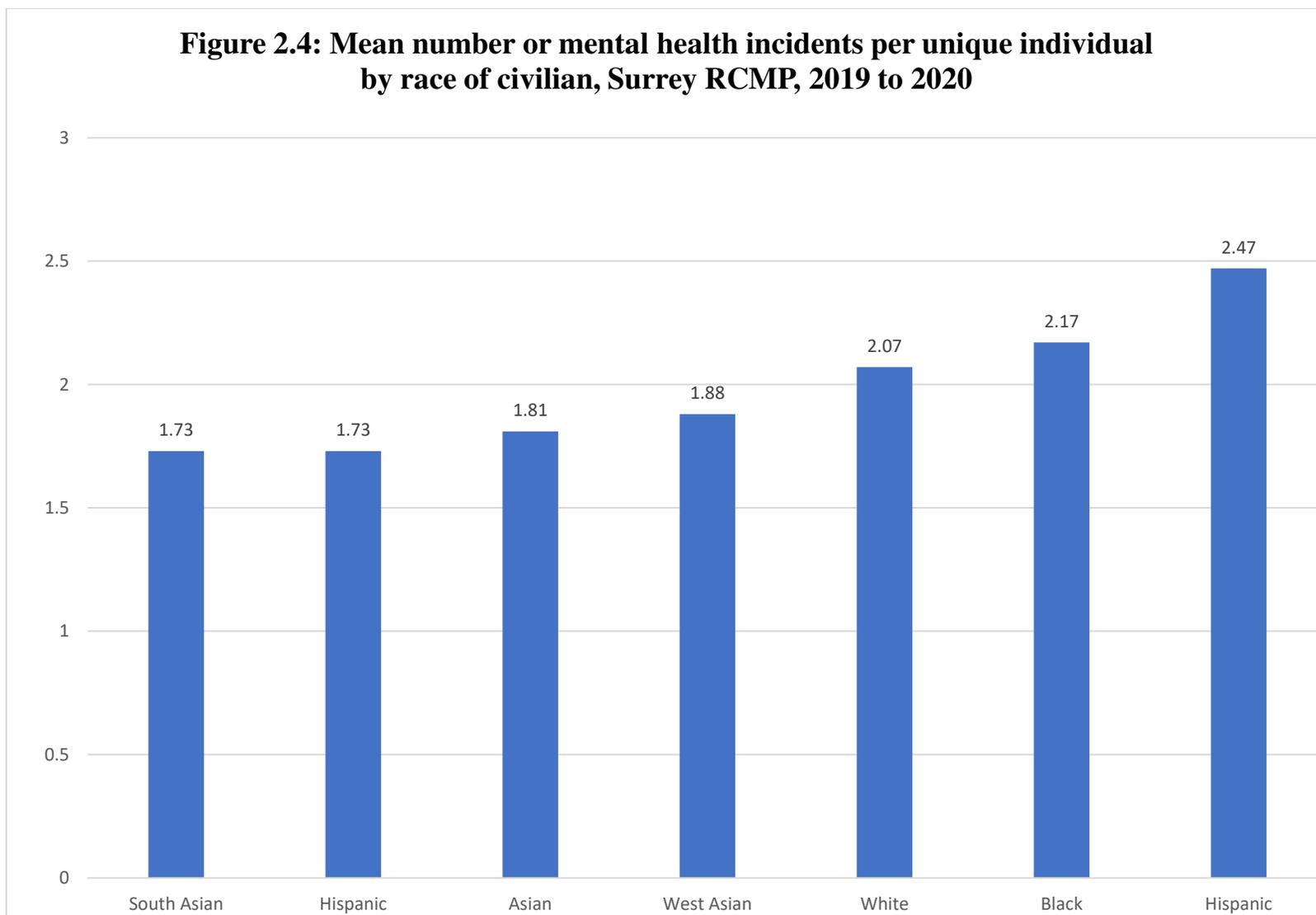


TABLE 2.19: Proportion of mental health incidents involving people from different racial groups by reason for police response, Surrey RCMP, 2019 to 2020

Offence type	White	Indigenous	Black	South Asian	Asian	Hispanic	Arab/West Asian	Number of cases
% Minor violence	56.3	8.2	4.8	19.8	6.5	1.5	2.6	992
% Major violence	64.6	5.3	4.8	14.8	3.7	2.1	4.8	189
% Sex offences	53.5	10.5	3.5	19.8	3.5	3.5	5.8	86
% Property crime	58.7	7.1	4.5	12.9	8.4	3.2	4.5	155
% Drug crime	66.3	10.0	7.5	10.0	2.5	0.0	3.8	80
% Administration of justice charges	54.2	11.0	6.8	18.6	1.7	0.8	6.8	118
% Mischief	58.8	11.8	7.8	13.1	2.6	2.0	3.9	153
% Disturbance	55.4	9.3	5.5	17.7	7.0	1.8	2.7	1,334
% Unspecified assistance	60.5	7.6	2.7	17.8	7.0	1.1	2.9	1,319
% Missing person investigation	56.9	13.5	4.4	14.0	6.0	2.2	2.6	1,330
% Well-being check	60.6	7.1	3.8	18.6	5.7	1.0	2.5	1,163
% Mental health act	56.5	8.0	3.8	19.6	6.8	2.0	3.0	13,020
% Suspicious person/vehicle	64.5	8.6	5.3	13.1	3.3	1.6	3.7	245
% Traffic violation	68.4	5.9	5.3	10.6	3.2	2.1	4.1	339
% Other reason	61.7	6.2	4.0	14.0	9.7	1.9	2.2	321
PER CENT SURREY POPULATION	39.6	2.6	1.8	32.4	18.7	1.4	1.8	517,877

TABLE 2.20: The representation of different racial groups in mental health incident statistics (as measured by odds ratios), by reason for police response, Surrey RCMP, 2019 to 2020

Offence type	White	Indigenous	Black	South Asian	Asian	Hispanic	Arab/West Asian
% Minor violence	1.42	3.15	2.67	0.61	0.35	1.07	1.44
% Major violence	1.63	2.04	2.67	0.46	0.20	1.50	2.67
% Sex offences	1.35	4.04	1.94	0.61	0.19	2.50	3.22
% Property crime	1.48	2.73	2.50	0.40	0.45	2.26	2.50
% Drug crime	1.67	3.85	4.17	0.31	0.13	0.00	2.71
% Administration of justice charges	1.37	4.23	3.78	0.57	0.09	0.57	4.86
% Mischief	1.48	4.54	4.33	0.40	0.14	1.43	2.78
% Disturbance	1.40	3.58	3.05	0.55	0.37	1.29	1.93
% Unspecified assistance	1.53	2.92	1.50	0.55	0.37	0.79	2.07
% Missing person investigation	1.44	5.19	2.44	0.43	0.32	1.57	1.86
% Well-being check	1.53	2.73	2.11	0.57	0.30	0.71	1.79
% Mental health act	1.43	3.08	2.11	0.60	0.36	1.43	2.14
% Suspicious person/vehicle	1.63	3.31	2.94	0.40	0.18	1.14	2.64
% Traffic violation	1.73	2.27	2.94	0.33	0.17	1.50	2.28
% Other reason	1.56	2.38	2.22	0.43	0.52	1.36	1.22

TABLE 2.21: Proportion of mental health incidents that resulted in a mental health apprehension or criminal charge by race of subject, Surrey RCMP, 2019 to 2020

Racial group	Per cent of population	% all mental Health incidents	% incidents that resulted in a mental health apprehension	% incidents that resulted in a criminal charge
White/European	39.6	57.4	55.7	57.2
Indigenous	2.6	8.4	8.1	9.2
Black	1.8	4.0	4.1	6.0
South Asian	32.4	18.5	19.8	18.1
Asian	18.7	6.5	6.8	4.3
Hispanic	1.4	1.9	2.0	0.6
Arab/West Asian	1.8	3.0	3.0	4.0
Other	1.6	0.4	0,3	0.6
TOTAL	100.0	10,431	100.0	1,00.0

TABLE 2.22: Proportion of mental health incidents noting a substance use issue by race of subject, Surrey RCMP 2019-2020

Racial group	Per cent of population	% incidents that did not identify a subject substance use issue	% incidents that noted a subject substance use issue
White/European	39.6	57.1	58.8
Indigenous	2.6	6.9	17.6
Black	1.8	3.9	4.7
South Asian	32.4	19.2	13.5
Asian	18.7	7.4	1.2
Hispanic	1.4	2.0	0.9
Arab/West Asian	1.8	3.0	3.1
Other	1.6	0.4	0.1
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0

**TABLE 2.23: Total strip searches by race of accused,
Surrey RCMP, January 1st, 2019 to December 31st, 2020**

Racial group	Population estimate	Per cent of population	Number of strip searches	Per cent of strip searches	Odds Ratio	Average annual strip search rate (per 100,000)
White/European	205,157	39.6	44	53.0	1.34	10.7
Indigenous	13,460	2.6	3	3.6	1.39	11.1
Black	9,455	1.8	7	8.4	4.67	37.0
South Asian	168,040	32.4	20	24.1	0.74	5.9
Asian	96,900	18.7	3	3.6	0.19	3.1
Hispanic	7,065	1.4	3	3.6	2.57	21.2
Arab/West Asian	9,485	1.8	3	3.6	2.00	15.8
Other	8,315	1.6	0	0.0	0.00	0.0
TOTAL	517,877	100.0	83	0.0	1.00	8.0

Prince George data: Racial disparities in Prince George RCMP statistics

Arrest (chargeable incident) statistics

The Prince George RCMP provided BCOHRC with data on 13,673 arrests (as defined as a chargeable incident) that took place between 2019 and 2020. Offender race was available for 13,430 cases (98.2 per cent of the sample). It is these 13,430 cases that are the focus of the current analysis.

The data indicate that Indigenous people are grossly over-represented in Prince George RCMP arrest data (see Table 3.1). Although Indigenous people represent 14.3 per cent of Prince George's population, they were involved in half (49.3 per cent) of all arrests/chargeable incidents captured by the RCMP data (Table 3.1). In other words, Indigenous people are 3.5 times more likely to appear in Prince George RCMP arrest data than their presence in the general population would predict. Furthermore, the average annual Indigenous arrest rate (26,716 per 100,000) is 5.5 times greater than the White rate (4,819 per 100,000) and 3.5 times greater than the city's average (7,752 per 100,000).

Arab/West Asian people are the only other racial group that is over-represented in Prince George RCMP arrest statistics (odds ratio=1.50). However, it should be noted that, the Arab/West Asian population of Prince George is very small (only 200 residents) and that they were involved in only 0.3 per cent of all arrest incidents.

White people, and people from all other racial minority groups, are significantly under-represented in Prince George arrest statistics. Interestingly, while Black people are significantly over-represented in the arrest statistics for the four other BC jurisdictions included in this study (Vancouver, Surrey, Duncan/North Cowichan, and Nelson), they are significantly under-represented in the Prince George arrest data. Although Black people represent almost one per cent of Prince George's population, they were involved in only 0.6 per cent of all chargeable incidents (odds ratio=0.67). The Black arrest rate (5,101 per 100,000) is almost the same as the White rate (4,819 per 100,000), and 5.2 times lower than the Indigenous rate (26,716 per 100,000).

Gender, race, and arrests

Men were identified as the offenders in 73.4 per cent of all arrests documented by the Prince George RCMP between 2019 and 2020.

Indigenous men are grossly over-represented in Prince George arrest statistics (see Tables 3.2 through 3.4). Although they represent only 6.8 per cent of Prince George's population, Indigenous males were involved in 33.7 per cent of all arrests conducted by the RCMP between 2019 and 2020. In other words, Indigenous males are 5 times more likely to be arrested than their presence in the general Prince George population. The average annual arrest rate for Indigenous males (38,113 per 100,000) is 5.2 times greater than the rate for White males (7,403 per 100,000) and 4.9 times greater than the city average (7,752 per 100,000).

Indigenous women are also significantly over-represented in Prince George arrest statistics. Although they represent 7.5 per cent of Prince George’s population, Indigenous women were involved in 15.5 per cent of all arrests conducted by the Prince George RCMP between 2019 and 2020. In other words, Indigenous females are 2.1 times more likely to be arrested than their presence in the general population. The average annual arrest rate for Indigenous women (16,031 per 100,000) is 2.2 times greater than the rate for White males (7,403 per 100,000) and 7.4 times greater than the rate for White women (2,157 per 100,000).

Arab/West Asian males are the only other group that is significantly over-represented in Prince George “chargeable incident” statistics (odds ratio=1.50). The representation of Black males (odds ratio=1.00), Hispanic males (odds ratio=1.00), and White males (odds ratio=0.96) in RCMP arrest statistics approximates their representation in the general Prince George population. Asian males (odds ratio=0.07) and South Asian males (odds ratio=0.63) are significantly under-represented in Prince George arrest statistics. With the notable exception of Indigenous females, women from all racial backgrounds are significantly under-represented in Prince George RCMP arrests/chargeable incidents.

The impact of unique individuals

It is important to examine the impact that unique individuals may have on observed racial disparities in Prince George RCMP arrest statistics. Individuals who have been subjected to multiple arrests could drive up the numbers for the racial group to which they belong. Fortunately, the data provided by the RCMP assigned a unique person identification number (PIN) to individuals involved in each arrest. This allowed the research team to identify individuals involved in more than one arrest.

Our results indicate that 4,719 unique individuals were responsible for 13,430 arrests for which there is racial data. This works out to an average of 2.85 arrests per unique individual in the Prince George RCMP arrest/chargeable incident dataset. The number of arrests or chargeable incidents, per unique individual, ranges from one to 149 separate incidents. It must be stressed that 62.1 per cent of the unique individuals in the Prince George arrest dataset were involved in only one incident. An additional 14.4 per cent of the sample were involved in only two incidents. One fourth of the unique individuals in the Prince George arrest dataset (23.5 per cent) were involved in three or more arrest incidents during the two-year study period.

Table 3.5 re-calculates arrest-based racial disparities counting unique individuals only once. This strategy eliminates the impact of statistical outliers who have been involved in multiple enforcement incidents. The results reveal that controlling for the impact of unique individuals somewhat reduces observed racial disparities. For example, the proportion of Prince George RCMP arrest incidents involving Indigenous people drops from 49.3 per cent to 35.2 per cent after controlling for individuals who were arrested on multiple occasions. After counting unique individuals only once, the odds ratio for Indigenous people drops from 3.45 to 2.46. Nonetheless, after controlling for the impact of unique individuals, significant racial disparities persist in Prince George arrest statistics. For example, the individual Indigenous arrest rate (6,708 per 100,000) remains 3.2 times greater than the White arrest rate (2,098 per 100,000). After controlling for the impact of unique individuals, Arab/West Asian males are the only other group

that are over-represented in Prince George arrest/chargeable incident statistics (odds ratio=3.50). All other racial groups are significantly under-represented.

Further analysis reveals significant racial differences in the number of arrest incidents per individual (see Figure 3.2). Overall, between 2019 and 2020, Indigenous people averaged four arrests per unique individual, followed by White people (2.3 arrests per unique individual). Individuals from all other racial groups averaged less than two arrests over the two-year study period.

Type of offence

BCOHRC's research team requested information about all offenses associated with each Prince George arrest incident. The RCMP were able to provide information on the four most serious offences associated with each arrest incident.

Table 3.6 compares the representation of each racial group, in the general Prince George population, with their presence within 16 different offence categories. The results indicate that Indigenous people are over-represented in Prince George RCMP arrest statistics involving a wide array of offences. For example, although they represent 14.3 per cent of Prince George's population, Indigenous people were documented as the accused person in 53.5 per cent of theft cases, 49.1 per cent of drug possession cases, 53.8 per cent of administration of justice cases (i.e., breach of parole conditions, failure to appear, etc.), 74.2 per cent of cases related to public intoxication, and 44.4 per cent of incidents involving major violence (i.e., robbery, aggravated assault, homicide/manslaughter, firearms-related offences, etc.).

Table 3.7 provides the odds ratios for each of the sixteen offence types, by the race of the offender. Please recall that, if a group has an odds ratio of 3.00 or greater, we consider them to be "grossly" over-represented in arrest statistics. If a group has an odds ratio between 1.50 and 3.00, we consider them to be "significantly" over-represented.

The results indicate that Indigenous people are grossly over-represented in eight of the sixteen offence categories including public intoxication offences (odds ratio=5.19), administration of justice charges (odds ratio=3.76), major violent offences (odds ratio=3.10), drug possession (odds ratio=3.43), fraud (odds ratio=3.02), theft (odds ratio=3.74), mischief (odds ratio=4.09), and causing a disturbance (odds ratio=4.40). Indigenous people are also significantly over-represented in all other offence categories including minor violence and drug trafficking. Clearly the over-representation of Indigenous people in Prince George RCMP arrests/chargeable incidents cannot be explained by their involvement in a few offences.

West Asians are significantly over-represented in several offence categories including driving under the influence, drug possession, drug trafficking, and major violence. For the most part, all other racial groups are either under-represented within each offence category or represented at a level that is equal to their representation in the general population.

Arrest clearance

The Prince George RCMP provided information on the outcome or “clearance” of each arrest incident. Five clearance categories were coded: 1) charges laid by the Crown; 2) charges unfounded (i.e., recommended by police, but declined by the Crown); 3) departmental discretion; 4) victim withdrew complaint; and 5) alternative measures.

Table 3.8 reveals that one-third of all Prince George RCMP arrests (38.0 per cent) resulted in a criminal charge being recommended by the police and confirmed or laid by the Crown. In 11.7 per cent of arrest incidents, charges were either recommended by the RCMP, but dropped or withdrawn by the Crown or otherwise listed as “unfounded.” More than a third of chargeable incidents (42.8 per cent) were cleared by police or departmental discretion and 6.8 per cent resulted in the complaint being dropped by the victim.

Table 3.9 reveals that Indigenous people are significantly over-represented in all clearance categories including incidents that resulted in a charge being laid by the Crown. For example, although Indigenous people represent 14.3 per cent of Prince George’s population, they were involved in 40.3 per cent of all arrests that resulted in a formal charge (odds ratio=2.82), 49.1 per cent of cases in which charges were dropped by the Crown or otherwise deemed unfounded (odds ratio=3.43), and 57.8 per cent of cases that were cleared by police discretion (odds ratio=4.04).

It is important to note that Indigenous people are even more over-represented in arrests that were cleared by departmental discretion than cases that resulted in a charge. It is somewhat challenging to interpret this finding. On the one hand, it could be argued that Indigenous people are more likely to be treated leniently by the police. In other words, the police could have recommended a charge in these cases but decided to let the offender off without further criminalization. Critics, however, might argue that these cases represent unnecessary arrests. In other words, these are “low quality” arrests involving weak evidence and little chance of conviction. Thus, the police decided to end the charging process before the case could be reviewed by the Crown. It is also important to note that Indigenous people are highly over-represented in arrest incidents in which charges were recommended by the police but rejected by the Crown (unfounded). Once again, is this evidence of Crown leniency with respect to Indigenous offenders, or evidence that Indigenous people are more likely to be subject to low quality arrests with little chance of conviction. Clear answers are not possible with the current data—but these issues should be flagged for further investigation.

All other racial groups are either under-represented in each clearance category or represented at a level that is equal to their presence in the general Prince George population (see Table 3.9). However, Arab/West Asian people are slightly over-represented in cases that resulted in a formal charge (odds ratio=2.50).

Identification of mental health and substance use issues

The Prince George RCMP arrest data also indicate whether, according to the police, the offender had a substance use or mental health issue at the time of arrest (see Table 3.10). The results indicate that 10.2 per cent of offenders were flagged for a problem with alcohol or substance use.

Only 0.8 per cent were flagged for a possible mental health issue and an additional 0.6 per cent were cited for a possible issue with both mental health and substance use. The majority of Prince George RCMP arrests (88.3 per cent) did not identify either a substance use or mental health issue.

The results indicate that Indigenous people are significantly over-represented in arrests involving a possible substance use issue (see Table 3.11). Although Indigenous people represent 14.3 per cent of Prince George's population, they were involved in 72.2 per cent of arrests involving an alleged substance use issue (odds ratio=5.05), 40.2 per cent of cases involving a suspected mental health issue (odds ratio=2.81) and 77.1 per cent of cases in which both mental health and substance use issues were flagged (odds ratio=5.39).

Arrests involving a mental health apprehension

The data indicate that only 48 of the 13,382 arrest incidents captured by the Prince George RCMP data (0.4 per cent) involved a mental health apprehension (see Table 3.12). The data, however, also indicate that Indigenous people are highly over-represented in arrest incidents that involved a mental health apprehension. Although Indigenous people represent 14.3 per cent of Prince George's resident population, they account for 49.3 per cent of all arrests that did not involve a mental health apprehension (odds ratio=3.45), compared to 52.1 per cent of arrests that involved a mental health apprehension (odds ratio=3.64).

Mental health incidents

In addition to arrests, BCOHRC's research team requested data on all mental health incidents recorded by the Prince George RCMP over the past ten years. At this time, the RCMP were only able to provide BCOHRC with two years of data (2019 and 2020).

The Prince George RCMP provided data on 19,012 individuals who were involved in a "mental health-related" incident between 2019 and 2020. These individuals include 8,203 individuals (43.1 per cent of the sample) who were identified as the "subject" of the police interaction (i.e., subject, suspect, emotionally disturbed person, accused person, etc.). An additional 6,508 persons were identified as the "complainant" in these incidents (34.2 per cent), 1,053 were identified as "witnesses" (5.5 per cent) and 346 individuals were identified as "victims" (1.8 per cent). The role code for the final 2,902 individuals (15.3 per cent of the sample) was simply identified as "other."

Conversations with RCMP officials revealed that the data, in its current state, cannot always identify the individual experiencing the mental health issue associated with the incident. A clear identification would involve a great deal of manual work that could not be completed within the study timeframe. Thus, in cases in which the police were responding to a crime or disturbance, the person with the mental health issue could be the offender, but could also be the victim, complainant, or witness. The RCMP caution, therefore, that an analysis of the race of people involved in mental health incidents must be interpreted with caution.

Fully recognizing data limitations, the analysis below focusses on the "subjects" associated with RCMP mental health incidents. Subjects include the following role codes associated with mental

health incidents: subject, suspect, emotionally disturbed person (EDP), accused, and charged. The research team decided to focus on “subjects” for three reasons. First of all, Indigenous people are more highly represented among the subjects in mental health cases than among complainants, witnesses, or victims. For example, Indigenous people represent 30.0 per cent of the subjects in Prince George RCMP mental health incidents, but only 18.3 per cent of complainants. Secondly, there is considerable evidence to suggest that, in the majority of cases, the subject role code in these incidents is, in fact, the same person experiencing a mental health issue. For example, in 61.2 per cent of all Prince George cases, the primary reason for the police response is listed as enforcement of the *Mental Health Act*. According to the RCMP, it is highly likely that the “subject” in all *Mental Health Act* cases is the same person experiencing the mental health issue associated with the case. Finally, we feel that it is important to examine the race of subjects involved in mental health incidents—even if they are not the person experiencing the mental health issue. After all, these “subjects” are the focus of the RCMP intervention.

The RCMP provided BCOHRC with data on 7,834 mental health incidents that included the race of civilian subjects (see Table 3.14). Civilian subjects include those categorized by the RCMP as subjects, suspects, accused persons, etc. Subjects do not include other roles including complainants, witnesses, or victims. In other words, subjects are persons who are the subject to the police investigation.

The data indicate that Indigenous people are significantly over-represented, as subjects, in Prince George RCMP mental health incidents. Although they represent 14.3 per cent of Prince George’s general population, Indigenous people were identified as the subject in 30.0 per cent of mental health incidents documented by the Prince George RCMP between 2019 and 2020. In other words, Indigenous people were 2.1 times more likely to be involved in a mental health incident than their presence in the general population. Indigenous people are somewhat less involved in Prince George RCMP mental health incidents (odds ratio=2.10) than arrest incidents (odds ratio=3.45). The average annual mental health incident rate for Indigenous people (9,476 per 100,000) is 2.4 times greater than the White rate (3,926 per 100,000) and 2.1 times greater than the city average (4,522 per 100,000).

Arab/West Asian people are the only other group that is over-represented in Prince George mental health incidents (odds ratio=2.00). However, it must be noted that, according to the Canadian census, there are only 200 people of Arab/West Asian descent living in Prince George. They represent only 0.2 per cent of the general population and 0.4 per cent of the subjects involved in mental health incidents (see Table 3.14).

The representation of White people, as subjects in mental health incidents, approximates their presence in the general population. People from all other racial groups—including Black, Asian, South Asian and Hispanic residents—are significantly under-represented in the Prince George mental health incidents documented by the RCMP.

Gender, race, and mental health incidents

Men were identified as the subjects in 57.2 per cent of all mental health incidents documented by the Prince George RCMP between 2019 and 2020. Women are more highly represented in Prince George mental health incidents (42.8 per cent) than arrest incidents (26.6 per cent).

Indigenous men and women are significantly over-represented in mental health incidents documented by the Prince George RCMP between 2019 and 2020 (see Tables 3.15 through 3.17). Although they represent only 6.8 per cent of Prince George's general population, Indigenous males were the subject in 14.4 per cent of all mental health incidents recorded by the RCMP during the study period. In other words, Indigenous males are 2.2 times more likely to be involved in a mental health incident than their presence in the general population would predict. The average annual mental health incident rate for Indigenous males (9,493 per 100,000) is two times greater than the rate for White males (4,750 per 100,000), and 1.8 times greater than the city average (5,151 per 100,000).

Similarly, although they represent 7.5 per cent of Prince George's resident population, Indigenous women were identified as the subjects in 15.6 per cent of mental health incidents documented by the RCMP between 2019 and 2020. In other words, Indigenous females are 2.1 times more likely to be involved in mental health incident than their presence in the general population would predict. The mental health incident rate for Indigenous women (9,398 per 100,000) is two times greater than the rate for White men (4,750 per 100,000), 3.1 times greater than the rate for White women (3,063 per 100,000), and 31.3 times greater than the rate for Asian women (300 per 100,000).

Despite their limited presence in the Prince George population, Arab/West Asian men and women are significantly over-represented in RCMP mental health statistics (odds ratio=2.00). The representation of White and Hispanic males in the RCMP mental health data approximates their presence in the general Prince George population (odds ratios of 1.05 and 1.00 respectively).

Black, Asian and South Asian men are significantly under-represented in mental health incidents documented by the Prince George RCMP between 2019 and 2020. Women from all racial backgrounds—with the exception of Indigenous women—are significantly under-represented in mental health incidents documented by the Prince George RCMP (see Table 3.17 and Figure 3.1).

The impact of unique individuals

As with arrests, it is important to examine the impact that unique individuals may have on observed racial disparities in Prince George RCMP mental health-related statistics. Individuals who have been subjected to multiple mental health incidents could drive up the numbers for the racial group to which they belong. Fortunately, the data provided by the RCMP assigned a unique person identification number (PIN) to individuals involved in each mental health incident. This allowed the research team to identify individuals involved in more than one mental health incident.

Our results indicate that 3,230 unique individuals were involved, as subjects, in the 7,834 mental health incidents captured by the Prince George RCMP. This works out to an average of 2.4 incidents per unique individual in the mental health dataset. The number of mental health incidents, per unique individual, ranges from one to 162 separate incidents. However, it must be stressed that 65.8 per cent of the unique individuals in the mental health dataset were involved in only one incident. An additional 15.1 per cent of the sample were involved in only two incidents. Only 19.1 per cent of the unique individuals in the Prince George RCMP mental health dataset were involved in three or more incidents during the two-year study period (2019-2020).

Table 3.18 recalculates mental health-based racial disparities counting unique individuals only once. This strategy eliminates the impact of statistical outliers who have been involved in multiple mental health incidents. The results reveal that controlling for the impact of unique individuals has little impact on observed racial disparities. For example, the proportion of Prince George mental health incidents involving Indigenous people drops only slightly from 30.0 per cent to 29.7 per cent after controlling for individuals who were involved in multiple incidents. After counting unique individuals only once, the odds ratio for Indigenous people drops from 2.10 to 2.08.

After controlling for the impact of unique individuals, the representation of Indigenous and Arab/West Asian people as subjects in mental health incidents is still significantly higher than their representation in the general Prince George population (see Table 3.18). After controlling for the impact of unique individuals, people from all other racial groups are either under-represented in Prince George mental health incidents or represented at a level that is consistent with their presence in the general population.

Figure 3.4 presents the mean number of mental health incidents, per unique individual, in the Prince George RCMP mental health dataset. The results reveal that Black people averaged 2.94 mental health incidents per unique individual, followed by Indigenous individuals (mean=2.45 incidents), White individuals (mean=2.43 incidents), and people from other racial minority backgrounds. These racial differences are statistically significant.

Reason for police response

BCOHRC's research team requested information about the cause or reason for each mental health incident. The RCMP were able to provide information on the reason for the police response and/or the four most serious offences associated with each mental health incident. This data was used to determine the factors or behaviours that contributed to the police response that led to the documentation of the mental health incident.

Six out of 10 incidents involved enforcement of the *Mental Health Act* (57.0 per cent). Approximately 11.4 per cent of all cases involved either a missing person investigation (5.9 per cent) or a Well-being check (5.5 per cent). Most other cases involved either a general disturbance call (9.5 per cent) or an alleged criminal offence (15.7 per cent). In sum, seven out of 10 mental health incidents (68.4 per cent) involved either the enforcement of the *Mental Health Act*, a missing persons investigation, or a well-being check. This finding, in our opinion, increases confidence that, in most cases, the subject identified in these incidents is indeed the person linked to the mental health issue.

Tables 3.19 and 3.20 document the representation of different racial groups in fifteen categories that describe the reason for the police response. The results reveal that Indigenous people are significantly over-represented (as indicated by an odds ratio of 1.50 or greater) in all 15 categories including missing persons investigations, enforcement of the *Mental Health Act*, disturbance calls, mischief, and both minor and major violence. They are grossly over-represented in mental health incidents involving administration of justice charges (odds ratio=3.04).

By contrast, White people are either under-represented in all offence categories or represented at level that is consistent with their presence in the general population. People of Asian descent are significantly under-represented in all offense categories. People of South Asian descent are significantly under-represented in all offense categories—except traffic violations and “other” police response justifications (including bylaw offenses). For those two categories they are represented at a level that is consistent with their representation in the general Prince George population.

Black people are significantly under-represented in 13 of the 15 police response categories (see Table 3.20). However, they are grossly over-represented with respect to “unspecified assistance” calls (odds ratio=3.22). Furthermore, their representation with respect to mischief offences is equal to their presence in the general Prince George population.

Hispanic people are significantly under-represented with respect to 11 of the 15 police response categories. However, they are over-represented in minor violence calls (odds ratio=1.67), unspecified assistance calls (odds ratio=3.33), and suspicious person/suspicious vehicle calls (odds ratio=12.00). The representation of Hispanic people in mischief cases is equal to their representation in the general population.

People of Arab/West Asian descent are grossly over-represented in seven response categories including minor violence, major violence, property crime, mischief, unspecified assistance calls, missing person cases, and traffic violations. They are also significantly over-represented with respect to disturbance calls and cases that involve the enforcement of the *Mental Health Act*. By contrast, Arab West Asians are under-represented in sex offence incidents, drug crimes, administration of justice charges, well-being checks, and cases that involve a suspicious person/vehicle.

Incident outcome

Table 3.21 documents the extent to which mental health incidents resulted in either charges being laid against the subject or a mental health apprehension. The results suggest that the representation of different racial groups varies little with respect to case outcome. For example, Indigenous people represent 14.3 per cent of the Prince George resident population, 30 per cent of all RCMP mental health incidents, 32.0 per cent of cases that resulted in a mental health apprehension, and 29.9 per cent of incidents that resulted in a criminal charge. In other words, Indigenous people are equally over-represented in all cases outcome categories.

Arab/West Asian people are also significantly over-represented in all outcome categories. All other racial groups are either under-represented or represented at a level that is equal to their presence in Prince George's resident population.

Identification of substance use issues

The Prince George data also indicate whether, according to the RCMP, the subject had a substance use issue at the time of the mental health incident (see Table 3.22). The results indicate that 6.7 per cent of subjects were flagged for a possible substance abuse issue. The results indicate that Indigenous people are equally over-represented in mental health incidents involving a possible substance abuse problem as those in which a substance use issue was not flagged (see Table 3.23). Although Indigenous people represent 14.3 per cent of Prince George's general population, they were involved in 29.5 per cent of mental health incidents involving an alleged substance use issue (odds ratio=2.06) and 30.0 per cent of cases involving no apparent substance use issue (odds ratio=2.10).

Arab/West Asian people are also significantly over-represented in cases that both involve and do not involve a substance use issue. All other groups are under-represented in cases involving a possible substance abuse problem or represented at a level that is consistent with their presence in the general Prince George population.

Strip searches

In addition to arrests, BCOHRC's research team received data on all strip search incidents recorded by the Prince George RCMP from 2019 to 2020. According to the data, the Prince George RCMP conducted 62 strip searches between January 1st, 2019 and December 31st, 2020—an average of 31 strip searches per year over the two-year time period. It should be noted that the Prince George RCMP's documented strip search rate is significantly lower than many other Canadian services. This will be discussed further in the conclusion of the final report.

Fifty-two of sixty-two strip searches (83.9 per cent) were conducted on male civilians. Ten were conducted on women (16.1 per cent). Over half of the strip searches (53.2 per cent) conducted by the Prince George RCMP involved White civilians and 38.7 per cent involved people of Indigenous descent. Further analysis reveals that Indigenous people (odds ratio=2.71), Black people (odds ratio=1.78), Hispanic people (odds ratio=5.33), and Arab/West Asian people (odds ratio=24.00) are all significantly over-represented in strip search incidents. By contrast, White, Asian, and South Asian people are all significantly under-represented in Prince George strip search statistics.

Although census benchmarking demonstrates the impact of strip searches at the aggregate population level, it might be argued that racial disparities in strip searches should be calculated by comparing the proportion of the population who have been strip searched with the proportion of the population that has been arrested. Further analysis indicates that, once we control or benchmark for the arrested population, Indigenous people become under-represented in Prince George strip search statistics. Although Indigenous people represent 49.3 per cent of those arrested by the Prince George RCMP, they represent only 38.7 per cent of those arrestees who were strip searched (odds ratio=0.78).

By contrast, using the arrest benchmarking method, Black people (odds ratio=2.66), Hispanic people (odds ratio=16.00), and Arab/West Asian people (odds ratio=16.00) all remain significantly over-represented in Prince George strip search statistics. White, Asian, and South Asian people remain under-represented in Prince George strip search statistics regardless of the benchmarking technique used.

Prince George tables and figures

**TABLE 3.1: Total arrests by race of accused,
Prince George RCMP, January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2020**

Racial group	Population estimate	Per cent of population	Number of arrests	Per cent of arrests	Odds ratio	Average annual arrest rate (per 100,000)
White/European	67,435	77.9	6,499	48.4	0.62	4,818.7
Indigenous	12,395	14.3	6,623	49.3	3.45	26,716.4
Black	745	0.9	76	0.6	0.67	5,100.6
South Asian	2,565	3.0	144	1.1	0.36	2,807.0
Asian	2,770	3.2	25	0.2	0.06	451.3
Hispanic	270	0.3	14	0.1	0.33	2,592.6
Arab/West Asian	200	0.2	46	0.3	1.50	11,500.0
Other	240	0.3	3	0.0	0.00	625.0
TOTAL	86,620	100.0	13,430	100.0	1.00	7,752.3

**TABLE 3.2: Total arrests by race of male accused,
Prince George RCMP, January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2020**

Racial group	Estimated male population	Per cent of male population	Number of arrests	Per cent of arrests	Odds ratio	Average annual arrest rate (per 100,000)
White/European	34,180	78.6	5,061	51.4	0.65	7,403.4
Indigenous	5,920	13.6	4,515	45.9	3.37	38,133.4
Black	345	0.8	60	0.6	0.75	8,695.6
South Asian	1,395	3.2	130	1.3	0.41	4,659.4
Asian	1,270	2.9	14	0.1	0.03	551.2
Hispanic	120	0.3	13	0.1	0.33	5,416.7
Arab/West Asian	130	0.3	42	0.4	1.33	16,153.8
Other	140	0.3	3	0.0	0.01	1,071.4
TOTAL	43,500	100.0	9,838	100.0	1.00	11,308.0

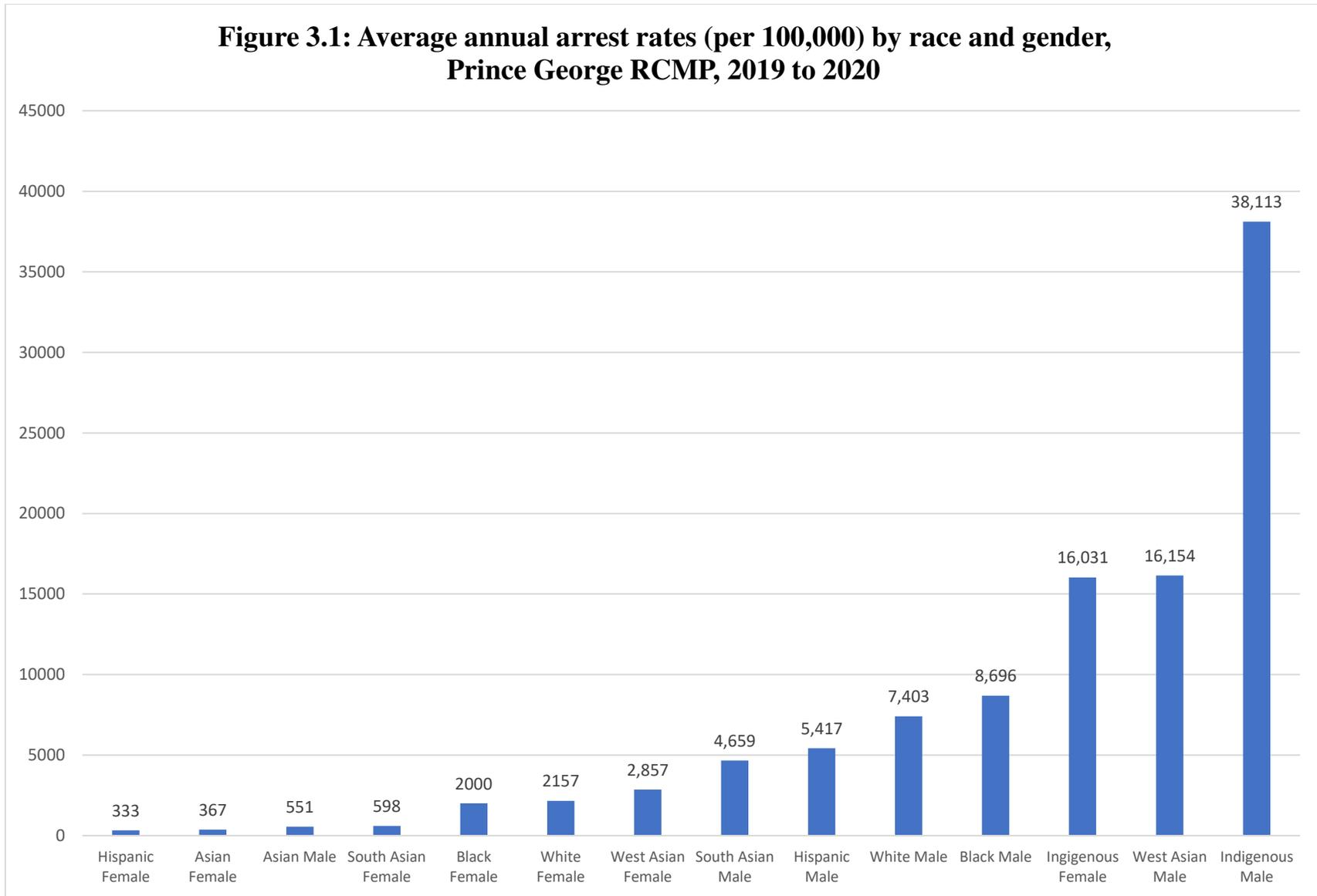
**TABLE 3.3: Total arrests by race of female accused,
Prince George RCMP, January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2020**

Racial group	Estimated female population	Per cent of female population	Number of arrests	Per cent of arrests	Odds ratio	Average annual arrest rate (per 100,000)
White/European	33,255	77.1	1,435	40.3	0.52	2,157.5
Indigenous	6,475	15.0	2,076	58.4	3.89	16,030.9
Black	400	0.9	16	0.4	0.44	2,000.0
South Asian	1,170	3.5	14	0.4	0.11	598.3
Asian	1,500	2.7	11	0.3	0.11	366.7
Hispanic	150	0.3	1	0.0	0.00	333.3
Arab/West Asian	70	0.2	4	0.1	0.50	2,857.1
Other	100	0.2	0	0.0	0.00	0.0
TOTAL	43,120	100.0	3,557	100.0	1.00	4,124.5

**TABLE 3.4: Summary of arrest statistics by race and gender, Prince George RCMP,
January 1st, 2019 to December 31st, 2020**

Race/gender group	Per cent population	Per cent arrests	Odds ratio	Average annual arrest rate (per 100,000)
Indigenous Male	6.8	33.7	4.95	38,113.4
Indigenous Female	7.5	15.5	2.07	16,030.9
Black Male	0.4	0.4	1.00	8,695.6
Black Female	0.5	0.1	0.20	2,000.0
South Asian Male	1.6	1.0	0.63	4,659.4
South Asian Female	1.5	0.1	0.07	598.3
Asian Male	1.5	0.1	0.07	551.2
Asian Female	1.7	0.1	0.06	366.7
Hispanic Male	0.1	0.1	1.00	5,416.7
Hispanic Female	0.2	0.0	0.00	333.3
West Asian Male	0.2	0.3	1.50	16,153.8
West Asian Female	0.1	0.0	0.00	2,857.1
White Male	39.5	37.8	0.96	7,403.4
White Female	38.4	10.7	0.28	2,157.5
Other Male	0.2	0.1	0.50	1,071.4
Other Female	0.1	0.0	0.00	0.0

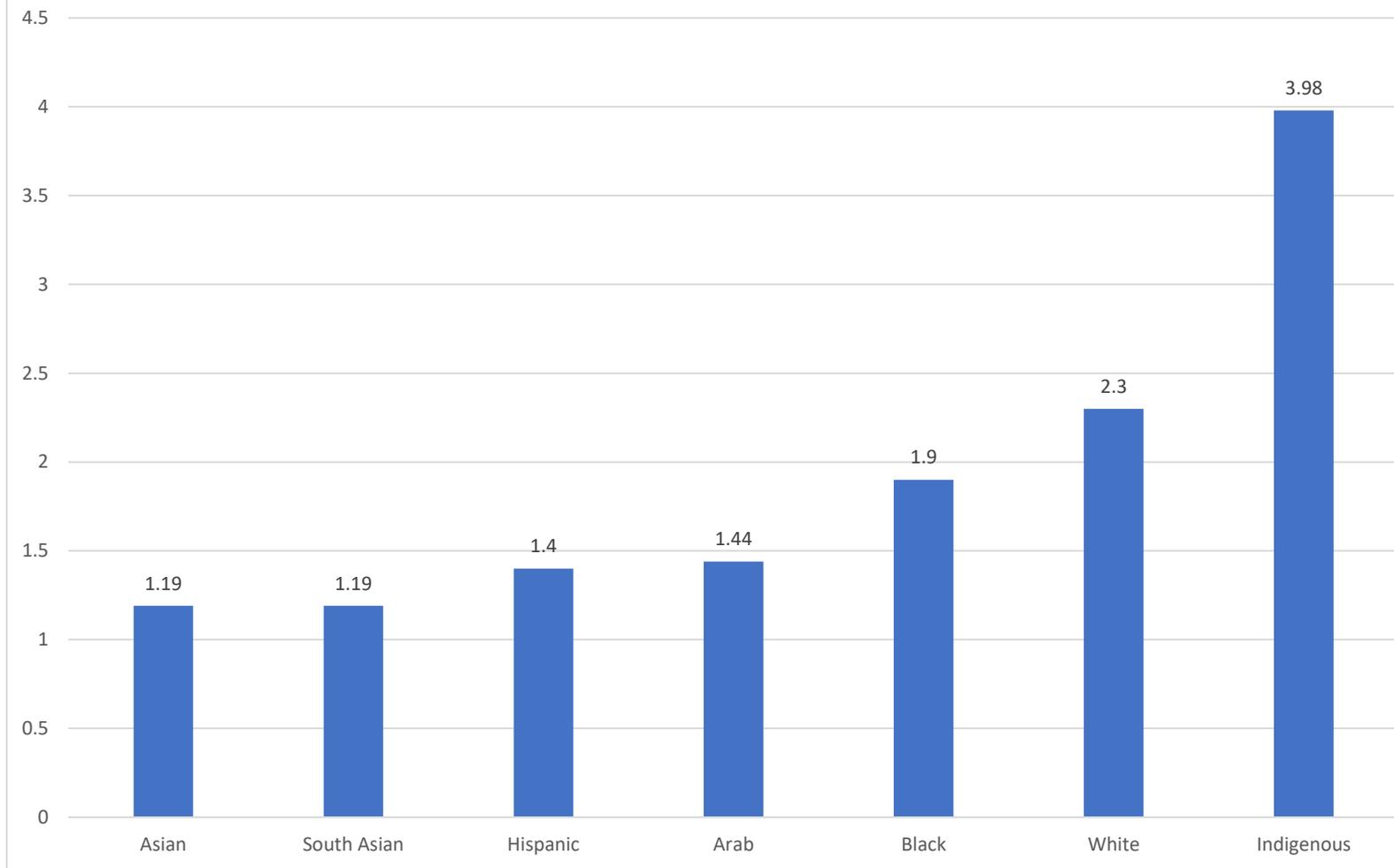
Figure 3.1: Average annual arrest rates (per 100,000) by race and gender, Prince George RCMP, 2019 to 2020



**TABLE 3.5: Arrests of unique individuals by race of accused,
Prince George RCMP, January 1st, 2019 to December 31st, 2020**

Racial group	Population estimate	Per cent of population	Number of arrests	Per cent of arrests	Odds ratio	Average annual arrest rate (per 100,000)
White/European	67,435	77.9	2,829	59.9	0.77	2,097.6
Indigenous	12,395	14.3	1,663	35.2	2.46	6,708.3
Black	745	0.9	40	0.8	0.88	2,684.6
South Asian	2,565	3.0	121	2.6	0.87	2,358.7
Asian	2,770	3.2	21	0.4	0.13	379.1
Hispanic	270	0.3	10	0.2	0.67	1,851.9
Arab/West Asian	200	0.2	32	0.7	3.50	8,000.0
Other	240	0.3	3	0.1	0.33	625.0
TOTAL	86,620	100.0	4,719	100.0	1.00	2,724.0

Figure 3.2: Mean number or arrests per unique individual by race of accused, RCMP Prince George, 2019 to 2020



**TABLE 3.6: Proportion of arrests involving people from different racial groups by type of offence,
Prince George RCMP, 2019 to 2020**

Offence type	White	Indigenous	Black	South Asian	Asian	Hispanic	Arab/West Asian	# of cases
% Arrested for minor violence	54.5	42.1	0.7	1.8	0.3	0.1	0.5	1,540
% Arrested for major violence	53.3	44.4	0.5	0.9	0.2	0.2	0.4	1,294
% Arrested for sex offences	56.1	39.4	0.5	1.8	0.9	0.5	0.9	221
% Arrested for fraud	56.0	43.2	0.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	134
% Arrested for theft	45.4	53.5	0.1	0.5	0.2	0.0	0.2	1,257
% Arrested for break and enter	61.6	37.4	0.0	0.6	0.2	0.0	0.2	489
% Arrested for other property crime	60.4	38.7	0.4	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.0	558
% Arrested for drug possession	48.9	49.1	0.9	0.3	0.3	0.0	0.5	1,026
% Arrested for drug trafficking/distribution	68.3	30.6	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.5	183
% Arrested for administration of justice charges	44.8	53.8	0.5	0.5	0.1	0.0	0.3	7,303
% Arrested for public intoxication	24.8	74.2	0.5	0.2	0.0	0.1	0.1	1,385
% Arrested for mischief	39.9	58.5	0.5	0.8	0.0	0.1	0.2	1,793
% Arrested for causing a disturbance	35.7	62.9	0.7	0.5	0.1	0.1	0.1	1,754
% Arrested for driving-related charges	72.0	22.0	0.6	3.7	0.4	0.3	0.9	2,159
% Arrested for driving under the influence	73.4	21.7	0.8	1.7	0.6	0.6	1.0	526

% Arrested for other violations	55.1	42.1	0.6	1.4	0.2	0.1	0.4	2,041
PER CENT PRINCE GEORGE POPULATION	77.9	14.3	0.9	3.0	3.2	0.3	0.2	86,620

TABLE 3.7: The representation of different racial groups in arrest statistics (as measured by odds ratios) by type of offence, Prince George RCMP, 2019 to 2020

Offence type	White	Indigenous	Black	South Asian	Asian	Hispanic	Arab/West Asian
Arrested for minor violence	0.70	2.94	0.78	0.60	0.09	0.33	2.50
Arrested for major violence	0.68	3.10	0.55	0.30	0.06	0.67	2.00
Arrested for sex offences	0.72	2.75	0.55	0.60	0.28	1.67	4.50
Arrested for fraud	0.72	3.02	0.78	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Arrested for theft	0.58	3.74	0.11	0.17	0.06	0.00	1.00
Arrested for break and enter	0.79	2.61	0.00	0.20	0.06	0.00	1.00
Arrested for other property crime	0.77	2.71	0.44	0.07	0.06	0.67	0.00
Arrested for drug possession	0.63	3.43	1.00	0.10	0.09	0.00	2.50
Arrested for drug trafficking/distribution	0.88	2.14	0.55	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.50
Arrested for administration of justice charges	0.57	3.76	0.55	0.17	0.03	0.00	1.50
Arrested for public intoxication	0.32	5.19	0.55	0.07	0.00	0.33	0.50
Arrested for mischief	0.51	4.09	0.55	0.27	0.00	0.33	1.00
Arrested for causing a disturbance	0.46	4.40	0.78	0.17	0.03	0.33	0.50
Arrested for driving-related charges	0.92	1.54	0.67	1.23	0.13	1.00	4.50
Arrested for driving under the influence	0.94	1.52	0.89	0.57	0.19	2.00	5.00

Arrested for other violations

0.71

2.94

0.67

0.47

0.06

0.33

2.00

**TABLE 3.8: Number and per cent of arrests by type of clearance,
Prince George RCMP, 2019 to 2020**

Type of arrest clearance	Number of arrests	Per cent of arrests
Charged	5,191	38.0
Charges unfounded	1,605	11.7
Police discretion	5,848	42.8
Victim withdrew charge	930	6.8
Alternative measures	99	0.7
TOTAL	13,673	100.0

**TABLE 3.9: Per cent of arrests by race of accused and clearance outcome,
Prince George RCMP, 2019 to 2020**

Race of accused	% Prince George population	% charged	% charges unfounded	% police discretion	% complaint withdrawn by victim	% alternative measure
White	77.9	56.7	49.1	40.4	49.3	67.0
Indigenous	14.3	40.3	49.1	57.8	48.2	33.0
Black	0.9	0.5	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.0
South Asian	3.0	1.6	0.6	0.7	1.3	0.0
Asian	3.2	0.3	0.3	0.1	0.1	0.0
Hispanic	0.3	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.0
Arab	0.2	0.5	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.0
Other	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

TABLE 3.10: Number and per cent of arrests by whether police note substance use or mental health issues, Prince George RCMP, 2019 to 2020

Police note substance use or mental health issues	Number of arrests	Per cent of arrests
No substance use or mental health issues noted by police	11,859	88.3
Substance use issue noted	1,376	10.2
Mental health issue noted	112	0.8
Both substance use and mental health issues noted	83	0.6
TOTAL	13,430	100.0

TABLE 3.11: Per cent of arrests by race of accused and police notification of mental health and substance use issues, Prince George RCMP, 2019 to 2020

Race of accused	% Prince George population	% no substance use or MH issue noted	% substance use noted	% mental health issue noted	% both substance use and mental health issue noted
White	77.9	51.0	26.6	58.9	22.9
Indigenous	14.3	46.5	72.2	40.2	77.1
Black	0.9	0.5	0.8	0.0	0.0
South Asian	3.0	1.2	0.2	0.9	0.0
Asian	3.2	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0
Hispanic	0.3	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
Arab	0.2	0.4	0.1	0.0	0.0
Other	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

TABLE 3.12: Number and per cent of arrests by whether arrest resulted in a mental health apprehension, Prince George RCMP, 2019 to 2020

Type of arrest	Number of arrests	Per cent of arrests
No mental health apprehension	13,382	99.6
Mental health apprehension	48	0.4
TOTAL	13,430	100.0

TABLE 3.13: Per cent of arrests by whether the arrest resulted in a mental health apprehension and race of the accused, Prince George RCMP, 2019 to 2020

Race of accused	% Prince George population	% no mental health apprehension	% mental health apprehensions
White	77.9	48.4	43.8
Indigenous	14.3	49.3	52.1
Black	0.9	0.6	2.1
South Asian	3.0	1.1	2.1
Asian	3.2	0.2	0.0
Hispanic	0.3	0.1	0.0
Arab	0.2	0.3	0.0
Other	0.3	0.0	0.0
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0

**TABLE 3.14: Total mental health incidents by race of civilian subjects,
Prince George RCMP, January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2020**

Racial group	Population estimate	Per cent of Population	Number of mental health incidents	Per cent of mental health incidents	Odds ratio	Average annual MH incident rate (per 100,000)
White/European	67,435	77.9	5,295	67.6	1.15	3,926.0
Indigenous	12,395	14.3	2,349	30.0	2.10	9,475.6
Black	745	0.9	47	0.6	0.67	3,154.4
South Asian	2,565	3.0	69	0.9	0.30	1,345.0
Asian	2,770	3.2	19	0.2	0.06	342.9
Hispanic	270	0.3	16	0.2	0.67	2,963.0
Arab/West Asian	200	0.2	34	0.4	2.00	8,500.0
Other	240	0.3	4	0.1	0.33	833.3
TOTAL	86,620	100.0	7,834	100.0	1.00	4,522.0

TABLE 3.15: Total mental incidents by race of male subjects, Prince George RCMP, January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2020

Racial group	Estimated male Population	Per cent of male population	Number of mental health incidents	Per cent of mental health incidents	Odds ratio	Average mental health incident rate (per 100,000)
White/European	34,180	78.6	3,247	72.5	0.92	4,749.9
Indigenous	5,920	13.6	1,124	25.1	1.85	9,493.2
Black	345	0.8	17	0.4	0.44	2,463.8
South Asian	1,395	3.2	55	1.2	0.37	1,971.3
Asian	1,270	2.9	10	0.2	0.07	393.7
Hispanic	120	0.3	8	0.2	0.67	3,333.3
Arab/West Asian	130	0.3	19	0.4	1.33	7,307.6
Other	140	0.3	1	0.0	0.00	357.1
TOTAL	43,500	100.0	4,481	100.0	1.00	5,150.6

**TABLE 3.16: Total mental health incidents by race of female subjects,
Prince George RCMP, January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2020**

Racial group	Estimated female population	Per cent of female population	Number of mental health incidents	Per cent of mental health incidents	Odds ratio	Average annual mental health incident rate (per 100,000)
White/European	33,255	77.1	2,037	61.1	0.79	3,062.7
Indigenous	6,475	15.0	1,217	36.5	2.43	9,397.7
Black	400	0.9	30	0.9	1.00	3,750.0
South Asian	1,170	2.7	14	0.4	0.15	598.2
Asian	1,500	3.5	9	0.3	0.09	300.0
Hispanic	150	0.3	8	0.2	0.67	2,666.7
Arab/West Asian	70	0.2	15	0.5	2.50	10,714.3
Other	100	0.2	3	0.1	0.50	1,500.0
TOTAL	43,120	100.0	3,333	100.0	1.00	3,864.8

TABLE 3.17: Summary of mental health incident statistics by race and gender, Prince George RCMP, January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2020

Race/gender group	Per cent population	Per cent of mental health incidents	Odds ratio	Average annual mental health incident rate (per 100,000)
Indigenous Male	6.8	14.4	2.18	9,493.2
Indigenous Female	7.5	15.6	2.08	9,397.7
Black Male	0.4	0.2	0.50	2,463.8
Black Female	0.5	0.4	0.80	3,750.0
South Asian Male	1.6	0.7	0.44	1,971.3
South Asian Female	1.4	0.2	0.14	598.2
Asian Male	1.5	0.1	0.07	393.7
Asian Female	1.7	0.1	0.06	300.0
Hispanic Male	0.1	0.1	1.00	3,333.3
Hispanic Female	0.2	0.1	0.50	2,666.7
West Asian Male	0.1	0.2	2.00	7,307.6
West Asian Female	0.1	0.2	2.00	10,714.3
White Male	39.5	41.5	1.05	4,749.9
White Female	39.4	26.1	0.66	3,062.7
Other Male	0.2	0.0	0.00	357.1

Other Female	0.1	0.0	0.00	1,500.0
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**Figure 3.3: Mental health incident rate (per 100,000) by race and gender
Prince George RCMP, 2019 to 2020**

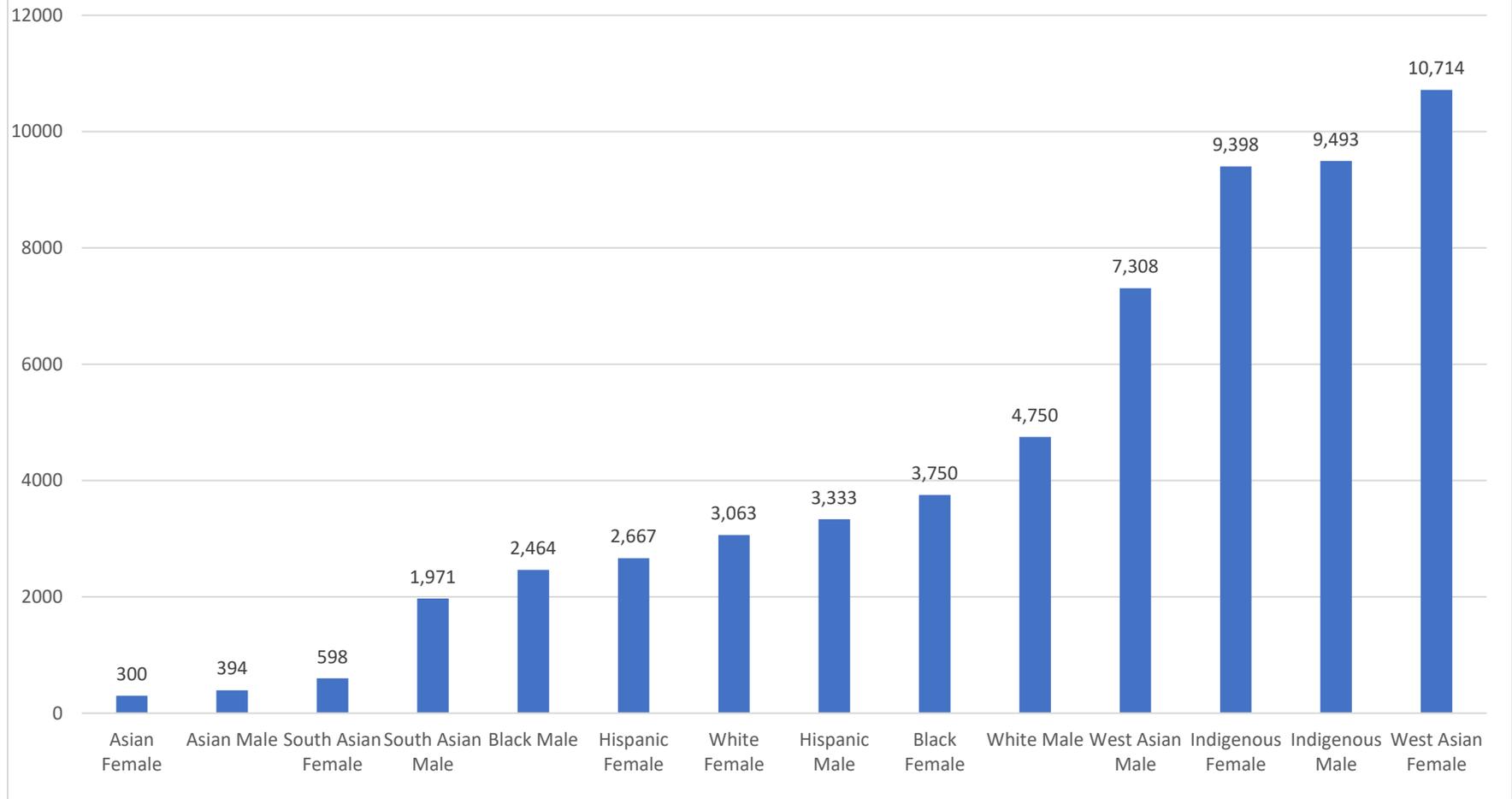


TABLE 3.18: Mental health incidents involving unique individuals by race of civilian subject, Prince George RCMP, January 1, 2011 to December 31, 2020

Racial group	Population estimate	Per cent of population	Number of mental health incidents	Per cent of mental health incidents	Odds ratio	Average annual mental health incident rate (per 100,000)
White/European	67,435	77.9	2,180	67.5	0.87	1,616.4
Indigenous	12,395	14.3	960	29.7	2.08	3,872.5
Black	745	0.9	16	0.5	0.55	1,073.8
South Asian	2,565	3.0	33	1.0	0.33	643.3
Asian	2,770	3.2	14	0.4	0.13	252.7
Hispanic	270	0.3	9	0.3	1.00	1,666.7
Arab/West Asian	200	0.2	15	0.5	2.50	3,750.0
Other	240	0.3	3	0.1	0.33	625.0
TOTAL	86,620	100.0	3,230	100.0	1.00	1,864.5

Figure 3.4: Mean number or mental health incidents per unique individual by race of civilian, Prince George RCMP, 2019 to 2020

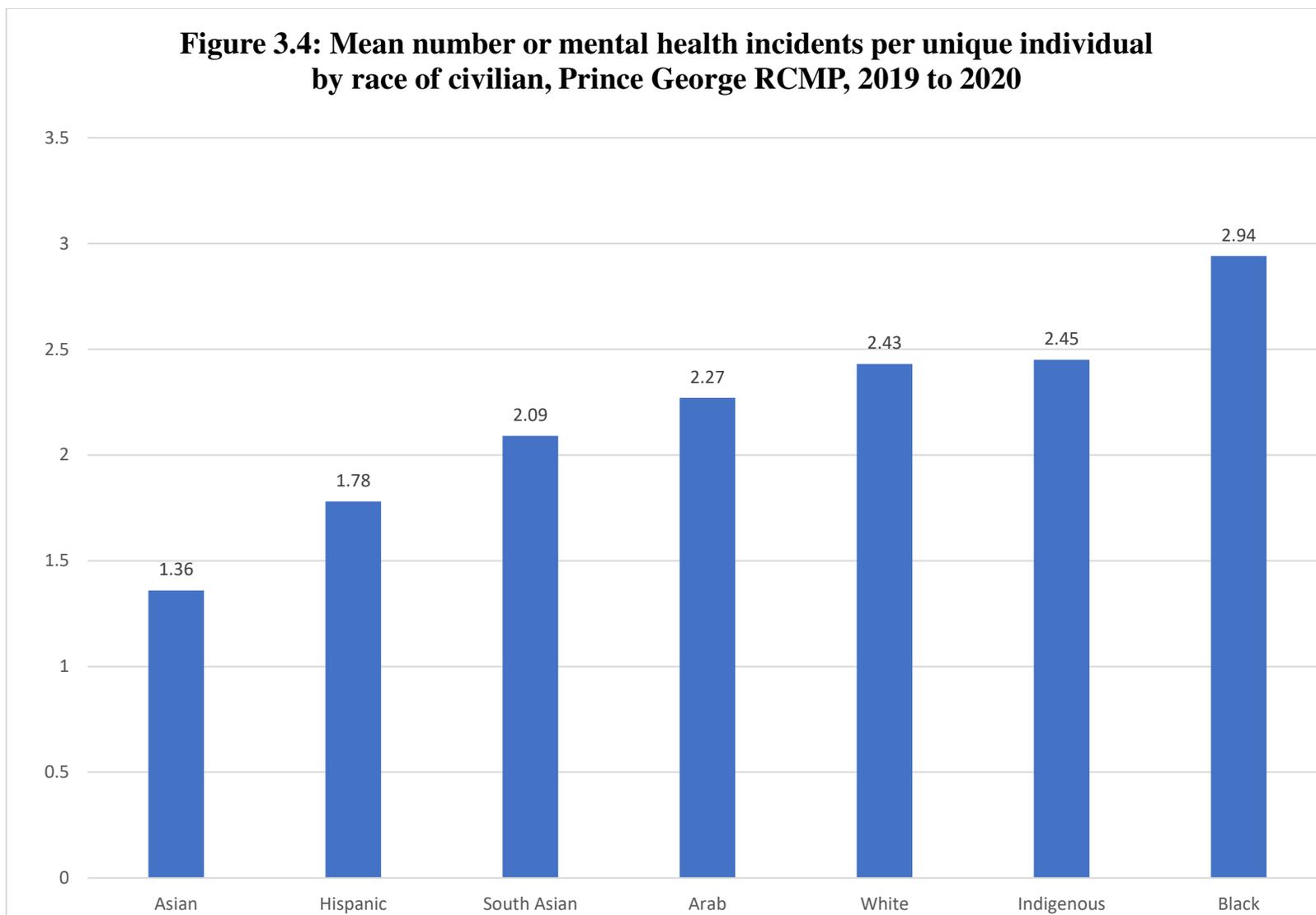


TABLE 3.19: Proportion of mental health incidents involving people from different racial groups by reason for police response, Prince George RCMP, 2019 to 2020

Offence type	White	Indigenous	Black	South Asian	Asian	Hispanic	Arab/West Asian	Number of Cases
% Minor violence	72.3	23.8	0.2	2.2	0.2	0.5	0.7	412
% Major violence	66.2	32.4	0.0	0.7	0.0	0.0	0.7	136
% Sex offences	57.4	42.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	54
% Property crime	74.3	22.1	0.0	1.8	0.9	0.0	0.9	113
% Drug crime	63.3	36.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	30
% Administration of justice charges	56.5	43.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	85
% Mischief	67.9	29.8	1.0	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.6	396
% Disturbance	67.7	30.1	0.7	1.2	0.0	0.1	0.3	745
% Unspecified assistance	66.7	26.5	2.9	1.0	0.0	1.0	1.0	102
% Missing person investigation	65.7	31.9	0.9	0.0	0.4	0.0	1.1	464
% Well-being check	74.4	24.9	0.0	0.5	0.2	0.0	0.0	426
% <i>Mental Health Act</i>	66.7	31.0	0.6	0.8	0.3	0.2	0.3	4,449
% Suspicious person/vehicle	65.1	31.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.6	0.0	83
% Traffic violation	70.6	24.2	0.7	3.3	0.7	0.0	0.7	153
% Other reason	72.0	21.7	0.6	3.1	0.0	0.0	2.5	161
PER CENT PRINCE GEORGE POPULATION	77.9	14.3	0.9	3.0	3.2	0.3	0.2	0.3

TABLE 3.20: The representation of different racial groups in mental health incident statistics (as measured by odds ratios) by reason for police response, Prince George RCMP, 2019 to 2020

Offence type	White	Indigenous	Black	South Asian	Asian	Hispanic	Arab/West Asian
% Minor violence	0.93	1.67	0.22	0.73	0.06	1.67	3.50
% Major violence	0.85	2.27	0.00	0.23	0.00	0.00	3.50
% Sex offences	0.74	2.98	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
% Property crime	0.95	1.54	0.00	0.60	0.28	0.00	4.50
% Drug crime	0.81	2.57	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
% Administration of justice charges	0.73	3.04	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
% Mischief	0.87	2.08	1.11	0.10	0.09	1.00	3.00
% Disturbance	0.87	2.10	0.78	0.40	0.00	0.33	1.50
% Unspecified assistance	0.86	1.85	3.22	0.33	0.00	3.33	5.00
% Missing person investigation	0.84	2.23	1.00	0.00	0.13	0.00	5.50
% Well-being check	0.96	1.74	0.00	0.17	0.06	0.00	0.00
% <i>Mental Health Act</i>	0.86	2.17	0.67	0.27	0.09	0.67	1.50
% Suspicious person/vehicle	0.83	2.19	0.00	0.00	0.00	12.00	0.00
% Traffic violation	0.91	1.69	0.78	1.10	0.22	0.00	3.50
% Other reason	0.92	1.52	0.67	1.03	0.00	0.00	12.50

TABLE 3.21: Proportion of mental health incidents that resulted in a mental health apprehension or criminal charge by race of subject, Prince George RCMP, 2019-2020

Racial group	Per cent of population	% all mental health incidents	% incidents that resulted in a mental health apprehension	% incidents that resulted in a criminal charge
White/European	77.9	67.6	65.5	68.2
Indigenous	14.3	30.0	32.0	29.9
Black	0.9	0.6	0.6	0.0
South Asian	3.0	0.9	0.8	0.9
Asian	3.2	0.2	0.6	0.0
Hispanic	0.3	0.2	0.1	0.0
Arab/West Asian	0.2	0.4	0.4	0.5
Other	0.3	0.1	0.1	0.0
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

TABLE 3.22: Proportion of mental health incidents noting a substance use issue by race of subject, Prince George RCMP, 2019-2020

Racial group	Per cent of population	% incidents that did not identify a subject substance use issue	% incidents that noted a subject substance use issue
White/European	77.9	67.6	67.6
Indigenous	14.3	30.0	29.5
Black	0.9	0.6	0.4
South Asian	3.0	0.8	1.8
Asian	3.2	0.3	0.0
Hispanic	0.3	0.2	0.0
Arab/West Asian	0.2	0.4	0.4
Other	0.3	0.1	0.0
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0

**TABLE 3.23: Total strip searches, by race of accused,
Prince George RCMP, January 1st, 2019 to December 31st, 2020**

Racial group	Population estimate	Per cent of population	Number of strip searches	Per cent of strip searches	Odds ratio	Average annual strip search rate (per 100,000)
White/European	67,435	77.9	33	53.2	0.68	24.5
Indigenous	12,395	14.3	24	38.7	2.71	96.8
Black	745	0.9	1	1.6	1.78	67.1
South Asian	2,565	3.0	0	0.0	0.00	0.00
Asian	2,770	3.2	0	0.0	0.00	0.00
Hispanic	270	0.3	1	1.6	5.33	185.2
Arab/West Asian	200	0.2	3	4.8	24.00	750.0
Other	240	0.3	0	0.0	0.00	0.00
TOTAL	86,620	100.0	62	100.0	1.00	35.8

Duncan data: Racial disparities in Duncan/North Cowichan RCMP statistics

Arrest (chargeable incident) statistics

The Duncan RCMP provided BCOHRC with data on 12,495 arrests (as defined as a chargeable incident) that took place between 2019 and 2020. Offender race was available for 11,203 cases (89.7 per cent of the sample). It is these 11,203 cases that are the focus of the current analysis. It should be noted that the Duncan RCMP had a higher rate of missing racial data (10.3 per cent) in their arrest dataset than the other police jurisdictions in the current study.

The data indicate that Indigenous people are significantly over-represented in Duncan RCMP arrest data (see Table 4.1). Although Indigenous people represent 15.6 per cent of Duncan's resident population, they were involved in 33.5 per cent of all arrests/chargeable incidents captured by the RCMP data (Table 4.1). In other words, Indigenous people are 2.2 times more likely to appear in Duncan RCMP arrest data than their presence in the general population would predict. Furthermore, the average annual Indigenous arrest rate (51,925 per 100,000) is 2.7 times greater than the White rate (19,427 per 100,000) and 2.2 times greater than the city's average (24,961 per 100,000). It is important to note that, between 2019 and 2020, there were more arrests or "chargeable incidents" of Indigenous people by the Duncan RCMP (3,749) than the number of Indigenous residents documented by the Canadian census (3,610).

Arab/West Asian people are the only other racial group that is significantly over-represented in Duncan RCMP arrest statistics (odds ratio=4.00). However, it should be noted that the Arab/West Asian population of Duncan/North Cowichan is very small (only 55 residents) and that they were involved in only 0.8 per cent of all documented arrest incidents.

Black and Hispanic people are also slightly over-represented in Duncan arrest incidents (odds ratio=1.33). However, the odds ratios for these two groups do not meet the 1.50 threshold that would flag a significant over-representation.

White, South Asian, and Asian people are significantly under-represented in Duncan/North Cowichan arrest statistics. Both South Asian (8,333 per 100,000) and Asian arrest rates (8,085 per 100,000) are significantly lower than the arrest rate for White Duncan residents (19,427 per 100,000).

Gender, race, and arrests

Men were identified as the offenders in 70.7 per cent of all arrests documented by the Duncan RCMP between 2019 and 2020. Indigenous men are grossly over-represented in Duncan arrest statistics (see Tables 4.2 through 4.4). Although they represent only 7.3 per cent of Duncan's population, Indigenous males were involved in 22.7 per cent of all arrests conducted by the RCMP between 2019 and 2020. In other words, Indigenous males are 3.1 times more likely to be arrested than their presence in the general Duncan/North Cowichan population. The average annual arrest rate for Indigenous males (75,073.7 per 100,000) is 2.6 times greater than the rate for White males (29,328 per 100,000) and three times greater than the city average (24,961 per 100,000).

Indigenous women are slightly over-represented in Duncan arrest statistics (odds ratio=1.30). However, it should be noted that Indigenous women are the only females that are over-represented in Duncan arrest statistics. Furthermore, the arrest rate for Indigenous women (31,436 per 100,000) is three times greater than the arrest rate for White women (10,449 per 100,000), 3.9 times greater than the rate for Asian women (8,025 per 100,000), and 14.9 times greater than the rate for South Asian women (2,143 per 100,000).

Arab/West Asian males (odds ratio=8.00) and Hispanic males (odds ratio=4.00) are also grossly over-represented in Duncan arrests or “chargeable incidents.” However, these calculations must be viewed with some caution due to small population size. Arab/West Asian males, for example, represent only 0.1 per cent of Duncan’s resident population and account for less than one per cent of all arrest incidents (0.8 per cent).

Black males are the only other group that is significantly over-represented in Duncan RCMP arrest statistics (odds ratio=1.67). Black males have the fourth highest arrest rate following Arab/West Asian males, Hispanic males, and Indigenous males.

The representation of White males in Duncan arrests (odds ratio=1.22) approximates their presence in the general population. By contrast, Asian (odds ratio=0.31) and South Asian males (odds ratio=0.56) are significantly under-represented.

The representation of Black women in Duncan arrest statistics approximates their representation in the general population (odds ratio=1.00). Within the female population, however, Black and Indigenous women have by far the highest arrest rates. The Black female arrest rate (32,500 per 100,000) is 3.1 times higher than the rate for White females (10,449 per 100,000). In fact, the arrest rates for both Black and Indigenous women are higher than the rates for White, Asian and South Asian males. Women from all other racial groups—including White women—are significantly under-represented in Duncan arrest statistics (see Table 4.4).

The impact of unique individuals

It is important to examine the impact that unique individuals may have on observed racial disparities in Duncan RCMP arrest statistics. Individuals who have been subjected to multiple arrests could drive up the numbers for the racial group to which they belong. Fortunately, the data provided by the RCMP assigned a unique person identification number (PIN) to individuals involved in each arrest. This allowed the research team to identify individuals involved in more than one arrest.

Our results indicate that 5,011 unique individuals were responsible for the 11,203 arrests for which there is racial data. This works out to an average of 2.23 arrests per unique individual in the Duncan RCMP arrest/chargeable incident dataset. The number of arrests or chargeable incidents, per unique individual, ranges from one to 122 separate incidents. It must be stressed that 75.3 per cent of the unique individuals in the Duncan arrest dataset were involved in only one arrest incident. An additional 11.3 per cent of the sample were involved in only two incidents. One 13.3 per cent of the unique individuals in the Duncan arrest dataset were involved in three or more arrest incidents during the two-year study period.

Table 4.5 re-calculates arrest-based racial disparities counting unique individuals only once. This strategy eliminates the impact of statistical outliers who have been involved in multiple enforcement incidents. The results reveal that controlling for the impact of unique individuals somewhat reduces Indigenous over-representation in Duncan arrest statistics. For example, the proportion of Duncan RCMP arrest incidents involving Indigenous people drops from 33.5 per cent to 24.9 per cent after controlling for individuals who were arrested on multiple occasions. After counting unique individuals only once, the arrest odds ratio for Indigenous people drops from 2.15 to 1.60. Nonetheless, after controlling for the impact of unique individuals, significant racial disparities persist in Duncan arrest statistics. For example, the individual Indigenous arrest rate (17,271 per 100,000) remains 1.75 times greater than the White arrest rate (9,883 per 100,000).

After controlling for the impact of unique individuals, Indigenous, Arab/West Asian, and Black people still emerge as significantly over-represented in Duncan arrest statistics.

Further analysis reveals significant racial differences in the number of arrest incidents per individual (see Figure 4.2). Overall, between 2019 and 2020, Indigenous people averaged three arrests per unique individual, followed by Arab/West Asian people (2.8 arrests per unique individual). By contrast, White individuals in the Duncan arrest dataset averaged 1.97 arrests.

Type of offence

BCOHRC's research team requested information about all offenses associated with each Duncan arrest incident. The RCMP were able to provide information on the four most serious offences associated with each arrest incident.

Table 4.6 compares the representation of each racial group, in the general Duncan population, with their presence within 16 different offence categories. The results indicate that Indigenous people are over-represented in Duncan RCMP arrest statistics involving a wide array of offences. For example, although they represent 15.6 per cent of Duncan's resident population, Indigenous people were documented as the accused person in 38.2 per cent of theft cases, 30.9 per cent of drug possession cases, 48 per cent of administration of justice cases (i.e., breach of parole conditions, failure to appear, etc.), 77 per cent of cases related to public intoxication, and 33 per cent of incidents involving major violence (i.e., robbery, aggravated assault, homicide/manslaughter, firearms-related offences, etc.).

Table 4.7 provides the odds ratios for each of the sixteen offence types, by the race of the offender. Please recall that, if a group has an odds ratio of 3.00 or greater, we consider them to be "grossly" over-represented in arrest statistics. If a group has an odds ratio between 1.50 and 3.00, we consider them to be "significantly" over-represented.

The results indicate that Indigenous people are grossly over-represented in two of the 16 offence categories: public intoxication offences (odds ratio=4.90) and administration of justice charges (odds ratio=3.08). Indigenous people are significantly over-represented in an additional ten offence categories including major violent offences (odds ratio=2.09), minor violence (odds ratio=2.48), drug possession (odds ratio=1.99), fraud (odds ratio=1.73), theft (odds ratio=2.45),

mischievous (odds ratio=2.33), and causing a disturbance (odds ratio=2.24). Indigenous people are not over-represented in only four offence categories including drug trafficking, break and enter offences, other property crime and driving-related offences. Clearly the over-representation of Indigenous people in Duncan RCMP arrests/chargeable incidents cannot be explained by their involvement in a few select offences.

Black people are significantly over-represented in six of the 16 offence categories: minor violence, fraud, drug possession, drug trafficking, driving infractions, and driving under the influence. Hispanic people are significantly over-represented in Duncan RCMP arrest statistics in ten of the sixteen offence categories: minor violence, major violence, theft, other property crime, drug possession, drug trafficking, administration of justice offences, mischief, driving infractions and driving under the influence. Arab/West Asians are significantly over-represented in nine offence categories: minor violence, sexual offences, theft, break and enter, drug possession, administration of justice offences, mischief, driving infractions, and driving under the influence.

South Asians are significantly under-represented in fifteen of the sixteen offence categories. The only exception is fraud in which they are slightly over-represented (odds ratio=1.32). People of Asian descent are significantly under-represented in all sixteen offence categories. Finally, White people are under-represented in 12 of the 16 offence categories captured by the Duncan arrest data. For the remaining four categories (break and enter offences, other property crime, drug trafficking and driving infractions) the representation of White people approximates their presence in Duncan's general population.

Arrest clearance

The Duncan RCMP provided information on the outcome or "clearance" of each arrest incident. Six clearance categories were coded: 1) charges laid by the Crown; 2) charges unfounded (i.e., recommended by police, but declined by the Crown); 3) CCJS non-reportable outcomes; 4) cleared by departmental discretion; 5) victim withdrew complaint; and 6) alternative measures.

Table 4.8 reveals that one fifth of Duncan RCMP arrests (21.7 per cent) resulted in a criminal charge being recommended by the police and confirmed or laid by the Crown. In 3.1 per cent of arrest incidents, charges were recommended by the RCMP, but dropped or withdrawn by the Crown or otherwise listed as "unfounded." A quarter of cases (24.2 per cent) were listed as "CCJS non-reportable" and 44.9 per cent of chargeable incidents were cleared by police or departmental discretion. An additional 5.1 per cent resulted in the complaint being dropped by the victim.

Table 4.9 reveals that Indigenous people are significantly over-represented in all clearance categories including incidents that resulted in a charge being laid by the Crown. However, the data also reveal that the over-representation of Indigenous people is particularly pronounced in cases that were settled or cleared through departmental discretion. For example, although Indigenous people represent 15.6 per cent of Duncan's population, they were involved in 33.3 per cent of all arrests that resulted in a formal charge (odds ratio=2.13), 35.0 per cent of cases in which charges were dropped by the Crown or otherwise deemed unfounded (odds ratio=2.24), and 41.8 per cent of cases that were cleared by police discretion (odds ratio=2.69).

Black people are significantly over-represented in cases that resulted in a charge (odds ratio=1.83) and in unfounded cases (odds ratio=1.83). Hispanic people are significantly over-represented in cases that resulted in a charge (odds ratio=1.67), cases that were unfounded (odds ratio=2.67), and cases that were cleared by police discretion (odds ratio=2.00). Arab/West Asian people are over-represented in cases that resulted in a charge (odds ratio=6.50), unfounded cases (odds ratio=5.50), and cases that were cleared by police discretion (odds ratio=3.00). By contrast, White, Asian, and South Asian people are significantly under-represented in each clearance category (see Table 4.9)

Identification of mental health and substance use issues

The Duncan RCMP arrest data also indicate whether, according to the police, the offender had a substance use or mental health issue at the time of arrest (see Table 4.10). The results indicate that 7.1 per cent of offenders were flagged for a problem with alcohol or substance use. Only 0.7 per cent were flagged for a possible mental health issue and an additional 0.5 per cent were cited for a possible issue with both mental health and substance use. The majority of Duncan RCMP arrests (91.7 per cent) did not identify either a substance use or mental health issue.

The results also indicate, however, that Indigenous people are particularly over-represented in arrests involving a possible substance use issue (see Table 4.11). Although Indigenous people represent 14.3 per cent of Duncan's population, they were involved in 32.9 per cent of incidents in which no substance use or mental health issues were raised (odds ratio=2.11), 39.9 per cent of arrests involving an alleged substance use issue (odds ratio=2.56), and 76.0 per cent of cases in which both mental health and substance use issues were flagged (odds ratio=4.87).

Both Hispanic people (odds ratio=3.00) and Arab/West Asian people (odds ratio=30.50) are grossly over-represented in arrest incidents that involved a potential substance use issue. White people are under-represented in arrest incidents that involved a possible substance use issue, but slightly over-represented in cases involving a possible mental health problem. Both Asians and South Asians are significantly under-represented in all case categories.

Arrests involving a mental health apprehension

The data indicate that only 74 of the 11,203 arrest incidents captured by the Duncan RCMP data (0.7 per cent) involved a mental health apprehension (see Table 4.12). The data, however, also indicate that both Indigenous and Arab/West Asian people are more highly over-represented in arrest incidents that involved a mental health apprehension than other types of incidents. For example, although Indigenous people represent 15.6 per cent of Duncan's resident population, they account for 33.4 per cent of all arrests that did not involve a mental health apprehension (odds ratio=2.14) and 40.5 per cent of arrests that involved a mental health apprehension (odds ratio=2.60).

Mental health incidents

In addition to arrests, BCOHRC’s research team requested data on all mental health incidents recorded by the Duncan RCMP over the past ten years. At this time, the RCMP were only able to provide BCOHRC with two years of data (2019 and 2020).

The Duncan/North Cowichan RCMP provided data on 10,743 individuals who were involved in a “mental health-related” incident between 2019 and 2020. These individuals include 4,299 individuals (40.0 per cent of the sample) who were identified as the “subject” of the police interaction (i.e., subject, suspect, emotionally disturbed person, accused person, etc.). An additional 3,665 persons were identified as the “complainant” in these incidents (34.1 per cent), 954 were identified as “witnesses” (8.9 per cent) and 248 individuals were identified as “victims” (2.3 per cent). The role code for the final 1,577 individuals (14.7 per cent of the sample) was simply identified as “other.”

As discussed above, conversations with RCMP officials revealed that the data, in its current state, cannot always identify the individual experiencing the mental health issue associated with the incident. A clear identification would involve a great deal of manual work that could not be completed within the study timeframe. Thus, in cases in which the police were responding to a crime or disturbance, the person with the mental health issue could be the offender but could also be the victim, complainant, or witness. The RCMP caution, therefore, that an analysis of the race of people involved in mental health incidents must be interpreted with caution.

Fully recognizing data limitations, the analysis below focusses on the “subjects” associated with RCMP mental health incidents. Subjects include the following role codes associated with mental health incidents: subject, suspect, emotionally disturbed person (EDP), accused, and charged. The research team decided to focus on “subjects” for three reasons. First of all, Indigenous people are more highly represented among the subjects in mental health cases than among complainants, witnesses, or victims. For example, Indigenous people represent 22.5 per cent of the subjects in Duncan RCMP mental health incidents, but only 17.9 per cent of complainants. Secondly, there is considerable evidence to suggest that, in the majority of cases, the subject role code in these incidents is, in fact, the same person experiencing a mental health issue. For example, in 56.4 per cent of all Duncan/North Cowichan cases, the primary reason for the police response is listed as enforcement of the *Mental Health Act*. According to the RCMP, it is highly likely that the “subject” in all *Mental Health Act* cases is the same person experiencing the mental health issue associated with the case. Finally, we feel that it is important to examine the race of subjects involved in mental health incidents even if they are not the person experiencing the mental health issue. After all, these “subjects” are the focus of the RCMP intervention.

The RCMP provided BCOHRC with data on 4,009 mental health incidents that included the race of civilian subjects (see Table 4.14). Civilian subjects include those categorized by the RCMP as subjects, suspects, accused persons, etc. Subjects do not include other roles including complainants, witnesses, or victims. In other words, subjects are persons who are the subject to the police investigation.

The data indicate that Arab/West Asian people are the only group significantly over-represented as subjects in Duncan mental health incidents. Although they represent only 0.2 per cent of the population, they were involved in 0.8 per cent of all mental health incidents (odds ratio=4.00).

The Arab/West Asian mental health incident rate (29,091 per 100,000) is 3.5 times greater than the White rate (8,211 per 100,000).

Indigenous people (odds ratio=1.44) and Black people (odds ratio=1.33) are also over-represented, as subjects, in mental health incidents. However, their respective odds ratios do not meet the 1.50 level that would have signaled a significant racial disparity. All other racial minority groups are under-represented in Duncan RCMP mental health incidents. White people are represented at a level that is equal to their representation in the general resident population (odds ratio=0.95).

Gender, race, and mental health incidents

Men were identified as the subjects in 60.3 per cent of all mental health incidents documented by the Duncan RCMP between 2019 and 2020. Women are more highly represented in Duncan mental health incidents (39.7 per cent) than arrest incidents (29.3 per cent).

Arab/West Asian males (odds ratio=7.00), Black males (odds ratio=1.67) and Indigenous males (odds ratio=1.63) are all significantly over-represented in Duncan RCMP mental health-related incidents (see Tables 4.15 through 4.17). Indigenous females (odds ratio=1.29) and White males (odds ratio=1.24) are also slightly over-represented in mental incidents. However, the odds ratios for these groups are below the 1.50 threshold that would signify a significant disparity.

The representation of Hispanic males and Arab/West Asian women is equal to their representation in the general population (odds ratio=1.00). South Asian and Asian males are both significantly under-represented in Duncan RCMP mental health incidents. White, Black, Asian, South Asian, and Hispanic women are all significantly under-represented in mental health incidents (see Figure 4.3).

Arab/West Asian males have by far the highest mental health incident rate (38,573 per 100,000), followed by Black males (15,714 per 100,000), Indigenous males (14,041 per 100,000), Arab/West Asian females (12,500 per 100,000), and Indigenous females (11,097).

The impact of unique individuals

As with arrests, it is important to examine the impact that unique individuals may have on observed racial disparities in Duncan RCMP mental health-related statistics. Individuals who have been subjected to multiple mental health incidents could drive up the numbers for the racial group to which they belong. Fortunately, the data provided by the RCMP assigned a unique person identification number (PIN) to individuals involved in each mental health incident. This allowed the research team to identify individuals involved in more than one mental health incident.

Our results indicate that 1,815 unique individuals were involved as subjects in the 4,009 mental health incidents captured by the Duncan RCMP. This works out to an average of 2.21 incidents per unique individual in the mental health dataset. The number of mental health incidents, per unique individual, ranges from 1 to 122 separate incidents. However, it must be stressed that 68.8 per cent of the unique individuals in the mental health dataset were involved in only one

incident. An additional 15.4 per cent of the sample were involved in only two incidents. Only 15.7 per cent of the unique individuals in the Duncan RCMP mental health dataset were involved in three or more incidents during the two-year study period (2019-2020).

Table 4.18 recalculates mental health-based racial disparities counting unique individuals only once. This strategy eliminates the impact of statistical outliers who have been involved in multiple mental health incidents. The results reveal that controlling for the impact of unique individuals has little impact on observed racial disparities. For example, the proportion of Duncan mental health incidents involving Indigenous people remains at 23.0 per cent after controlling for individuals who were involved in multiple incidents.

After counting unique individuals only once, the odds ratio for Indigenous people rises slightly from 1.44 to 1.47. After controlling for the impact of unique individuals, Arab/West Asian people (odds ratio=3.00) and Black people (odds ratio=1.50) emerge as the only two groups that are significantly over-represented in Duncan mental health-related incidents.

The representation of White people in mental health incidents is equal to their presence in Duncan's resident population (odds ratio=0.96). Asian (odds ratio=0.27), South Asian (odds ratio=0.48), and Hispanic people (odds ratio=0.67) are all under-represented.

Figure 4.4 presents the mean number of mental health incidents, per unique individual, in the Duncan RCMP mental health dataset. The results reveal that Arab/West Asian people averaged 3.2 mental health incidents per unique individual, followed by Asian individuals (mean=3.1 incidents), South Asian individuals (mean=2.73 incidents), and people from other racial minority backgrounds. These racial differences are statistically significant.

Reason for police response

BCOHRC's research team requested information about the cause or reason for each mental health incident. The RCMP were able to provide information on the reason for the police response and/or the four most serious offences associated with each mental health incident. This data was used to determine the factors or behaviours that contributed to the police response that led to the documentation of the mental health incident.

Over half of all incidents (54.3 per cent) involved enforcement of the *Mental Health Act*. Approximately 9.0 per cent of all cases involved either a missing person investigation (5.9 per cent) or a well-being check (3.1 per cent). Most other cases involved either a general disturbance/mischief call (14.3 per cent) or an alleged criminal offence (13.7 per cent). In sum, two-thirds of all mental health incidents (63.3 per cent) involved either the enforcement of the *Mental Health Act*, a missing persons investigation, or a well-being check. This finding, in our opinion, increases confidence that, in most cases, the subject identified in these incidents is indeed the person linked to the mental health issue.

Tables 4.19 and 4.20 document the representation of different racial groups in fifteen categories that describe the reason for the police response. The results reveal that Indigenous people are significantly over-represented (as indicated by an odds ratio of 1.50 or greater) in five of the 15

categories including sex offences, drug crime, administration of justice offences, disturbance calls, and enforcement of the *Mental Health Act*.

Black people are over-represented in four of the fifteen response categories including minor violence, administration of justice offences, calls for unspecified assistance, and traffic violations. Hispanic people are also over-represented in four response categories including major violence, property crime, unspecified assistance calls, and calls that involved a suspicious person or vehicle. People of Arab/West Asian descent are over-represented in 11 of the 15 response categories including minor violence, property crime, drug crime, administration of justice offences, disturbance calls, unspecified assistance calls, missing person investigations, and incidents that involved the enforcement of the *Mental Health Act*.

By contrast, White people are either under-represented in all response categories or represented at level that is consistent with their presence in the general population. South Asian people are under-represented in 14 of the 15 police response categories. They are slightly over-represented in calls involving a suspicious person or vehicle (odds ratio=1.39). Asian people are under-represented in all of the response categories pertaining to Duncan mental health-related incidents.

Incident outcome

Table 4.21 documents the extent to which mental health incidents resulted in either charges being laid against the subject or a mental health apprehension. The results suggest that the representation of different racial groups varies little with respect to case outcome. However, there is some evidence to suggest that Indigenous people are more likely to be involved in mental health apprehensions and less likely to be involved in incidents that resulted in a formal charge.

Indigenous people represent 15.6 per cent of the Duncan resident population, 22.5 per cent of all RCMP mental health incidents, 25.8 per cent of cases that resulted in a mental health apprehension, and only 16.2 per cent of incidents that resulted in a criminal charge.

Arab/West Asian people are also significantly over-represented in all outcome categories—but they are particularly over-represented in cases that resulted in a criminal charge (odds ratio=13.00). All other racial groups are either under-represented or represented at a level that is equal to their presence in Duncan's resident population.

Identification of substance use issues

The Duncan data also indicate whether, according to the RCMP, the subject had a substance use issue at the time of the mental health incident (see Table 4.22). The results indicate that 5.7 per cent of subjects were flagged for a possible substance abuse issue.

The results also indicate that Indigenous people are over-represented in cases that did not identify a substance use issue (odds ratio=1.47), but slightly under-represented in cases in which a substance use issue was flagged (odds ratio=0.92).

Arab/West Asian people are significantly over-represented in mental health incidents that did not flag a substance use issue (odds ratio=2.00). However, they are grossly over-represented in cases that flagged a possible substance use issue. Although they represent only 0.2 per cent of Duncan's population, Arab/West Asian people were involved in 7.4 per cent of mental health incidents in which the police identified a substance use issue (odds ratio=37.00). All other groups are under-represented in cases involving a possible substance abuse problem or represented at a level that is consistent with their presence in the general Duncan population.

Strip searches

In addition to arrests, BCOHRC's research team received data on all strip search incidents recorded by the Duncan RCMP from 2019 to 2020. According to the data, the Duncan RCMP conducted 19 strip searches between January 1st, 2019 and December 31st, 2020. An average of 9.5 strip searches per year over the two-year time period. It should be noted that the Duncan RCMP's documented strip search rate is significantly lower than many other Canadian services. This will be discussed further in the conclusion of the final report.

Eighteen of the 19 strip searches (94.7 per cent) were conducted on male civilians. Only one was conducted on a woman (5.3 per cent). Three quarters of Duncan RCMP strip searches (73.1 per cent) involved White civilians and 21.1 per cent involved people of Indigenous descent. Only one strip search involved a Black person. People from all other racial groups were not subject to a strip search.

Based on these low numbers, Black people are the only group over-represented in Duncan strip search statistics (odds ratio=8.83). However, this over-representation is based on the fact that a single strip search represents 5.3 per cent of all strip searches that took place during the study period.

Although census benchmarking demonstrates the impact of strip searches at the aggregate population level, it might be argued that racial disparities in strip searches should be calculated by comparing the proportion of the population who have been strip searched with the proportion of the population that has been arrested. Further analysis indicates that once we control or benchmark for the arrested population, Black people remain over-represented in strip search statistics. They were involved in 0.8% of arrests and 5.3% of strip searches (odds ratio=6.63).

Duncan/North Cowichan tables and figures

**TABLE 4.1: Total arrests by race of accused,
Duncan/North Cowichan RCMP, January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2020**

Racial group	Population estimate	Per cent of population	Number of arrests	Per cent of arrests	Odds Ratio	Average annual arrest rate (per 100,000)
White/European	17,910	76.9	6,975	62.3	0.81	19,427.4
Indigenous	3,610	15.6	3,749	33.5	2.15	51,925.2
Black	130	0.6	92	0.8	1.33	35,384.5
South Asian	720	3.1	120	1.1	0.35	8,333.3
Asian	705	3.0	114	1.0	0.33	8,085.1
Hispanic	80	0.3	50	0.4	1.33	31,250.0
Arab/West Asian	55	0.2	92	0.8	4.00	83,636.4
Other	70	0.3	11	0.1	0.33	7,857.1
TOTAL	23,280	100.0	11,203	100.0	1.00	24,061.4

**TABLE 4.2: Total arrests by race of male accused,
Duncan/North Cowichan RCMP, January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2020**

Racial group	Estimated male population	Per cent of male population	Number of arrests	Per cent of arrests	Odds ratio	Average annual arrest rate (per 100,000)
White/European	8,560	77.2	5,021	63.4	0.82	29,328.3
Indigenous	1,695	15.3	2,545	32.2	2.10	75,073.7
Black	70	0.6	53	0.7	1.17	37,857.1
South Asian	370	3.3	105	1.3	0.39	14,189.2
Asian	300	2.7	49	0.6	0.22	8,166.7
Hispanic	30	0.3	47	0.6	2.00	78,333.3
Arab/West Asian	35	0.3	87	1.1	3.67	124,285.7
Other	30	0.3	9	0.1	0.33	15,000.0
TOTAL	11,090	100.0	7,916	100.0	1.00	35,689.8

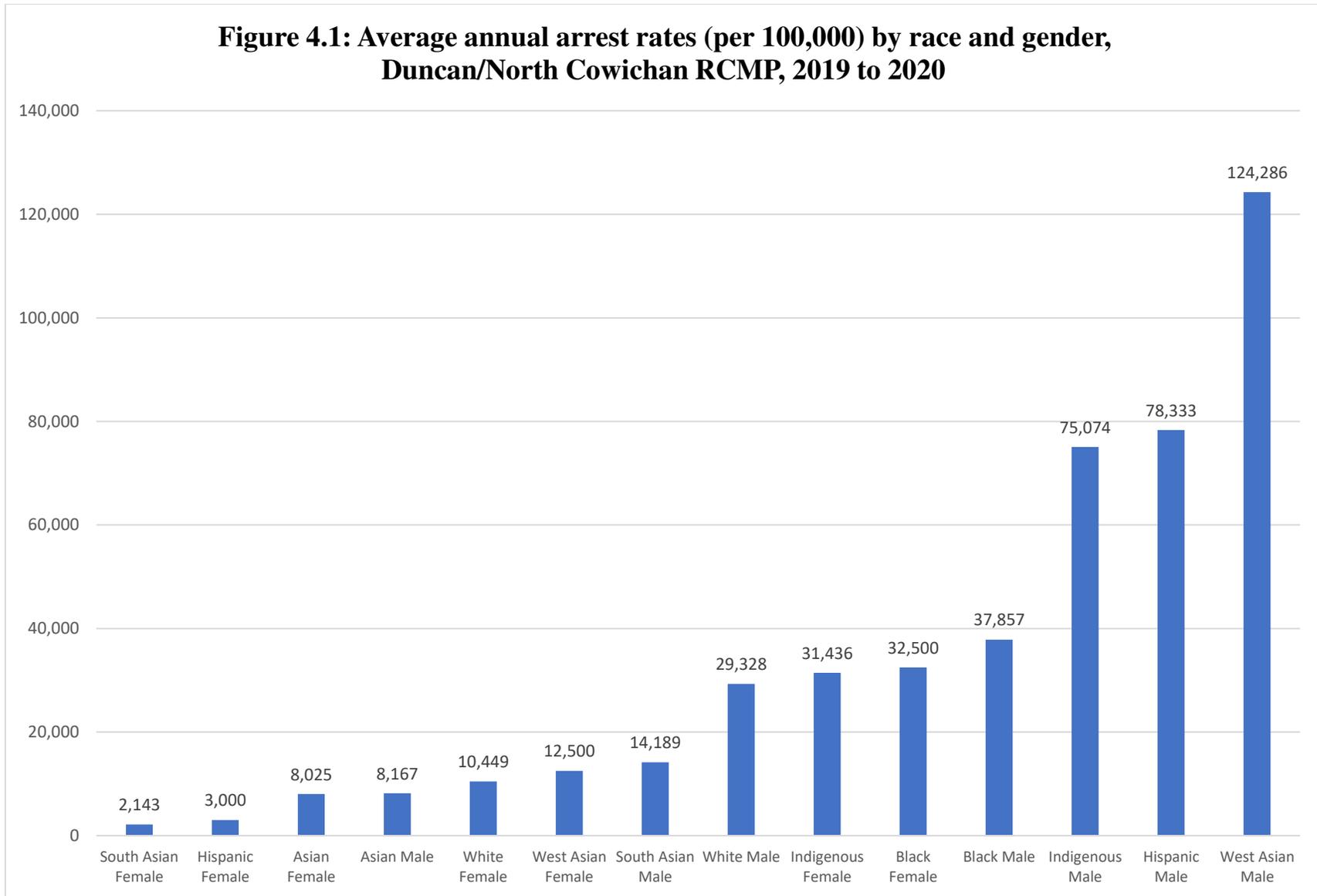
**TABLE 4.3: Total arrests by race of female accused,
Duncan/North Cowichan RCMP, January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2020**

Racial group	Estimated female population	Per cent of female population	Number of arrests	Per cent of arrests	Odds ratio	Average annual arrest rate (per 100,000)
White/European	9,350	76.7	1,954	59.4	0.77	10,449.2
Indigenous	1,915	15.7	1,204	36.6	2.33	31,436.0
Black	60	0.5	39	1.2	2.40	32,500.0
South Asian	350	2.9	15	0.5	0.17	2,142.9
Asian	405	3.3	65	2.0	0.61	8,024.7
Hispanic	50	0.4	3	0.1	0.25	3,000.0
Arab/West Asian	20	0.2	5	0.2	1.00	12,500.0
Other	40	0.3	2	0.1	0.33	2,500.00
TOTAL	12,190	100.0	3,287	100.0	1.00	13,482.4

TABLE 4.4: Summary of arrest statistics by race and gender, Duncan/North Cowichan RCMP, January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2020

Race/gender group	Per cent population	Per cent arrests	Odds ratio	Average annual arrest rate (per 100,000)
Indigenous Male	7.3	22.7	3.11	75,073.7
Indigenous Female	8.2	10.7	1.30	31,436.0
Black Male	0.3	0.5	1.67	37,857.1
Black Female	0.3	0.3	1.00	32,500.0
South Asian Male	1.6	0.9	0.56	14,189.2
South Asian Female	1.5	0.1	0.07	2,142.9
Asian Male	1.3	0.4	0.31	8,166.7
Asian Female	1.7	0.6	0.35	8,024.7
Hispanic Male	0.1	0.4	4.00	78,333.3
Hispanic Female	0.2	0.0	0.00	3,000.0
West Asian Male	0.1	0.8	8.00	124,285.7
West Asian Female	0.1	0.1	1.00	12,500.0
White Male	36.8	44.8	1.22	29,328.3
White Female	40.2	17.4	0.43	10,449.2
Other Male	0.1	0.1	1.00	15,000.0
Other Female	0.2	0.0	0.00	2,500.0

Figure 4.1: Average annual arrest rates (per 100,000) by race and gender, Duncan/North Cowichan RCMP, 2019 to 2020



**TABLE 4.5: Arrests of unique individuals by race of accused,
Duncan/North Cowichan RCMP, January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2020**

Racial group	Population estimate	Per cent of population	Number of arrests	Per cent of arrests	Odds ratio	Average annual arrest rate (per 100,000)
White/European	17,910	76.9	3,540	70.6	0.92	9,882.7
Indigenous	3,610	15.6	1,247	24.9	1.60	17,271.5
Black	130	0.6	43	0.9	1.50	16,538.5
South Asian	720	3.1	72	1.4	0.45	5,000.0
Asian	705	3.0	47	0.9	0.30	3,333.3
Hispanic	80	0.3	21	0.4	1.33	13,125.0
Arab/West Asian	55	0.2	33	0.7	3.50	30,000.0
Other	70	0.3	8	0.2	0.67	5,714.3
TOTAL	23,280	100.0	5,011	100.0	1.00	10,762.5

Figure 4.2: Mean number of arrests per unique individual by race of accused, Duncan/North Cowichan RCMP, 2019 to 2020

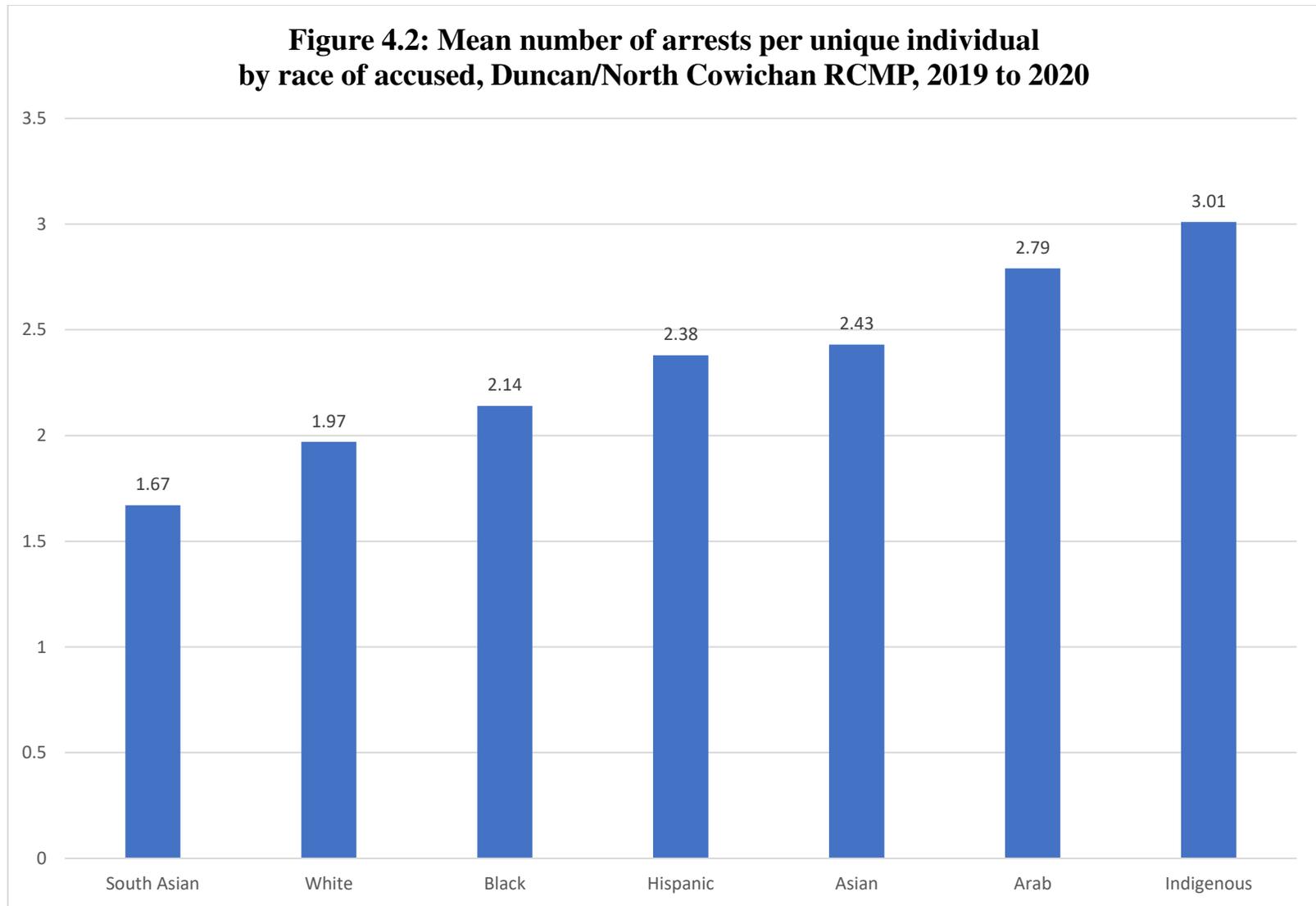


TABLE 4.6: Proportion of arrests involving people from different racial groups by type of offence, Duncan/North Cowichan RCMP, 2019 to 2020

Offence type	White	Indigenous	Black	South Asian	Asian	Hispanic	Arab/West Asian	# of Cases
% Arrested for minor violence	56.6	38.7	1.2	1.4	0.4	0.5	1.3	1,104
% Arrested for major violence	62.7	32.6	0.8	1.4	0.3	2.2	0.0	365
% Arrested for sex offences	54.5	39.8	0.8	1.6	0.8	0.0	0.8	123
% Arrested for fraud	67.6	27.0	1.4	4.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	74
% Arrested for theft	59.4	38.2	0.8	0.6	0.3	0.5	0.3	794
% Arrested for break and enter	80.0	15.7	0.0	0.7	0.0	0.0	3.6	140
% Arrested for other property crime	77.7	20.9	0.5	0.5	0.0	0.5	0.0	220
% Arrested for drug possession	64.8	30.9	1.5	0.5	0.9	0.7	0.9	775
% Arrested for drug trafficking/distribution	74.8	20.9	1.2	1.2	0.6	0.6	0.0	163
% Arrested for administration of justice charges	48.5	48.0	0.6	0.8	0.4	0.5	1.1	2,745
% Arrested for public intoxication	22.0	76.5	0.5	0.2	0.1	0.4	0.3	1,534
% Arrested for mischief	59.0	36.3	0.7	0.7	1.8	0.5	1.0	1,249
% Arrested for causing a disturbance	60.1	34.9	0.5	0.7	1.7	0.3	1.8	1,085
% Arrested for driving-related charges	79.5	15.2	1.0	1.6	1.3	0.5	0.7	3,947
% Arrested for driving under the influence	67.2	28.3	1.7	1.9	0.0	0.6	0.2	463

% Arrested for other violations	60.9	35.4	0.5	1.4	0.8	0.4	0.5	1,906
PER CENT PRINCE GEORGE POPULATION	76.9	15.6	0.6	3.1	3.0	0.3	0.2	23,280

TABLE 4.7: The representation of different racial groups in arrest statistics (as measured by odds ratios) by type of offence, Duncan/North Cowichan RCMP, 2019 to 2020

Offence type	White	Indigenous	Black	South Asian	Asian	Hispanic	Arab/West Asian
Arrested for minor violence	0.74	2.48	2.00	0.45	0.13	1.67	6.50
Arrested for major violence	0.81	2.09	1.33	0.45	0.10	7.33	0.00
Arrested for sex offences	0.71	2.55	1.33	0.52	0.27	0.00	4.00
Arrested for fraud	0.88	1.73	2.33	1.32	0.00	0.00	0.00
Arrested for theft	0.77	2.45	1.33	0.19	0.10	1.67	1.50
Arrested for break and enter	1.04	1.01	0.00	0.23	0.00	0.00	18.00
Arrested for other property crime	1.01	1.34	0.83	0.16	0.00	1.67	0.00
Arrested for drug possession	0.84	1.98	2.50	0.16	0.30	2.33	4.50
Arrested for drug trafficking/distribution	0.97	1.34	2.00	0.39	0.20	2.00	0.00
Arrested for administration of justice charges	0.63	3.08	1.00	0.26	0.13	1.67	5.50
Arrested for public intoxication	0.29	4.90	0.83	0.06	0.03	1.33	1.50
Arrested for mischief	0.77	2.33	1.17	0.23	0.60	1.67	5.00
Arrested for causing a disturbance	0.78	2.24	0.83	0.23	0.56	1.00	9.00
Arrested for driving-related charges	1.03	0.97	1.67	0.52	0.43	1.67	3.50
Arrested for driving under the influence	0.87	1.81	2.83	0.61	0.00	2.00	1.00

Arrested for other violations

0.08

2.27

0.83

0.45

0.27

1.33

2.50

**TABLE 4.8: Number and per cent of arrests by type of clearance,
Duncan/North Cowichan RCMP, 2019 to 2020**

Type of arrest clearance	Number of arrests	Per cent of arrests
Charged	2,709	21.7
Charges unfounded	384	3.1
Non-reportable	3,022	24.2
Police discretion	5,613	44.9
Victim withdrew charge	634	5.1
Alternative measures	62	0.5
Other/unknown	71	0.5
TOTAL	13,673	100.0

**TABLE 4.9: Per cent of arrests by race of accused and clearance outcome,
Duncan/North Cowichan RCMP, 2019 to 2020**

Race of accused	% Duncan Population	% charged	% charges unfounded	% police discretion	% complaint withdrawn by victim	% not reportable	% alternative measure
White	76.9	61.9	61.2	54.4	59.4	82.6	59.2
Indigenous	15.6	33.3	35.0	41.8	36.8	12.3	40.8
Black	0.6	1.1	1.1	0.7	0.8	0.9	0.0
South Asian	3.1	1.2	0.5	0.9	1.5	1.5	0.0
Asian	3.0	0.5	0.3	1.5	0.3	1.5	0.0
Hispanic	0.3	0.5	0.8	0.6	0.2	0.6	0.0
Arab	0.2	1.3	1.1	0.6	1.0	0.6	0.0
Other	0.3	0.2	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.0
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

**TABLE 4.10: Number and per cent of arrests by whether
police note substance use or mental health issues,
Duncan/North Cowichan RCMP, 2019 to 2020**

Police note substance use or mental health issues	Number of arrests	Per cent of arrests
No substance use or mental health issues noted by police	10,278	91.7
Substance use issue noted	800	7.1
Mental health issue noted	75	0.7
Both substance use and mental health issues noted	50	0.5
TOTAL	11,203	100.0

TABLE 4.11: Per cent of arrests by race of accused and police notification of mental health and substance use issues, Duncan/North Cowichan RCMP, 2019 to 2020

Race of accused	% Duncan population	% no substance use or MH issue noted	% substance use noted	% mental health issue noted	% both substance use and mental health issue noted
White	76.9	63.0	52.6	85.3	24.0
Indigenous	15.6	32.9	39.9	14.7	76.0
Black	0.6	0.9	0.3	0.0	0.0
South Asian	3.1	1.2	0.0	0.0	0.0
Asian	3.0	1.1	0.1	0.0	0.0
Hispanic	0.3	0.4	0.9	0.0	0.0
Arab	0.2	0.4	6.1	0.0	0.0
Other	0.3	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

TABLE 4.12:
Number and per cent of arrests by whether arrest resulted in a mental health apprehension,
Duncan/North Cowichan RCMP, 2019 to 2020

Type of arrest	Number of arrests	Per cent of arrests
No mental health apprehension	11,129	99.3
Mental health apprehension	74	0.7
TOTAL	11,203	100.0

TABLE 4.13:
Per cent of arrests by whether the arrest resulted in a mental health apprehension and race of the accused,
Duncan/North Cowichan RCMP, 2019 to 2020

Race of accused	% Duncan population	% no mental health apprehension	% mental health apprehensions
White	76.9	62.3	56.8
Indigenous	15.6	33.4	40.5
Black	0.6	0.8	0.0
South Asian	3.1	1.1	0.0
Asian	3.0	1.0	1.4
Hispanic	0.3	0.4	0.0
Arab	0.2	0.8	1.4
Other	0.3	0.1	0.0
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0

**TABLE 4.14: Total mental health incidents by race of civilian subjects,
Duncan/North Cowichan RCMP, January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2020**

Racial group	Population estimate	Per cent of population	Number of mental health incidents	Per cent of mental health incidents	Odds ratio	Average annual MH incident rate (per 100,000)
White/European	17,910	76.9	2,941	73.4	0.95	8,210.5
Indigenous	3,610	15.6	901	22.5	1.44	12,479.2
Black	130	0.6	32	0.8	1.33	12,307.7
South Asian	720	3.1	60	1.5	0.48	4,166.7
Asian	705	3.0	31	0.8	0.27	2,198.6
Hispanic	80	0.3	7	0.2	0.67	4,375.0
Arab/West Asian	55	0.2	32	0.8	4.00	29,090.9
Other	70	0.3	5	0.1	0.33	3,571.4
TOTAL	23,280	100.0	4,009	100.0	1.00	8,610.4

**TABLE 4.15: Total mental incidents by race of male subjects,
Duncan/North Cowichan RCMP, January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2020**

Racial group	Estimated male population	Per cent of male population	Number of mental health incidents	Per cent of mental health incidents	Odds ratio	Average mental health incident rate (per 100,000)
White/European	8,560	77.2	1,827	75.6	0.98	10,671.7
Indigenous	1,695	15.3	476	19.7	1.29	14,041.3
Black	70	0.6	22	0.9	1.50	15,714.3
South Asian	370	3.3	48	2.0	0.61	6,486.5
Asian	300	2.7	6	0.2	0.07	1,000.0
Hispanic	30	0.3	6	0.2	0.67	10,000.0
Arab/West Asian	35	0.3	27	1.1	3.67	38,571.4
Other	30	0.3	4	0.2	0.67	6,666.7
TOTAL	11,090	100.0	2,416	100.0	1.00	10,892.7

**TABLE 4.16: Total mental health incidents by race of female subjects,
Duncan/North Cowichan RCMP, January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2020**

Racial group	Estimated female population	Per cent of female population	Number of mental health incidents	Per cent of mental health incidents	Odds ratio	Average annual mental health incident rate (per 100,000)
White/European	9,350	76.7	1,113	69.9	0.91	5,951.9
Indigenous	1,915	15.7	425	26.7	1.70	11,096.6
Black	60	0.5	10	0.6	1.20	8,333.3
South Asian	350	2.9	12	0.8	0.28	1,714.3
Asian	405	3.3	25	1.6	0.48	3,086.4
Hispanic	50	0.4	1	0.1	0.25	1,000.0
Arab/West Asian	20	0.2	5	0.3	1.50	12,500.0
Other	40	0.3	1	0.1	0.33	1,250.0
TOTAL	12,190	100.0	1,592	100.0	1.00	6,529.9

**TABLE 4.17: Summary of mental health incident statistics
by race and gender, Duncan/North Cowichan RCMP,
January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2020**

Race/gender group	Per cent population	Per cent of mental health incidents	Odds ratio	Average annual mental health incident rate (per 100,000)
Indigenous Male	7.3	11.9	1.63	14,041.3
Indigenous Female	8.2	10.6	1.29	11,096.6
Black Male	0.3	0.5	1.67	15,714.3
Black Female	0.3	0.2	0.67	8,333.3
South Asian Male	1.6	1.2	0.75	6,486.5
South Asian Female	1.5	0.3	0.20	1,714.3
Asian Male	1.3	0.1	0.08	1,000.0
Asian Female	1.7	0.6	0.35	3,086.4
Hispanic Male	0.1	0.1	1.00	10,000.0
Hispanic Female	0.2	0.0	0.00	1,000.0
West Asian Male	0.1	0.7	7.00	38,571.4
West Asian Female	0.1	0.1	1.00	12,500.0
White Male	36.8	45.6	1.24	10,671.7
White Female	40.2	27.8	0.69	5,591.9
Other Male	0.1	0.1	1.00	6,666.7

Other Female	0.2	0.0	0.00	1,250.0
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**Figure 4.3: Mental health incident rate (per 100,000) by race and gender
Duncan/North Cowichan RCMP, 2019 to 2020**

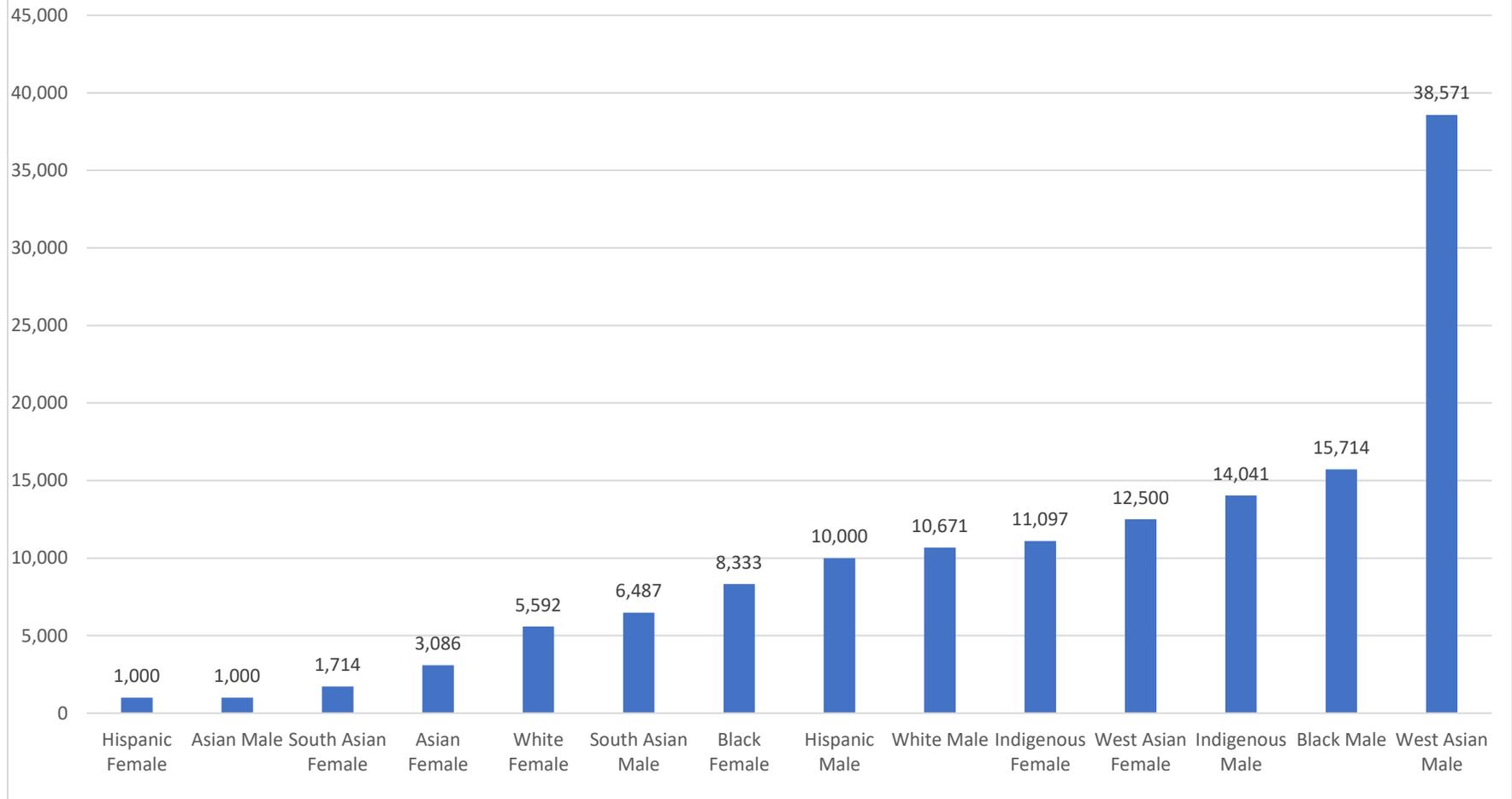


TABLE 4.18: Mental health incidents involving unique individuals by race of civilian subject, Duncan/North Cowichan RCMP, January 1, 2011 to December 31, 2020

Racial group	Population estimate	Per cent of population	Number of mental health incidents	Per cent of mental health incidents	Odds ratio	Average annual mental health incident rate (per 100,000)
White/European	17,910	76.9	1,342	73.9	0.96	3,746.5
Indigenous	3,610	15.6	408	22.9	1.47	5,651.0
Black	130	0.6	17	0.9	1.50	6,538.5
South Asian	720	3.1	22	1.2	0.38	1,527.8
Asian	705	3.0	10	0.6	0.20	709.2
Hispanic	80	0.3	3	0.2	0.67	1,875.0
Arab/West Asian	55	0.2	10	0.6	3.00	9,090.9
Other	70	0.3	3	0.2	0.67	2,142.8
TOTAL	23,280	100.0	1,815	100.0	1.00	3,898.2

Figure 4.4: Mean number or mental health incidents per unique individual by race of civilian, Duncan/North Cowichan RCMP, 2019 to 2020

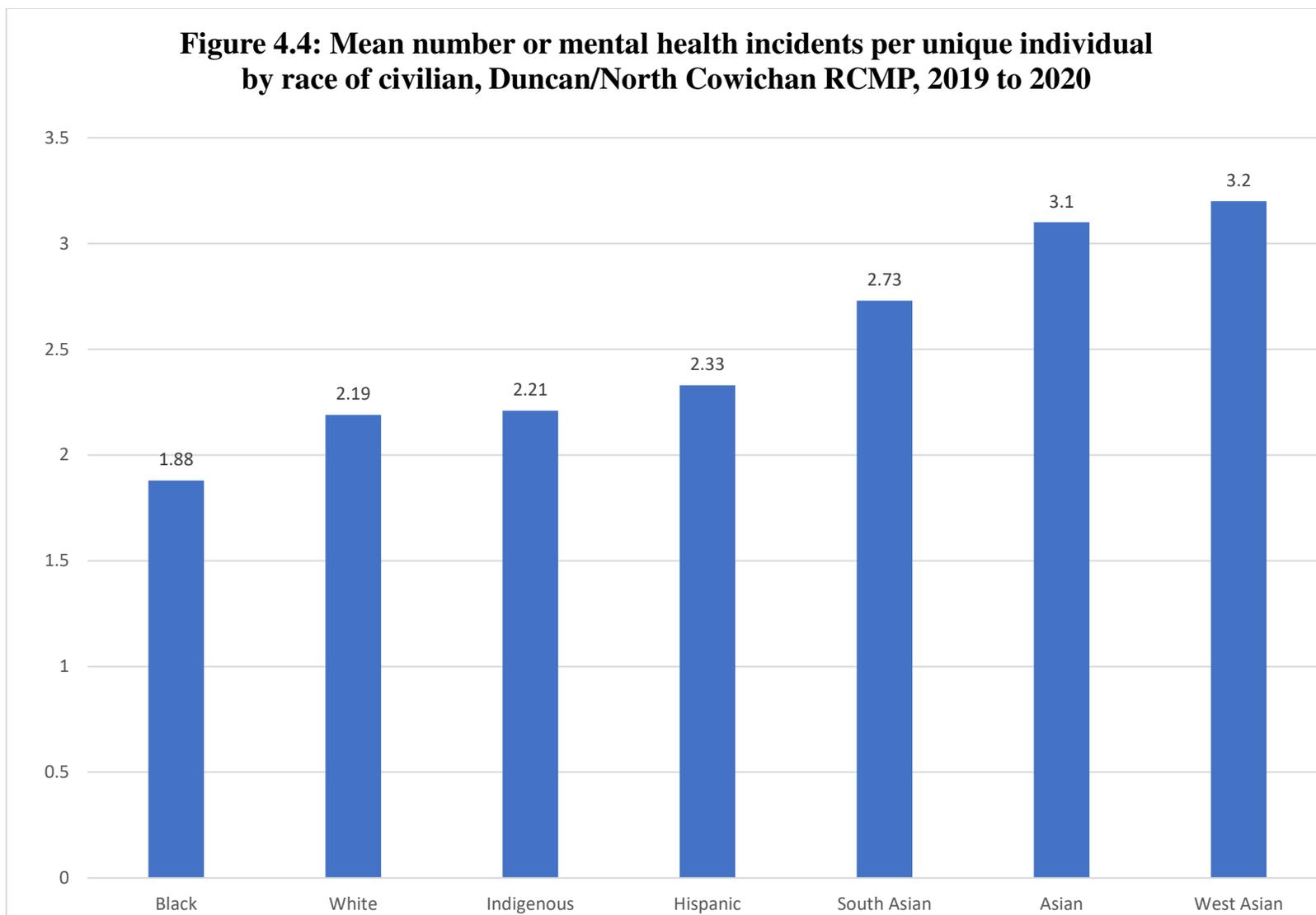


TABLE 4.19: Proportion of mental health incidents involving people from different racial groups by reason for police response, Duncan/North Cowichan RCMP, 2019 to 2020

Offence type	White	Indigenous	Black	South Asian	Asian	Hispanic	Arab/West Asian	Number of cases
% Minor violence	77.8	17.6	1.8	0.7	0.4	0.0	1.4	279
% Major violence	79.7	15.3	0.0	1.7	1.7	1.7	0.0	59
% Sex offences	65.6	31.3	0.0	3.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	32
% Property crime	74.7	16.0	0.0	1.3	1.3	1.3	5.3	75
% Drug crime	65.2	26.1	0.0	0.0	4.3	0.0	4.3	46
% Administration of justice charges	62.7	35.6	1.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	59
% Mischief	77.8	18.1	0.7	1.7	1.0	0.0	0.7	293
% Disturbance	70.3	26.5	0.0	1.1	0.7	0.0	1.4	283
% Unspecified assistance	82.7	12.5	1.9	1.0	0.0	1.0	1.0	104
% Missing person investigation	73.1	22.7	0.0	0.8	2.1	0.4	0.4	238
% Well-being check	74.6	20.6	0.8	1.6	2.4	0.0	0.0	126
% <i>Mental Health Act</i>	71.6	24.8	0.8	1.6	0.5	0.1	0.5	2,183
% Suspicious person/vehicle	87.2	2.1	0.0	4.3	0.0	2.1	2.1	47
% Traffic violation	84.7	11.8	1.2	1.2	0.0	0.0	1.2	85
% Other reason	78.1	14.9	1.8	2.6	0.9	0.0	1.8	114
PER CENT DUNCAN POPULATION	76.9	15.6	0.6	3.1	3.0	0.3	0.2	23,280

TABLE 4.20: The representation of different racial groups in mental health incident statistics (as measured by odds ratios) by reason for police response, Duncan/North Cowichan RCMP, 2019 to 2020

Offence type	White	Indigenous	Black	South Asian	Asian	Hispanic	Arab/West Asian
% Minor violence	1.01	1.13	3.00	0.23	0.13	0.00	7.00
% Major violence	1.04	0.98	0.00	0.55	0.57	5.67	0.00
% Sex offences	0.85	2.01	0.00	1.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
% Property crime	0.97	1.03	0.00	0.42	0.43	4.33	2.65
% Drug crime	0.84	1.67	0.00	0.00	1.43	0.00	26.50
% Administration of justice charges	0.81	2.37	2.83	0.00	0.00	0.00	21.50
% Mischief	1.01	1.16	1.17	0.55	0.33	0.00	0.00
% Disturbance	0.91	1.70	0.0	0.35	0.23	0.00	3.50
% Unspecified assistance	1.07	0.80	3.17	0.32	0.00	3.33	7.00
% Missing person investigation	0.95	1.45	0.00	0.26	0.70	1.33	5.00
% Well-being check	0.97	1.32	1.33	0.52	0.80	0.00	0.00
% <i>Mental Health Act</i>	0.93	1.59	1.33	0.52	0.17	0.33	2.50
% Suspicious person/vehicle	1.13	0.13	0.00	1.39	0.00	7.00	10.50
% Traffic violation	1.10	0.76	2.00	0.39	0.00	0.00	6.00
% Other reason	1.02	0.96	3.00	0.84	0.30	0.00	9.00

TABLE 4.21: Proportion of mental health incidents that resulted in a mental health apprehension or criminal charge by race of subject, Duncan/North Cowichan RCMP, 2019-2020

Racial group	Per cent of population	% all mental health incidents	% incidents that resulted in a mental health apprehension	% incidents that resulted in a criminal charge
White/European	76.9	73.4	70.1	76.9
Indigenous	15.6	22.5	25.8	16.2
Black	0.6	0.8	0.8	0.9
South Asian	3.1	1.5	1.4	0.9
Asian	3.0	0.8	0.7	0.0
Hispanic	0.3	0.2	0.1	1.7
Arab/West Asian	0.2	0.8	1.0	2.6
Other	0.3	0.1	0.1	0.9
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

TABLE 4.22:
Proportion of mental health incidents noting a substance use issue
by race of subject, Duncan/North Cowichan RCMP, 2019-2020

Racial group	Per cent of population	% incidents that did not identify a subject substance use issue	% incidents that noted a subject substance use issue
White/European	76.9	73.0	78.3
Indigenous	15.6	23.0	14.3
Black	0.6	0.8	0.0
South Asian	3.1	1.6	0.0
Asian	3.0	0.8	0.0
Hispanic	0.3	0.2	0.0
Arab/West Asian	0.2	0.4	7.4
Other	0.3	0.1	0.0
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0

**TABLE 4.23: Total strip searches, by race of accused,
Duncan/ North Cowichan RCMP, January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2020**

Racial group	Population estimate	Per cent of population	Number of strip searches	Per cent of strip searches	Odds ratio	Average annual strip search rate (per 100,000)
White/European	17,910	76.9	14	73.7	0.96	39.1
Indigenous	3,610	15.6	4	21.1	1.35	55.4
Black	130	0.6	1	5.3	8.83	384.6
South Asian	720	3.1	0	0.0	0.00	0.0
Asian	705	3.0	0	0.0	0.00	0.0
Hispanic	80	0.3	0	0.0	0.00	0.0
Arab/West Asian	55	0.2	0	0.0	0.00	0.0
Other	70	0.3	0	0.0	0.00	0.0
TOTAL	23,280	100.0	19	100.0	1.00	40.8

Nelson data: Racial disparities in Nelson Police Department (NPD) statistics

Arrest (chargeable incident) statistics

The Nelson Police Department (NPD) provided BCOHRC with data on 1,687 arrest incidents that took place between 2019 and 2020. Offender race was available for 1,617 cases (95.9 per cent of the sample). It is these 1,617 cases that are the focus of the analysis below.⁶

The data indicate that both Indigenous and Black people are significantly over-represented in Nelson Police arrest data (see Table 5.1). Although Indigenous people represent only 5.4 per cent of Nelson's population, they were involved in 10.3 per cent of all arrests captured by the NPD data (Table 5.1). In other words, Indigenous people are 1.9 times more likely to appear in NPD arrest data than their presence in the general population would predict. Furthermore, the average annual Indigenous arrest rate (14,310 per 100,000) is almost twice the White rate (7,315 per 100,000).

Although Black people represent only 0.7 per cent of Nelson's population, they were involved in 1.5 per cent of all arrests captured by the NPD data (Table 5.1). In other words, Black people were 2.1 times more likely to appear in the NPD arrest data than their presence in the general population would predict. Furthermore, the average annual Black arrest rate (17,143 per 100,000) is 2.3 times greater than the White rate (7,315 per 100,000).⁷

Asian, South Asian, and Arab/West Asian people are all significantly under-represented in the NPD arrest data (see Table 5.1). People of Hispanic background are only slightly over-represented (i.e., their arrest odds ratio of 1.33 does not meet the 1.50 threshold discussed above).

Due to the very low number of arrests involving non-Black visible minorities (29 in total), we collapse arrests involving Asian, South Asian, Hispanic, and Arab people into a single "other racial minority category" (see Table 5.2). The results indicate that although other racial minorities represent 4.3 per cent of Nelson's general population, they were involved in only 1.8 per cent of all arrest incidents from 2019 to 2020 (odds ratio=0.42). In other words, other racial minorities are 58 per cent less likely to be involved in an arrest incident than their presence in the general Nelson population would predict. The arrest rate for other racial minorities (3,152 per 100,000) is 82 per cent lower than the Black rate (17,143 per 100,000), 78 per cent lower than

⁶ This report uses census data for the City of Nelson to produce estimates of the racial composition of the population. The City of Nelson is more racially diverse than the broader Nelson Census Agglomeration Area. In other words, if we used population estimates for the broader Nelson Census Agglomeration area the observed racial disparities captured in this report would be even larger.

⁷ Over the two-year study period, the Nelson Police recorded 24 arrests of Black people. This is equivalent to 34.3% of Nelson's Black population. By contrast, the NPD recorded 1,398 arrests of White people. This equals 14.6% of Nelson's White population. Of course, we cannot assume that all people arrested by the NPD were actually residents of Nelson. Unfortunately, data on the residence of accused persons was not provided.

the Indigenous rate (14,310 per 100,000), and 57 per cent lower than the White rate (7,315 per 100,000).

Gender, race, and arrests

Men were identified as the offenders in 81.6 per cent of all arrests documented by the NPD between 2019 and 2020. Black and Indigenous men are grossly over-represented in NPD arrest statistics (see Tables 5.3 through 5.5). Although they represent only 2.6 per cent of Nelson’s population, Indigenous males were involved in 9.3 per cent of all arrests conducted by the NPD between 2019 and 2020. In other words, Indigenous males are 3.6 times more likely to be arrested than their presence in the general population would predict. The average annual arrest rate for Indigenous males (28,113 per 100,000) is 2.3 times greater than the rate for White males (12,421 per 100,000) and 3.7 times greater than the city average (7,562 per 100,000).

Although they represent only 0.3 per cent of Nelson’s population, Black males were involved in 1.4 per cent of all arrests conducted by the NPD between 2019 and 2020. In other words, Black males are 4.7 times more likely to be arrested than their presence in the general population would predict. The average annual arrest rate for Black males (38,333 per 100,000) is 3.1 times greater than the rate for White males (12,421 per 100,000) and 5.1 times greater than the city average (7,562 per 100,000).

White males are also over-represented in NPD arrests—although much less over-represented than either Black or Indigenous males. Although they represent 43.1 per cent of the general population, White males were involved in 69.1 per cent of all NPD arrests between 2019 and 2020 (odds ratio=1.60).

Males from other racial minority groups are under-represented in Nelson arrest statistics. Although they represent 2.1 per cent of the general population, other minority males were involved in only 1.7 per cent of arrests between 2019 and 2020 (odds ratio=0.81). Furthermore, the White male arrest rate (12,421 per 100,000) is 1.9 times greater than the arrest rate for other racial minority males (6,364 per 100,000).

Women from all racial backgrounds—including Black and Indigenous women—are significantly under-represented in Nelson arrest statistics (see Table 3 and Figure 1). Among the female population, White women have the highest arrest rate (2,901 per 100,000), followed by Indigenous Women (2,698 per 100,000), Black women (1,250 per 100,000), and women from other racial minority groups (192 per 100,000).

The impact of unique individuals

It is important to examine the impact that unique individuals may have on observed racial disparities in NPD arrest statistics. Individuals who have been subjected to multiple arrests could drive up the numbers for the racial group to which they belong. Fortunately, the data provided by the NPD assigned a unique person identification number (PIN) to individuals involved in each arrest. This allowed the research team to identify individuals involved in more than one arrest.

Our results indicate that 730 unique individuals were responsible for 1,617 arrests for which there was racial data. This works out to an average of 2.2 arrests per individual in the NPD arrest dataset. The number of arrests per unique individual ranges from one to 50 separate incidents.

It must be stressed that 71.4 per cent of the unique individuals in the arrest dataset were involved in only one arrest incident. An additional 13.2 per cent of the sample were involved in only two incidents. Only 15.5 per cent of the unique individuals in the NPD arrest dataset were involved in three or more arrest incidents during the two-year study period.

Table 5.6 recalculates arrest-based racial disparities counting unique individuals only once. This strategy eliminates the impact of statistical outliers who have been involved in multiple enforcement incidents. The results reveal that controlling for the impact of unique individuals significantly reduces observed racial disparities. For example, the proportion of NPD arrest incidents involving Indigenous people drops from 10.3 per cent to 4.7 per cent after controlling for individuals who were arrested on multiple occasions. Thus, after counting unique individuals only once, Indigenous people become under-represented in NPD arrest statistics (odds ratio drops from 1.91 to 0.87). Furthermore, the Indigenous arrest rate (2,672 per 100,000) is now lower than the White rate (3,197 per 100,000).

Similarly, after controlling for unique individuals, the proportion of Black people involved in NPD arrests drops from 1.5 per cent per cent to 0.8 per cent. After counting unique individuals only once, Black people are now only slightly over-represented in NPD arrest statistics (i.e., the odds ratio drops from 2.14 to 1.14). Furthermore, the Black arrest rate (3,571 per 100,000) is now only slightly higher than the White arrest rate (3,197 per 100,000). After controlling for the impact of unique individuals, people from other racial minority backgrounds remain significantly under-represented in NPD arrest statistics (odds ratio=0.56).

Figure 5.2 presents the mean number of arrest incidents per unique individual in the NPD arrest dataset. The results reveal that Indigenous people, in the NPD arrest dataset, averaged 5.35 arrests per unique individual, followed by Black individuals (mean=4.80 arrests), White individuals (mean=2.29 arrests), and people from other racial minority backgrounds (mean=1.81 arrests). These racial differences are statistically significant. On average, unique Indigenous individuals in the NPD dataset were involved in approximately three more arrests over the study period than unique White individuals. Similarly, on average, unique Black individuals were involved in 2.5 more NPD arrests than their White counterparts between 2019 and 2020.

In summary, although individuals arrested on multiple occasions largely eliminate overall racial disparities in NPD arrest statistics, Indigenous and Black individuals were involved in significantly more arrest incidents than White individuals.

Type of offence

BCOHR's research team requested information about all criminal charges associated with each arrest incident. The Nelson Police Department were able to provide information on the four most serious charges associated with each arrest incident.

The data reveal that most NPD arrest incidents (58.5 per cent) involved only one recommended charge. An additional 24.1 per cent of arrests involved two charges, 12.5 per cent involved three charges, and 4.9 per cent involved four or more charges.

Table 5.7 compares the representation of each racial group in the general Nelson population with their presence within eleven different offence categories. The results indicate that both Indigenous and Black people are over-represented in NPD arrest statistics involving a wide array of offences. For example, although they represent only 5.4 per cent of Nelson's population, Indigenous people were involved in 12.3 per cent of violent crime charges, 14.8 per cent of administration of justice charges (i.e., breach of parole conditions, failure to appear, etc.), 11.9 per cent of mischief/disturbance charges, and 15.6 per cent of charges related to public intoxication. Furthermore, although they represent only 0.7 per cent of Nelson's general population, Black people were involved in 2.5 per cent of assaults, 1.8 per cent of charges involving other violent crime, 3.6 per cent of theft/break and enter charges, 5.5 per cent of administration of justice charges, 2.7 per cent of drug possession charges, and 2.7 per cent of mischief/disturbance charges.

Table 5.8 provides the odds ratios for each of the eleven offence types, by the race of the offender. Please recall that, if a group has an odds ratio of 3.00 or greater, we consider them to be "grossly" over-represented in arrest statistics. If a group has an odds ratio between 1.50 and 3.00, we consider them to be "significantly" over-represented.

The results indicate that Indigenous people are significantly over-represented in seven of the eleven offence categories including public intoxication offences (odds ratio=2.89), administration of justice charges (odds ratio=2.74), violent crime (odds ratio=2.28), and mischief (odds ratio=2.20). By contrast, Indigenous people are significantly under-represented with respect to theft (odds ratio=0.83), drug possession (odds ratio=0.50), and vehicle-related offences (odds ratio=0.35).

The results indicate that Black people are grossly over-represented in five of the eleven offence categories captured by the NPD data, including theft (odds ratio=5.14), other property crime (odds ratio=7.86), drug possession (odds ratio=3.86), mischief/disturbance offences (odds ratio=3.86), and assault (odds ratio=3.57). Black people are also significantly over-represented in both violent offences (odds ratio=2.57) and administration of justice charges (odds ratio=1.57). By contrast, Black people are significantly under-represented in drug trafficking charges (odds ratio=0.00), vehicle-related charges (odds ratio=0.00), and charges involving public intoxication (odds ratio=0.29).

People from other racial minority groups are significantly under-represented in all offence categories (see Table 5.8). Overall, the representation of White people in all offence categories approximates their representation in the general population (odds ratios range from 0.91 to 1.07).

Arrest clearance

The Nelson Police Department provided information on the outcome or "clearance" of each arrest incident. Six clearance categories were coded: 1) CCJS non-reportable; 2) charges laid; 3)

charges recommended by police but declined by the Crown; 4) victim withdrew complaint; 5) departmental discretion; and 6) other.

Table 5.9 reveals that over half of all arrests (56.0 per cent) were cleared by departmental discretion. By contrast, only 19.1 per cent resulted in a charge being laid against the accused. However, in an additional 6.2 per cent of cases a charge was recommended by the police but denied by the Crown. In 10.4 per cent of cases charges were not pursued because the victim withdrew their complaint.

Table 5.10 reveals that both Black and Indigenous people are over-represented among those formally charged with an offence, among those who were charged by the police but had the charge dropped by the Crown, and among cases that were cleared by departmental discretion.

For example, although Black people represent only 0.7 per cent of the Nelson population, they were involved in 2.2 per cent of all arrests that resulted in a formal charge (odds ratio=3.14), 4.4 per cent of cases in which charges were dropped by the Crown (odds ratio=6.29), and 1.2 per cent of cases cleared by departmental discretion (odds ratio=1.71).

Similarly, Indigenous people represent only 5.4 per cent of the general population but were involved in 6.3 per cent of all arrests that resulted in a formal charge (odds ratio=1.17) and 10.0 per cent of cases in which charges were dropped by the Crown (odds ratio=1.85). Indigenous people are also significantly over-represented in cases that were cleared by police discretion (odds ratio=2.37) and cases in which the victim withdrew the complaint (odds ratio=1.33). People from other racial minority groups are significantly under-represented in all clearance categories (see Table 5.10). The representation of White people in all clearance categories approximates their presence in the general population of Nelson (see Table 10).

It is important to note that Indigenous people are even more over-represented in arrests that were cleared by departmental discretion than cases that resulted in a charge. It is somewhat challenging to interpret this finding. On the one hand, it could be argued that Indigenous people are more likely to be treated leniently by the police. In other words, the police could have recommended a charge in these cases but decided to let the offender off without further criminalization. Critics, however, might argue that these cases represent unnecessary arrests. In other words, these are “low quality” arrests involving weak evidence and little chance of conviction. Thus, the police decided to end the charging process before the case could be reviewed by the Crown. It is also important to note that both Black and Indigenous people are highly over-represented in arrest incidents in which charges were recommended by the police but rejected by the Crown (unfounded). Once again, is this evidence of Crown leniency with respect to Indigenous offenders, or evidence that Indigenous people are more likely to be subject to low quality arrests with little chance of conviction. Clear answers are not possible with the current data but these issues should be flagged for further investigation.

Identification of mental health and substance use issues

The NPD arrest data also indicate whether, according to the police, the offender had a substance use or mental health issue at the time of arrest (see Table 5.11). The results indicate that 12.6 per cent of offenders were flagged for a problem with alcohol or drug substance use. Only 1.8 per

cent were flagged for a possible mental health issue. The majority of NPD arrests (86.1 per cent) did not identify either a substance use or mental health issue.

The results also indicate that Indigenous people are over-represented in arrests involving a possible mental health issue. Although Indigenous people represent 5.4 per cent of Nelson's population, they were involved in 13.6 per cent of arrests involving an alleged mental health issue (odds ratio=2.52). By contrast, none of the arrests involving Black people (0.0 per cent) involved an alleged mental health issue. However, Black people are over-represented in arrests involving alleged substance use as well as arrests in which neither substance uses nor mental health issues were identified (see Table 5.12).

White people are slightly over-represented in arrests involving an alleged substance abuse problem, but slightly under-represented in cases in which a mental health issue was identified (Table 12). People from other racial backgrounds are under-represented in all arrest categories.

Mental health incidents

In addition to arrests, BCOHRC's research team requested data on all mental health incidents recorded by the Nelson Police Department over the past ten years. The NPD provided BCOHRC with data on 4,311 subject-oriented mental health incidents that took place between 2016 and 2020. Race of civilian subjects was available for 4,231 cases (98.1 of the sample).

As with arrests, the data indicate that Black people are grossly over-represented in Nelson Police mental health incidents (see Table 5.13). However, unlike arrests, the data suggest that Indigenous people are slightly under-represented in NPD mental health incidents.

Although Black people represent only 0.7 per cent of Nelson's population, they were involved in 3.3 per cent of all mental health incidents captured by the NPD data (Table 5.13). In other words, Black people were 4.7 times more likely to appear in NPD mental health incidents than their presence in the general population would predict. Furthermore, the average annual mental health incident rate for Black people (40,286 per 100,000) is 5 times greater than the White rate (8,013 per 100,000).

Indigenous people represent 5.4 per cent of Nelson's population. However, they were identified as the subject in only 5.1 per cent of all mental health incidents captured by the NPD data (Table 5.13). In other words, Indigenous people are six per cent less likely to appear in NPD mental health incidents than their presence in the general population would predict. Furthermore, the average annual Indigenous mental health incident rate (7,414 per 100,000) is slightly lower than the White rate (8,013 per 100,000).

As with arrests, people from other racial minority backgrounds are significantly under-represented in NPD mental health incidents (see Table 5.13). Although they represent 4.3 per cent of Nelson's population, other racial minorities were involved, as the subjects, in only 1.1 per cent of documented mental health incidents between 2016 and 2020. Furthermore, the average annual mental health incident rate for other racial minorities (2,043 per 100,000) is 75 per cent less than the White rate (8,013 per 100,000) and 95 per cent less than the rate for Black people (40,286 per 100,000).

The presence of White people (odds ratio=1.01) in NPD mental health incidents is equal to their presence in the general population.

Gender, race, and mental health incidents

Men were identified as the subjects in 72.1 per cent of all mental health incidents documented by the NPD between 2016 and 2020. However, women are more highly represented in NPD mental health incidents (27.9 per cent) than NPD arrest incidents (18.4 per cent).

As with arrests, Black men are grossly over-represented in NPD mental health incidents (see Tables 5.14 through 5.16). Although they represent only 0.3 per cent of Nelson’s population, Black males were the subject in 3.2 per cent of all mental health incidents recorded by the NPD between 2016 and 2020. In other words, Black males are 10.7 times more likely to be involved in a mental health incident than their presence in the general population would predict. The average annual mental health incident rate for Black males (91,333 per 100,000) is 7.5 times greater than the rate for White males (12,212 per 100,000), 7.5 times greater than the rate for Indigenous males (12,151 per 100,000), and 11.5 times greater than the city average (7,934 per 100,000).

Indigenous males (odds ratio=1.46) and White males (odds ratio=1.49) are only slightly over-represented in NPD mental health incidents (see Table 16). Males from other racial minority groups are significantly under-represented (odds ratio=0.48).

Women from all racial backgrounds are significantly under-represented in NPD mental health incidents. However, among the female population, White women have the highest annual mental health incident rate (4,713 per 100,000), followed by Indigenous women (3,429 per 100,000), Black women (2,000 per 100,000), and women from other racial groups (461 per 100,000).

The impact of unique individuals

It is important to examine the impact that unique individuals may have on observed racial disparities in NPD mental health-related statistics. Individuals who have been subjected to multiple mental health incidents could drive up the numbers for the racial group to which they belong. Fortunately, the data provided by the NPD assigned a unique person identification number (PIN) to individuals involved in each mental health incident. This allowed the research team to identify individuals involved in more than one mental health incident.

Our results indicate that 1,060 unique individuals were responsible for the 4,231 mental health incidents captured by the NPD data. This works out to an average of 3.99 incidents per unique individual in the NPD mental health dataset. The number of mental health incidents, per unique individual, ranges from one to 153 separate incidents. However, it must be stressed that 55.3 per cent of the unique individuals in the mental health dataset were involved in only one incident. An additional 15.9 per cent of the sample were involved in only two incidents. Only 20.9 per cent of the unique individuals in the NPD mental health dataset were involved in three or more incidents during the five-year study period.

Table 5.17 recalculates mental health-based racial disparities counting unique individuals only once. This strategy eliminates the impact of statistical outliers who have been involved in multiple mental health incidents. The results reveal that controlling for the impact of unique individuals significantly reduces observed racial disparities—especially disparities involving Black people. For example, the proportion of NPD mental health incidents involving Black

people drops from 3.3 per cent to 0.9 per cent after controlling for individuals who were involved in multiple incidents. Thus, after counting unique individuals only once, Black people are only slightly over-represented in NPD mental health incidents (the odds ratio drops from 4.71 to 1.29). Furthermore, the Black mental health incident rate (2,857 per 100,000) is now only 39 per cent higher than the White rate (2,045 per 100,000). By contrast, the Black rate is five times greater the White rate before controlling for the impact of unique individuals.

After controlling for the impact of unique individuals, the representation of both Indigenous (odds ratio=0.93) and White People (odds ratio=1.03) in mental health-related incidents is approximately equal to their representation in the general population (see Table 17). After controlling for the impact of unique individuals, people from other racial minority backgrounds remain significantly under-represented in NPD mental health statistics (odds ratio=0.44).

Figure 7.4 presents the mean number of mental health incidents per unique individual in the NPD dataset. The results reveal that Black people in the NPD dataset averaged 14.1 mental health incidents per unique individual, followed by Indigenous individuals (mean=4.25 incidents), White individuals (mean=3.99 incidents), and people from other racial minority backgrounds (mean=2.35 incidents). These racial differences are statistically significant. On average, unique Black individuals in the NPD dataset were involved in approximately ten more mental health incidents, over the study period, than unique White individuals.

In sum, although individuals involved in multiple incidents largely explains the over-representation of Black people in the NPD mental health dataset, Black individuals were involved in significantly more mental health incidents than White people or people from other racial backgrounds.

Reason for police response

The BCOHRC research team requested information about the cause or reason for each mental health incident. The Nelson Police Department were able to provide information on the four most serious offences associated with each mental health incident. The data reveal that most NPD mental health incidents (67.0 per cent) involved only one offence. An additional 26.5 per cent of incidents involved two offences, 5.1 per cent involved three offences, and 1.4 per cent involved four or more offences.

Table 5.18 compares the representation of each racial group, in the general Nelson population, with their presence within eight different offence categories. Although they represent only 5.4 per cent of Nelson's population, Indigenous people were involved in 11.6 per cent of public intoxication offences, 9.0 per cent of administration of justice offences (i.e., breach of parole conditions, failure to appear, etc.), and 7.4 per cent of violent offences. Furthermore, although they represent only 0.7 per cent of Nelson's general population, Black people were involved in 2.0 per cent of violent offences, 9.2 per cent of property crimes, 4.2 per cent of drug-related crimes, 3.9 per cent of mischief/disturbance calls, and 2.4 per cent of disturbed person calls.

Table 5.19 provides the odds ratios for each of the eight offence types, by the race of the offender. Please recall that, if a group has an odds ratio of 3.00 or greater, we consider them to

be “grossly” over-represented in arrest statistics. If a group has an odds ratio between 1.50 and 3.00, we consider them to be “significantly” over-represented.

The results indicate that Indigenous people are significantly over-represented in only two of the eight offence categories: public intoxication offences (odds ratio=2.15), and administration of justice charges (odds ratio=1.67). The results also indicate that Black people are grossly over-represented in four of the eight offence categories captured by the NPD data: property crime (odds ratio=13.14), drug-related crime (odds ratio=6.00), mischief/general disturbance calls (odds ratio=5.57), and disturbed person calls (odds ratio=3.43). Black people are also significantly over-represented in mental health incidents that were caused by a violent offence (odds ratio=2.86).

People from other racial minority groups are significantly under-represented in all offence categories (see Table 5.19). Overall, the representation of White people in all offence categories approximates their representation in the general population (odds ratios range from 0.94 to 1.02).

Incident clearance

The Nelson Police Department provided information on the outcome or “clearance” of each mental health incident. Seven clearance categories were coded: 1) CCJS non-reportable; 2) charges laid; 3) charges recommended by police but declined by the Crown; 4) committed to a mental health facility; 5) departmental discretion; 6) previously founded – not cleared (i.e., still under investigation; and 7) other.

Table 5.20 reveals that over half of all mental health incidents (50.7 per cent) fell into the “previously founded – not cleared” category. In other words, these cases are technically still under investigation. By contrast, only 4.2 per cent of mental health incidents resulted in a charge being laid against the subject. In an additional 1.4 per cent of cases, a charge was recommended by the police, but denied by the Crown. A third of cases (29.5 per cent) were deemed “not reportable” and 11.6 per cent were cleared by “departmental discretion.” Only 0.2 per cent of all cases involved a committal to a mental health facility.

Table 5.21 reveals that Black people are significantly over-represented among those formally charged with an offence—and among those who were charged by the police but had the charge dropped by the Crown. Black people are also over-represented among cases cleared as un-reportable, cases cleared by police discretion, and cases deemed “previously founded – not cleared.”

Indigenous people are over-represented in only two clearance categories: cases in which charges were dropped by the Crown, and cases cleared by police discretion. People from other racial minority groups are significantly under-represented in all clearance categories (see Table 21). The representation of White people in all clearance categories approximates their presence in the general population of Nelson (see Table 21). However, it is important to note that all eight of the individuals committed to a mental health facility (100.0 per cent) were classified by the NPD as White.

Identification of substance use issues

The NPD mental health data also indicate whether, according to the police, the subject had a substance use issue at the time of the mental health incident (see Table 5.22). The results indicate that 14.4 per cent of subjects were flagged for a possible substance abuse.

The results indicate that Black people are over-represented in mental health incidents involving a possible substance abuse problem (see Table 5.23). Although Black people represent 0.7 per cent of Nelson's general population, they were involved in 2.8 per cent of mental health incidents involving an alleged substance use issue (odds ratio=4.00). Both Indigenous people (odds ratio=0.70) and people from other racial backgrounds (odds ratio=0.70) are significantly under-represented in mental health incidents involving possible substance abuse. The representation of White people in mental health incidents involving possible substance abuse is about equal to their presence in the general Nelson population (odds ratio=1.04).

Mental health apprehensions

The Nelson Police Department also provided information on whether a mental health incident resulted in a mental health apprehension. The results indicate that only 13.5 per cent of all mental health incidents resulted in a mental health apprehension (see Table 5.24).

The results also indicate that Black people are the only racial group significantly over-represented in NPD mental health apprehensions. Although they represent only 0.7 per cent of Nelson's general population, Black people were involved in 2.1 per cent of all mental health apprehensions (odds ratio=3.00). The representation of both White people (odds ratio=1.02) and Indigenous people (odds ratio=0.93) in mental health apprehensions approximates their presence in the general population (see Table 25). People from all other racial minority backgrounds are significantly under-represented in NPD mental health apprehensions (odds ratio=0.28).

Civilian role in mental health incidents

In addition to the race of the subjects (suspects) in mental health incidents, the Nelson Police Department also provided data on the race of civilian victims, complainants, and witnesses.

Over half of the civilians involved in mental health incidents (55.5 per cent) were identified as subjects or suspects. An additional 27.5 per cent were identified as complainants, 15.7 per cent as witnesses and 1.7 per cent as victims (see Table 5.26).

The results indicate that, with respect to NPD mental health incidents, Indigenous and Black people are more likely to be identified as subjects than as complainants, victims or witnesses (see Table 5.27). While Black people are grossly over-represented among subjects (odds ratio=4.70), their representation among complainants, victims and witnesses is about equal to their representation within the general Nelson population. The representation of Indigenous people among both subjects and victims is equal to their representation in the general population. However, Indigenous people are significantly under-represented among both complainants (odds ratio=0.43) and witnesses (odds ratio=0.54).

Regardless of role, other racial minorities are significantly under-represented in NPD mental health incidents. The representation of White people is slightly higher among complainants and witnesses than among victims or subjects.

Strip searches

In addition to arrests, the BCOHRC research team requested data on all strip search incidents recorded by the Nelson Police Department over the past 10 years. According to the data, the NPD conducted 20 strip searches between January 1, 2011 and December 31, 2020. An average of only two strip searches per year over a 10-year time period. Some 18 of the 20 strip searches (90.0 per cent) were conducted on male civilians. Only two were conducted on women (20.0 per cent).

Some 16 of the 20 strip searches (80.0 per cent) conducted by the NPD involved White civilians, three involved Indigenous civilians (15.0 per cent), and one search involved a Black civilian (5.0 per cent). Although one might argue that both Indigenous (odds ratio=2.8) and Black people (odds ratio=7.14) are over-represented in NPD strip searches, the numbers are far too low to draw firm conclusions.

Nelson tables and figures

**TABLE 5.1: Total arrests by race of accused,
Nelson Police Department, January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2020**

Racial group	Population estimate	Per cent of population	Number of arrests	Per cent of arrests	Odds ratio	Average annual arrest rate (per 100,000)
White/European	9,555	89.6	1,398	86.5	0.97	7,315.5
Indigenous	580	5.4	166	10.3	1.91	14,310.3
Black	70	0.7	24	1.5	2.14	17,142.9
South Asian	85	0.8	5	0.3	0.37	2,941.1
Asian	260	2.4	6	0.4	0.17	1,153.9
West Asian/Arab	0	0.0	1	0.1	----	0.0
Latin American	60	0.6	13	0.8	1.33	10,833.3
Other	55	0.5	4	0.2	0.40	3,636.4
TOTAL	10,665	100.0	1,617	100.0	1.00	7,562.1

**TABLE 5.2: Total arrests by race of accused,
Nelson Police Department, January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2020**

Racial group	Population estimate	Per cent of population	Number of arrests	Per cent of arrests	Odds ratio	Average annual arrest rate (per 100,000)
White/European	9,555	89.6	1,398	86.5	0.97	7,315.5
Indigenous	580	5.4	166	10.3	1.91	14,310.3
Black	70	0.7	24	1.5	2.14	17,142.9
Other	460	4.3	29	1.8	0.42	3,152.2
TOTAL	10,665	100.0	1,617	100.0	1.00	7,562.1

**TABLE 5.3: Total arrests by race of male accused,
Nelson Police Department, January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2020**

Racial group	Estimated male population	Per cent of male population	Number of arrests	Per cent of arrests	Odds ratio	Average annual arrest rate (per 100,000)
White/European	4,440	89.6	1,103	84.7	0.94	12,421.2
Indigenous	265	5.3	149	11.4	2.15	28,113.2
Black	30	0.6	23	1.8	3.00	38,333.3
Other	220	4.4	28	2.1	0.47	6,363.6
TOTAL	4,955	100.0	1,303	100.0	1.00	13,148.3

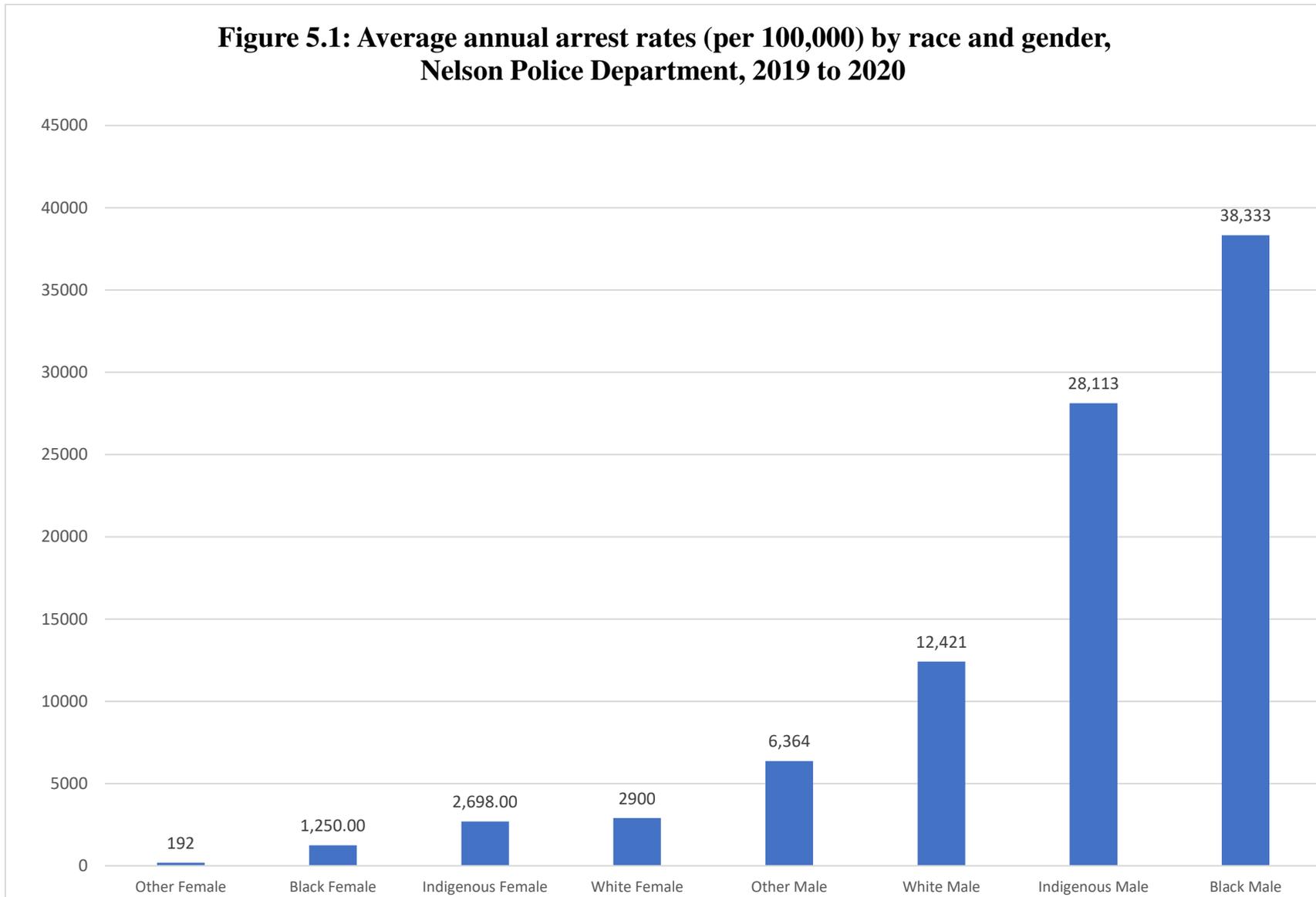
**TABLE 5.4: Total arrests by race of female accused,
Nelson Police Department, January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2020**

Racial group	Estimated female population	Per cent of female population	Number of arrests	Per cent of arrests	Odds ratio	Average annual arrest rate (per 100,000)
White/European	4,740	88.5	275	93.5	1.06	2,900.8
Indigenous	315	5.9	17	5.8	0.98	2,698.4
Black	40	0.7	1	0.3	0.43	1,250.0
Other Racial Minority	260	4.9	1	0.3	0.06	192.3
TOTAL	5,355	100.0	294	100.0	1.00	2,745.1

TABLE 5.5: Summary of arrest statistics by race and gender, Nelson Police Department, January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2020

Race/gender group	Per cent population	Per cent arrests	Odds ratio	Average annual arrest rate (per 100,000)
Indigenous Male	2.6	9.3	3.58	28,113.2
Indigenous Female	3.1	1.1	0.35	2,698.4
Black Male	0.3	1.4	4.67	38,333.3
Black Female	0.4	0.1	0.25	1,250.0
White Male	43.1	69.1	1.60	12,421.2
White Female	46.0	17.2	0.37	2,900.8
Other Male	2.1	1.7	0.81	6,363.6
Other Female	2.5	0.1	0.04	192.3

Figure 5.1: Average annual arrest rates (per 100,000) by race and gender, Nelson Police Department, 2019 to 2020



**TABLE 5.6: Arrests of unique individuals by race of accused,
Nelson Police Department, January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2020**

Racial group	Population estimate	Per cent of population	Number of arrests	Per cent of arrests	Odds ratio	Average annual arrest rate (per 100,000)
White/European	9,555	89.6	611	92.2	1.02	3,197.3
Indigenous	580	5.4	31	4.7	0.87	2,672.4
Black	70	0.7	5	0.8	1.14	3,571.4
Other	460	4.3	16	2.4	0.56	1,739.1
TOTAL	10,665	100.0	730	100.0	1.00	3,425.6

Figure 5.2: Mean number of arrests per unique individual by race of accused, Nelson Police Department, 2019 to 2020

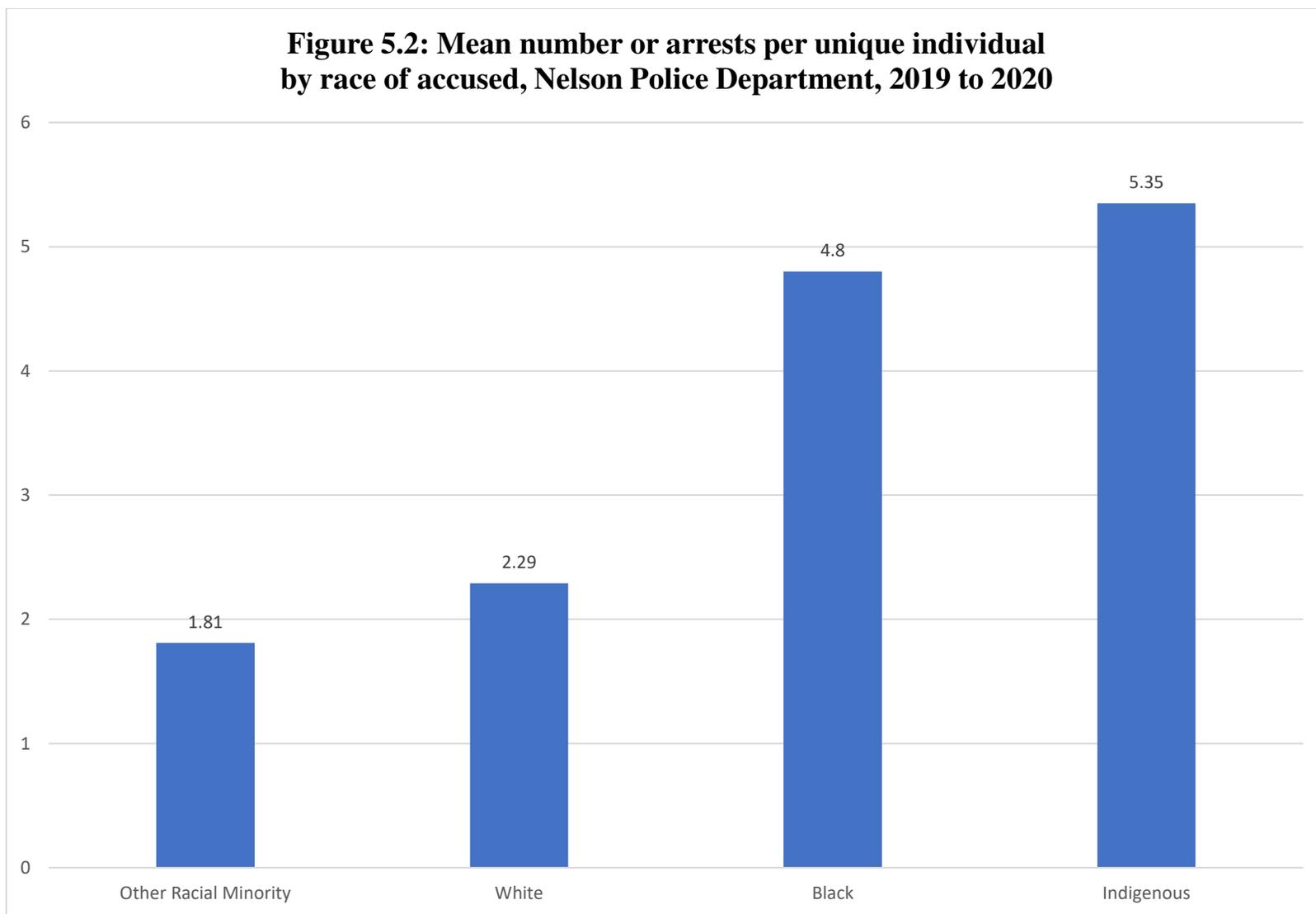


TABLE 5.7: Proportion of arrests involving people from different racial groups by type of offence, Nelson Police Department, 2019 to 2020

Offence type	White	Indigenous	Black	Other racial minority	Number of cases
Assault	88.2	8.1	2.5	1.2	167
Other violent crime	84.2	12.3	1.8	1.8	59
Theft and break & enter	92.0	4.5	3.6	0.0	232
Other property crime	89.1	5.5	5.5	0.0	59
Administration of justice charges	82.4	14.8	1.1	1.7	479
Drug possession	93.2	2.7	2.7	1.4	74
Drug sales/trafficking	88.9	9.7	0.0	1.4	74
Disturbance/mischief calls	83.0	11.9	2.7	2.4	344
Public intoxication	81.3	15.6	0.2	3.0	572
Vehicle-related offences	95.7	1.9	0.0	2.5	177
Other offences	89.5	8.6	1.0	1.0	224
PER CENT NELSON POPULATION	89.6	5.4	0.7	4.3	-----

TABLE 5.8: Representation of different racial groups in arrest statistics (as measured by odds ratios) by type of offence, Nelson Police Department, 2019 to 2020

Offence type	White	Indigenous	Black	Other racial minority
Assault	0.98	1.50	3.57	0.28
Other violent crime	0.94	2.28	2.57	0.42
Theft and break & enter	1.03	0.83	5.14	0.00
Other property crime	0.99	1.02	7.86	0.00
Administration of justice charges	0.92	2.74	1.57	0.39
Drug possession	1.04	0.50	3.86	0.32
Drug sales/trafficking	0.99	1.80	0.00	0.32
Disturbance/mischief calls	0.93	2.20	3.86	0.56
Public intoxication	0.91	2.89	0.29	0.70
Vehicle-related offences	1.07	0.35	0.00	0.58
Other offences	1.00	1.59	1.43	0.23

**TABLE 5.9: Number and per cent of arrests by type of clearance,
Nelson Police Department, 2019 to 2020**

Type of arrest clearance	Number of arrests	Per cent of arrests
Non-reportable	114	6.8
Charged	323	19.1
Charged by police, but charge denied by crown	104	6.2
Victim withdrew charge	178	10.4
Police discretion	944	56.0
Other	26	1.5
TOTAL	1,687	100.0

**TABLE 5.10: Per cent of arrests by race of accused and clearance outcome,
Nelson Police Department, 2019 to 2020**

Race of accused	% Nelson population	% non-reportable	% charged	% charge rejected by crown	% victim withdrew complaint	% police discretion
White	89.6	93.6	90.8	85.0	90.4	83.6
Indigenous	5.4	4.6	6.3	10.0	7.2	12.8
Black	0.7	0.0	2.2	4.0	1.2	1.2
Other minority	4.3	1.8	0.6	1.0	1.2	2.4
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

TABLE 5.11: Number and per cent of arrests by whether police note substance use or mental health issues, Nelson Police Department, 2019 to 2020

Police note substance use or mental health issues	Number of arrests	per cent of arrests
No substance use or mental health issues noted by police	1,453	86.1
Substance use issue noted	212	12.6
Mental health issue noted	22	1.3
TOTAL	1,687	100.0

**TABLE 5.12:
Per cent of arrests by race of accused and police notification of mental health and substance use issues, Nelson Police Department, 2019 to 2020**

Race of accused	% Nelson population	% no substance use or MH issue noted	% substance use noted	% mental health issue noted
White	89.6	85.4	93.4	86.4
Indigenous	5.4	11.0	5.2	13.6
Black	0.7	1.5	1.4	0.0
Other minority	4.3	2.1	0.0	0.0
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

**TABLE 5.13: Total mental health incidents by race of civilian subjects,
Nelson Police Department, January 1, 2016 to December 31, 2020**

Racial group	Population estimate	Per cent of Population	Number of mental health incidents	Per cent of mental health incidents	Odds ratio	Average annual mental health incident rate (per 100,000)
White/European	9,555	89.6	3,828	90.5	1.01	8,012.5
Indigenous	580	5.4	215	5.1	0.94	7,413.8
Black	70	0.7	141	3.3	4.71	40,285.7
Other	460	4.3	47	1.1	0.26	2,043.5
TOTAL	10,665	100.0	4,231	100.0	1.00	7,934.4

**TABLE 5.14: Total mental health incidents by race of male accused,
Nelson Police Department, January 1, 2016 to December 31, 2020**

Racial group	Estimated male population	Per cent of male population	Number of mental health incidents	Per cent of mental health incidents	Odds ratio	Average annual mental health incident rate (per 100,000)
White/European	4,440	89.6	2,711	88.9	0.99	12,211.8
Indigenous	265	5.3	161	5.3	1.00	12,150.9
Black	30	0.6	137	4.5	7.50	91,333.3
Other	220	4.4	41	1.3	0.30	3,727.3
TOTAL	4,955	100.0	3,050	100.0	1.00	12,310.8

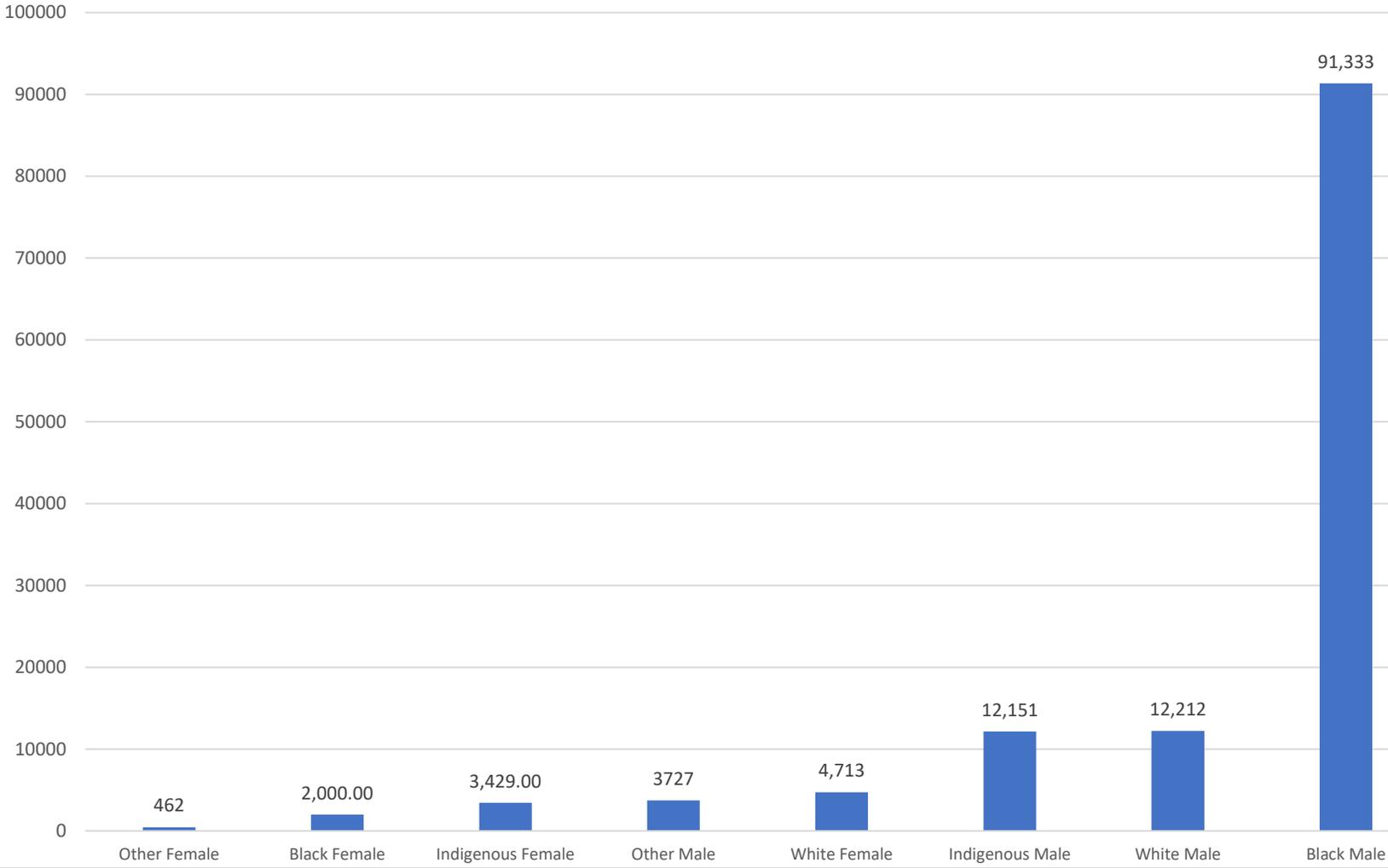
**TABLE 5.15: Total mental health incidents by race of female accused,
Nelson Police Department, January 1, 2016 to December 31, 2020**

Racial group	Estimated female population	Per cent of female population	Number of mental health incidents	Per cent of mental health incidents	Odds ratio	Average annual mental health incident rate (per 100,000)
White/European	4,740	88.5	1,117	94.6	1.07	4,713.1
Indigenous	315	5.9	54	4.6	0.78	3,428.6
Black	40	0.7	4	0.3	0.43	2,000.0
Other Racial Minority	260	4.9	6	0.5	0.10	461.5
TOTAL	5,355	100.0	1,181	100.0	1.00	4,410.8

TABLE 5.16: Summary of mental health incident statistics by race and gender, Nelson Police Department, January 1, 2016 to December 31, 2020

Race/gender group	Per cent population	Per cent mental health incidents	Odds ratio	Average annual mental health incident rate (per 100,000)
Indigenous Male	2.6	3.8	1.46	12,150.9
Indigenous Female	3.1	1.3	0.42	3,428.6
Black Male	0.3	3.2	10.67	91,333.3
Black Female	0.4	0.1	0.25	2,000.0
White Male	43.1	64.1	1.49	12,211.8
White Female	46.0	26.4	0.57	4,713.1
Other Male	2.1	1.0	0.48	3,727.3
Other Female	2.5	0.1	0,04	461.5

Figure 5.3: Average annual mental health incident rates (per 100,000) by race and gender, Nelson Police Department, 2016 to 2020



**TABLE 5.17: Mental health incidents involving unique individuals by race of accused,
Nelson Police Department, January 1, 2016 to December 31, 2020**

Racial group	Population estimate	Per cent of population	Number of unique persons	Per cent of unique persons	Odds ratio	Average annual mental health incident rate (per 100,000)
White/European	9,555	89.6	977	92.2	1.03	2,045.0
Indigenous	580	5.4	53	5.0	0.93	1,827.6
Black	70	0.7	10	0.9	1.29	2,857.1
Other	460	4.3	20	1.9	0.44	869.6
TOTAL	10,665	100.0	1,060	100.0	1.00	1,987.8

Figure 5.4: Mean number of mental health incidents per unique individual by race of accused, Nelson Police Department, 2016 to 2020

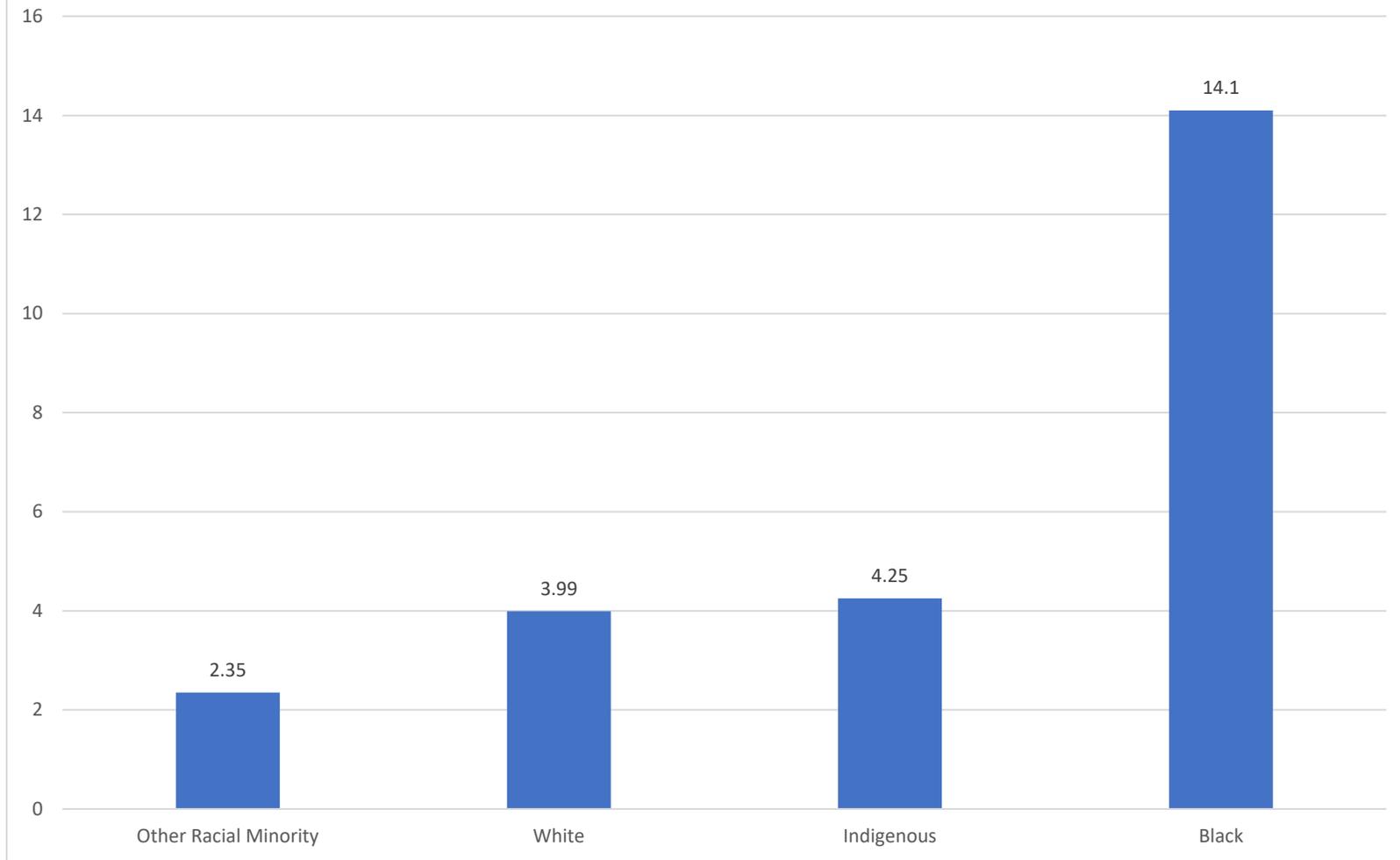


TABLE 5.18: Proportion of mental health incidents involving people from different racial groups by reason for police response, Nelson Police Department, 2016 to 2020

Offence type	White	Indigenous	Black	Other racial minority	Number of cases
Violent crime	88.2	7.4	2.0	2.5	205
Property crime	84.7	6.1	9.2	0.0	100
Drug-related crime	90.3	5.6	4.2	0.0	75
Mischief/general disturbance call	89.9	5.4	3.9	0.9	2,796
Public intoxication	86.7	11.6	0.4	1.2	256
Administration of justice charges	88.9	9.0	1.0	1.0	295
Disturbed person call	91.6	4.9	2.4	1.2	1,452
Other reason	90.7	4.1	3.4	1.7	474
PER CENT NELSON POPULATION	89.6	5.4	0.7	4.3	-----

TABLE 5.19: The representation of different racial groups in mental health incidents (as measured by odds ratios) by reason for police response, Nelson Police Department, 2016 to 2020

Offence type	White	Indigenous	Black	Other racial minority
Violent crime	0.98	1.37	2.86	0.58
Property crime	0.94	1.13	13.14	0.00
Drug-related crime	1.01	1.04	6.00	0.00
Mischief/general disturbance call	1.00	1.00	5.57	0.21
Public intoxication	0.97	2.15	0.57	0.28
Administration of justice charges	0.99	1.67	1.43	0.23
Disturbed person call	1.02	0.91	3.43	0.28
Other reason	1.01	0.76	4.86	0.39

TABLE 5.20: Number and per cent of mental health incidents by type of clearance, Nelson Police Department, 2016 to 2020

Type of incident clearance	Number of incidents	Per cent of incidents
Non-reportable	1,272	29.5
Charged	179	4.2
Charged by police, but charge denied by crown	62	1.4
Committed to a mental health facility	8	0.2
Police discretion	499	11.6
Previously founded – not cleared	2,185	50.7
Other	106	2.5
TOTAL	4,311	100.0

**TABLE 5.21: Per cent of arrests by race of accused and clearance outcome,
Nelson Police Department, 2016 to 2020**

Race of subject	% Nelson population	% non-reportable	% charged	% charge rejected by crown	% subject committed to a facility	% police discretion	% previously founded - not cleared	% other
White	89.6	91.0	93.3	82.3	100.0	89.6	90.4	87.7
Indigenous	5.4	3.9	3.9	9.7	0.0	7.4	5.6	3.8
Black	0.7	3.9	2.8	8.1	0.0	2.4	3.0	2.8
Other minority	4.3	1.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.6	1.0	5.7
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

**TABLE 5.22: Number and per cent of mental health incidents
by whether police note subject substance use issues,
Nelson Police Department, 2016 to 2020**

Police note substance use or mental health issues	Number of incidents	per cent of incidents
No substance use issues noted	3,786	85.6
Substance use issue noted	635	14.4
TOTAL	4,421	100.0

**TABLE 5.23: Per cent of arrests by race of accused and clearance outcome,
Nelson Police Department, 2016 to 2020**

Race of accused	% Nelson population	% substance use issue not noted	% substance use issue noted
White	89.6	90.0	93.1
Indigenous	5.4	5.5	3.8
Black	0.7	3.3	2.8
Other minority	4.3	1.2	0.3
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0

TABLE 5.24: Number and per cent of mental health incidents that resulted in a mental health apprehension, Nelson Police Department, 2016 to 2020

Mental health apprehension	Number of incidents	per cent of incidents
No	3,823	86.5
Yes	598	13.5
TOTAL	4,421	100.00

**TABLE 5.25:
Per cent of arrests, by race of subject and whether there was a mental health apprehension, Nelson Police Department, 2016 to 2020**

Race of accused	% Nelson population	% no mental health apprehension	% mental health apprehension
White	89.6	90.2	91.7
Indigenous	5.4	5.3	5.0
Black	0.7	3.5	2.1
Other minority	4.3	1.1	1.2
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0

**TABLE 5.26: Civilian role in documented mental health incidents,
Nelson Police Department, 2016 to 2020**

Civilian role	Number	Per cent
Suspect/subject of investigation	4,311	55.1
Victim	133	1.7
Complainant	2,146	27.5
Witness	1,227	15.7
TOTAL	7,817	100.00

**TABLE 5.27:
Per cent of arrests by race of subject and whether there was a mental health apprehension,
Nelson Police Department, 2016 to 2020**

Race of accused	% Nelson population	% subjects/ suspects	% victims	% complainants	% witnesses
White	89.6	90.4	90.2	95.1	94.0
Indigenous	5.4	5.2	5.3	2.3	2.9
Black	0.7	3.3	0.8	0.9	0.7
Other minority	4.3	1.1	3.7	1.7	2.4
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Summary, data interpretation, and recommendations

The analysis above presented a massive amount of data. Table 8.1 tries to summarize major findings with respect to the representation of different racial groups in police statistics. The results reveal:

- Indigenous people are grossly over-represented (odds ratio of 3.00 or greater) in arrests involving both the Vancouver Police Department (VPD) and the Prince George RCMP. Indigenous people are significantly over-represented (odds ratio between 1.50 and 2.99) in arrests involving the Nelson Police Department, the Surrey RCMP and the Duncan/North Cowichan RCMP.
- Black people are grossly over-represented in arrests statistics involving the Vancouver Police Department. Black people are also significantly over-represented in arrests involving both the Surrey RCMP and the Nelson Police Department. By contrast, they are under-represented in arrests involving the Prince George RCMP. Their representation in arrests involving the Duncan/North Cowichan RCMP is approximately equal to their representation in the general population.
- Although they represent a relatively small segment of the population, Arab/West Asian people are grossly over-represented in Duncan RCMP arrests, and significantly over-represented in arrests associated with Vancouver, Surrey and Prince George.
- Hispanic people are significantly over-represented in both Vancouver and Surrey arrests but under-represented in arrests involving the Prince George RCMP.
- White people are under-represented in arrests involving both the Prince George and Duncan/North Cowichan RCMP. Their representation in arrests involving the other three police jurisdictions is equal to their presence in the general population.
- Asian and South Asian people are significantly under-represented in arrest statistics across all of the police jurisdictions included in this study.
- Indigenous people are also grossly over-represented in mental health related incidents involving the Vancouver Police Department and the Surrey RCMP. They are significantly over-represented in cases involving the Prince George RCMP.
- Black people are grossly over-represented in mental health incidents involving both the Vancouver and Nelson Police Departments. They are significantly over-represented in cases involving the Surrey RCMP.

- People of Arab/West Asian background are significantly over-represented in mental health incidents involving the VPD, Surrey RCMP, Prince George RCMP, and Duncan RCMP.
- Across all police jurisdictions, the representation of White people approximates or equals their representation in the general resident population.
- Both Asians and South Asians are significantly under-represented in mental health incidents involving all five of the police jurisdictions in this study.
- Black people are grossly or significantly over-represented in strip searches involving all five police jurisdictions.
- Indigenous people are grossly over-represented in strip searches involving the Vancouver Police Department. They are also significantly over-represented in strip searches involving Prince George RCMP and the Nelson Police Department.
- Both Hispanic and Arab/West Asian people are significantly over-represented in strip searches involving the VPD, the Surrey RCMP and the Prince George RCMP.
- Across jurisdictions, White people are either under-represented in strip searches or their representation is equal to their presence in the general population.
- Across jurisdictions, Asians and South Asians are significantly under-represented in strip search statistics. However, in Vancouver the representation of South Asians is equal to their presence in the general population.
- IBPOC over-representation in strip search statistics is largely explained by their over-representation in arrests. However, even after benchmarking for the arrested population, Black people are over-represented in strip searches involving the Vancouver Police Department, the Surrey RCMP, the Prince George RCMP, and the Duncan RCMP. Hispanic and Arab/West Asian people also remain over-represented in strip searches involving the Prince George RCMP.

TABLE 6.1: Summary – The representation of different racial groups in British Columbia police statistics

Racial group	ARRESTS – CHARGEABLE INCIDENTS				
	Vancouver	Surrey	Prince George	Duncan	Nelson
White	EQUAL	EQUAL	UNDER	UNDER	EQUAL
Indigenous	GOR	SOR	GOR	SOR	SOR
Black	GOR	SOR	UNDER	EQUAL	SOR
Hispanic	SOR	SOR	UNDER	EQUAL	EQUAL
West Asian	SOR	SOR	SOR	GOR	EQUAL
South Asian	UNDER	UNDER	UNDER	UNDER	UNDER
Asian	UNDER	UNDER	UNDER	UNDER	UNDER
Racial group	MENTAL HEALTH INCIDENTS				
	Vancouver	Surrey	Prince George	Duncan	Nelson
White	EQUAL	EQUAL	EQUAL	EQUAL	EQUAL
Indigenous	GOR	GOR	SOR	EQUAL	EQUAL
Black	GOR	SOR	UNDER	EQUAL	GOR
Hispanic	EQUAL	EQUAL	UNDER	UNDER	UNDER
West Asian	SOR	SOR	SOR	GOR	UNDER
South Asian	UNDER	UNDER	UNDER	UNDER	UNDER
Asian	UNDER	UNDER	UNDER	UNDER	UNDER
Racial group	STRIP SEARCHES				
	Vancouver	Surrey	Prince George	Duncan	Nelson
White	EQUAL	EQUAL	UNDER	EQUAL	EQUAL
Indigenous	GOR	EQUAL	SOR	EQUAL	SOR
Black	GOR	GOR	SOR	GOR	GOR
Hispanic	SOR	SOR	GOR	UNDER	UNDER

West Asian	SOR	SOR	GOR	UNDER	UNDER
South Asian	EQUAL	UNDER	UNDER	UNDER	UNDER
Asian	UNDER	UNDER	UNDER	UNDER	UNDER

- 1. GOR = Grossly over-represented (odds ratio of 3.00 or higher)**
- 2. SOR = Significantly over-represented (odds ratio between 1.50 and 2.99)**
- 3. UNDER = Under-represented (odds ratio of less than 0.90).**
- 4. EQUAL = Representation equal to presence in general population (odds ratio between 0.90 and 1.49)**

Notable disparities

The case of Indigenous women

It is well known in the research literature that women tend to be significantly under-represented in police arrest statistics. In the current study, Indigenous women emerge as a glaring exception to this general rule. For example, compared to their presence in the general population, Indigenous women are grossly over-represented in arrests involving the Vancouver Police Department. They are also significantly over-represented in arrests involving both the Surrey and Prince George RCMP. Within these jurisdictions, the arrest rate for Indigenous women significantly exceeds the arrest rates for White, Asian, and South Asian males. Within all jurisdictions, the arrest rate for Indigenous women greatly exceeds the arrest rate for White women and women from all other racial backgrounds.

Disparity by offence type

The results presented above reveal that Indigenous people and Black people are significantly over-represented in arrests involving a broad range of offences. However, further analysis reveals that both groups are far more represented in common, public disorder offences, and administration of justice charges than crimes involving serious violence. For example, the Vancouver data uncovered 69,429 arrests involving a single charge. Only 2.7 per cent of these cases involved an allegation of serious violence (robbery, homicide/manslaughter, sexual assault). By contrast, 47.4 per cent of these cases involved a public disorder offence (public intoxication, mischief, or breach of peace) and 15.6 per cent involved an administration of justice offence (i.e., breach parole or probation conditions, etc.). Importantly, the over-representation of Indigenous people in public intoxication offences (odds ratio=18.86), mischief (odds ratio=12.32), breach of peace offences (odds ratio=11.77) and administration of justice offences (odds ratio=12.45) is higher than their representation in cases involving sexual assault (odds ratio=8.59), robbery (odds ratio=8.00) and homicide/manslaughter (odds ratio=5.50). The same pattern tends to repeat itself across police jurisdictions.

These findings point to the prominent role the police play in enforcing public order and how this type of law enforcement can lead to the disproportionate criminalization of Indigenous and IBPOC peoples. The gross over-representation of Indigenous and Black people in administration of justice charges further demonstrates how initial contact with the justice system can lead to further criminalization and a cycle that is difficult to escape.

Case outcomes

The results of the above analysis indicate that Indigenous and Black offenders are over-represented in all case outcomes including cases in which formal charges were laid against the accused person. However, it is important to note that both Black and Indigenous people are even more over-represented in arrests that were cleared by departmental discretion than cases that resulted in a charge. As discussed above, it is somewhat challenging to interpret this finding. On the one hand, it could be argued that Black and Indigenous people are more likely to be treated leniently by the police. In other words, the police could have recommended a charge in these cases but decided to let the offender off without further repercussions. Critics, however, might

argue that these cases represent unnecessary arrests. In other words, these are “low quality” arrests involving weak evidence and little chance of conviction. Thus, the police decided to end the charging process before the case could be reviewed by the Crown. It is also important to note that Black and Indigenous people are highly over-represented in arrest incidents in which charges were recommended by the police but rejected by the Crown. Once again, is this evidence of Crown leniency with respect to Black and Indigenous offenders, or evidence that Black and Indigenous people are more likely to be subject to low quality arrests with little chance of conviction. Clear answers are not possible with the current data, but these issues should be flagged for further investigation.

A note on strip searches

As discussed above, significant racial disparities exist with respect to strip searches across the police jurisdictions examined in this study. However, much of this disparity can be explained by racial differences in arrests. After benchmarking for arrests, only Black people emerge as significantly over-represented in strip search statistics.

However, it is also important to note that, compared to other Canadian jurisdictions, strip searches are rarely performed by the British Columbia police services involved in this study. For example, a recent study revealed that, between 2014 and 2016, 40 per cent of all arrests conducted by the Toronto Police Service resulted in a strip search (McNeilly 2019).⁸ By comparison, during the study period, less than one per cent of the arrests conducted by the police services involved in this study resulted in a strip search: Vancouver (0.9 per cent); Surrey (0.2 per cent); Prince George (0.5 per cent), Duncan/North Cowichan (0.2 per cent). The only exception was the Nelson Police Department—where the strip search rate rose to only 1.2 per cent. According to this data, strip searches are rarely employed by the police in British Columbia and thus rarely impact accused persons from all racial backgrounds.

Interpreting racial disparities

A growing volume of Canadian and international research has documented that both Indigenous and Black people are significantly over-represented in arrest statistics reflecting a wide variety of criminal offences. Over-representation is particularly high with respect to drug-related offences, gang activity, street-level violence, public order offences and administration of justice charges (Unnever et al. 2017; Anderson 2015; Bowling and Phillips 2002). Canadian researchers have begun to document this same pattern including the over-representation of Indigenous and Black people in both provincial and federal corrections (see review in Owusu-Bempah and Wortley 2013).

Although examining the causes of the significant racial disparities was outside the scope of the study, three theories have been offered to explain the over-representation of Indigenous, Black, and other racialized people in arrest statistics: 1) the bias thesis, 2) the civilian bias thesis, and 3) the offending thesis.

⁸ Between 2014 and 2016 the TPS conducted 140,050 arrests and 54,676 strip-searches.

The bias thesis

The bias thesis states that Indigenous, Black and people of colour are over-represented in police statistics because they are subject to biased or discriminatory treatment by the police and the broader criminal justice system. For example, some argue that, due to racial profiling and the aggressive deployment of police within their communities, Indigenous and Black people are subject to much higher levels of police surveillance than others. Higher police surveillance, it is maintained, makes Indigenous and Black offenders more vulnerable to detection and arrest than White offenders who engage in exactly the same activities.

Racial bias may also extend from police surveillance activities to officer discretion. Critics argue that, when faced with evidence of illegal activity, the police are much more likely to arrest Indigenous and Black people than White civilians—particularly for minor crimes and public order offences.

Criminologists and police scholars have long identified that police officers have considerable discretion with respect to how they perform their duties. Scholars also acknowledge that it is easier for officers to exercise discretion with respect to minor than major crimes. For example, consider a scenario in which a police officer has pulled over a driver for speeding 30 kilometres over the limit. To deal with this case the officer can choose between a number of different options: 1) they can issue a warning or caution; 2) they can issue a ticket for a lower speed limit violation (thus reducing the fine); or 3) they can issue a ticket documenting the full extent of the speeding violation. Consider a second scenario. An officer on foot patrol observes two teenagers consuming an illegal drug in a park. As with the speeding example, the officer has several options: 1) they can ignore the violation and walk by; 2) they can confront the youth and informally ask them to desist; 3) they can issue a formal warning or caution; 4) they can apprehend the youth and recommend a pre-charge diversion; and 5) they can level a criminal charge. Officer discretion, however, is much more limited with respect to serious crime. For example, it is highly unlikely that an officer who witnessed an armed robbery would caution rather than arrest the suspect. It is also possible that, due to post-arrest Charter protections, racial disparities in outcomes may become smaller as offenders move through the justice system.⁹

Police scholars are interested in how various legal (i.e., seriousness of the crime, strength of the evidence, etc.), community (i.e., local crime rate), situational (i.e., reactive vs proactive policing, presence of witnesses, etc.), and extra-legal factors (i.e., citizen demeanour, age, gender, etc.) impact police discretion (see Goff 2017: 212-213; Regoeczini and Kent 2013; Alpert and Dunham 2004; Alpert et al 2005; Dunham et al. 2004). The findings produced by this report suggest that race may also impact arrest decisions.

Early American and British studies of police arrest practices suggested that the racial minorities were much more likely to be arrested for minor crimes (including drug use, minor assault, vagrancy, etc.) than Whites (see extensive reviews in Gabbidon and Greene 2005; Walker et al. 2004; Bowling and Phillips 2002). Nonetheless, more recent evidence suggests that racial bias in

⁹ In other words, the Charter may be less effectively applied to the arrest decisions of police officers.

police arrest decisions may be declining. For example, contemporary observational studies of police-citizen encounters, conducted in the United States, suggest that, controlling for the seriousness of criminal conduct, race is unrelated to the police decision to arrest (see Delisi and Regoli 1999; Klinger 1997). However, observational studies have been critiqued because they tend to focus on more serious offending and do not control for the presence of the researcher. Many feel that police officers will behave differently under direct observation than under normal field conditions. In addition, a number of recent American studies suggest that it is the race of the victim—not the race of the offender—that may impact the arrest decision. In other words, there is considerable evidence to suggest that the police are more likely to make arrests in cases involving white than non-white minority victims and are especially likely to make arrests when the case involves a white victim and a minority offender (see Parker et al. 2005; Stolzenberg et al. 2004). Some have argued that this is direct evidence that the police put a higher value on white than minority victims and thus devote more effort and resources to solving such crimes (see Mann 1993). These findings are also consistent with the “racial threat” hypothesis which suggests that the police will treat inter-racial crimes involving minority offenders and white victims as particularly heinous.

In addition to observational studies, several American meta-analyses have established significant racial differences in police arrest practices. For example, Kochel and his colleagues (2011) conducted a meta-analysis of twenty-seven different datasets. They found that Black people and other minorities are 30 per cent more likely to experience an arrest after controlling for time, location and criminal behaviour. In another meta-analysis, Lytle (2014) found that Black people were significantly more likely Whites to be arrested after controlling for offence seriousness, geographic location, suspect characteristics and time of the study. Huizinga and his colleagues (2007) examined the probability of arrest using large, longitudinal datasets from Pittsburgh, Seattle and Rochester. They also found that the over-representation of Black youth in arrest statistics cannot be explained by their level of offending or risk factors. Black racial identity still increases the likelihood of arrest after controlling for frequency of offending, seriousness of offending, gender, age, socio-economic status, family characteristics and other risk factors.

Tapia (2012) and Anderson (2015) also found that Black youth were more likely to be arrested than White youth after controlling for gang membership, demographic factors and both past and present criminal behaviour. Interestingly, after controlling for other theoretically relevant factors, Anderson (2015) found that Black youth were more likely to be arrested in both poor and wealthy neighbourhoods. However, they were particularly vulnerable to arrest if they lived in communities that had low rather than high Black populations. A number of other American studies (see Kirk 2008; Unever et al. 2017) have produced similar results.

While the bulk of the American evidence suggests that Black people are more likely to be arrested than White people, a few studies have argued that race does not impact arrest decisions. For example, Beaver et al.’s (2013) analysis of data from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health found no evidence that African Americans were more likely to be arrested after controlling for lifetime offending, socioeconomic status and other risk factors.

American research further suggests that racial bias with respect to police arrest and charge practices may be most evident with respect drug possession and other discretionary

offences. Indeed, a large number of American studies have firmly established that Black people actually consume marijuana and other illegal drugs at a rate that is similar to—or lower—than Whites. However, across every state, Black people are between three and eight times more likely to be arrested and charged with drug possession than their White counterparts (Edwards et al. 2013). Similarly, the U.S. Department of Justice Civil Rights Division’s recent investigation of the Baltimore Police Service found that the BPD’s disproportionate charging of African Americans for highly discretionary misdemeanor offenses including trespassing, disorderly conduct, failing to obey an officer’s orders and “impeding” was “suggestive of intentional discrimination.” The Division also found that for every discretionary misdemeanor offense that it examined, officials dismissed charges against African Americans at significantly higher rates—indicating that officers applied a lower standard when arresting African Americans for these offenses (U.S. Department of Justice 2016: 58-61).

Unfortunately, studies that examine the impact of both offender and victim race on arrest decisions have rarely been conducted in Canada. However, as in the United States, research does suggest that Black people are highly over-represented with respect to certain discretionary offences. For example, an analysis of Toronto police data, from 1996 to early 2002, found that Black people were three times more likely to be charged with simple drug possession than White people, despite survey evidence which suggests that White people have higher rates of drug use than Blacks. This finding is consistent with the argument that Black people are more likely to be subjected to racially biased police surveillance tactics—including stop and frisk—that lead to the discovery of small amounts of drugs (Wortley 2005; Wortley and Tanner 2005).

Recent Canadian evidence also suggests that race may influence treatment once an offence has been identified by police. For example, Samuels-Wortley’s (2019) research reveals that, within the Greater Toronto Area, Black youth with no previous criminal record are more likely to be charged with simple marijuana possession than their White counterparts. White youth, by contrast, are more likely to be cautioned or offered diversion. Another study examined over 10,000 drug possession arrests made by the Toronto Police Service between 1996 and 2001. The results documented that, for single charge cases involving simple drug possession, Black suspects (38 per cent) were much more likely than Whites (23 per cent) to be taken to the police station for processing. White accused persons, on the other hand, were more likely to be released at the scene. Once at the police station, Black accused were held overnight, for a bail hearing, at twice the rate of Whites. These racial disparities in police treatment remain after other relevant factors—including age, criminal history, employment, immigration status and whether or not the person has a permanent home address—have been taken into statistical account (Rankin et al. 2002a). Older studies that examined the treatment of young offenders in Ontario yielded very similar results (Commission on Systemic Racism 1995).

While few Canadian studies have been conducted on racial differences in police arrest and charging practices, the existing research strongly suggests that there is a cause for concern. At the very least, more research is required.

Civilian racial bias thesis

A second thesis that may help explain racial disparities in police arrest statistics and mental health incidents is the civilian racial bias thesis. As discussed above, in a large proportion of the arrests involving Indigenous and Black offenders, the complainants or victims are from other racial backgrounds. Hypothetically, if anti-Black and anti-Indigenous biases exist within the broader community, these biases might increase the likelihood that incidents involving Indigenous and Black people are reported to the police. In other words, civilian racial biases may make the police more aware of incidents involving minority offenders and ultimately impact arrest statistics.

The offending thesis

The offending thesis maintains that Indigenous, Black and other IBPOC people engage in criminal activity at a higher level than other racial groups and this fact is accurately reflected in official arrest statistics. This perspective was recently expressed by one BC police official, who, after reviewing the preliminary results of this study, stated that: “Some people are underrepresented in the statistics because they are not involved in the type of activities that require police attention and others are overrepresented because they live the type of life that result in citizens calling police or police noticing them.”

Criminologists and other social scientists widely acknowledge that higher rates of criminality among racialized communities are not the result of inherent or behavioural tendencies. Although such overtly racist theories remain part of popular discourse, they have been completely discredited by the scientific community. Rather, higher rates of minority offending can be attributed to a complex array of historical and contemporary social factors. Many scholars, for example, argue that current rates of Black and Indigenous offending stem from the negative consequences of centuries of colonialism, slavery and racial oppression. This historical oppression produced both intergenerational trauma and contemporary economic and social disadvantage. The impact of intergenerational trauma and contemporary social disadvantage, in turn, results in higher rates of offending for disadvantaged groups (Unnever et al. 2019; Wortley and Owusu-Bempah 2016).

It is far beyond the scope of this report to provide a thorough review of how historical and contemporary systemic racism and discrimination can help explain higher rates of arrests among certain racial groups. Nonetheless, according to most theoretical perspectives, it is not surprising that both Indigenous and Black people—arguably the two groups most negatively impacted by colonialism and slavery—have the highest arrest rates within the police jurisdictions examined in this study.

Further analysis reveals that, within British Columbia, Indigenous and Black people are much more likely than other groups to be disadvantaged by systemic racism and discrimination in education, employment, health, and housing, and are most impacted by socio-economic disadvantages.

These disadvantages are rooted in colonialism, slavery, and the ongoing intergenerational trauma.¹⁰

The under-representation of Asians and South Asians in police statistics

A major finding from the current study is that both Asian and South Asian people are significantly under-represented in arrest statistics, mental health-related policing, and strip searches. Indeed, in all police jurisdictions included in the current study, the White arrest rate is significantly higher than the arrest rate for Asian and South Asian people. Similar findings have surfaced in other Canadian and American jurisdictions. One might conclude that this finding “proves” that the police do not engage in racially biased law enforcement practices. After all, if police racism exists, wouldn’t all racial minority groups be subject to higher levels of police surveillance and harsher treatment than White people?

A number of factors may help explain the under-representation of Asians and South Asians in police statistics. First of all, both groups may actually be less involved in crime and disorder—especially common “street-level” offences—than their White, Black, and Indigenous counterparts. Over the past two decades, Canada’s immigration policies have enabled the migration of a large number of well-educated professionals and businesspeople from Hong Kong, China and India. As a result, recent data indicates that, on average, Asian and South Asian residents of Canada are more highly-educated, more likely to be employed, have higher household incomes, and are less likely to live below the poverty-line, than people from other racial groups—including White, native-born Canadian citizens (Perry and Alvi 2016; Zong and Perry 2011). In other words, Asian and South Asian residents of Canada are less likely to experience the types of social disadvantage associated with higher levels of criminal behaviour.

Furthermore, a high proportion of Asian and South Asian Canadians are either first or second-generation migrants to Canada. Recent research indicates that, regardless of racial background, first and second-generation immigrants tend to have significantly lower rates of crime than the native born. Criminality, however, may start to increase in the third generation (Zatz and Smith 2012). The anti-crime orientation of new immigrants has been attributed to various factors including strong family ties, commitment to education, and fear of criminal deportation. Thus, immigration status may also help explain the under-representation of Asians and South Asians in British Columbia arrest statistics.

Finally, there is growing evidence that South Asians and Asians do not suffer from the same negative stereotypes as Black and Indigenous people. In fact, Asians and South Asians are often viewed by others as the “model minority” (see Padgett et al 2020; Pon 2000; Chao et al 2013; Daga et al. 2018; Hsu 2015). Rather than being associated with poverty, substance use and criminality, Asians and South Asians are often stereotyped as smart, hard-working, affluent, and law-abiding. Do such “positive” stereotypes exist amongst police officers? If they do, Asians and

¹⁰ It is important to note that while Black people are over-represented in many common street crimes (robbery, drug trafficking, interpersonal violence, etc.), they are significantly under-represented in several other major crime categories—including white-collar and corporate offences. These racial differences likely reflect racial differences in socio-economic status and differential access to criminal opportunities.

South Asians may be less likely to be subjected to racial profiling and increased levels of police surveillance. Positive stereotypes could also contribute to more lenient treatment during police-civilian encounters. All these factors could contribute to the under-representation of Asians and South Asians in police data. In sum, the under-representation of Asians and South Asians in police statistics does not negate the possibility of anti-Indigenous and anti-Black racism in Canadian policing—nor does it negate the possibility of bias against other minority groups.

The need for an integrated explanation

Historically, the offending hypothesis and the bias hypothesis have been juxtaposed. Politically, one tended to support one model or the other. However, growing evidence suggests that both explanations have merit. In other words, the over-representation of Indigenous and Black people in arrest statistics may be caused by *both* higher rates of offending and racial bias within the criminal justice system. In fact, higher rates of offending by Indigenous, Black, and other racialized people may be used to justify or reinforce racially biased law enforcement practices. As discussed, the possibility of civilian bias must also be considered when examining patterns of police reporting. Unfortunately, the nature, quality and completeness of police data received during this study precludes a robust exploration of the many factors that might contribute to racial disparities in arrests and other forms of police contact. Future research strategies must be designed in a manner that will enable the testing of different theories. This is the only way researchers, community members, police officials, and policy-makers can determine what proportion of racial disparities can be attributed to higher rates of offending, racial bias, or civilian reporting practices.

Time and data limitations

The study described above is marked by several time and data limitations. Although the data request was made in April 2021, all the data required for the current analysis was not received until July 2021. In order to meet submission deadlines for the Special Committee on Reforming the Police Act, the final report had to be submitted to BCOHRC at the end of August 2021. Thus, all data cleaning, coding, and analysis, as well as report preparation, had to be completed in a very brief two-month period. This was a monumental task, considering the massive amount of data received: three datasets (arrest, mental health incidents and strip searches) from each of five police jurisdictions (15 datasets total). Collectively, these datasets likely represent the largest collection of race-based police data ever received in Canada.

Time constraints limited the type and level of analysis that was possible. For example, during this period, the research team was unable to obtain more refined Census data that would have enabled advanced benchmarking—including benchmarking based on age groups and neighbourhood dynamics. We hope that the research team will be able to continue its work with the data and submit supplementary reports reflecting more advanced analytical techniques.

The data that was received also had its limitations. For example, due to both time constraints and data retention policies, the police services involved in this study were not able to provide data for the entire ten-year period between 2011 and 2020. For example, four of the five police jurisdictions were only able to provide arrest data for two years: 2019 and 2020. Thus, the research team was unable to conduct a trend analysis that would have examined changes in racial

disparities over the past decade. Similarly, police services were unable to provide the requested data on police releases. Thus, we were unable to examine racial differences with respect to type of release and explore allegations that racial minorities are less likely to be released at the scene and more likely to be taken into custody and held for a remand hearing. Finally, the data did not include information on the home addresses of accused persons. It was felt that requesting this type of information would have raised privacy concerns. However, because we do not have information on home address, we were unable to determine the accuracy of Census benchmarking and whether racial disparities are impacted by accused persons or police subjects who reside outside of the jurisdictions at the focus of this inquiry. Future research should address these shortcomings

Conclusion

The results of this examination are disturbing. Indigenous and Black people are either grossly or significantly over-represented in British Columbia arrest statistics. Hispanic and Arab/West Asian people are also over-represented in many of the police jurisdictions involved in the current study. Furthermore, the data indicate that a great deal of police activity involves people experiencing mental health issues. Indigenous, Black and Arab/West Asian people are also significantly over-represented in these types of police interactions. Racial disparities likely result from a combination of higher rates of offending, police bias, and civilian reporting practices. Regardless of the cause, the over-representation of Indigenous, Black and other people of colour in police statistics is a problem that can no longer be ignored. Both government and police officials must make the reduction of racial disparities a priority.

A number of promising crime prevention strategies could be effective in reducing higher rates of offending by Indigenous, Black, and other racialized individuals. These strategies include:

- Targeted anti-poverty strategies that reduce economic disadvantage among Indigenous, Black and other racialized people
- Community development programs that improve the quality of housing and increase both recreational and employment opportunities within disadvantaged communities
- Early childhood education and youth development programs that target the needs of Indigenous, Black, and other minority youth
- Targeted, culturally sensitive education and mentorship programs that enhance career opportunities for Indigenous, Black, and other minority youth
- Targeted, culturally sensitive mental health and substance use services that can disrupt the relationship between mental health challenges, substance abuse and criminal offending
- Targeted, culturally sensitive rehabilitation and reintegration programs that reduce recidivism among Indigenous, Black and other minority offenders

Recently, advocates have called for the defunding of the police in order to fund community development and community crime prevention programs. However, the evidence suggests that these types of programs deserve increased government support—even if police funding is not reduced. It has become cliché for police leaders to state that society will never be able to arrest itself out of problems with crime and violence. The roots of these problems are too deeply engrained in our history and social structure. Meaningful change will only emerge after significant social reform—social reform that involves much more than policing practices.

Nonetheless, we can't ignore that conscious, implicit and systemic biases within policing—and the broader justice system—contribute significantly to the over-representation of Black, Indigenous and other racial minority people in police statistics. Thus, government and police institutions must make all effort to reduce bias and increase community confidence in law enforcement. Strategies that might help reduce racial bias in policing include:

- Enhanced recruitment of police officers from Indigenous, Black and other racial minority backgrounds. Police diversity may reduce racial bias and build cultural competence within police organizations
- Strategies that screen police recruits for racial bias and cultural capital with respect to dealing with diverse populations
- Enhanced anti-bias training. Training should be more than a course or workshop that officers have to attend or “take.” Training should not be a box that officers have to tick. Effective anti-bias training must be training that officers have to pass or demonstrate competence. This is the only way to guarantee officer attention and demonstrate that police organizations take such training seriously
- Revised officer evaluation standards that award community policing and relationships building efforts rather than traditional policing criterion like arrests and ticketing
- Improved internal monitoring practices that can identify racial bias among officers and target individuals for retraining, reassignment, or dismissal
- Enhanced civilian oversight and police complaints processes—including an increase in independent, non-police investigation into allegations of police racial bias and unprofessional behaviour

Finally, governments and police officials in British Columbia must fully commit to the collection of race-based data. In the past, police and governments in Canada have not responded well to academic and community requests for data collection and data analysis frameworks that would better address allegations of racial bias. In our opinion, the magnitude of the racial disparities identified in this report justify greater action on the research and data transparency front.¹¹

As an accountability measure, British Columbia should develop a system that can produce high quality race-based data on arrest practices and other important issues. This data should be made available to internal police researchers, academics, government policy-makers, and community advocacy groups. The analysis and dissemination of this data should be used to document racial disparities, identify how racial bias may contribute to the over-representation of Indigenous, Black and other racialized groups in police statistics, and evaluate the effectiveness of anti-racism and crime prevention initiatives. A failure to implement such a data collection strategy would demonstrate a lack of commitment to equity and anti-racism efforts.

Organizational attempts to prevent or impede race-based data collection would demonstrate that police interests outweigh the interests of Indigenous, Black community and other racial minority communities. At least in theory, the police work for the public. As such, the police should be transparent. They should both collect and release information that the general public—or specific groups with the general public—demand. As Kane (2007: 778), argues, police departments sometime unwisely operate as if police-generated records are propriety data. He states that: “The

¹¹ The collection of demographic data, of course, should not be limited to racial background. Ideally age, gender, and measures of socio-economic status would be included in a rigorous data collection regime. Furthermore, with respect to gender, it appears that police services need to do a better job capturing non-binary, gender-diverse populations. As discussed above, the presence of gender-diverse populations in the police data received as part of this inquiry was too small to enable an accurate analysis.

public funds police departments and all dimensions of their coercive activities. The public *owns* all information related to police operations and processes. Thus, police departments should be required not only to collect data on coercive outcomes and processes but also to make them generally available to the public.”

In many ways, the results of the research reported in this document raise more questions than they answer. However, one thing is clear: profound racial disparities in police arrest and mental health statistics exist in British Columbia. At the very least, these disparities deserve much more research, monitoring, and policy attention.

Appendix A: BCOHRC data requests to the Vancouver Police Department, RCMP, and Nelson Police Department

In this section:

- Govender, Kasari. “Re: Request for demographic data for various policing activities and outcomes.” Letter to Vancouver Police Department Chief Constable Adam Palmer, April 12, 2021.
- Govender, Kasari. “Re: Request for demographic data for various policing activities and outcomes.” Letter to Nelson Police Department Chief Constable Paul Burkart, April 15, 2021.
- Govender, Kasari. “Re: Request for demographic data for various policing activities and outcomes.” Letter to BC RCMP Deputy Commissioner Jennifer Strachan, June 3, 2021.
- Govender, Kasari. “Order to produce records.” Served by email to Jennifer Strachan - Deputy Commissioner, Commanding Officer for British Columbia, Royal Canadian Mounted Police, June 8, 2021.
- Govender, Kasari. “Re: Request for demographic data for various policing activities and outcomes [Appendix A to Order dated June 8, 2021 – Human Rights Commissioner’s April 12, 2021 request]” Letter to BC RCMP Deputy Commissioner Jennifer Strachan, April 12, 2021.

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